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Evaluating the Increase in Anti-Judaism on Social Media Platforms

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The Transformation of Christian Identity:

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to highlight the continued presence of Anglo-Israelism on the far-right. It also aims to underscore the various modern far-right actors which adhere to, and actively promote, Anglo-Israelite ideologies. The first chapter addresses the definition of anti-Judaism, and finds it the most suitable term for describing current forms of anti-Jewish hate in America. The Second chapter analyzes the origin and theology of Anglo-Israelism. The third chapter highlights modern proponents of Anglo-Israelism, their goals/motivation, and their recruitment techniques. The final chapter reviews findings and suggest a more aggressive approach to the implementation of holocaust education and critical race theory in American K-12 classrooms in order to curb the spread of far-right extremism.

Introduction

Donald Trump's victory in the 2016 U.S. Presidential election brought America's social ills to the forefront of political discourse. Since then, the political right's continued support of former president Trump – even after his refusal to denounce far-right neo-Nazi groups like the Proud Boys in 2020 – has created severe political cleavages in the United States.[1] This has left Americans on both sides feeling alienated from their friends, family, and neighbors that fall on the opposite side of the ever-growing political divide. A 2021 study from the American Survey Center – self-described as a "nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to understanding the way cultural, political, and technological changes are shaping the lives of ordinary Americans" – states that while only fifteen percent of the U.S. population report terminating relationships based on political differences, twenty-two percent of them cited support – or lack thereof – of Donald Trump as the determining factor.[2] A separate study by the Pew Research Center in September of 2020 indicates that approximately ninety-seven percent of American voters on both sides reported having little to no friends who supported the opposite presidential candidate (Joe Biden/Donald Trump).[3] Additionally, an annual study produced by Chapman University on American fears finds that from 2020-2021 approximately eighty percent of Americans cited fear of "corrupt government officials" as their number one worry. This was followed by "people I

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[1] It should be noted that at times, Donald Trump has condemned white supremacy as a whole. The above statement was in reference to the 2020 presidential debate, between Donald Trump and the Democratic nominee Joe Biden. During the debate, then President Donald Trump was asked by Chris Wallace of Fox News to denounce white supremacy in general, this was followed by Joe Biden's suggestion of condemning the Proud Boys specifically, to which Trump responded "Proud Boys, stand back and stand by. But I'll tell you what, I'll tell you what: somebody's got to do something about Antifa and the left because this is not a right-wing problem this is a left-wing. This is a left-wing problem. . ." For the full transcript of the debate see: The Commission on Presidential Debates, *September 29, 2020 Debate Transcript.*

[2] Daniel Cox, *The State of American Friendship.*

[3] Pew Research Center, *Majorities of Trump, Biden Voters Say.*

love dying" – which rose from the nineth most cited fear in 2019 – with the third, fourth, and sixth highest ranking fears also referencing COVID-19 related anxieties. [4]

The increased anxiety surrounding Americas political and ideological future, combined with the personal fears associated with a global pandemic, have left scholars of Jewish Studies – along with Jewish communities and leaders –feeling increasingly anxious as well. As is well known, antisemitism, and Jewish hate in general, never truly disappear. As Jonathan Greenblatt CEO of the Anti-defamation League, as well as Cas Mudde, Deborah Lipstadt, Cynthia Miller-Idriss, David Nirenberg, and countless other scholars have shown, antisemitism lies dormant on the periphery of civilized society, waiting for social unrest and fear to catapult it back into the mainstream of political discourse. Donald Trump's America could be described as many things, however, civilized is not the first term that comes to mind. This is why this study aims to highlight the anti-Jewish foundation that unites members of various far-right ideologies, which appear, on the surface, to have no underlying connections.

With these factors in mind, the recent rise in antisemitic incidents across the U.S. seems predictable, albeit alarming. The FBI Crime Data Explorer reports 690 Jewish related hate crimes in 2016, and 956 in the following year. However, the most recent FBI reports depict a clear indication of an increase in anti-Jewish hate in America. Reporting nearly sixty percent of all religiously motivated hate crimes in 2020 to have been directed at members of the Jewish community. As American Jewish Committee (AJC) CEO David Harris points out, it speaks for itself when a religious group "who make up no more than 2% of the U.S. population" constitute "nearly sixty percent" of all religiously motivated hate crimes in the United States. [5]

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[4] Roxy Amirazizi, *America's Top Fears 2020/2021*.
[5] American Jewish Committee (AJC), *AJC Deeply Troubled by FBI Hate Crimes Data*

However, it is not simply Donald Trump's blatant racism and xenophobia alone that has led to this increase in religious and racial bigotry. Former president Trump's rhetoric during, and after, his time in office emboldened extremists on the outskirts of society and motivated a slew of disinformation campaigns generated by far-right agents working in a coordinated effort to disseminate their antisemitic rhetoric. This effort is evident in a leaked 2016 *Daily Stormer* [6] style guide, which calls for a "light" tone.[7] The guide was written anonymously and published in 2017 by far-right website *Vox Day*.[8] It offers tips for individuals writing under the name Andrew Anglin – founder and editor of the *Daily Stormer* – to promote consistency, but it also outlines strategies for recruitment, such as: "(t)he unindoctrinated should not be able to tell if we are joking or not."[9] Followed by, "This is obviously a ploy and I actually do want to gas [k***s]. But that's neither here nor there."[10]

This "style guide" goes on, outlining which slurs are appropriate to use and when to use a serious tone vs. an ironic. As the guide states several times, their prime directive is to prey on the fear of the general public to "always blame the Jews for everything."[11] In 2017, the Southern Poverty Law Center had the *Daily Stormer* website ranked 5,597th in the U.S., but they faced adversity when GoDaddy canceled their service after Anglin – against the better judgment of his ghost writer – published an article titled "Woman Killed in Road Rage Incident was a Fat, Childless 32-Year-Old Slut" in response to the murder of Heather Heyer during the 2017 *Unite*

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[6] The *Daily Stormer* is a far-right neo-Nazi website owned and operated by Andrew Anglin. The title of the publication is a play on the title of the Der Stürmer publications in Nazi Germany. For more on Andrew Anglin and the *Daily Stormer* see: Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), *Andrew Anglin*, and Anti-Defamation League (ADL), *Andrew Anglin: Five Things to Know*
[7] Anonymous, *Daily Stormer Style Guide*
[8] Ashley Feinberg, *This is the Daily Stormer's Playbook*
[9] Anonymous, *Daily Stormer Style Guide*
[10] Ibid
[11] Ibid

the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia.[12] Currently, the website is still active, though it now goes under the domain name "DailyStormer.Name" and has bounced around between various domain registrars.

The Website's homepage is fitted with a banner stating "because the Jews are to blame" behind an image of Jesus on the crucifix.[13] Along the side of the homepage an interactive map purports to show the decline of the white race in real time.[14] Figure 2 highlights one of the major themes of nearly every extant white supremacist organization, the belief in a Jewish orchestrated *white genocide*. This belief – that Jews are actively working to weaken the white race through intermarriage and mass immigration – inspired the *fourteen words*, or what the ADL refers to as "the most popular white supremacist slogan around the globe."[15] The fourteen words refer to the sentence "we must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children" and can appear in various contexts from dog-whistles in social media posts/user bios, to tattoos, and other forms of self-expression/identification. Figure 1 refers to the anti-Jewish accusation of deicide expounded by Christians since the first centuries of the Common Era, and is a prime example of the blurring of lines that can often occur between anti-Judaism and antisemitism. However, this phenomenon is not new. America has a long history of racial bigotry, this is not surprising, but many Americans are ignorant to the forms of religiously motivated anti-Jewish hate that persisted throughout WWII and remain influential today.

Following a tide of Jewish immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Ku Klux Klan once again began to gain popularity in America. Different from the Original Klan which was active in the south during the Jim Crow Era, the Second Klan – as scholars often

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[12] , Talia Lavin, Andrew Marantz, and Jordy Yager. *The Neo-Nazis of the Daily Stormer*
[13] See Figure 1.
[14] See Figure 2
[15] ADL, *White Genocide*

call it – was prominent in the Northern states during the 1920s. The Second Klan also focused their racist and xenophobic lambasting on the most heavily populated minority groups of their area.[16] More often than not, this was the Catholics, Jews, and Asians found living in larger numbers in Northern cities. As scholars such as Kathleen Blee, Linda Gordon, and Lisa McGirr have pointed out, the Second Klan was responsible for the formation of the "Christian right." [17] In other words, they created the foundation for the melding of race, religion, and politics that is currently seen today. Working in tandem with Protestant ministers across the U.S., the Second Klan was successful in implementing religious and political leaders in several states. This in turn generated more publicity and normalization of the Second Klan's racist rhetoric. As Gordon and McGirr point out in their closing chapters, the Second Klan's influence on American ideology and government policy was long lasting – especially those policies which were aimed at immigration. Katherine Benton-Cohen enumerates on this point in her 2018 book, *Inventing the Immigration Problem*.[18] The Second Klan was also instrumental in the formation of the Third Klan, as well as a far more formidable force – Anglo-Israelism.

First introduced in America the end of the nineteenth century as British-Israelism, Anglo-Israelism is America's own combination of the religious antisemitism, or anti-Judaism, usually associated with Catholicism in Medieval Europe and the racially motivated antisemitism of Nazi Germany. Positing first the British (British-Israelism), followed by the Americans (Anglo-Israelism) as the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, Anglo-Israelism sees Jews as non-white children of Satan, who are aimed at "white genocide." While there are many adherents of Anglo-Israelism, such as the Aryan Nations, the group most associated with the movement arose

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[16] Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK*
[17] Ibid. Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol*.
[18] Katherine Benton-Cohen, *Inventing the immigration problem*

following the Great Depression, and is referred to as *Christian Identity*. However, *Identity*

membership peaked in the 1990s after an onslaught of violent attacks were carried out in their

name, resulting in severe backlash.[19] Currently, the SPLC reports only nine extant organizations

that still publicly declare adherence to *Identity* theology remaining.[20] However, it is clear from

the multitude of sources that will be examined in the body of this report, that the theology behind

Anglo-Israelism did not die out, but rather, created a foundation for members of seemingly

unrelated far-right/extremist organizations to justify their bigoted world views.

For adherents of Anglo-Israelism, the rapture will occur post-tribulation, however, for

that to happen there must be a race war between the whites and all other races, and the whites

must win for their messiah to return. This is where the conspiracy starts to come together for

adherents of Anglo-Israelism who believe Jews are attempting to slowly erode the white race –

through mass immigration and interracial marriages – in an attempt to better their own chances

in the imagined battle to come. This belief stems from adherent's strict dispensationalist views,

which set them apart from other Fundamentalist/Protestant sects.[21] If the belief in a Jewish

orchestrated "white genocide" sounds familiar, it should. The previously discussed *fourteen*

words rely on the same anti-Jewish trope, however, they do so without mentioning the rapture, or

even Christianity in general. Some may argue this makes the slogan antisemitic, especially since

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[19] *Christian Identity* was responsible for several violent attacks throughout the 1908s-1990s including the deadliest domestic terrorist attack in U.S. History –Timothy McVeigh's bombing of the Oklahoma City Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building on April 19th 1995. Following the bombing, pipe bombs were sent to several government officials by a member of the *Christian Identity* compound in Elohim City, Oklahoma that McVeigh had attempted to contact prior to his attack. This violence led to fewer individuals associating themselves publicly with *Christian Identity* as membership waned. However, as a recent study from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies has shown, the theology of *Christian Identity* did not die off, but rather, evolved to fit a more modern climate. See: CTEC Staff, *Christian Identity's New Role on the Extreme Right.*

[20] Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), *Hate Map.*

[21] For more on the relationship between American dispensationalism and anti-Judaism see: Walker Robins, *Between Dixie and Zion: Southern Baptist and Palestine Before Israel* and Yaakov Shalom Ariel, *An Unusual Relationship: Evangelical Christians and Jews*

it appears racially motivated on the surface, however, the issue is not that simple, and it will be addressed in depth in the body of this study.

Michael Barkun – a political scientist specializing in religion and violence – details the origin and scope of the Anglo-Israelism movement in the United States in his 1994 book titled *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement*. According to Barkun, Anglo-Israelism created "dangerous new potentialities" for "others to exploit in the future."[22] What Barkun meant by this was simple, the non-sectarian approach of Anglo-Israelism in general, and *Christian Identity* specifically, can and has been easily adopted by a variety of religious/secular far-right agents and manipulated to fit their own world views. For example, far-right anti-government organizations may resonate with *Identity's* distrust of government, and may adopt their reasoning of an elite Jewish stronghold on world governments as their validation. Barkun provides an example of this in a revised edition of *Religion and The Racist Right* in which he makes the connection between the 1995 domestic terrorist attack on the Oklahoma City Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building and a *Christian Identity* compound in Elohim City, Oklahoma. This connection further underscores the mailability of *Identity* doctrine, and also points out the hypocrisy of anti-Jewish tropes which posit the Jew as an inferior race, yet at the same time credits the Jewish community with disproportionate amounts of power.

