

# “Gettr-ing” User Insights from the Social Network Gettr

**Filipo Sharevski**

DePaul University  
243 S Wabash Ave  
Chicago, IL  
fsharevs@depaul.edu

**Amy Devine**

DePaul University  
243 S Wabash Ave  
Chicago, IL  
adevine@depaul.edu

**Emma Pieroni**

DePaul University  
243 S Wabash Ave  
Chicago, IL  
epieroni@depaul.edu

**Peter Jachim**

DePaul University  
243 S Wabash Ave  
Chicago, IL  
pjachim@depaul.edu

## Abstract

As yet another alternative social network, Gettr positions itself as the “marketplace of ideas” where users should expect the truth to emerge without any administrative censorship. To understand how this marketplace actually works, we interviewed 124 Gettr users and analyzed their views on how truth is meted out on the platform. While the right-leaning users joined Gettr as a result of a perceived freedom of speech infringement by the mainstream platforms, notably Twitter, the left-leaning users followed them in numbers as to “keep up with the misinformation.” The absence of restrictive actions like muting, removing, or labeling was pointed both as an enabler of free speech in practice (right-leaning) and as an enabler of bullying and harassment (left-leaning). We also found that almost every tenth user in our sample had a bad experience on a mainstream social media platform that forced them to seek refuge on Gettr.

## 1 Introduction

Promising a reprieve from banning and content moderation, fringe social networks are offering alternative social media experience to users disenchanted with participation on mainstream places like Twitter or Facebook. One such place is Gettr (a portmanteau of the words ‘Get Together’), brandishing an image of an alternative platform founded on “the principles of free speech, independent thought and rejecting political censorship and ‘cancel culture’” (Gettr, 2022). This image is not new, as other alternative social networks like Parler offer(ed) users to “express openly, without fear of being deplatformed for their views” (Parler,

2022), Gab “champions free speech” (Gab, 2022), and 4chan allows “anyone to post comments and share images” (4chan, 2022). Therefore, a question arises about what novelty in particular Gettr brings for the fringe communities online.

Alternative social media platforms attract research curiosity with their lax moderation policies, palpable toxicity, and discourse ridden with polarizing and conspiracy narratives. 4chan, with its notorious, politically incorrect /pol board, receives considerable attention in analyzing trends of self-consciously offensive culture and meme virality on social media (Colley and Moore, 2022; Mittos et al., 2020; Zannettou et al., 2018b; Hine et al., 2017). Parler, infamous for providing “just enough” networking cohesion for the violent mob attack on the United States Capitol on 6 January 2021 (Munn, 2021), was empirically analyzed to reveal the patterns of amplification of its political pundits and the deliberate user experience design that inhibits a user’s ability to search for alternative political narratives (Peironi et al., 2021; Aliapoulos et al., 2021). Gab, branded as the “free speech” alternative to Twitter, was found to attract alt-right users, conspiracy theorists, and other trolls that disseminate hate speech on the platform much higher than Twitter, but lower than 4chan’s /pol board (Zannettou et al., 2018a; Lima et al., 2018). And an early look at Gettr (Paudel et al., 2021), showed yet another outlet for toxicity akin to Gab and 4chan, although yet to achieve the level of engagement and activity characteristic for the online fringe communities.

These content-focused looks further inspire an important line of inquiry following online extrem-

ism (Phadke and Mitra, 2021; Gaudette et al., 2021), ideological radicalization (Youngblood, 2020), hate speech (Mathew et al., 2020; Kennedy et al., 2020), and false information (Bleakley, 2021). However, the content-focus looks fail to shed a light on these platforms from the vantage point of the users themselves i.e. no analysis so far gathered users’ insights from participation on any of these alternative platforms. Doing such a user study has nothing to do with legitimizing the platforms’ existence or mission, but instead provides a meaningful context to the predominantly content-focused and data-driven investigations so far. Falling short of understanding the incentive structure for migrating to, and interacting on, these platforms, leaves a rather uninformed research conditions to conjectures about the future trajectories of the fringe communities online. Our study, to the best of our knowledge, is the first one that does a user experience assessment of the Gettr platform in response to this gap.

