

- Digital Influence: 21st Century Storytelling for
fun and profit
THE_DONALD
-

ETIC LAB

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Politics - but not as we know it

- The impact of online communities in politics has been widely debated.
- Advocates insist that social media is an effective tool for collective action.
- Critics hold that conversations on social platforms are ephemeral in nature and typically lead to no effective collective action.
- Morozov [2014] sustains that digital platforms are unable to sustain the attention of people, therefore, they would not engage in political participation as it takes time or involve personal risks.
- Christensen [2011] argues that there is not enough evidence to sustain that Internet activism is replacing traditional political participation, rather, it only helps citizens to become aware of issues.
- Recent research has found that while many activist organisations believe they are creating stronger communities and dialogues with their public through social media, this rarely translates to significant mobilisation with regard to public events or political activism. Guo and Saxton [2014]

Politics - but not as we know it

- A very large number of actors organising in ways that are viewed by authorities such as the press, academia and politicians as illegitimate
- Memes, Trolling, Doxing, Fake Documentary making, an entire portfolio of unorthodox methods
- Acting outside the domain of political parties or indeed normal political campaigns
- Seeking outcomes that are not the product of legislation or even from elected representatives
- Propagandists or political actors?

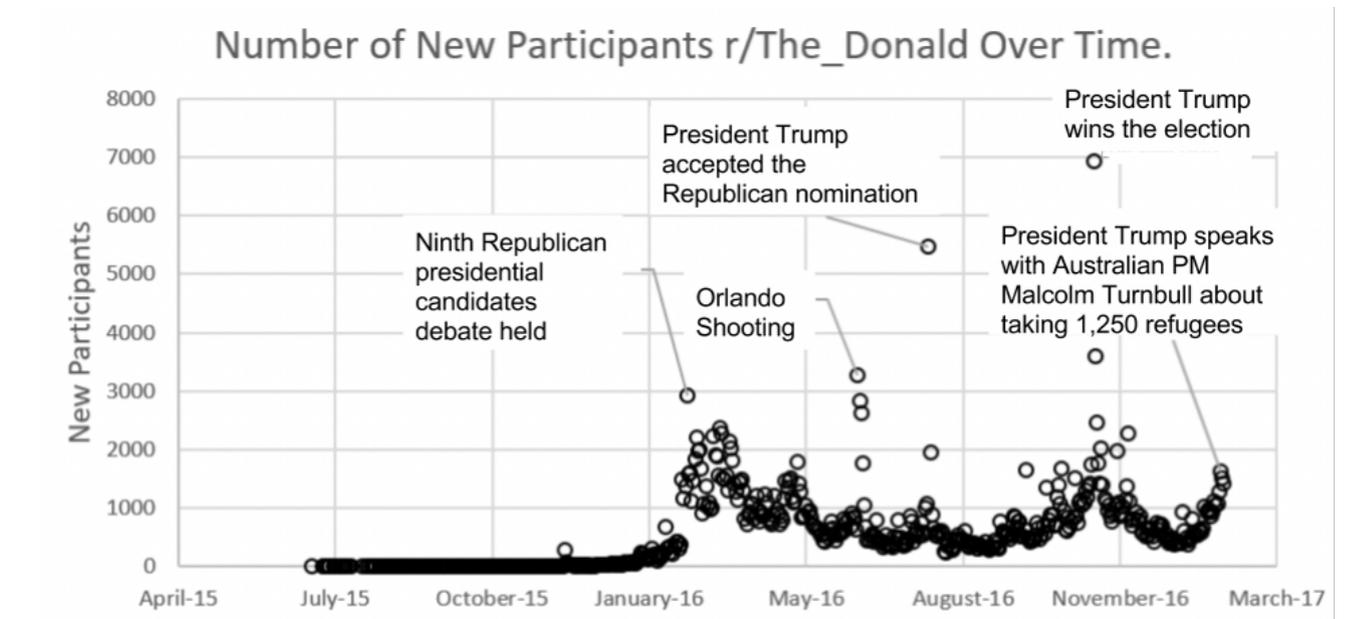
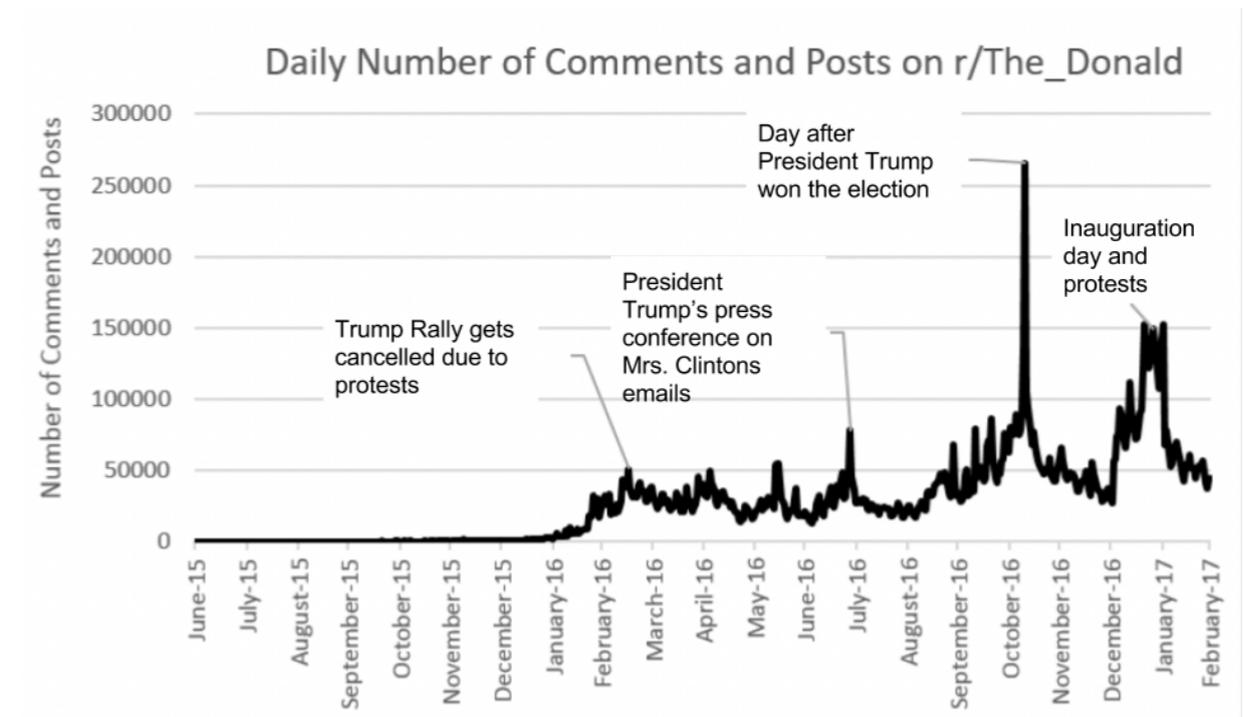