As Holocaust historian Deborah Lipstadt points out in an interview with Vox's Ezra Klein, antisemitism differs from standard forms of racial discrimination in that the stereotypes placed on the Jews are generally seen as positive – wealth, power, education – however, these stereotypes are often subverted into negative qualities by both the right and the left – unbridled power, corruption, and cunningness. [23] This subversion of positive characteristics makes refuting

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[22] Michael Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, 253.
[23] Ezra Klein, *Antisemitism Now, Antisemitism Then*

claims difficult as those who make these assertions may not be doing so in a deliberately

malicious way, yet they are still perpetuating stereotypes that have negative impacts on the

Jewish community as a whole. Returning to the "unindoctrinated" comment in the leaked 2016

Daily Stormer style guide, the far-rights approach to recruitment begins to make sense. In order

to indoctrinate the "unindoctrinated" the far-right – or at least the journalist at the *Daily Stormer*

– should rely on the ignorance of the general population to push their anti-Jewish rhetoric. This

tactic is not risky given the severe lack of Holocaust education amongst Americans.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany – a group aimed at

securing material compensation for victims of the Holocaust – completed a survey across all fifty

American states and found that nearly fifty percent of millennials (aged 26-41)[24] could not name

at least one camp or ghetto.[25] Additionally, thirty-one percent of Americans, and forty-one

percent of millennials, stated they believed the Holocaust had claimed the lives of "fewer than

two-million" Jews. But what does Holocaust education have to do with remaining unsusceptible

to far-right indoctrination? A 2007 study from the U.K. answers this question by suggesting

Holocaust education may be the key to producing a population that is not only less antisemitic,

but also less likely to support other forms of prejudice in general. The study's accompanying

article states students who have been given the chance to participate in Holocaust education

courses "had stronger positive values, were more tolerant and were more disposed to active

citizenship by their understanding of individual responsibility towards racism."[26] With only

twenty-three U.S. states requiring Holocaust education, it becomes clear why the far-right has

implemented a "joking" approach to the dissemination of antisemitic and white supremacist

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[24] Millennial age range based on ranges from Beresford Research, *Generations Defined by Name, Birth Year, and Ages in 2022.* Exact range not indicated in original study.
[25] Claims Conference, *New Survey by Claims Conference Finds Significant Lack of Holocaust Knowledge*
[26] Henry Maitles, *"Why are we learning this": Does Studying the Holocaust Encourage Better Citizenship Values?*

diatribe. This approach is evident through the far-rights adoption of memes, and social media in general, in their recruitment process. This evolution of white supremacy is referred to by some on the far-right as "boots to suits" and is aimed at legitimizing white supremacy in the mainstream media by presenting its members as respectable college educated Americans, rather than the racist skinheads one typically imagines.[27] This transformation is discussed at length by Cynthia Miller-Idriss in her 2020 publication *Hate in the Homeland: The New Global Far Right*, in which Millier-Idriss posits the "mainstreaming" of far-right politics and conspiracy theories and the "transformations in far-right aesthetics and communication styles, particularly for [the] youth" as intrinsic to the resurgence and broad dissemination of far-right extremism in America.[28]

To this point, the terms far-right, extremist, white supremacy/supremacist, and neo-Nazi have been used interchangeably to describe right-wing extremist who promote antisemitism and racial hatred in general. However, the multitude of groups/ideologies which are classified as far-right have various beliefs that overlap and diverge in crucial ways. Those overlaps are key to this study – which aims to highlight the anti-Jewish foundation that links adherents of various modern far-right ideologies – and therefore, an analysis of the spaces and avenues in which these far-right agents operate and recruit new members is invaluable. By outlining the theology and scope of Anglo-Israelism and its proponents in the twentieth century, this study aims to underscore the anti-Jewish rhetoric that links twenty-first century adherents of various far-right organizations and ideologies in America. These findings will then be compared to the ideologies present on both mainstream and far-right social media sites and online platforms. While the goal of this study is not to prove that all extremist organizations in the U.S. adhere to antisemitic

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[27] Yara Bayoumy and Kathy Gilsinan, *A Reformed White Nationalist Says*
[28] Cynthia Miller-Idriss, *Hate in the Homeland,* 27

principles in their daily life, it does aim to suggest that anti-Jewish conspiracies and myths serve

as a foundational aspect to extremist world views.

Chapter One: The Roots of Hate

Anti-Judaism as a term is typically associated with Medieval Christian animosity and violence toward Jews based on theological differences. Those unfamiliar with the history of anti-Judaism may erroneously categorize it as a symptom of Nazi-era eugenics. However, the history of Jewish hatred predates Nazi Germany by more than two thousand years. Culminating in violent crusades, forced baptisms, expulsions and pogroms across the medieval Western world, anti-Judaism laid the foundations for modern antisemitism. In his *Anti-Judaism: A Western Tradition*, David Nirenberg claims the earliest forms of anti-Jewish animosity can be traced back to ancient Egypt. Nirenberg is careful to make clear that he is not suggesting a clear line of thought carried on throughout history.

Centered around a series of questions relating to how the gentile world viewed and constructed forms of Judaism from ancient to modern times – even in areas with little to no Jewish presence – Nirenberg's study posits anti-Judaism as the foundation to Western identity and the Western thought process. According to Nirenberg, "anti-Judaism should not be understood as some archaic or irrational closet in the vast edifices of Western thought (but) rather one of the basic tools with which that edifice was constructed."[29] By categorizing culturally taboo activities – such as money lending and trading in the Medieval period – as singularly Jewish practices, Western civilization created a sense of self that was defined by what it was not, regardless of what it may have actually been. For the purpose of this study, Nirenberg's theory of anti-Judaism as a mode of relating to one's immediate environment is fitting. Even in areas where there was little to no Jewish presence, medieval Christians felt the

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[29] David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism,* 6

need to invoke anti-Jewish sentiments in order to make sense of the world around them, and their

position in that world. Similar to modern invocations of anti-Jewish diatribe which posit the

COVID-19 pandemic as a "plandemic" orchestrated by "global elites" – Christians of the

Medieval period sought what they viewed as rational answers to the world around them, and in

doing so, painted a violently negative picture of Judaism as a whole.[30]

Robert Chazan's *From Anti-Judaism to Anti-Semitism: Ancient and Medieval*

Constructions of Jewish History reads well against Nirenberg's *Anti-Judaism* in that it examines

the evolution of Christian depictions of Jewish past, present, and future in order to gain a better

understanding of Christian invocations of anti-Jewish hate as a means of self-identification.

Starting with the gospels and working his way up to Martin Luther's inevitable break from the

Catholic Church, Chazan focuses his discussion on various intellectual leaders throughout the

centuries, and their uniquely ambiguous perceptions of Jewish past, present, and future. In doing

so, Chazan is able to uncover lines of similarities between influential intellectuals such as

Nicholas Donin, Peter the Venerable, Friar Raymond Martin, and Martin Luther, whose negative

perception of the contemporary Jews of their lifetimes led to their ultimately negative portrayals

of Jewish past and future. Similar to Nirenberg, Chazan is quick to counter that while lines of

similarity can be uncovered, the evolution is by no means a "simple movement towards

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[30] The term "plandemic" originates from a 2020 conspiracy film which was aimed at spreading misinformation regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the New York Times, the twenty-six minute film had over eight million views within the first week it was posted. The video was circulated amongst hardcore conspiracy theorist and anti-vax supporters at first, but saw the largest growth in popularity following its introduction to the Qanon movement. The video has sense inspired countless conspiracy theories regarding COVID-19 and its relation to a Jewish orchestrated global takeover, often referred to as the "New World Order" or "Great Reset." While not all those who adhere to this world view see the "global elite" as Jewish, this is often the metaphor used by extremist in an attempt to validate their anti-Jewish world views. Sheera Frenkel, Ben Decker, and Davey Alba, *How the 'Plandemic' Movie and its Falsehoods Spread*. For more on the origin, scope, and impact of the film, see: Shanin Nazar and Toine Pieters, *Plandemic Revisited*

enhanced negativity…(culminating) in the Holocaust" but rather, a symptom of "changing contexts."[31]

So, what is anti-Judaism, and how has it manifested over the past two thousand years? When looking to define anti-Judaism, in the traditional sense, scholars often point to five overarching themes of anti-Jewish hate – though there are more to be sure. Ritual murder, deicide, greed, disloyalty, and power are listed as "Old Myths in a New Era" by the ADL in their recent publication of *Antisemitism Uncovered* which aims to underscore the connection between medieval Christian conceptions of Jews and modern antisemitism/conspiracy theories.[32] As Chazan explains in his 1997 publication of *Medieval Stereotypes and Modern Antisemitism*, and in the prologue of *From Anti-Judaism to anti- Semitism*, scholars of Jewish history generally agree that the middle ages, or the later half of the eleventh century to be more specific, was the start of a form of "destructive stereotypes that projected the Jews as malevolent toward their Christian neighbors, as bent on harming these neighbors, and as having the power to inflict serious damage on the Christian societies that hosted them."[33] The Christian intellectuals of Medieval Europe – influenced by the popular anti-Jewish rhetoric of the general populace – manipulated the "balanced" depiction of Jews in early Christian writings into vehemently negative portrayals that influenced modern anti-Jewish strains of thought.

Beginning in chronological order, Jewish accusations of deicide were one of the first forms of Christian animosity towards Jews and originate within the Christian Gospels. These early writings, while clearly anti-Jewish, also contained overtly positive aspects of Judaism as well, especially regarding the ancient Israelites. This is due, in part, to the fact that Christianity

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[31] Robert Chazan, *From Anti-Judaism*
[32] Anti-Defamation League (ADL), *Antisemitism Uncovered: A Guide*
[33] Chazan, From *Anti-Judaism*, x

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shares an origin story with Judaism. During the first century of the common era, Christianity had yet to become the dominate religion in any area, and as such, often used Judaism as a means of validating their "new" religion. However, as Christians had to maintain the superiority of Christianity over Judaism, Christians often sought to ground Christianity in Judaism, while at the same time, differentiate themselves from the contemporary Jews of their lifetimes. The Gospel of Mark follows this balanced depiction of positive and negative aspects of Judaism. It is thought to be the oldest of the Gospel narratives, and is considered to be the templet for the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John. While Mark paints the Jews in a negative light by portraying them as the main enemy, Matthew intensified this beyond both Mark and Luke by having the Jews accept full responsibility and guilt for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. A guilt, which as the Jews purportedly stated, was generational – leaving the Jews of Matthew's time equally responsible their ancestors actions. However, Matthew's view of the Jewish past is less negative than that of Luke or Mark, as Jewish culpability was posited as divinely predicted, and necessary.[34] Mark posits the Jewish leaders as the villains, leaving the remaining masses of Jews to be seen as apologetic, while Luke barely mentions a Jewish presence at the crucifixion at all.

Chazan posits these differing views on the underlying differences in the environments in which they were composed. Mark, written sometime in the decade after 60CE, saw contemporary Jews as the main enemy, while Matthew, written by a Jewish-Christian around 80CE, sought to ground Jesus in the historical narrative of Jerusalem, and in doing so, was forced to paint a more positive perspective of the Jewish past. Luke, on the other hand, was writing during Paul's proselytizing efforts, and therefore, wrote a gospel sympathetic to the Jewish role in the crucifixion.

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[34] Chazan, *From anti-Judaism,* 17

The various reasoning for positive/negative portrayals are less important than what they actually signal, an uncertain and easily manipulated perception of the Jews in early Christianity. The accessibility, popularity, and relative simplicity of the gospels allowed for the majority of medieval Christian society to have a basic understanding of their principles, as well as their accusations. So much so, that in 1095 when Pope Urban II called for an all-out attack on Muslim occupied holy sites in Jerusalem, bands of crusaders made up of ordinary men, women, and children, eager to head the popes call to action, instead turned their animosity toward their imagined "enemies" at home.[35] Though Pope Urban II, and the majority of the Catholic Church adhered to the Augustinian Doctrine regarding the treatment of Jews, the complexities and nuances of Church doctrine was often lost on the average citizen.[36] As Chazan, Nirenberg, Leonard B. Glick, and Kenneth R. Stow all suggest, the popularity of the Gospels amongst an illiterate populace led to the acceptance of anti-Jewish hate during the Medieval period. This popularity influenced several Christian intellectuals to support an anti-Jewish stance by constructing their own forms of Jewish history that lent validation to the accusations. At the

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[35] As Kenneth R. Stow suggests in his 1992 publication of *Alienated Minority: The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe*, not all crusaders targeted the Jews in the crusades of 1096. Rather, it was bands of crusaders made up of ordinary Christian lay people, mainly from the Rhineland, who targeted Jewish populations. The groups led by members of high society, and/or professional soldiers, remained dedicated to Pope Urban II's original call to action. Stow credits this to the widely accepted accusation of deicide, stating "were not the Jews, moreover, deserving of punishment for murdering Christ?" Kenneth Stow. *Alienated Minority*, 107.

[36] The Gospels, on the surface, paint a negative picture of Jewish responsibility for the murder of Jesus Christ. As such, Jews were routinely blamed for deicide throughout the centuries leading up to the medieval period. However, the "Augustinian synthesis" as scholars often refer to it, suppressed any would be Church sanctioned anti-Jewish violence. The Augustinian synthesis, established by St. Augustine in the fifth century, states Christians should not take up arms against the Jews, as the Jews "bare witness" to the truth of Christianity – i.e. their position in life shows that Christians/Christianity was the victor/Gods chosen people. This refers to "replacement theory" in which gods original "covenant of the flesh" with the Israelites was replaced by the "covenant of the faith" with the gentiles. By being doomed to wander the world, Jews were not only a statement to the Christian Truth, but also, provided biblical validation as to the ancient roots of Christianity. Jews may have been blind to the truth, but they were not to be harmed and would eventually – according to Augustine – see the error in their ways and convert to Christianity. As such, the Jews were not to be harmed, and Augustine supported this position with scripture, Psalm 59 to be specific. Psalm 59 states " Slay them not, lest at any time they forget your law; scatter them in your might." Chazan, *From Anti-Judaism*, 3-23.

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same time, however, Church figures and intellectuals such as Bernard of Clairvaux worked to ensure Christian adherence to the Augustinian stance in the succeeding crusades.[37]

The accusations of greediness, disloyalty, and power all share a basic foundation – Jewish exclusion from Christian society. Medieval Europe was a feudalistic society, in which owning land and adhering to Christian principles went hand in hand with success. However, Jews were excluded from this basic privilege. As a nomadic people from the time of the Babylonian captivity, the Jews were scattered across the Medieval world. Regardless of their geographical location, however, Jews placed importance on the ability to read and write in Hebrew. This skill set them apart from their illiterate Christian counterparts, opening the door to a new form of economic advancement – commerce. A Jew living in Spain, a Spanish speaking country, could communicate with Jews living in Russia, or Italy, without any knowledge of the vernacular. These international ties allowed Jews to offer luxury and foreign goods that their Christian counterparts had no hopes of attaining. It also placed Jews in close ties with the Christian elite/nobility as they were often the only ones able to afford such products. However, this skill also posited Jews as a single entity; loyal to their religious community over that of the country/town in which they were living, giving way to accusations of disloyalty. But, as the eleventh century came to a close, Christian merchants were beginning to push Jews out of the trading business. As a result, Jewish merchants had no choice but to transfer to a far more damning venture – moneylending.[38]

Offering protections and the promise of economic prosperity, the nobility of Medieval Europe, looking to advance their region by inviting "capable and productive urban settlers"

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[37] See Chazan, *From Anti-Judaism,* 113, 116-120, 122-23, 133, 181, 188, 242-43. Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism,* 132, 202, 240, 539. Leonard B. Glick, *Abraham's Heirs,* 83, 113, 143, 121-23. Stow *Alienated Minority,* 105, 113-114, 211. E.M. Rose, *The Murder of William of Norwich,* 47-48, 57-58, 73-74, 107, 171, 214, 215
[38] Glick, *Abrahams Heirs*, 77

actively sought out the resettlement of Jews in their area. [39] This was the case in the beginning of

the 12th century when Jews began moving in mass to the newly developed Northern regions of

Europe with hopes of economic opportunity and advancement.[40] However, not all Christians

were as accepting of their new Jewish neighbors, which left many Jewish communities reliant on

church officials and local nobility in their area for protection.[41] This protection often came at a

high price, and required the Jews living in urban Christian areas to pay exorbitant fees on top of

the higher taxes they already faced.[42] As Glick states, Christians at the end of the eleventh

century had begun to come to terms with the idea of money as a necessary aspect of life, rather

than "feces, vomit, garbage [or]…the devil's own substance" as it had been described in previous

centuries.[43] At the same time, advancements in agriculture and infrastructure allowed for more

Christians to partake in trade and commerce than ever before. As more and more Christians

began to take up the trade, the Jewish minority in the region was left with little to no choice other

than funding Christian ventures and the lavish lifestyles of the Western elites – as Christians

often preferred to do business with other Christians whenever they had the opportunity to.