## 2 Content-focused Look on Gettr

Content-focused looks on Gettr are scarce to find as the platform maintains a highly restricted access to its content. There is, however, a GoGettr API, a third party client for scraping data that was created by the Stanford Internet Observatory (R. Miles McCain et al., 2022), but it does not allow for an up-to-date representative data retrieval. So far, the only paper that analyzes data on Gettr (Paudel et al., 2021) was submitted immediately before Gettr changed the indexing structure of the platform’s posts, a limitation for future content-focused looks that was also acknowledged by the GoGettr API team, confirming no explanation or remediation offered by Gettr so far.

With a very limited data available up to August 9<sup>th</sup> 2021 through the GoGettr API, we collected 6.8 million posts, 373,725 users, and 18,274,986 unique follower/followee relationships to have at least some rough understanding of how the content is structured on Gettr, following the preliminary platform scoping in (Paudel et al., 2021). The summary of the dataset is shown in Table 1.

	Count
Posts	6,814,244
Users	73,725
Followings	18,274,986

Table 1: Dataset Overview

Analyzing the timestamps of the posts as the closest alternative to an order indexing, we built a third-order univariate regression model (Seabold and Perktold, 2010) that captured 96.3% of the variability in the total number of posts over that period of time ( $r^2$ ), with an adjusted  $r^2$  of 95.9%. The model helped us to uncover a weekly cyclical pattern usage/participation on the platform, highlighted in Figure 1, showing a decrease in platform usage on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

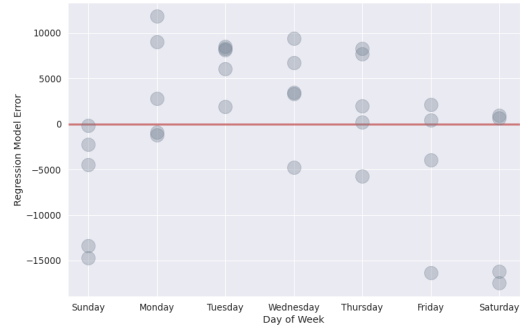


Figure 1: Residuals by day of the week.

Next to when users do post on Gettr, we look how users interact between each other. Due to the limitations of the Gettr API to distinguish between different types of follows, we decided to take a look at how often users mention one another, and how frequently two users mention one another. These relationships constitute some form of a “friendship,” as defined in (Huberman et al., 2009), because they show a more deliberate effort between two people to support each other in a manner that is proactive. Previous work on Twitter examining these “friendships” has found a stronger positive correlation with a user’s engagement on the platform than other relationships with other users like declared follower/followee relationships (Huberman et al., 2009).

In our case, due to the relative newness of the platform in the dataset that we obtained, we limited the number of mentions between two users to be at least one for them to be considered friends. This is simply because users have not had a chance to mention each other too much. We found 1,872 friendship relationships within our dataset, meaning that approximately 0.55% of users are in a friendship. These friendships naturally formed 592 disconnected subsets, of which the majority (500) had just 2 users. A summary of the friendship set is shown in Table 2. A corresponding

graph of all friendships on the platform is plotted in Figure 2.

	Count
<b>Friendship Subsets</b>	592
<b>Basic Friendship (2 users)</b>	500
<b>Total Friendships</b>	1,872
<b>Friendships / Total Users</b>	0.55%

Table 2: Friendships Overview

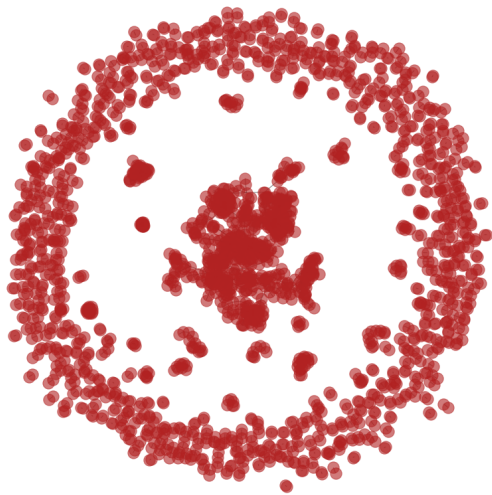


Figure 2: All friendships on the platform - users are represented in red dots, and their friendships are represented with black lines between them, or an overlap. The ring of friendships are smaller for subsets of two or three user friendships on the fringes, and the larger for the friendship groups in the center