Politics - but not as we know it

- We examined 17 months of comments from the r/The_Donald, up to February 2017.
- A dataset of more than 16 million comments and over 340 thousand participants.
- We analysed the ephemerality of the participants and their behaviours.
- We also analysed two notorious cases where part of the community allegedly participated in collective action.
- Finally, we characterised the behaviour of the most active participants who appeared to engage in activism.

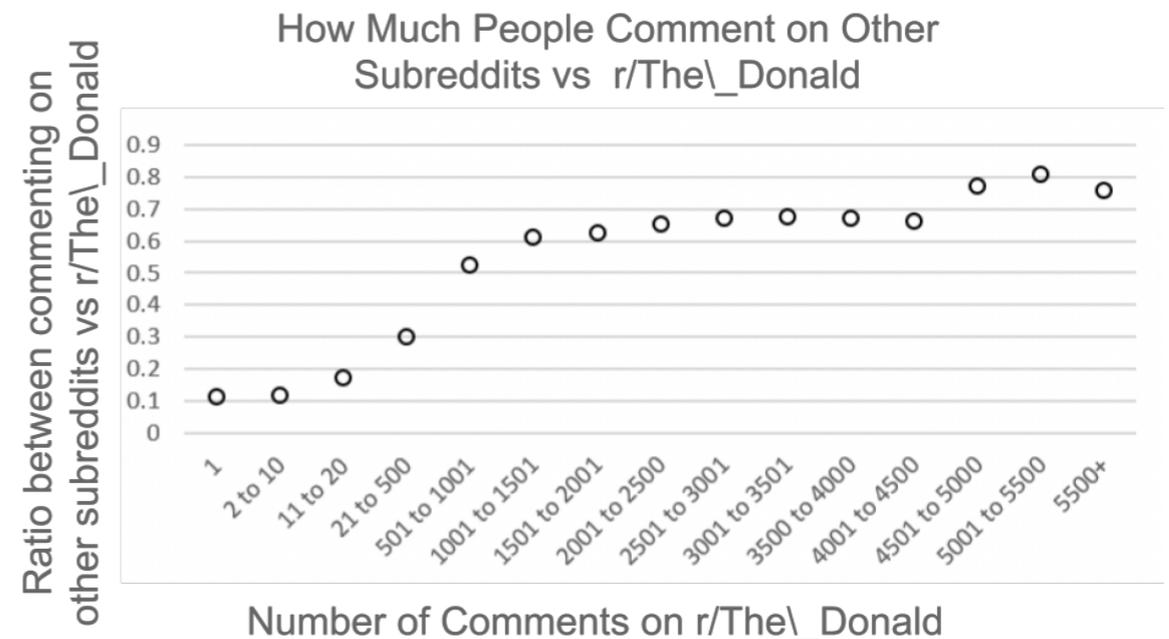
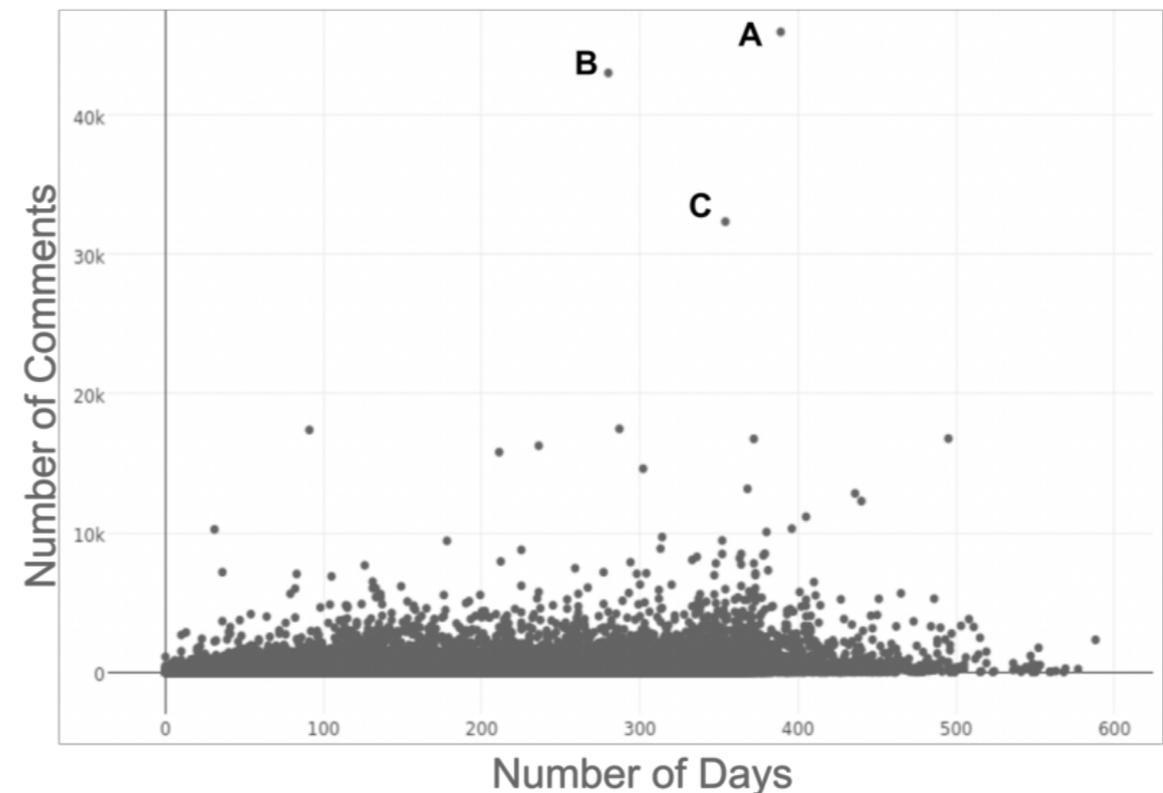
Study - Ephemerality

- Peaks surrounding specific events, but also a steady and high level of activity throughout the period of the presidential campaign.
- Activity actually increased subsequent to the presidential election.



Study - Ephemerality

- Participants on r/The_Donald were active for extended periods of time.
- We can observe that individuals are distributed almost along the whole graph, meaning that they kept active between 100 and 500 days, 65 days on average.
- It is clear from this data that the community is not dominated by those commenters who are only briefly active.



Study - “Dear White People” and Amy Schumer

- We explored whether users on r/The_Donald organised collective action mobilisation efforts.
- Amy Schumer claimed that people on The Donald organised a campaign on Netflix against her to give her show negative reviews.
- On February 8th, 2017 Netflix released the trailer of "Dear White People", a satirical series about a student of colour who navigates a predominantly white Ivy League college.
- We chose these cases since they were covered in mass media, and because they supposedly led to significant consequences, something that the theory of slacktivism regards as impossible

Category	Amy Schu- mer	Dear White People	Doxing	Total Avg (%)
Diagnostic	2760(92.34%)	395(84.59%)	450(84.40%)	90%
Prognostic	174 (5.82%)	39(12.03%)	64(8.33%)	7%
Motivational	55 (1.84%)	34(3.38%)	18(7.26%)	3%