In the twelfth century, the Catholic Church began aligning Jews with usury, and sin –

regardless of the Christian presence in the venture. As previously mentioned, the Jews often held

closer ties with the Christian elite and nobility than with the ordinary citizenry, and this was

exacerbated by the Jews new role as creditor to the region. As Glick states, while "a few

Christians loaned money; almost all Jews did so."[44] This led to the concept of moneylending as a

whole to be identified with Judaism, and in turn, Jews became synonymous with usury and

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[39] Chazan, *From Anti-Judaism*, 110
[40] Ibid, 110
[41] Ibid, 114
[42] Ibid, 111
[43] Glick, *Abrahams Heirs,* 83
[44] Ibid

greed. When the nobility – which also charged Jews for protection – could not afford to pay off the interest they had accrued, the local Jews were in no position to demand they do so. In these instances, Jews were often forced to increase interest on other outstanding loans in order to make up the difference. As Christians across the Western world began to view Jews as their unapologetic creditors and murders of their messiah, a new and more deadly phenomenon began to take shape across Europe.

The accusations of ritual murder states that Jews use the blood of Christians – typically Christian children to portray Christian innocence – in their Passover rituals. Believed to have originated with the story of William of Norwich, accusations of ritual murder began to spring up across the Western world during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and led the average Christian to view the Jews as a dangerously violent force bent on doing them harm. However, as with the other anti-Jewish claims that have been discussed thus far, the claims of ritual murder were nothing more than a medieval Christian fabrication popularized by fear and ignorance. As E.M. Rose shows in *The Murder of William of Norwich: The Origins of the Blood Libel in Medieval Europe*, the story of William of Norwich was just that, a story. Intending to make Norwich a site of pilgrimage, Thomas of Monmouth – a Benedictine monk living in the area – authored a seven-part series on the kidnapping, torture, and murder of a young boy at the hands of the local Jewish population.[45] According to Thomas, the Jews had tortured the young Christian boy by recreating the death of Jesus, and therefore, the child was deserving of sainthood, while the Jews were deserving of death. Though the tale initially gained little traction and died out rather quickly, "the idea that Jews engaged in ritual murder became firmly rooted in the European imagination."[46]

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[45] Rose, *The murder of William of Norwich*
[46] Ibid, 2.

The claims of a Jewish affinity for ritual murder spread rapidly across Europe during the second half of the twelfth century as Christian fears of transubstantiation began to arise. As scholars like Glick show, the correlation was not a coincidence. Transubstantiation, canonized by the Lateran Council of 1215, is the Christian belief of a "miraculous transformation" that occurs during mass, in which bread (communion wafer) and wine are transformed into the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ.[47] As reports of curious Christians stealing communion wafers began to arise, so too did the stories of Jewish desecration of those same wafers. The accusation of Jewish desecration of the Host through the stabbing/torture of the communion wafer not only validated the Catholic Church's claims on the process of transubstantiation, it also reinforced the narrative of Jewish hostility towards Christians. A win-win for Church officials.

A story originating in Paris in 1290 in which a Jew was said to have stolen a communion wafer and tortured it, only to then realize the validity of the Catholic Church's claims – and of Christianity in general – provides a perfect example of the full circle picture of anti-Judaism in the Medieval period. Beginning with claims of deicide, Medieval Christians painted a picture of Jews that saw them as agents of the devil who were actively working to undermine the Christian truth. From kidnapping and murdering small children, to poisoning entire cities, Jews and Judaism in general became the scapegoats for any and all of Christendom's struggles.[48]

Following the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Christian animosity towards Jews only increased. From the Spanish Inquisitions and expulsions in the fifteenth century, to William Shakespeare's "Jewish Question" in *The Merchant of Venice* in during the sixteenth century,

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[47] Glick, *Abrahams Heirs,* 262-263

[48] Following the Black Death in the fourteenth century, Christians across Europe blamed Jewish populations for poisoning well water leading to mass casualties. While some Christians at the time pointed to the fact that Jews had suffered equally during the plague, popular animosity towards the Jews suppressed would be rationality. For more on the Christian accusations see: Glick, *Abraham's Heirs,* 264-270. Samuel K. Cohn *The Black Death and the Burning of Jews.* For more on Jewish responses to the accusations see: Susan L. Einbinder, *After the Black Death*

Jews became synonymous with the greatest sins of Christianity.[49] With calls of *Judaizer*

Christians solidified a mode of thinking that categorized culturally taboo activities as inherently

Jewish, regardless of the prevalence of Christian participation in said activities. Even in areas

with little to no Jewish presence – such as William Shakespeare's London – Christians relied on

their own constructions of Judaism in order to delineate right from wrong, or rather Christian

from Jewish. While the Catholic Church was responsible for the majority of the animosity

directed at the Jews, they were also one of their largest protectors – as the Church relied on St.

Augustine's approach to the Jews. However, this protection was eradicated in the sixteenth

century when Martin Luther broke from the traditional Augustinian synthesis that had allowed

Jews the basic right of existence.

Martin Luther sought to strip Christianity of its Jewish roots by positing all of Hebrew

scripture not as the word of God, but rather, the word of Jesus Christ himself. After his break

from the Roman Catholic Church, Luther no longer had to uphold the laws of Psalms 59, nor was

he limited by Augustinian's doctrine pertaining to fair treatment of the Jews. Born in 1483, and

considered the "prophet of the German nation," Luther sought a "spiritual transformation" and

"served as the foundation" for modern Protestant and Evangelical sects.[50] As Nirenberg states,

Luther's writings were cited often by scholars in Nazi Germany, and in modern times on "the

homepages of German Neo-Nazi websites."[51] Initially, Luther's writings seem empathetic

toward the Jews, placing the blame for their current position on the limited freedoms bestowed

upon them by the church. If this is what Luther truly believed, no one knows. His writings

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[49] Shakespeare's "Jewish Question" refers to the question of "who is the merchant, and who is the Jew?" A question that was intended to underscore the ways in which Christians sin or "Judaize" by participating in traditionally Jewish endeavors like commerce and moneylending. For more on the Anti-Jewish accusations of Shakespeare see: James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews*

[50] Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism,* 246-249.

[51] Ibid, 267

progress over time, culminating in an essay titled "*On the Jews and Their* Lies" which called for the burning of synagogues, Jewish scriptures and residences, and advocated for the confinement of Jews "under one rooftop or stall."[52]

By the end of his life, Martin Luther adamantly argued for conversion or expulsion of Jews across the Western world. The evolution of Luther's writings left many questioning whether his original stance on the Jews was simply a tool used to levy criticism at the Catholic Church. Chazan posits that Luther simply came to believe the Jews could not be converted, whereas he had originally believed their blindness was due, in part, to the corruption of the Catholic Church and Rabbinical leaders. Nirenberg strays from Chazan's declaration by stating that the change in Luther's writings were not due to his "collision with living Jews in the 'real' world" but rather, the conflicts inherent in Luther's approach to removing Judaism from the Hebrew scriptures. These conflicts were also intensified by unfounded rumors of Jewish proselytization efforts in Eastern Europe.[53] Whatever the reasoning behind Luther's change in tone, his writings at the end of his life eradicated the need for Judaism in the Christian narrative, and stripped the Jews of whatever protections Augustine had bestowed upon them. Luther's writings provide an example of how an individual can break from the Catholic church, and yet still harbor popular anti-Jewish sentiments which originated through Catholic hermeneutics.

As most of the scholars discussed thus far have hinted at, or even flat out suggested, the popular anti-Jewish tropes and myths that originated in the early medieval period, became solidified in Christian folklore to be exploited in the future. Similar to Martin Luther, intellectuals writing during the enlightenment (the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) sought to break from the constraints of the Church. However, unlike Martin Luther, these intellectuals

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[52] Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism,* 262
[53] Ibid, 256

sought a rationalist, rather than theological conclusion for what they saw as the subhuman qualities of the Jews. However, rather than starting from a place of Jewish innocence, intellectuals and theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries relied on popular Christian conceptions of Judaism, and at the same time rejected the theological validation of these claims. In other words, Jews were not scattered across the world as punishment by God, but rather, due to their lack of "qualities necessary for sustaining a state."[54] As Jacob Katz explains in *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism 1700-1933*, the rationalist movement – which lasted from 1680-1715 – further stripped the Jews of any theologically based protection by rejecting Christianity as a whole. Rationalist sought "common sense" answers to the world's problems as advancements in "technology, economics, society, and politics" drove many in society to question the conclusions of the Church.[55] However, these inexperienced "historians" often produced biased results as their "common sense" approach was often infused with the popular Christian animosity towards Jews.

Returning to the definitions of anti-Judaism posited by David Nirenberg and Robert Chazan, the idea of anti-Judaism as a means of relating to, and making sense of, one's evolving environment, rather than as a continuous strain of thought becomes evident. The previously mentioned Bernard of Clairvaux, writing during the twelfth century, feared Christians "Jewing worse than Jews do" by partaking in moneylending, but actively sought protections for actual Jews. By categorizing moneylending as a singularly Jewish practice, that in turn "Judaizes" any Christian who partakes in the activity, Bernard was equating what he saw as the most atrocious element of contemporary society with the Jewish religion. Similarly, Voltaire – writing during the later half of the eighteenth century – sought to implement a separation of Church and State

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[54] Jacob Katz, From *Prejudice to Destructio*n, 40.
[55] Ibid, 24

and saw the Catholic church as public enemy number one.[56] Though Voltaire sought to dismantle the foundations of Christianity, he created an image of an archaic and morally deficient Jew by targeting the biblical narratives. Rather than begin from a position of Jewish innocence, Voltaire attempted to provide a rational explanation for what he saw as faults in the character of contemporary Jews. In other words, whether he realized it or not, Voltaire – along with the majority of the Enlightenment writers – was influenced by traditional Christian views of Jews and Judaism that had emerged from the Medieval period.[57] future opponents of Judaism, lacking a theological backing for their accusations, were forced to fabricate new validations for their bigotry as debates over the naturalization and integration of Jews began to unfold. According to Katz, these arguments against Jewish citizenship formed the basis of modern antisemitism by presenting anti-Jewish hate as a scientifically sound venture against a subhuman race.[58]

As I hope this brief and far from exhaustive explanation has shown, anti-Judaism is not simply a characteristic of ancient Christian attitudes towards Jews and Judaism. Rather, anti-Judaism is a means of explanation, discovery, and identification. It does not rely on the presence of Jews or Christians to be invoked. Anti-Judaism – as a Western characteristic – aims to make sense of the positive and negative aspects of life. Anti-Judaism provides those who invoke it with a sense of historical– and at times biblical – validation for their hate. For Saint Augustine, anti-Judaism provided a validation for the truth of Christianity. Anti-Judaism allowed Bernard of Clairvaux to reassign blame for the heretical actions of contemporary Christians. Anti-Judaism gave Martin Luther the ability to break from the Catholic church and provided Voltaire with the

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[56] Ibid, 34
[57] Ibid, 55
[58] To maintain clarity, the intricacies and popular debates of the periods discussed have been omitted. For a more detailed explanation of the evolution of anti-Judaism from the nineteenth century on see: Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction*. George Mosse, *Towards the Final Solution: A History of European Racism*. James Carol, *Constantine's Sword: The Church and the Jews: A History*. Moshe Zimmermann, Wilhelm *Marr: The Patriarch of Anti-Semitism*. And Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*

tools necessary to condemn Christianity as a whole. Although each of these theologians had different goals, they chose to exploit the popular animosity towards Jews to achieve them. In all, anti-Judaism created a theological and ideological foundation for creating a scapegoat on which to place any and all of the Western world's problems. As Chazan and Nirenberg suggest, anti-Judaism is not a singular strain of thought that has been carried down throughout generations – it is the way in which Western society relates to, and makes sense of, its evolving environment. As such, it the opinion of this study – as well as the opinions of the majority of the scholars discussed thus far – that anti-Judaism, rather than antisemitism, is a more suitable term for the forms of anti-Jewish hate that will be discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter Two: Branches of Hate

Anglo-Israelism stems from a 19th century U.K. based religious movement known as British-Israelism. The movement gained popularity during the Great Depression in America, with around nine extant organizations to date.[59] The basic tenets of Anglo-Israelism were developed by various influential preachers and orators throughout the first half of the twentieth century and rely on a literal interpretation of biblical texts. The movements foundational belief holds that Americans – or Anglo-Saxons to be more specific – are the true descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes. However, as the movement expanded, theories relating to the origins of contemporary Jews began to arise. Wesley Swift – a Christian Identity preacher who attempted to "revive" the Second Klan in 1946 – developed one of the most widely circulated theories in Christian Identity, the seedliner theory.[60] This theory holds that Jews are not human, but rather the offspring of Eve and Satan – who took the form of the serpent in the Adam and Eve narrative. According to Swift, the serpent in the Garden of Eden was Satan in a humanoid form, who seduced Eve – leading to the birth of Cain and in his view, Jews. A second popular Christian Identity theory holds that Jews and "all other races" were created from the "mud" of the earth prior to the fashioning of the Adamic people out of "clay."[61] Either interpretation supports the notion that the Jews are actively working towards the annihilation of the white race through intermarriage and mass immigration – another foundational tenet of Anglo-Israelism.