As we examined the friendship subgraphs, we noted that while most friendship subgraphs only consisted of a couple of users, there were a couple that were substantially larger. The second largest friendship subgraph, depicted in Figure 3, consisted of a large number of prominent republicans (Matt Gaetz, Rudy Giuliani, Rick Santorum, Mike Pompeo, Sean Spicer), republican organizations (CPAC, Arizona GOP, the Heritage Foundation), and right-leaning political news organizations (Epoch Times, Steve Bannon’s War Room, Newsmax, National Pulse). Together, this shows a public sphere of influence, where people in that subgraph mention one another, and there are clear ideological similarities in the narratives that they present to their audiences.

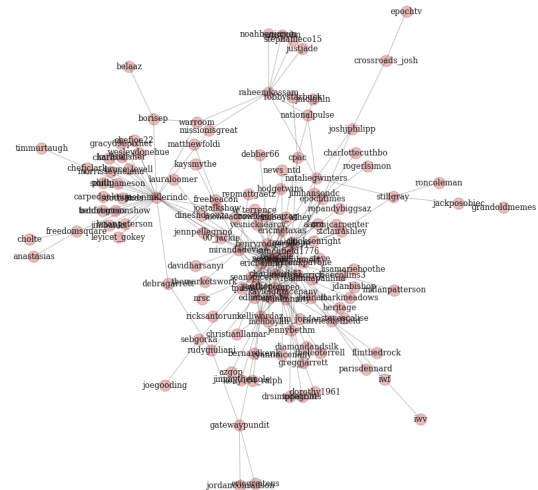


Figure 3: This is a friendship subgraph that shows a large number of prominent right-thought leaders, including prominent republicans, republican organizations, and right-leaning news organizations

### 3 Gettr: User Insights

A content-focused look is certainly useful in uncovering the macroscopic trends that shape the participation and the appeal of Gettr. However, a look into Gettr from a user perspective provides us with a context of platform participation on a more microscopic, granular level, an analysis absent from the research on alt-platforms so far. To our knowledge, this is a first study that brings the individual voices of the Gettr users to the fore and analyzes them in the context of their participation in the online fringe communities (Munn, 2019). Such an analysis uncovers the “pipeline” through which users normalize and acclimate to the discourse on Gettr. To this objective we conducted a user study, approved by our Institutional Review Board (IRB) before any research activities began, where Gettr users were invited to expound on:

- What is the value proposition they see in Gettr;
- How they participate and express themselves on Gettr;
- What kind of information they usually get from Gettr and how they consume it; and
- Social media and Gettr experiences.

We set to sample a population that was 18 years or above old, a Gettr account holder, from the United States through the Amazon Mechanical Turk and Prolific. Both reputation and attention checks were included to prevent input from bots and poor responses. The user study asked open-ended questions and it took around 20-30 minutes to complete. Participants were compensated with the standard participation rate of \$27.64/hr. The study was anonymous and allowed users to skip any question they were uncomfortable answering. We also collected participants' political leanings, race/ethnicity, level of education, gender identity, and age.

After the consolidation and consistency checks, a total of 124 participants completed the study. To ensure consistency in the analysis and validity of the results, each of the open-ended responses in the survey was coded independently by three researchers. The codebook was simple and included a coding on the justification quotes from the participants on each of the four research questions above. The Fleiss's kappa  $\kappa = 0.981$  for the 95% confidence, indicating an "excellent" inter-coder agreement overall.

The distribution of participants per their self-reported political leanings was: 29 left-leaning (23.38%), 42 moderate (33.87%), 40 right-leaning (32.25%), and 13 apolitical (10.5%). In respect to race/ethnicity, 91 identified as White (73.38%), 29 as Black or African American (9.67%), 13 as Asian (10.48%), 7 as Latinx (5.64%), and 1 as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (0.83%). Education-wise, 22 of the participants had a high-school level (17.74%), 84 some college or 2/4-year college (67.74%), and 19 had a graduate level of education (14.52%). Gender-wise, 47 of the participants were female (37.9%), 72 were male (58.06%), and 6 identified as non-binary (4.04%). Age-wise, 25 were in the 18 - 24 bracket (20.17%), 36 in the 25 - 34 (29.03%), 35 in the 35 - 44 (28.23%), 16 in the 45 - 54 (12.9%), and 12 in the 55 - 64 bracket (9.67%). The distribution of the sample is balanced on the political leanings, gender identity, and age, while skewed towards white and college-level educated participants.