Table 1. Total Comments Per Case per Categories

Study - “Dear White People” and Amy Schumer

- Diagnostic
- “...Look I’m just so tired of the left trying to divide us by race, gender, and skin color [...] We are all Americans [...] This “dear white people” crap is not only insulting to me as a white male, who is currently working and going to college because I couldn’t get scholarships cause of muh privilege. It’s just more race baiting divisive crap from the Left when we all need to focus on MAGA [Make America Great Again]. It really gets under my skin...”
- Prognostic
- “...Lets start our own calletteremail writing campaigns to any companies that terminate an employee over one of these doxing incidents. Lets make them know that by trying to appease these communist aggressors they are pissing us off to the point that we will no longer do business with them...”
- Motivational
- “...All the more reason that we should dump Net- flix. Their "Dear White People Show" they released is a bit too preachy. If Soros is funding, hell yes, I’m done. Pic related: My cancellation receipt <http://imgur.com/a/VbdCK...>”

Nature of The_Donald

- Insofar as individuals chose to customise and participate in an online environment and interact with others - it must reflect who you are or wish to be. Shuler [2015]
- Community of Interest - a group or groups of people who can be identified as sharing a common interest or concern and primarily driven by the exchange of information.
- Community of Practice - share ideas and information, set values, build practices, and develop relationships with peers and stakeholders to focus on a common purpose.
- “Every time I opened up my Internet browser I learned. I spent whole days consuming, digesting, and producing. (*insert poop joke*)”.(
<https://medium.com/@stevenfranssen/to-license-or-not-f14d0a5c159>
)

TRAITORS



THE MODERN BENEDICT ARNOLDS

UNDOCUMENTED DEMOCRATS



IT'S EMPOWERING TO KNOW
ONE DAY I MAY BECOME
HIS FAVORITE WIFE

DON'T LET TRUMP
TAKE AWAY MY DREAMS

#ShariaForAmerica
#WhyIMarched
#SellOurDaughters

MESSAGE BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE MUSLIM ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

NETFLIX Browse Kids DVD

Your Membership is Canceled

An email confirmation will be sent to timothytreadstone@icloud.com.

[Back to Account](#)

Baked Alaska™ @bakedalaska [Follow](#)

Netflix announced a new anti-white show (Dear White People) that promotes white genocide.

I cancelled my account, do the same. [#NoNetflix](#)

Takeaways

- Some participants stayed engaged for long periods of time (65 days on average)
- New subscribers continued arriving at an increasing rate even after the election day, and were not necessarily restricted casual users.
- Sharing ideas and knowledge was and is a cornerstone of their activities, conducting 'research', making memes, distributing memes, Trolling and policing their values on The_Donald all illustrate a community of practice at work.

Other Activist Communities?

JOIN YOUR UNION

The Tenants Union exists to improve the lives of renters across the UK, rebalance power in the rental sector, and be a collective voice for its members.

We're TUUK, a Union for UK based tenants.

The Tenants Union exists to improve the lives of renters across the UK, rebalance power in the rental sector, and be a collective voice for its members.

We – the Tenants Union members – support each other by developing essential services as ways to take back power for ourselves and in response to the lived problems we've faced. As renters, we can be pretty vulnerable: from delayed repairs to stolen deposits, from damp and mould to unsafe buildings, from cramped living conditions to evictions, we're open to all kinds of inconveniences and exploitation.

Leeds results

Lovely student/young professionals 4 bed

Ad details Email advertiser

NEW Ad ref# 8664754



Modern kitchen. The cupboard unit is detachable, which makes emptying it out very easy.



House based in Hyde Park, close to amenities. Fixtures are generally unsafe, and include a kitchen unit which fell off the wall nearly crushing one of the tenants, faulty gas pipes which were condemned by a British Gas engineer, and a leaking shower. Amongst other things.

This house is perfect for students or young professionals who don't know their rights, and are likely to sign a bad contract or be bullied by their landlord.

Luckily, there is now a Tenants Union which is offering free advice, and will help fight your corner if you end up in a hellhole like this.

Reply to this message or search for the Tenants Union UK (TUUK) site online.

Don't be coerced. Unionise.

*As a sweetener, if you've ever left a deposit with a landlord, and it wasn't protected by the government scheme you are entitled to four times the value back, regardless of whether it was returned to you. The TUUK will help you make your claim.

House share
Leeds
LS6

£320 pcm (double)



Availability

Available: Now
Minimum term: None
Maximum term: None
• Short lets considered

Extra cost

Deposit: £312.00
Bills included?: No
Fees apply?: No

Amenities

Furnishings: Furnished
Parking: Yes
Garage: No
Garden/terrace: Yes
Balcony/Patio: No
Disabled access: Yes
Living room: shared
Broadband included: No

Current household

Contact the advertiser

Rrouse
Current Flatmate
Last Online: Today

Email advertiser

In a hurry? Show interest for Free and we will send the advertiser your profile

Read our safety tips.