Followers of Anglo-Israelism are strictly millenarian, but do not believe in a post-tribulation rapture as their apocalyptic world view paints the tribulation period as a racial holy war between Anglo-Saxon protestants and all other races. This is one of the only factors that sets

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[59] Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), *Hate Map*
[60] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 183-185
[61] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 150-154

them apart from other fundamentalist or Evangelicals who believe they will avoid the rapture by being "saved" during the tribulation.[62] This anticipation of a "racial holy war" also explains the violent outlook that many adherents hold toward traditional forms of government – which they expect to fall during the Tribulation. Some Anglo-Israelites, similar to Zionist, believe they have the ability to speed up the Messiah's return by implementing the environment depicted in the biblical narratives. For Anglo-Israelites, the rapture and the second coming of the messiah will be enacted by a surge of violence that topples civilized society. As such, some adherents attempt to accelerate this process by committing violent crimes against both society and government institutions. Additionally, the racialization of the rapture and the imagery of battle/war that is often invoked when discussing the tribulation period has led many modern adherents to adopt a "hermetic" lifestyle, often motivating them to hoard large quantities of food, ammunition, and weapons in off grid locations.

As mentioned, the movement gained popularity throughout the 1930s-1940s, however, it made its way to the United States in the early 1870s. This occurred when Joseph Wild began preaching on British-Israelism, a topic first introduced to him by John Wilson's *Lectures on Our Israelitish Origin*.[63] This strain of British-Israelism was anti-Jewish in that it claimed the British, rather than the Jews, were the true heirs of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. However, proponents of British-Israelism often adhered to the Augustinian synthesis in regard to their views on contemporary Jews. British-Israelites believed Jews served a role in "All-Israel" and would eventually be converted to see the truth of Christianity. This was the view of early proponents of

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[62] For more on the origins and growth of Fundamentalism/Evangelicalism and its impact on American society see: Matthew Avery Sutton *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism*. Ernest Sandeen *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British & American Millenarianism 1800-1930*. And George Marsden *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism*.
[63] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 7

the movement in America such Edward Hine, who suggested contemporary Jews were "never lost," but instead served as a "reminder of the Jewish rejection of Jesus' Messiahship."[64] In the 1920s British-Israelism was adopted by several members of the previously mentioned Second Klan, who helped to morph the American strain of British-Israelism into the violently anti-Jewish *Christian Identity* movement. These individuals included influential orators such as Reuban Sawyer and Howard Rand. While members such as Wesley Swift and William J. Cameron – writer for the *Dearborn Independent* and close friend to Henry Ford – went on to demonize the Jews through the "synthesis of religion and occult ideals."[65]

The impact of the Second Klan on Christian Identity theology is seen explicitly in the writings of Reuban H. Sawyer, who was a member of the Oregon chapter of the Ku Klux Klan during the 1920s, and was also an adherent of British-Israelism. Sawyers views regarding the Jews prior to 1921 were reflective of Edward Hines Augustinian outlook but slowly evolved as his involvement with the Second Klan began to increase. Following 1921, Sawyer's anti-Jewish hate was on full display. Aligning contemporary with Jews with "Bolshevists," accusing them of controlling Christians through "finance or commerce," and even referencing William Shakespeare's "Shylocks," Sawyer condemned the entirety of America's Jewish population.[66] Barkun posits Sawyer as a "prefiguration" of the merger of conservative politics and religion.

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[64] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 11

[65] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 183-85. The *Dearborn Independent* was a newspaper, owned by Henry Ford, which produced weekly articles aimed at the degradation of the Jewish population in American and is also responsible for reintroducing the highly anti-Jewish *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to American society. For more on the Dearborn Independent see: Barkun *Religion and the Racist Right*, 33-37. For more on Henry Ford and his promotion of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion see: Neil Baldwin, Henry Ford and The Jews. For more on the impact of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion on American society see: Barkun, *A culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America*, 4-5, 49-55, 130, 145-57. McGirr *The War on Alcohol,* 29, 137. Gordon, *The Second Coming,* 11, 218. Binjamin W. Segel and Richard S. Levy, *A Lie and a Libel: The History of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

[66] *Shylock* refers to the Jewish character in William Shakespeare's previously mentioned play "The Merchant of Venice." Barkun, *Religion*, 25

However, Barkun highlights the contributions of Howard Rand as truly monumental to Anglo-Israelism's evolution. According to Barkun, Rand's leadership catapulted British-Israelism from the fringes of society in the early 20th century to a mainstream movement just a few decades later.[67] As Barkun suggests, Sawyer was focused on promoting the Klan and British-Israelism separately. It was Howard Rand – a second generation British-Israelite – who saw the potential for the promotion of both organizations as a singular entity. For Rand, British-Israelism provided the second Klan with both the biblical and historical validation necessary to condemn anyone who did not fit the white protestant narrative.

With the help of Rand, British-Israelism – now dubbed Anglo-Israelism by the *Christian Identity* movement –went on to gain support and influence throughout the Great Depression. Anglo-Israelism thrived in the U.S. until its collapse in the late 1990s following a string of violent attacks which were linked to the organization. This includes the deadliest domestic terrorist attack in U.S. history – the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing by Timothy McVeigh. The attack claimed the lives of over 168 Oklahomans, including 19 children, and inspired a series of violent pipe bomb attacks orchestrated by a resident of the *Christian Identity* compound located in Elohim City, Oklahoma. McVeigh had attempted to contact this compound prior to his attack on the Alfred P. Murrah Building, although his motivations for doing so remain up for speculation.[68] Many may be surprised to hear that McVeigh was involved with a Christian

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[67] As David M. Wrobel points out in his *America's West: A History 1890-1950*, the "clear divide" between conservative republicans and liberal democrats that is seen today had not yet emerged in the 1920s. However, as Linda Gordon suggests in *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s and the American Political Tradition,* the Second Klan of the 1920s supported big business and small government, aligning itself with the conservative right. As Lisa McGirr's *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State* makes clear, the Second Klan was often allowed to terrorize minority populations under the guise of prohibition enforcement. This led to distinctive voting blocs that were solidified in the 1928 U.S. presidential election, which was centered around the prohibition debate.

[68] Michael Barkun and the Middlebury Institute both credit the pending execution of Richard Wayne Snell as the reasoning behind McVeighs attempts to contact the *Identity* compound. Additionally, both point to the date of McVeighs attack on the Alfred P. Murrah building as an additional indicator of his connections with *Christian*

extremist group, given that the reasoning behind the attack is almost always attributed to anti-government sentiments following the ATF shooting in Waco Texas. However, this highlights perhaps one of the most dangerous and potentially attractive aspects of Anglo-Israelism – their preference for militancy.[69]

Prior to the Great Depression, the previously mentioned Second Klan held major influence over American politics, ideology, and theology, while Anglo-Israelism remained on the outskirts of society. Setting the stage for a society reminiscent of the environment in which anti-Judaism emerged, the Second Klan created an image of white protestant America that was crucial to the success of the *Christian Identity* movement. [70] Fueled by existing nativist sentiments, American citizens in the early 1920s sat back and watched as the Second Klan violently assaulted and harassed minority immigrant populations, all in the name of halting the "moral decay" of the nation.[71] However, the Klan did not stop there. With an end goal of ensuring a white protestant nation for years to come, infiltrating the existing American political and religious frameworks was the Klan's top priority. The Klan was successful in this venture,

Identity. Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 268. CTEC Staff, *Christian Identity's New Role on the Extreme Right*

[69] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, 268-271

[70] As David M. Wrobel points out, in his *America's West: A History 1890-1950* the "clear divide" between Republicans and Democrats that is seen today, had not yet been established at the beginning of the 1920s. The Klan along with threatened Evangelicals opened the doors to the gaping divide between conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats as they supported the notion of big business and small government. However, as Lisa McGirr suggested in *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*, the intense violence and discrimination that minorities and immigrants of all backgrounds – Jews, Catholics, Latinos, Asians, and African Americans – were exposed to during the prohibition era, created a voting bloc of individuals eager to use the federal government to implement a better world for themselves. As McGirr states, minorities began to see the federal government as a tool capable of granting them protection following the massive efforts of the U.S. government to suppress the sale and consumption of alcohol. The 1928 U.S. Presidential election solidified these republican and democratic voting blocs by centering the election around prohibition. McGirr, *War on Alcohol,* xxii, 158

[71] Ibid, 133. For more on the rise of temperance organizations and other "morality crusades" as well as their impact on minority populations see: Pliley, Kramm, and Fischer-Tine, *Global Anti-Vice Activism, 1890-1950: Fighting Drinks, Drugs, and "Immortality."*

amassing several politicians and religious leaders through bribery, threats, and societal pressure.[72]

The Klan also "encouraged" Protestant ministers across the U.S. to promote Klan ideology, and even financially supported twenty-six traveling ministers as part of their "Klokards" or "traveling lectures."[73] However, as the violent tactics and moral hypocrisy of the Second Klan became increasingly impossible to ignore, the organization lost the strong hold it once had on the nation. But the Klan's aspirations for a predominantly white protestant America left lasting scars on American society and its immigration policies, and also set a precedent for members of both the left and the right, who came to see the federal government as a tool both capable of eliminating opposition and implementing desired change.[74]

But what led seemingly average Americans to not only support but *join* a violent and racist organization? Lisa McGirr and Linda Gordon – two scholars of American History – in their recent works on the pivotal 1920s both point to preexisting nativism/racism, prohibition enforcement, and an overwhelming support of Klan ideology amongst American citizens. McGirr suggests that individuals did not join the Klan "simply because of its character as a social and civil organization."[75] Stating instead, that the majority of Americans joined/supported the Klan as a means of protecting the white protestant majority. Gordon offers a more hopeful suggestion by suggesting that grandiose Klan festivals, the newly threatened position of Christian Evangelicals, the popularity of fraternal organizations, and the Klan's populist rhetoric, were all major factors that led to the Klan's overwhelming success in the early 1920s. Gordon

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[72] Gordon, *Second Coming,* 88.

[73] Ministers who were struggling financially or worked in an area heavily populated by Klan supporters/members were often pressured into accepting the Klan's offer of monetary donations as payment for public support of Klan ideologies and racist rhetoric. Gordon, *Second Coming*. 89, 90

[74] McGirr, *War on Alcohol*, xxii, 133-138.

[75] Ibid, 136

also places a great deal of importance on the Klan's oratorical skills and flamboyant pageantry, which she categorizes as typical to European Fascism.[76] Where the Klan strays from these preconceived formulations of fascism can be seen in their commitment to democracy and their rampant anti-intellectualism stemming from their adherence to religion.[77]

This "religious deviation" from European Fascism, according to Gordon, ultimately led to the Second Klan's downfall as much of their leadership was exposed for their immoral activities behind closed doors.[78] However, the Klan created a foundation for Anglo-Israelism to thrive on, and as Gordon suggests, Klan ideologies did not simply die out as membership waned. As Gordon states, "(t)he Klan's mobilization of evangelical ministers foreshadowed – and probably helped generate – the entry of Christian Right preachers into conservative politics fifty years later."[79] While Gordon ends with an examination of the remaining influential components which helped create the 1920s Klan, she posits that nativism, Christian Evangelicalism, and right-wing populist organizations still exist today, although they "no longer have a single organization to unite them."[80] However, this study would suggest that Anglo-Israelism has become this uniting agent. By creating a foundation of conspiracy and distrust of government institutions – that is lent historical validation based on a racialized interpretation of biblical narratives – Anglo-Israelism provides disenfranchised hate groups with the tools necessary for mobilization. Gordon only mentions Anglo-Israelism briefly throughout the text – even referring to it as a belief system that "appeared to soften" the views of notorious Klan leaders towards then

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[76] Gordon, *Second Coming*, 5, 200
[77] Ibid, 204
[78] Ibid, 202
[79] Ibid, 90
[80] Ibid, 198

end of the 1920s, while McGirr fails to mention Anglo-Israelism or the *Christian Identity*

movement at all.

According to Gordon, the Second Klan of the 1920s originally held to traditional

antisemitic views, but these views were then altered sometime toward the end of the 1920s with

the Klan's introduction to British-Israelism. This ideology allowed for Klan members to

differentiate between the "clay" and "mud" Hebrews, with poor Eastern European Jews being

relegated to "mud" status, while their wealthy German Ashkenazic counterparts were categorized

as "clay."[81] These "clay" people were thought to have been "separated from Americans only by

religion," and therefore, were capable of assimilation. Gordon cites Klan leader Richard Evans as

stating "Eastern Jews" were not "true Jews, only Judaized Mongols – Chazars."[82] This statement

is more in line with the Khazar Hypothesis, which as Barkun explains, was not unique to British-

Israelism, and has roots in Medieval mythology.[83] Barkun further points out that the theory

"enjoyed a vogue in America" throughout the height of immigration restriction in the 1920s, and

did so as it successfully assigned Jews to the Asian – rather than European – category. This

allowed for preexisting restrictions on Asian immigration in America to limit unwanted Jewish

immigration.[84] According to Barkun, this categorization was a form of antisemitism that allowed

its adherents to practice both bigotry and acceptance, lessening their own moral quandaries about

immigration restriction, and was adopted my various *Identity* adherents.[85]

As both Gordon and Barkun suggest, the *Christian Identity* movement – along with the

Aryan Nations, the modern Ku Klux Klan, and various other Christian hate groups – is viewed as

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[81] Ibid, 32
[82] Ibid, 153
[83] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 136
[84] Ibid, 137
[85] Ibid, 136-142

an offshoot movement of the Second Klan. While not all Klan members were *Christian Identity* adherents, or proponents of Anglo-Israelism, the theology provided a foundation for their various world views. Whether an individual sees Jews, Catholics, Asians, African Americans, or the American government as the main enemy, the theology of Christian Identity allows for a grouping of these categories into a single enemy. This is one of the main characteristics of the modern far-right movement, the overlaps and divergences amongst various groups. As Barkun makes clear,

> Even if disengagement wins out against military, and the revolutionary millenarian drive weakens, however, Christian Identity will not have lost a capacity for future disruption, for it has already introduced into American life – albeit thus far only at the margins – motifs not present before, which for sheer virulence are virtually unprecedented. Should Christian Identity disappear through internal transformation, membership erosion, or fissioning, it will still have created dangerous new potentialities. Whatever may happen to Identity as a religious movement, or to its organizational parts, its doctrines of demonic conspiracy and apocalyptic battle exist where they did not before, for others to exploit in the future.[86]

Barkun's statement was made in 1997 following the height of the Christian Identity Movement, but his proclamation is not inaccurate. People associated with Anglo-Israelism and *Christian Identity* became social pariahs as deadly attacks were becoming more commonplace amongst its adherents. Similar to the Second Klan, the theology behind Anglo-Israelism did not disappear, but rather adapted to fit the contemporary climate.