### 3.1 Gettr's Value Proposition

Our results reveal several reasons why people joined Gettr. The most prevalent one is the users' objection to a perceived censorship and freedom of

speech infringement by the mainstream platforms, notably Twitter [**P** denotes a participant and the number their index in the sample]:

[P44] *Gettr doesn't censor free thought and having been on Twitter for many years, I have seen the decline in the quality of the site. From suspending accounts to slapping false "fact check" labels on posts, Twitter has gone from a quality platform to a Gestapo site. Many of my friends have gone over to Gettr and love it, as do I. We aren't free if we can't express thoughts without fear of being banned.* [right-leaning]

[P38] *I don't like the politics of Twitter, and I would love to see an alternative take its place. I am tired of the censorship of conservative voices. I was further annoyed that Parler wasn't allowed to exist (although I am disappointed in Parler's lack of effort to find web hosting.)* [right-leaning]

[P7] *I decided to participate in Gettr because radical feminists are being banned from Twitter left and right just for stating basic facts. I have not been banned but friends of mine have and it's only a matter of time until I am as well.* [left-leaning]

[P52] *The main reason was free speech. A lot of posts on the other social platforms get censored if the discussion gets controversial or it does not fit the narrative of the general populace. It is always important to hear the viewpoints of everyone even if they do not align with yours and hopefully find a common platform where everyone has a voice.* [moderate]

[P32] *I was tired of censorship on other social media platforms. I want to hear different perspectives.* [apolitical]

Interestingly, the political leanings across the entire spectrum considerably factored in joining Gettr. The right-leaning and moderate participants were drawn to the freedom of speech value proposition of the platform, while the left-leaning joined Gettr in numbers mostly out of curiosity to see what the "opposition is saying:"

[P35] *Curiosity. I know that it prides itself on not censoring its subscriber base, so wanted to see how racist//sexist/transphobic the posts were. I think knowing what the “other” side thinks, so as to better inform yourself of the issues and opinions and to know how to combat those ideas.*

[P20] *I wanted to see what the Trump supporters were up to in their new echo chamber.*

[P48] *Although I am quite liberal, I was interested to see what kind of information/misinformation was shared on Gettr. I think there’s value in trying to understand the opposing views and trying to learn why they believe the things that they do.*

[P89] *I don’t believe or trust anything on that site nor the users and politics that it promotes. I do though want to know what my enemy is up to. My main reason is to observe out of curiosity.*

Participants with some high school or high school graduate level were predominantly right-leaning and moderate, indicating that “a lot of people [they] follow on twitter have been banned, so [they] joined Gettr to hopefully get uncensored and non biased information again.” [P71]. The some/or 2/4-year college graduate participants reflect the aforementioned free-speech/spy-on-conservatives dichotomy as they comprised the largest part of our sample. The post-graduate educated participants, balanced on the political spectrum, provided justifications for what precisely pushed them towards Gettr, for example, “*Twitter recently they banned Babylon Bee, a satire account for their jokes, which a clear violation of first amendment where’s Gettr believes in our constitutional rights.*” [P53]. Gender-wise, the conformity to the observed dichotomy of the Gettr’s appeal is also preserved:

[P75] *To try something new for a change to share my ideas about free speech, since like using other platforms such as Twitter to express said thoughts, was a lot more difficult and hate-arousing. [male, right-leaning]*

[P12] *Curiosity to see what the far-right bubble had to say about things [male, left-leaning]*

[P37] *It seems to be a better source of information than Twitter [female, right-leaning]*

[P89] *I wanted to see what conservatives are posting since i feel like most liberals like myself aren’t aware [female, left-leaning]*

[P101] *Some people I follow on twitter created accounts there, so I wanted to see their updates [non-binary, moderate]*

[P28] *I screenshot people saying weird like far-right things and make fun of them with my friends [non-binary, left-leaning]*