As mentioned, anti-Jewish hate does not disappear, it simply moves in and out of the mainstream narrative. Many of the anti-Jewish elements of Anglo-Israelism were not new accusations, the movement simply repopularized the ancient and medieval tropes/myths related to the Jews by providing biblical answers to contemporary issues. As the revival of the Second Klan shows, the 1920s was full of racial tension. By taking advantage of white protestants fears

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[86] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right,* 253

surrounding immigration and the "immorality" of the immigrants, Anglo-Israelites merged the racially charged anti-Judaism of Nazi Germany, with the theological anti-Judaism of the Medieval period. Additionally, the movements apocalyptic world view, and distrust of government institutions created a foundation for uniting various extremist who would have otherwise remained on the periphery.

As with the intricacies and popular debates that were omitted in the previous chapter on Medieval anti-Judaism, this chapter has omitted the various internal fissures and debates within the movement. The most important aspect of Anglo-Israelism is not seen in its members various validations for their violently racist world views, but rather its unarguable points. These can be broken down into the following:

I.   Jews are not of the same origin as Anglo-Saxons. They were either created before the adamic race from the "mud" of the earth, are descendants of Cain – the offspring of Eve and Satan, or they are "race-mixing" Khazars from the Black Sea – in other words, not the true Israelites.[87]

II. The Rapture will occur post tribulation – with the tribulation consisting of a racial holy war between the Anglo-Saxons and all other races.

III. The Jews, as the agents of the devil, are actively attempting to weaken the white race through intermarriage and mass immigration, to ensure their own victory in the racial holy war.

IV. The tribulation period will entail a complete collapse of civilized society, including government institutions – leading to members to living remote, isolated lifestyles off grid.

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[87] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, 142

In the following chapter, these five points will be used to identify potential *Christian Identity* proponents on Gab.

Chapter Three: Fruit of Hate

Currently, the SPLC lists nine organizations which still publicly declare adherence to *Christian Identity*, down from eleven in recent years.[88] While the numbers indicate a clear decline in traditional forms of *Christian Identity* membership, this study would argue that the numbers do not reflect a lack of popularity for Anglo-Israelism as a whole. The *Center on Terrorism, Extremism, and Counterterrorism* at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey published a study in 2021 on the presence of *Christian Identity* theology on Telegram.[89] The study found over 30 "Channels" – i.e. groups of individual users– which actively promoted *Christian Identity* doctrine on the platform. The study concludes by stating the movement had not "simply declined" but rather, "transformed."[90] Positing *Identity* as a "novel threat" with the potential to "instigat(e) violence" amongst various unaffiliated far-right movements, the study reminds readers of the thousands of individuals who are exposed to this racist theology daily through social media.[91]

While Telegram is a popular platform for many on the far-right – with over 500 million monthly users – Gab, a far-right social media site which resembles the structure and layout of Facebook, seems to be gaining popularity amongst the far-right.[92] Though the platform has no accompanying app, and must be accessed through a web browser, the site had over 3.7 million

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[88] Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), *Hate Map – Christian Identity.*
[89] CTEC Staff, *Christian Identity's New Role on the Extreme Right,*
Telegram is a far-right social media app designed to allow users to create both private and public group messages. The app has become a safe-haven for members of the far-right who have been banned or restricted on typical social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. For more on Telegram see: Anti-Defamation League (ADL), *Telegram: The Latest Safe Haven.*
[90] CTEC Staff, *Christian Identity's New Role on the Extreme Right*
[91] Ibid.
[92] Brian Dean, *How Many People Use Telegram*

monthly users in 2020.[93] The site received severe backlash after it was linked to the

radicalization of the Tree of life shooter, Robert Bowers, who had posted threatening messages

on the site prior to his attack.[94] Andrew Torba, CEO of Gab, has also made headlines recently

due to his new found friendship with Nick Fuentes – an admitted white supremacist, participant

in the 2017 Unite the Right Rally, and leader of the America First movement.[95] Torba was

invited to speak at Fuentes' America First Political Action Conference (AFPAC), which gained

media attention following U.S. Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene's decision to attend the

neo-Nazi conference in February of this year.[96] Taylor Greene also has her own connections to

Torba, as it was recently uncovered that the congresswoman had doled out nearly forty thousand

U.S. dollars for advertisements on his site.[97] Given Gab's recent brush with the limelight, and its

promotion by sitting members of the United States government, this study aims to highlight the

presence of *Christian Identity* theology on the site, as well the potentialities for indoctrination

and radicalization that are present.

There are currently only two public groups on Gab which state explicitly that they adhere

to *Christian Identity* theology. These include "Christian Identity" which has six hundred and

thirty-nine members, and "National Socialist Christian Identity" which has two hundred and

forty-one members. There are an additional five groups which use the tag "Christian Identity"

but do not use the term in their group name, or biography. Included in this category is the group

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[93] This is the most recent data available for the number of monthly users on Gab. Jazmin Goodwin, *Gab: Everything You Need to Know*.

[94] For more on the Tree of Life shooting and the radicalization of Robert Bowers see: Anti-Defamation League (ADL), *Gab and 8Chan: Home to Terrorist*.

[95] For more on the relationship between Andrew Torba and Nick Fuentes, see Alex Kaplan and Jeremy Tuthill, *The Growing Links*.

[96] For more on Marjorie Taylor Greene's speech and the backlash she received see: Aaron Navarro and Robert Costa, *Marjorie Taylor Greene Downplays* Speaking at a Conference

[97] Eric Hananoki, *Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene Has Been Paying* for Marketing on Gab

"Klansman, LOTIE, and White Americans that want to become Klansman or LOTIE" which underscores the continued affiliation between the KKK and *Christian Identity*. [98]

The larger group, "Christian Identity" was created by a follower of William Finck – creator and operator of the *Christian Identity* website known as Christogenea – who goes by the name "Farmer-General" on Christogena, and is listed as a "Senior Member." This is evident through a post by "Farmer-General" on the Chat forum of Christogenea.org, in which the user states they are "considering making a Christian Identity Group on Gab."[99] The individual states their username on Gab is "@Herr_Ubermensch" which is the username of the individual listed as the "Admin" of the "Christian Identity" group on Gab.[100] The user also makes reference to the previously mentioned Tree of Life shooter, Robert Bowers, and declares the event a "False Flag."[101] Bowers had displayed an influence of *Christian Identity* through his positing of Jews as "the children of Satan" in the biography section of his Gab profile.[102] However, *Christian Identity* adherents rebuke this charge, claiming instead that the shooting was a "false flag operation" intended to paint the movement in a negative light.

Responses on the Christogenea forum created by "Farmer-General" range from attacks on Bowers to attacks on Gab for "censoring" *Christian Identity* related posts/users on the website following the attack.[103] A user which goes by the name "EnglishVids" encouraged "Farmer-General" to create the group stating "By all means go for it. But even spamming/leaving many

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[98] See Figure 3 and 4. In this context, LOTIE refers to "Ladies of the Invisible Empire" – a group established by the Second Klan in the 1920s to appease the multitudes of women who wanted to join the Klan but were excluded due to gender. See Gordon, *The Second Coming*, 125-128.
[99] See Figure 5
[100] Group Admins, similar to admins on Facebook Groups, are responsible for managing group members, as well as the information which is posted in the group.
[101] A "false flag," according to the Online Merriam-Webster dictionary, is "a hostile or harmful action (such as an attack) that is designed to look like it was perpetrated by someone other than the person or group responsible for it."
[102] Julie Turkewitz and Kevin Roose, *Who is Robert Bowers*.
[103] See Figure 6

comments here and there about CI (*Christian Identity*) can do wonders."[104] Figure 7 is a

screenshot of a conversation between "Farmer-General" and another Christogenea member –

four months prior to the "Considering making a Christian Identity Group on Gab" forum – in

which "Farmer-General" states there are "quite a few Past gab users on (Christogenea.org)."

"Farmer-General" goes on, positing the increased exodus from Gab to Christogenea as a

response to the censorship of *Christian Identity* rhetoric on Gab. However, this claim seems

unfounded, as a year prior to the post by "Farmer-General" a separate user made the same

accusations against Gab, yet there remains a strong presence of *Christian Identity* proponents on

the website.[105] A more likely excuse for the increased presence of Gab users on Christogenea,

would be the continued recruitment efforts being deployed by members Christogenea on Gab. As

is evident from "Farmer-General's" initial post, as well as "EnglishVids'" reply – the goal is to

poach users from Gab by directing them to Christogenea or other "sites approved by Mr.

Finck."[106]

      The smaller of the groups, "National Socialist Christian Identity" while at times reposting

Christogenea content, does not appear to be connected to the site, or any followers of Finck. Of

the multitudes of offensive memes/videos posted on the groups Timeline, a single post by

"@SmolWhiteGroyper" stands out. The user begins by asking for clarity on the origins of

contemporary Jews and attaches a screenshot of a rant levied against *Christian Identity* from an

unknown source.[107] User "@Timairborne" replies to this inquiry with a link to a YouTube video

titled "100 Proofs the Israelites Were White."[108] The YouTube video, which was uploaded by an

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[104] See Figure 6
[105] See Figure 7 and 8
[106] See Figure 5 and 6
[107] See Figure 10
[108] See Figure 11

account titled "TruthVids," has been up for over two years, and has over ninety-three thousand

views. A second video, suggested by YouTube itself, shares the same title and creator as the first

and has amassed over twelve thousand views in a little over a year.[109] "TruthVids" has over

twenty-one thousand "subscribers" on YouTube, but has uploaded less than forty videos. They

also provide a link to their own third-party website, suggesting it has "much more information."

Their videos range in views from roughly two thousand to one and a half million, and are

explicitly focused on providing "evidence" that white Anglo-Saxons are the true descendants of

the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. The fact that these individuals are using YouTube, a mainstream

social media site, provides them with a sense of validation and authority in their recruitment

efforts. Surely, one would think, YouTube would remove content that is known to have the

potential to radicalize and incite violence. However, that does not seem to be the case.

While only two groups explicitly declare their adherence to *Christian Identity* on Gab,

there are several users who promote *Identity* theology which have no link to these two groups, or

the five other previously mentioned groups which use the "Christian Identity" tag on Gab.

Additionally, there are several users, which on the surface appear to have no connection to

Christian Identity, but show a clear influence of Anglo-Israelism in their world views. An

example of this can be seen in the user "@HERALDofYah" who claims to have been banned

from mainstream social media sites such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook, as well as the

"public group" option on Telegram.[110] The user has over ninety-five hundred followers, and

regularly posts racist and conspiratorial memes/links to videos on third party websites. On the

surface, this user appears to touch on every far-right talking point there is – i.e., linking Jews to

the Covid-19 pandemic, promoting the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and a distrust for

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[109] See Figure 12
[110] See Figure 9

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government institutions – especially the 2020 U.S. Presidential election results, and Joe Biden.

However, by following the link to the users "ministry site" located in the "about" section of their

biography, one is able to find an abundance of *Christian Identity* talking points, including

arguments for satanic Jews aimed at eliminating the white race and a post-tribulation rapture.[111]

The user also shows how individuals may appropriate aspects of *Christian Identity* doctrine

without fully committing to the theology as a whole. In a blog posted to the website a year prior

to the declaration of a post-tribulation rapture, the individual condemns the "seedliner" theory as

a heretical concept with no biblical backing.[112]

Amongst the Gab profiles which regularly promote and broadcast *Christian Identity*

talking points – and belong to none of the previously mentioned *Christian Identity* groups – five

individuals stand out amongst the rest due to sheer virulence, large follower count, or potential

ability to proselytize.[113] Their usernames are as follows; @GrandeFormaggio,

@American_Confederate, @Psiop, @ZadokWatchMinistry, and @BellsJudeth. Beginning in the

order in which the usernames are listed, @GrandeFormaggio is first. With over thirteen hundred

followers, this user's biography begins by boasting about his ban from Twitter, and continues by

declaring "Our reality is staged & scripted." Pointing to the theory of evolution as a "kabbalah

fairytale," the recent increase in public protests as "staged riots," and climate change as "Bs,"

@GrandeFormaggio declares that humanity is being deceived by "Satan's forces." In line with

the biography, this user's posts are focused on aligning the Covid-19 pandemic with the "first

horseman of the apocalypse" and the vaccine with "the mark of the beast." At the end of one of

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[111] Trust Christ or Go to Hell, *False Doctrines & Statements*.
[112] Trust Christ or Go to Hell, *Are 'Jews' Brothers*
[113] Though each of these individuals follow, or are followed by, users who promote *Christian Identity*/Anglo-Israelite talking points, there is no overlapping of followers. Each of the individuals listed do not follow, nor are they followed by, other members on the list.

his many declarations, @GrandeFormaggio states "good Christians" will have to "suffer" through the tribulation, as there will be no pre-tribulation rapture, and provides a coinvent meme of his biblical exegesis on the topic.[114]

A large portion of @GrandeFormaggio's attention is focused on targeting the LGBTQ+ community as agents of Satanic forces, bent on destroying the white nuclear family. However, the third most popular topic on his page is focused on the Israelite origins of Anglo-Saxons.[115] As evidenced by Figure 13-17, @GrandeFormaggio has undoubtably been influenced by Anglo-Israelism, however, his page is not explicitly focused on *Christian Identity* talking points. Instead, @GrandeFormaggio touches on several far-right talking points – including Covid-19 and the vaccine, LGBTQ+ rights, the New World Order (NWO) conspiracy, and the "denazification" of Ukraine.[116] By decentralizing the *Christian Identity* content on their Gab profile, @GrandeFormaggio has cast a wider net than the two previously mentioned groups. Individuals interested in a slew of far-right talking points will find biblical validation for their racism and xenophobia through @GrandeFormaggio's profile whether they meant to or not. Additionally, the use of Memes and links to third party videos allows individuals to share the information more rapidly, and with less evidence of where they've encountered the information.

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[114] See Figure 13 and 14

[115] See Figure 15, 16, and 17.