Age-wise, the participants in the [18 - 24] bracket were mostly joining Gettr for making connections and “*trying new things, not a fan of the modern social media giants and their censorship*” [P90]. The [25 - 34] participants added more context on to the “trying something new” premise, stating that “*other sites are stale; You deal with the same lack of trust of them and want to get away from all the negativity*” [P108]. The [35 - 44] participant got even more concrete and stated they joined Gettr “*so I can talk and converse that have same political beliefs as me and not be ostracized by everyone*” [P59]. The [45 - 54] participants contextualized this stance by doubling down on the “*free speech, against the massive push for cancel culture on social media*” [P106]. The [55 - 64] participants added the differentiation niche with Twitter, as they were “*was interested to see if indeed Gettr would be better than Twitter*”. [P83].

Participants also pointed out that they came to Gettr because “*some friends of their friends did*” [P81] and several noted that “*many of the conservative talk show personalities that they listen to are on Gettr and they recommended it*” [P122]. One of the participants found the platform design and features appealing: “*I enjoy the user interface of Gettr as well as it’s more approachable community. As a moderate conservative, I fit in well with almost everyone I have encountered on the platform. Gettr also gives the option to link it to an individual’s Twitter.*” [P99]. The informative value of the content on Gettr was also appealing as “*it seems to be a better source of information than Twitter*” [P37] where users can “*stay up to date with news*” [P54].

### 3.2 Participation and Expression on Gettr

Around 27.5% of all the participants indicated they participate through writing original posts and commenting/liking on other's user posts. Either commenting (29%) or liking (21.8%) on other's user posts was how roughly half the participants spent their time on Gettr. The remaining 21.5% of the participants indicated that they are "mostly just browsing and exploring the platform" [P29]. When asked what motivates a user to participate on Gettr, the right-leaning and apolitical participants cited the appeal of a "personally involving discourse" while the moderates and left-leaning cited leaned more towards a "constructive discourse":

[P27] *If I have a strong opinion on it or get emotionally worked up.* [right-leaning]

[P29] *I do not fully agree with their conservative agenda, but being on the site and involved in the commentary helps me see the "other side" as it was.* [moderate]

[P86] *I am interested in learning more about peoples opinions on many issues, especially political issues that are different than my own.* [left-leaning]

[P43] *If I see interesting topics that resonate with me.* [apolitical]

We queried the participants about how Gettr's self-proclaimed "free speech" image facilitates their expression on the platform. The right-leaning participants stated that Gettr: "doesn't ban people for saying things that big government and the elites might not like" [P22], "seeks to eliminate the 'cancel culture'" [P33], "Allows free exchange of information that is factual, despite what Twitter says" [P44], and "allows a person who believes in Donald Trump to be able to express those views and not be censored" [P59]. The moderates explicitly highlighted a comparison to Twitter as being "strict about removing content that they deem is not correct - even if I don't agree with what someone is saying, I would prefer to see the content instead of having it removed" [P97]. The left-leaning participants didn't miss to point out that "Gettr prides itself on freedom of speech, but obviously it doesn't condone bullying, harassment, threatening behavior, etc; So far concerning

'ideas', Gettr is pretty lax and unobtrusive [P35]. They also pointed out the UX support for freedom of speech, as "there is no muting or removing" on the platform [P36].

In regards to the way of expression, we asked the participants if they use textual content only, emojis, and/or memes (or combination of). The right leaning participants preferred textual expression as not to "hijack the post" with multimedia [P38] or to "voice different perspectives that the news does not do a good enough job of covering" [P23]. The moderates opted for textual expression because "it's faster and easier and allows you to be as clear and specific as possible" [P91]. Although many liberal-leaning participants come to Gettr to "lurk and spy on conservatives" [P14], those who actively participate "always try to be respectful and still get their point across" [P34] as well as use "specific wording to balance their views, but not agitate, and shut down discussions [P48].