[116] The New World Order conspiracy (NWO) originates in the 1990s and is currently linked to the "Great Reset" conspiracy, aimed at George Soros. The conspiracy is multifaceted and boils down to a belief in a corrupt government, bent on enslaving its population. Links to George Soros arose following his plea for a "Great Reset" following the Covid-19 Pandemic. For more on the origins of the NWO conspiracy see: Barkun, *A culture of Conspiracy*. For more on the Great Reset and its links to the NWO conspiracy see: Anti-Defamation League (ADL), *'The Great Reset' Conspiracy Flourishes*. In this context "denazification" is used in quotations as it does not accurately describe Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Posited as Russian President Vladimir Putin's reasoning behind his invasion of Ukraine, the claim of denazification is unfounded. However, several members of the far-right support this claim by pointing to a Neo-Nazi battalion in Ukraine known as the Azov Battalion. For more on the war between Russia and Ukraine, and the disinformation campaigns it has inspired see: Rachel Treisman, *Putin's Claims of Fighting*

The next three users, @American_Confederate, @Psiop, and @ZadokWatchMinistry, are similar to @GrandeFormaggio in that they do not flat-out state they are supporters of *Identity* theology, but actively broadcast and promote *Christian Identity* talking points. @American_Confederate combines medieval anti-Jewish tropes alongside accusations of the Jews as the "serpent seed of Cain" and regularly makes use of the fourteen words in his posts.[117] Similarly, @ZadokWatchMinistry promotes medieval anti-Jewish tropes alongside the "seedline" theory, however, he reserves the later for his posts in the Gab group "Mature Bible Discussion" – which appears to have no other connection to Christian Identity or Anglo-Israelism.[118] @Psiop, who has approximately four thousand followers on Gab, supports a wide range of white supremacist talking points centered around the conspiracy of a Jewish orchestrated white genocide. Urging people to avoid the Covid-19 vaccination, @Psiop claims the vaccine is designed to clot the blood of the individuals who receive it.[119] @Psiop's blood clot theory differs from @GrandeFormaggio's declaration of the vaccine as "the mark of the beast" and shows how individuals on the far-right can share a similar distrust/animosity without the same validations. @Psiop goes on to display their *Christian Identity* influence in a lengthy rant which implements the Khazar hypothesis to condemn the "Jewish controlled mainstream media" and the "elders of Zion."[120] At the end of @Psiop's rant, there is a link to a YouTube video with over forty-nine thousand views, which proports to show Jews admitting to the medieval accusation of deicide. The video was posted to YouTube by "If Americans Knew" who have approximately twenty-one thousand five hundred subscribers, and focus on the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine. This is yet another example of how the far-right overlaps and

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[117] See Figure 18-23
[118] See Figure 26 and 27
[119] See Figure 25
[120] See Figure 25

diverges in crucial ways. A video uploaded by what appears to be pro-Palestinian forces has in turn been used by white supremacists in America to justify anti-Vax propaganda.

Apart from these individuals, there are several Gab users who are unmistakable supporters of *Christian Identity*, but do not belong to any groups which promote *Identity* theology – such as @BellsJudeth.[121] This user's profile is overtly influenced by *Identity,* with "Jews Serpent Seed Exposed" listed in the "name" section of their profile. However, these individuals have created niche pages, where users looking to find more information regarding Christian Identity may end up. The five individuals discussed above appeal to a wider variety of individuals– allowing them to recruit Gab users who may have otherwise remained oblivious to *Christian Identity* teachings. It is also important to keep in mind that these individuals have a combined following of over nine thousand individuals with little to no overlaps in followers. None of the individuals discussed followed each other, nor were they members of any *Christian Identity* group on Gab. Additionally, every individual discussed – apart from @BellsJudeth – have Gab profiles which are focused on white supremacy or far-right talking points in general, with the occasional indicator of their Christian Identity influence.

While this was by no means an exhaustive list of every Gab user who supports/promotes Christian Identity and Anglo-Israelism, it uncovers the multitude of ways in which Gab users may come into contact with this racist and violent theology. Users who are familiar with *Christian Identity* may flock to the designated groups. There they will find a wealth of individual profiles dedicated to promoting *Christian Identity* talking points. However, it is just as likely that a user with no prior knowledge of the movement could stumble upon a profile that appears – on the surface – to focus on mainstream far-right issues such as Covid-19 vaccinations and mask

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[121] See Figure 28

mandates. In reality, these individuals are being exposed to a violent and dangerous form of extremism that has been proven to appeal to members of various far-right organizations. As both the study by the Middlebury Institute and Michael Barkun make clear, *Christian Identity* theology has the potential to influence groups/individuals who are "prone to antisemitism, racism, and violence."[122] By providing these individuals with a biblical/historical validation for their bigoted and racist world views, *Christian Identity* doctrine has the ability to unite various extremist/far-right movements who may appropriate some, or all, of the theology in order to validate their calls for violence.

Given *Identity's* appeal to violent extremists, is important to consider two factors. The first factor is the type of individual who frequents Gab. As the profiles discussed thus far show, Gab users tend to promote the fact that they have been banned from traditional social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. Individuals can be removed from Twitter and Facebook for a multitude of reasons, including inciting violence and promoting disinformation. The CEO of Gab himself advertises his website as a safe haven for far-right actors, and actively regurgitates far-right talking points including anti-Jewish accusations.[123] In other words, it is no secret that the individuals on Gab are already predisposed to an acceptance of some form of far-right content.

The second factor, is the speed in which information shared on Gab is disseminated across mainstream social media sites – creating the potential for further indoctrination efforts outside of the typical far-right sites. As an article published in October of 2021 by the ADL states, "For Twitter Users, Gab's Toxic Content Is Just a Click Away." The study found that between the seventh of June and the twenty-second of August in 2021, over a hundred and

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[122] CTEC Staff, *Christian Identity's New Role*
[123] Anti-Defamation League (ADL), *Gab CEO Andrew Torba Broadcasts*

twelve thousand posts on Twitter contained links to Gab content. Additionally, these posts were able to reach an audience of over two-hundred and fifty-four million individuals.[124] Exacerbating this issue is the presence of far-right actors on Twitter itself. As the ADL states in their 2021 Online Antisemitism Report Card, "even if a platform with a billion users who each post once a day enforced its policies accurately 99 percent of the time, that would still leave 10 million errors every day." The ADL gave Twitter a "B-" in their yearly Antisemitism Report Card, due to their responsiveness in removing content flagged by undercover ADL profiles. A cursory examination of Twitter showed *Christian Identity* talking points are not difficult to find, however, they do appear to be suppressed on the social media platform.

Twitter users @ZRonda144, @WaVyDaVy69, @TruthBombingSince1985, and William Finck himself, all actively promote *Christian Identity* doctrine on their Twitter profiles. As figure 29 shows, Finck's presence on Twitter is muted at best.[125] With less than three hundred followers, Finck's most recent post stems from 2018 and claims his exhaustive efforts to "pick fights" on Twitter has not had its intended effect on his follower count. Finck's post generated a few responses, even some which came two years after his initial post. Overall, the responses are positive. Some users state they "see" Finck and "will follow" him. One user even encourages Finck to join Parler – a popular far-right dupe on Twitter.

Finck is not the only proponent of *Christian Identity* on Twitter, and other users seem to have had a bit more luck on the site – though not by much. Both @ZRonda144 and @TruthBombingSince1985 have Twitter profiles similar to @GrandeFormaggio's Gab profile – in that they do not center their discussions on *Christian Identity*, but rather, use the doctrine to validate other mainstream far-right views. In a response to user @Kate94793608's questioning

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[124] Anti-Defamation League (ADL), *For Twitter Users*
[125] See Figure 29

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of how Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy could be a Nazi, @ZRonda144 enacts the "seedline" theory to discredit Zelenskyy's Jewish heritage.[126] @TruthBombingSince1985's posts are extremely similar, claiming Ashkenazi Jews are "fake" – even equating them to Nazis – the user also actively instigates arguments relating to the timing of the rapture.[127] Additionally, figure 32 shows Twitter user @WaVyDaVy69 sharing the "100 Proofs Israelites Were White" YouTube video that was shared in the Gab group "National Socialist Christian Identity."[128] However, it is important to consider that the majority of these individuals have follower counts of less than eight hundred, and the majority of their posts have very little interaction. As the study by the ADL and this cursory examination have shown, it is not difficult for individuals to locate *Christian Identity* teachings on mainstream social media platforms, however, the users may need to actively seek out this information. This task is made even less difficult, and at times is unavoidable, on far-right platforms such as Gab and Telegram who do little to limit the misinformation and disinformation on their sites.

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[126] See Figure 30
[127] See Figure 31
[128] See Figure 32

Conclusion

Anglo-Israelism developed alongside the Second Klan and influenced modern hate groups and their leaders such as the Aryan Nations' Richard Butler, and David Duke – notorious leader of the KKK.[129] The basic tenets of Anglo-Israelism were conceived through their apocalyptic world views and conspiratorial anti-Jewish rhetoric. Relying on anti-Jewish tropes that had been solidified into folklore, *Christian Identity* adherents in the twentieth century combined new and old accusations against the Jewish population to validate their own bigoted world views. Similar to the theologians of the Medieval period and Nazi Germany, individuals such as Wesley Swift and Howard Rand sought to provide their outlooks with biblical and historical validation. Influenced by the racial tensions of the period, Swift accused the Jews of actively working to weaken the white race through what he viewed as the most dangerous threat to society – immigration and interracial marriage.

Similar to Bernard of Clairvaux who sought to condemn moneylending and posited the activity itself as possessing "Judaizing" qualities – *Christian Identity* writers in the mid twentieth century sought to provide biblical answers to contemporary issues. In doing so, *Christian Identity* theology became a combination of religion and pseudoscience. Jews were no longer linked to Satan by word of mouth or rumor, thanks to Swfit's seedline theory, there was now "academic proof" of a Jewish relation to Satan himself. As such, anything deemed "Satanic" by *Christian Identity*, such as immigration, covid-19 vaccinations, and the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, can now be seen not as a necessary reaction to a changing environment, but rather, as an orchestrated attack against white Christians. Additionally, *Christian Identity's* adoption of

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[129] Barkun, *Religion and the Racist Right*, 68-70, 141-142, 210.

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the Khazar hypothesis – and the continued support for it amongst modern adherents even after being discredited – points to the centrality of anti-Judaism to their argument.[130] Without a perpetrator, *Christian Identity* claims are baseless. There must be an active enemy, and in *Christian Identity's* case, it is always the Jews – regardless of the actors involved. This resembles the Second Klan's "militarization" of their organization. By acting, meeting, and dressing as if preparing for a battle with the enemy, the Klan meetings legitimized their warnings of war against conspiring enemy forces.[131] Similarly, members of *Christian Identity* use apocalyptic war terminology to solidify the threat in the minds of average Americans.

The malleability of *Christian Identity* doctrine, along with their lack of a centralized cannon, has created a uniting foundation for various far-right extremist. However, this is not to say that they share the same end goals, or even world views. As the different opinions regarding the Covid-19 vaccinations between @Psiop and @GrandeFormaggio show, extremist on the far-right can share a similar disdain but at the same time, provide differing reasons for doing so. Timothy McVeigh and Robert Bowers had different end goals to be sure, but they were both influenced by *Christian Identity's* proclivity for violent attacks against a government they saw as corrupt. As the previous chapter has shown, Anglo-Israelism and the *Christian Identity* movement have not died out, but rather adapted to fit the modern climate. Attempting to secure followers through the use of memes, videos, and social media posts in general, the need for face-to-face recruitment efforts have been eliminated. Individual users from various backgrounds are now able to stumble upon information they would have otherwise remained ignorant to – considering *Christian Identity* proponents tend to provide a mixture of mainstream far-right talking points alongside *Identity* theology. While individuals may not adopt all of *Christian*

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[130] Doron M. Behar, *No Evidence from Genome-Wide Data.*
[131] Gordon, *Second Coming*, 76

Identity's talking points, they may appropriate aspects of *Christian Identity* doctrine which provides validation for their world views. An example of this can be seen in the recent white supremacist plot to attack power grids across the U.S. in an attempt to "start a race war."[132] The three men responsible for the plot claim to have met online, and though they no longer have any public social media profiles to examine, their motivation to "start a race war" by attacking the infrastructure of the U.S. government is telling in and of itself.

Another characteristic of *Christian Identity* is their ability to adapt to the mainstream narrative. When deciding which *Christian Identity* terms to search for on Telegram, the Middlebury institute found that the term "rahowa" – a shortened version of "Racial Holy War" which originated amongst *Christian Identity* adherents – no longer served as an indicator of *Christian Identity* influence as the term had readily been appropriated by various far-right actors with no ties to the movement. This highlights the influence that *Christian Identity* has on the far-right as a whole.

As the popularity of the previously mentioned fourteen words has shown, individuals on the far-right are more than willing to accept the notion of a white genocide orchestrated by the Jewish population. While *Christian Identity's* original stance on the topic was that this "genocide" would occur through mass immigration and interracial marriage – contemporary *Christian Identity* adherents now point to the equal rights of LGBTQ+ individuals as the newest approach to white genocide. A large portion of users @American_Confederate and @GrandeFormaggio's posts are focused on the rights of individuals in the LGBTQ+ community. Declaring the basic human rights of male-to-female and female-to-male individuals as an attack on the nuclear family – and in turn Christian principles – both users simultaneously invoke white

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[132] United States Department of Justice (DOJ), *Three Men Plead Guilty to Conspiring*.

genocide alongside Christian values. This is dangerous considering much of *Christian Identity* doctrine is similar to that of evangelical protestants, with the exception of a post-tribulation rapture.

Given the social anxiety faced by many Americans that was discussed in the introduction, and the positing of "threatened evangelicals" by Gordon as a key factor in the rise of the Second Klan, it may not be as difficult as one imagines to convince some Christians that they are living through the tribulation. Referring to Figure 13, 14, and Figure 25, it is clear that this is the approach of these posts. Similar to many apocalyptic world views, *Christian Identity* relies on social unrest and fear to push their narrative, without it, one hopes, they will retreat back to the peripheries of mainstream society.

One way to ensure the retreat of far-right actors, of any variety, is to eliminate their ability to disseminate their racist and bigoted rhetoric. Following the discovery that the January 6th insurrection on the U.S. capitol was planned and organized on Facebook, mainstream social media platforms began to receive severe backlash.[133] Facebook and Twitter attempted to remove several individuals who had shared disinformation relating to the 2020 U.S. presidential election results, and various other far-right actors including former president Trump himself. However, as the 2021 Online Antisemitism Report Card by the ADL has shown, it is nearly impossible to keep extremist off mainstream social media platforms. Additionally, given Elon Musk's recent purchase of the largest share of Twitter stock ever owned by a single individual, and his disdain for the "restricting" of Twitter profiles which "cause social unrest" – it appears censorship and restriction may be off the table.

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[133] Shannon Bond, *Kicked off Facebook and Twitter*

Given the unlikelihood of a complete exodus of far-right agents on mainstream platforms, the next step then, would appear to be educating the youth. As Cynthia Miller-Idriss stated in *Hate in the Homeland*, the youth are being targeted by far-right actors in a variety of venues typically reserved for younger less educated individuals. This includes college campuses, social media, after school programs, and various other institutions frequented by Americas youth. This is why contemporary efforts from Republicans to ban books and educational activities relating to Critical Race Theory (CRT) are so dangerous.[134] It has been proven that by implementing CRT in American K-12 classrooms, minority students are "more engaged in school," less likely to drop out, and more likely to participate in political discourse.[135] By banning discussions relating to CRT, not only are minority students less likely to perform well in school, white students are less likely to understand the complicated and systemic modes of racism that are present in the daily lives of minorities. To date, seven U.S. states have banned the implementation of CRT in schools, while sixteen states are in the process of doing so.[136] With almost half of the states banning CRT in some form, it does not appear that a federal mandate for the implementation of the theory in K-12 classrooms will be coming anytime soon. Exacerbating this issue is the attack on Holocaust education and gender identity in K-12 classrooms as well. Similar to the 2007 study from the U.K. mentioned in the introduction, a more recent 2020 study from the U.S. found "students with Holocaust education have more pluralistic attitudes and are more open to differing viewpoints, which includes being more comfortable with people of a different race or

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[134] Critical Race Theory is the study of the effects of systematic racism on minority populations. For more on the origins and scope of the attack against the theory see: Stephen Kearse, *GOP Lawmakers Intensify Effort to Ban Critical Race Theory in Schools*

[135] Matt Barnum, *As States Place New Limits on Class Discussion*

[136] World Population Review, *States That have Banned Critical Race Theory*.

sexual orientation."[137] These students were also more likely to "challenge intolerant behaviors" and "stand up to negative stereotyping."[138]

Given this information, it then begs the question – why would politicians and leaders attack educational approaches proven to produce a more accepting and educated populace? Considering the far-rights proclivity for targeting the uneducated through venues typically reserved for America's youth, it seems more crucial than ever to push back against the politicians and leaders who are attempting to widen this far-right recruiting pool. By implementing educational activities relating to the history of race and racism in American K-12 classrooms, it will limit the availability of potential recruits and force the racist and bigoted narratives of the far-right back to the outskirts of society, where they belong.

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[137] Florida Atlantic University, *Survey of U.S. College Students*
[138] Ibid

Figures

Figure 1. DailyStormer.Name
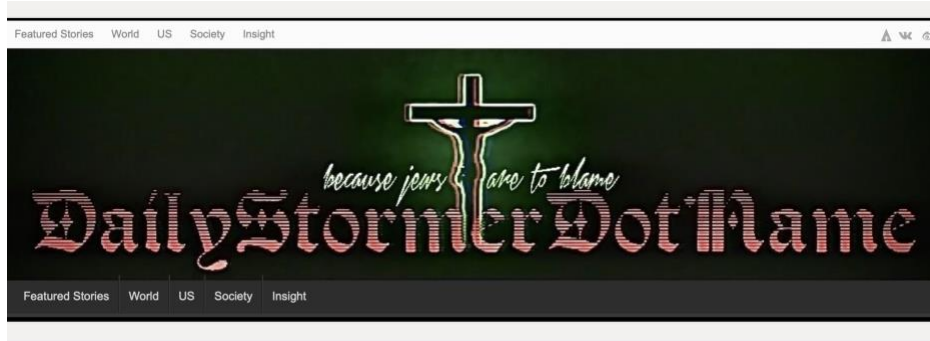
Figure 2. DailyStormer.Name
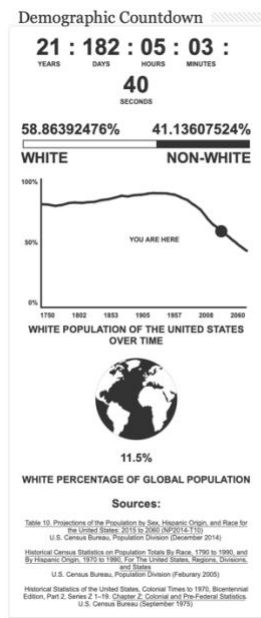
Figure 3. Gab Groups Who Use Christian Identity Tag
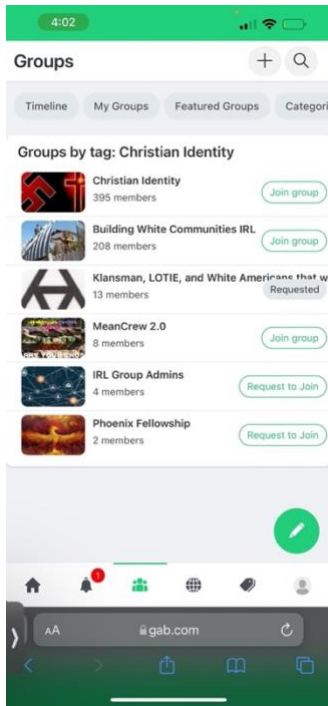
Figure 4. Gab Group "Klansman, LOTIE, and White Americans that want to become Klansman or Lotie"
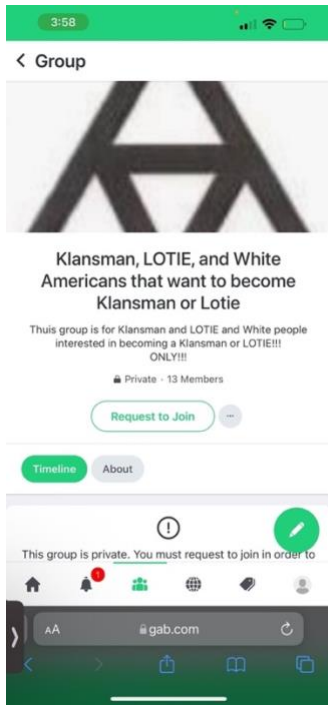
Figure 5. Christogena.org Chat Forum

Figure 6. User Replies on Christogenea "Considering making a Christian Identity Group on Gab" forum.
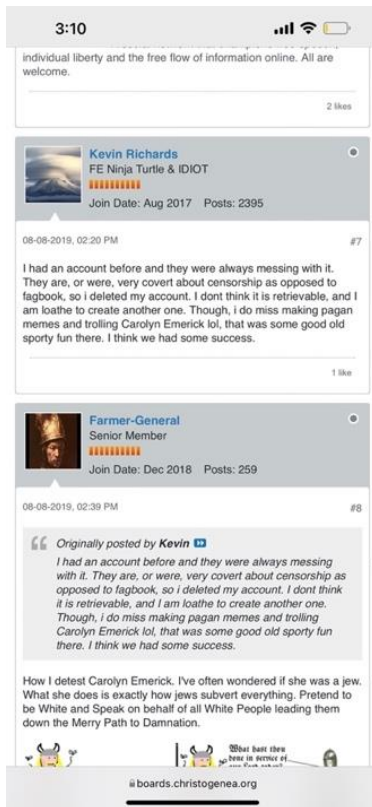
Figure 7. "Farmer-General" Post on Christogenea
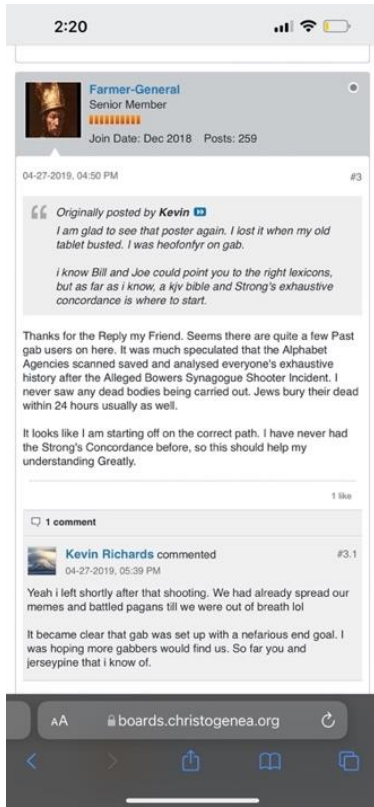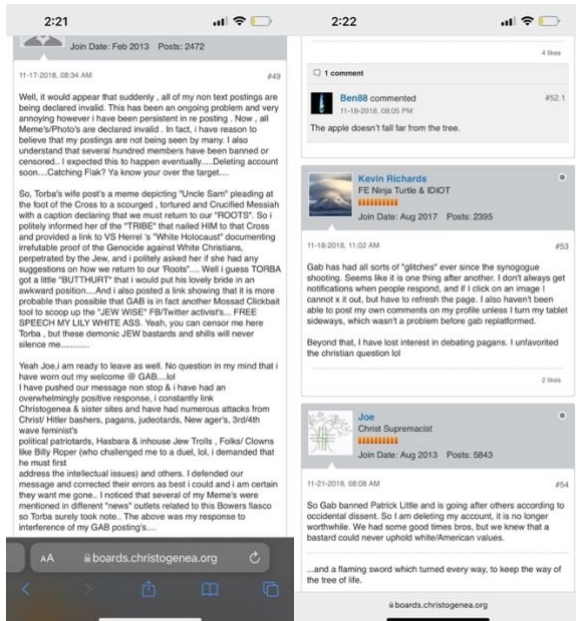

Figure 8. Christogenea User Complaints Against Gab

Figure 9. "Trust Christ or go to Hell! Group on Gab

Figure 10. "@SmolWhiteGroyper" on Gab
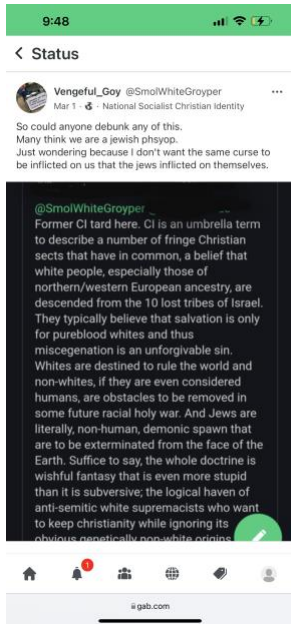
Figure 11. "100 Proofs the Israelites Were White" Video Link Shared on Gab in Christian Identity Group

Figure 12. "100 Proofs the Israelites Were White" Video Uploaded to YouTube, Shared on Gab in Christian Identity Group

Figure 13. @GrandeFormaggio Covid-19 as Horseman of the Apocalypse
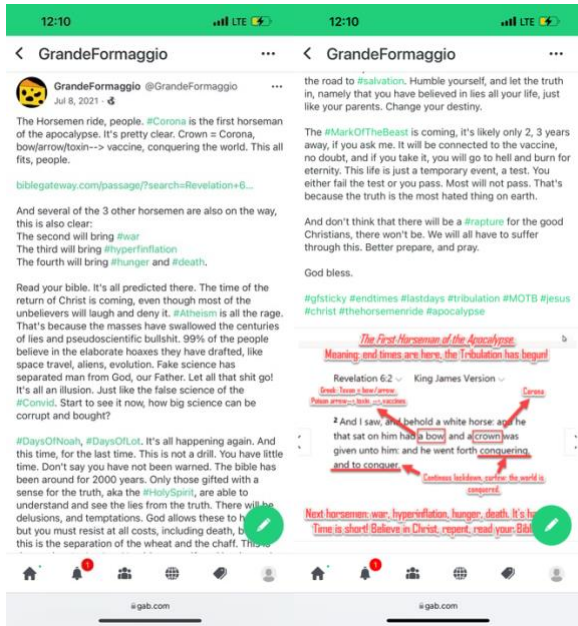
Figure 14. Meme Which was Included in Post by @GrandeFormaggio in Figure 12.
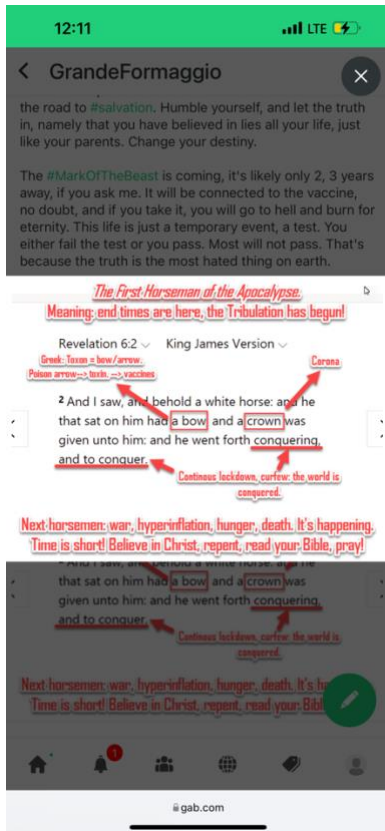
Figure 15. @GrandeFormaggio on the Israelite Origins of Anglo-Saxons
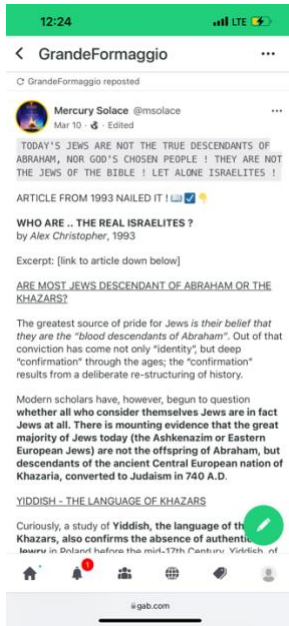
Figure 16. Accompanying Meme to the Post in Figure 15

Figure 17. Meme shared by @GrandeFormaggio
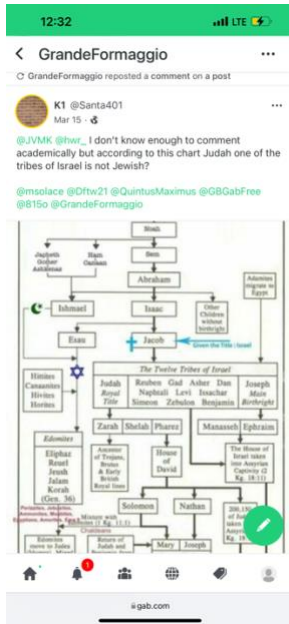
Figure 18. Post by @American_Confederate referring to Jews as "The Serpent Seed of Cain."

Figure 19. Meme Posted by @American_Confederate Posits Calls for Diversity as Jewish Orchestrated White Genocide.

Figure 20. Meme Posted by @American_Confederate. Medieval Anti-Jewish accusation of disloyalty.

Figure 21. Meme Posted by @American_Confederate Stating prominent members of the far-right are not to be trusted as they use codewords when referring to the Jews.

Figure 22. Meme Posted by @American_Confederate positing the Jews as controlling mainstream media, and as the orchestrators of Racial tensions

Figure 23. Meme Posted by @American_Confederate promoting the idea of a Jewish orchestrated white genocide
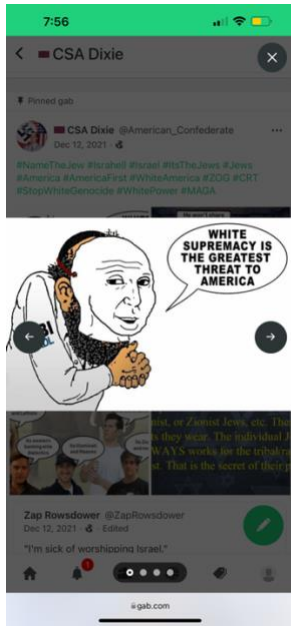
Figure 24. Meme posted by @Psiop, linking the Covid-19 Vaccination to a Jewish orchestrated genocide

Figure 25. A post by @Psiop linking Jews to Covid-19 pandemic. Employes Anti-Jewish tropes from medieval period along side Christian Identity theology on the origins of contemporary Jews. Link to YouTube video of alleged Jews admitting to deicide.
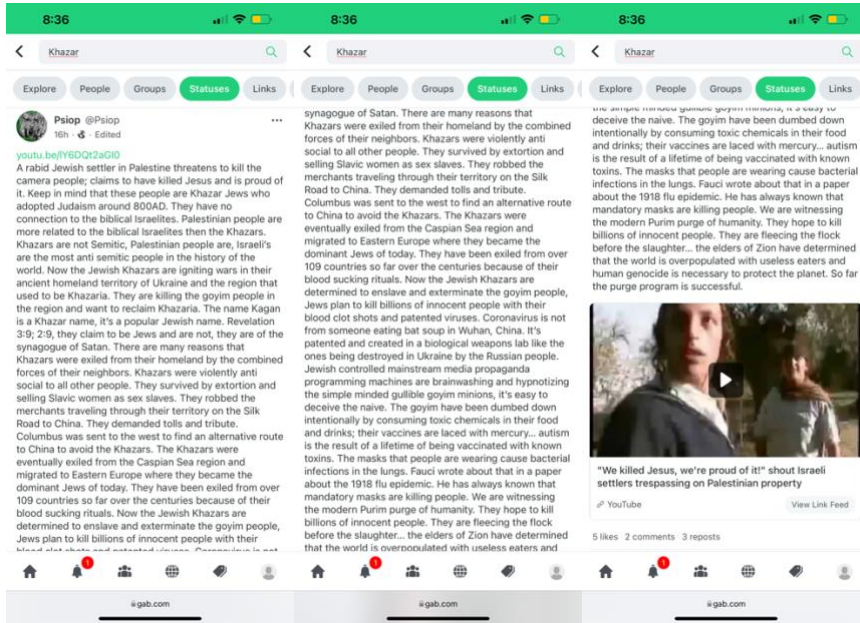

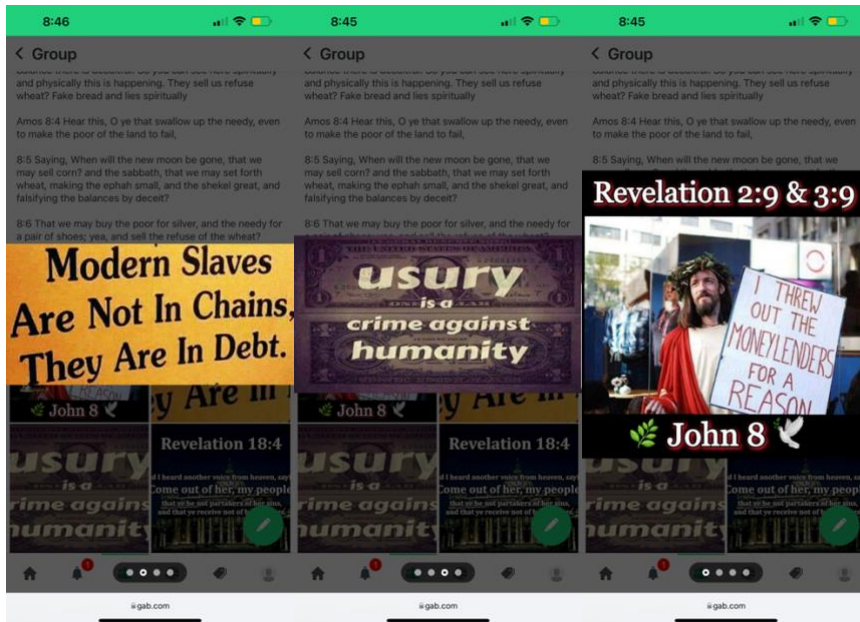*Figure 26. Anti-Jewish Memes posted by @ZadokWatchMinistry*

Figure 27. Post by @ZadokWatchMinistry in "Mature Bible Discussion"
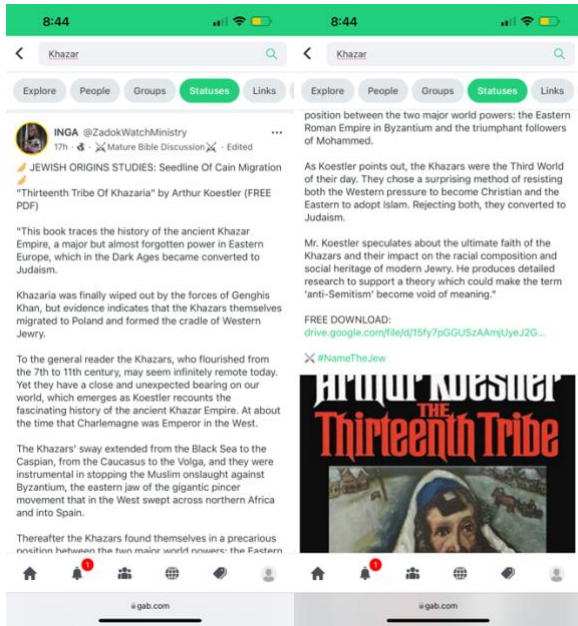

Figure 28. Screenshot of user @BellsJudeth's Gab Profile and Biography

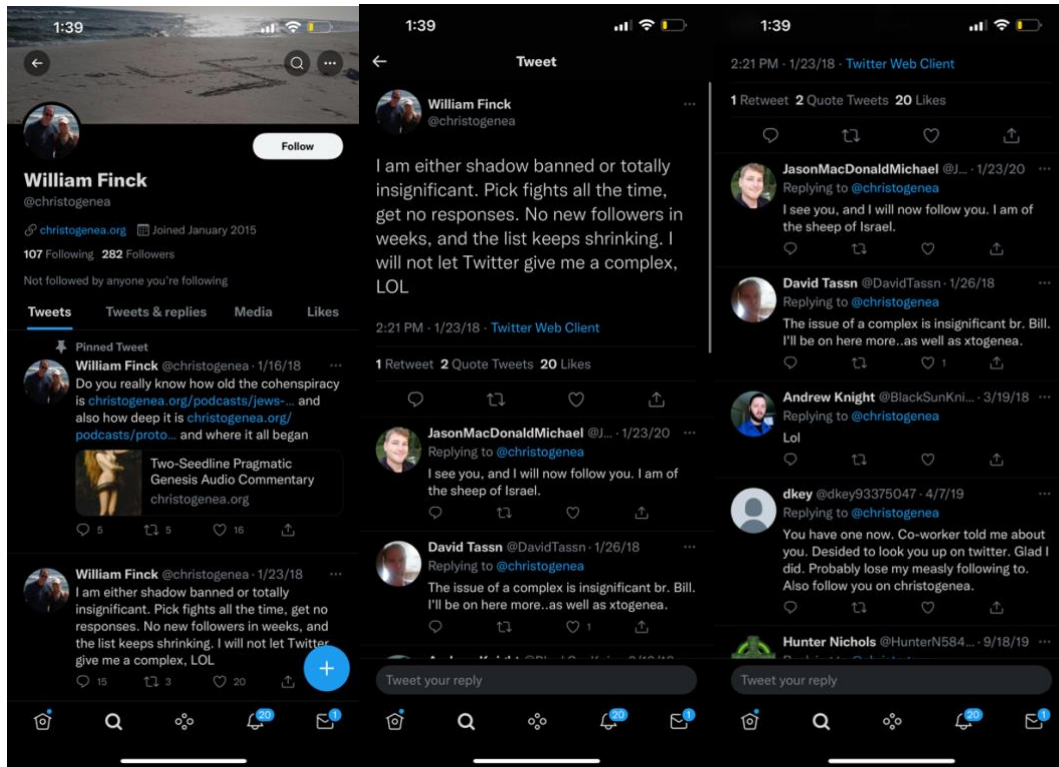*Figure 29. William Finck's Twitter Profile and Latest Tweet*

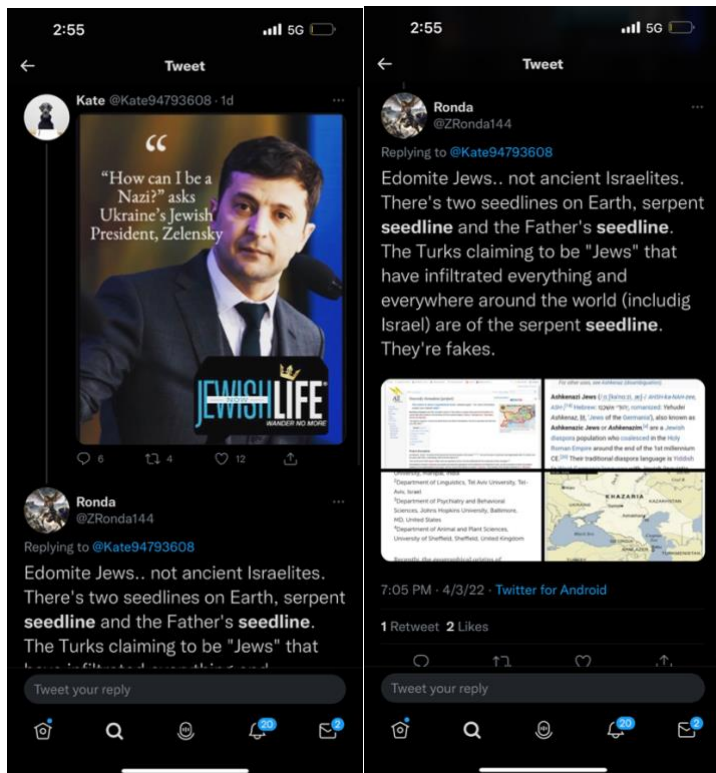*Figure 30. @ZRonda144 Tweet regarding Seedline Theory*

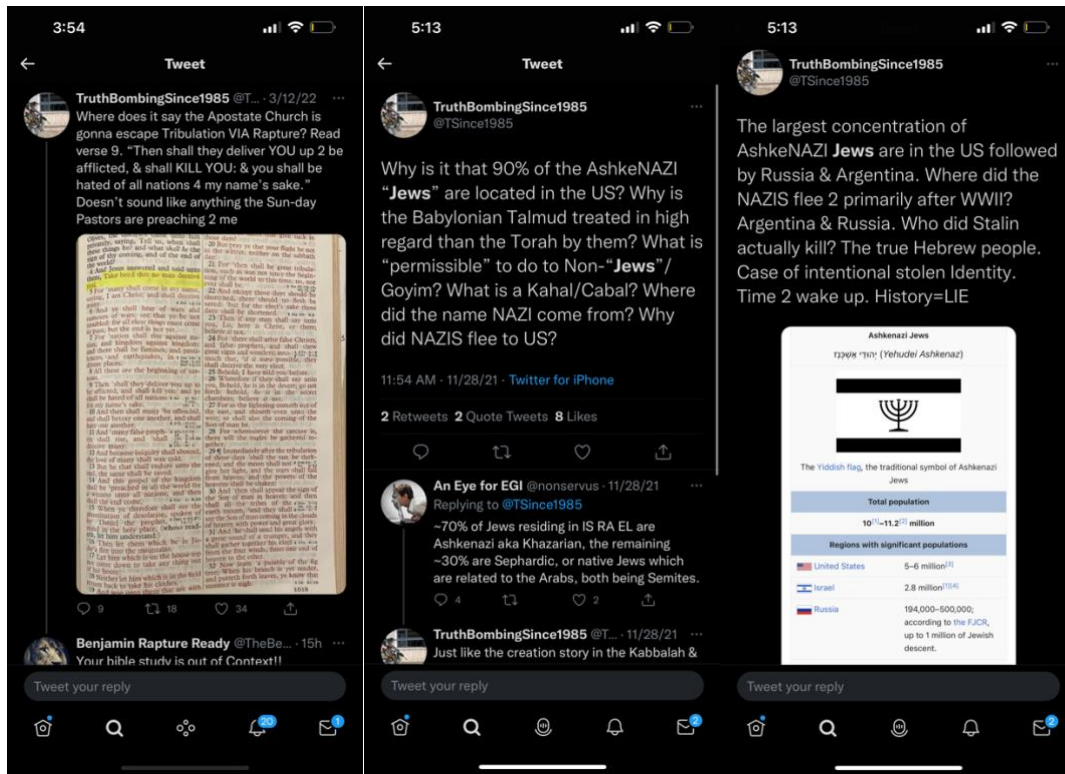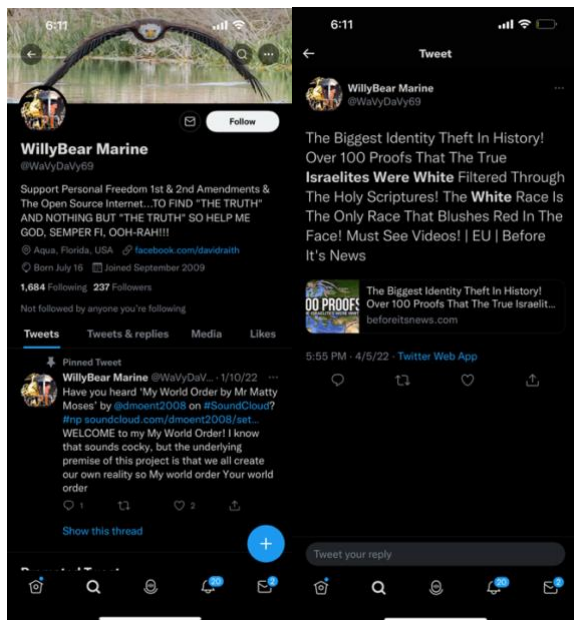*Figure 31. @TruthBombingSince1985's Tweets*

Figure 32. "100 Proofs That the True Israelites Were White" Shared by @WaVyDaVy69 on Twitter

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