The right-leaning participants utilized emojis mostly to accentuate a point, e.g. "use emojis that correspond with the emotion of my reaction to a post, for example, if I am angry about what is said in a post, I will use the anger emoji [P47]. The moderates utilized emojis just to show appreciation for other's posts [P120]. The left-leaning participants avoided using emojis, arguing that "emojis give people a way out, and if I engage, I am generally looking for answers or at least understanding of why certain views are held" [P34]. When it comes to memes, the left-leaning and apolitical participants strongly avoided using them, while the moderates used them "usually as joke/humor" [P106]. Fun was also the most cited reason for using memes by the right-leaning participants, as "memes are funny in a political way; I post memes that poke fun at liberals." [P122].

### 3.3 Information Consumption on Gettr

Regarding information consumption, we first asked the participants if there is any information they get exclusively on Gettr and nowhere else on social media. Participants singled out:

[P22] *News involving COVID vaccines and statements*

[P53] *Babylon Bee, James O'Keefe, and Project Veritas content and commentary*



[P59] *The MAGA movement information and the ways to de-certify the election*

[P19] *Opinions on minor Republican primary candidates*

We also asked if the participants have compared information between other social networks and Gettr. From the mainstream platforms, expectedly, Twitter was the most sought after place for information comparison across the political spectrum. The left-leaning and apolitical participants mostly avoided the alternative platforms (less than 8% in both groups have looked outside of Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or Reddit), while the moderates had a preference for comparison with 4chan. The right-leaning participants were equally interested in comparing Gettr information with Parler, Truth Social, Gab, and 4chan (23.35%) while maintaining the main focus on the mainstream social networks (76.65%).

We noticed that male participants have a much stronger preference for comparing information between Gettr on one side, and Reddit, Truth Social, Gab, and 4chan on the other side (35.78%). The female and non-binary participants mostly turned to the mainstream social networks for information comparison (only 14% and none, respectively, had looked at any alternative community). The participants with some/high school degree mostly preferred Twitter and Reddit, but also turned to the alternative platforms. The some/college graduates participants had equal preference within the mainstream and alternative platform groups, though much in favor of the Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit (72.64%). The post-graduate participants mostly sought comparison of information on the mainstream platforms (74.45%). Age-wise, the trend remains similar to the above, with the less interest for the alternative social networks among the young and more senior participants (only 7% and 4.5%, respectively, had looked at any of these communities).

### 3.4 Social Media and Gettr Experiences

We asked the participants if they had had a bad experience on Gettr or another another social network. We did so because our content analysis revealed that 620 unique users mentioned that they were subject of personal harassment in their profile descriptions (a similar trend was observed on Parler where the “banning” was used as a badge

of honor (Peironi et al., 2021)). Citing personal harassment, 10.48% of the participants reported a bad experience on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Reddit.

[P123] *I've gotten some pretty nasty remarks from people that I don't know on Twitter over content that I did not consider controversial [right-leaning]*

[P29] *I've been shamed as a bigot for doing nothing wrong on Twitter before. I'm not even conservative! [moderate]*

[P14] *Plenty. Discourse with Conservatives on platforms such as Facebook quickly devolves into name-calling and personal attacks [left-leaning]*

Our content analysis revealed that 496 unique users mentioned that they got banned from the mainstream social networks into their profile descriptions: 13 of those users explicitly used the term “Facebook Jail” badge of honor in their profiles, 32 people self-described themselves as “shadow-banned”, citing bans and content moderation, 11.29% of the participants complained about bad experience on the mainstream platforms:

[P21] *I got put in “Facebook Jail” a few times for information and thoughts I posted about COVID, which turned me off on using Facebook [right-leaning]*

[P30] *Yeah, Facebook and Twitter would put stupid warnings on posts about stuff I posted, but I was actually right [moderate]*

[P85] *I was banned on Facebook for speaking the truth about the #metoo [left-leaning]*

We also asked the participants about what would make them consider leaving Gettr. Interestingly, the dichotomy we observed throughout the analysis so far is somewhat reversed: the left-leaning participants would not leave Gettr for anything while the moderates and right-leaning participants would seek other platforms if censorship/bans crept in on Gettr or users start abandoning it. Drawing on the experience of Parler, some participants express worries about Gettr being

“shut down by Apple or Google” [P44]. An introduction of “overwhelmingly biased recommendation algorithm like Twitter” [P68], “changes in the user interface” [P79] and introduction of “content moderation” [P97] were also mentioned several times besides the main points of free-speech/opposition credo:

[P4] *Censorship is the only thing that would cause me to leave. If Gettr ever gets to be like Twitter or Facebook by censoring important stories I will leave to find something better* [right-leaning]

[P27] *If Gettr started banning people and limiting freedom of expression I would probably leave it* [moderate]

[P14] *Nothing, as I only use Gettr for conflict, and to understand the Conservative zeitgeist* [left-leaning]

## 4 Discussion

### 4.1 User Experience on Gettr

The deep insights from Gettr reveal that users on the platform ‘get *asymmetrically* together’ usually during the work week. Perhaps the weekends are left for the other platforms, as virtually everyone we interviewed confirmed they regularly use other social networks, most notably Twitter and Reddit. The asymmetric nature of the discourse, characteristic for the fringe platforms, is also confirmed with our findings that suggest a similar centrality towards right-thought “celebrities” as is the case on Parler (Peironi et al., 2021) and Gab (Zannettou et al., 2018a).

We found evidence that people do bring their identity to the fore on Gettr and virtually in all cases the participation in the discourse encompasses expression of their political attitudes. The ones being moderate or leaning right on the political spectrum cited, in no uncertain terms, their disenchantment of Twitter’s banning and moderation as the reason why they joined Gettr. Within our sample, more than 10% of the people were actually being banned from the mainstream platforms, a rather large number for a relatively small number of users reviewed. The ones leaning left, followed in considerable numbers because they saw a value in “seeing what misinformation the opposition is spreading around.”

When it comes to (mis)information, the self-reported topics on Gettr were related to the COVID-19 vaccines and statements, commentary of right-thought pundits and narratives like Project Veritas, MAGA movement information, and republican candidates debates. Interestingly, very few of the participants directly mentioned the topics we identified in the cluster as ones they are interested in or discuss on Gettr. Overall, none of the participants were ready to leave the platform but indicated that it is a possibility if Gettr decides to implement “censorship”. The moderate and right-leaning participants were also concerned about Gettr being shut down by Apple or Google like Parler was and the left-leaning participants were concerned about where else they can find a similar source of “conservative zeitgeist.”

From our results it appears that so far users are satisfied with the value proposition of Gettr. We even got far-left participants that found a refuge on Gettr after being banned on Twitter, suggesting that Gettr—at least for now—works to maintain an image they believe is a “free-speech keeper” (Sharevski et al., 2021). Some of the participants expressed that by using this posture Gettr does not condone bullying, harassment, and threatening behaviour, which is an issue that Gettr might face soon or later since the “marketplace of ideas” metaphor does not have a static meaning in the broader legal interpretation of the First Amendment online (Schroeder, 2018).

### 4.2 Limitations and Future Work

In regards our user study, we were limited in obtaining a larger sample as it was difficult to reach the Gettr user population and many Gettr users declined to participate. Future research, if Gettr is still present in the social network space, could attempt to replicate this study with a larger user population in order to provide a basis for a more insightful quantitative analysis of the user experience. We also took a very cautious phenomenological approach in surveying the user experience on Gettr. The sample citations included each of the responses to the four research questions were selected by a unanimous agreement between the three independent coders/researchers, however, this does not preclude the analysis to be affected by some degree of selection bias. We acknowledge that other group of coders/researchers could select citations different than the once we



selected, though we believe the end result of the analysis will remain effectively the same.

In our future work, we plan to expose Gettr users to particular content or findings about the platform and obtain their opinions as to capture how Gettr maintains (or not) the principles of free speech and independent thought. Another line of inquiry following our study is the diffusion of information between Twitter, Reddit, and other alt-platforms that aims to track how the right-thought “celebrities” manage to maintain their active presence across the social network sphere as we did not delve deeper to analyze the content of the most popular accounts on Gettr.

## 5 Conclusion

Gettr, at the current stage, appears more as a pathway rather than a fully formed “pipeline” through which the disenchantment of the so-called Big-Tech social networks shapes the alternative agenda. With a simple user interface, it does allow acclimation for users perceived as outcasts from the mainstream social media discourse on both sides of the political spectrum and not just on the right. However, we had to uncover this evidence only through user interviews as the Gettr administrators inhibited any effort to objectively determine the larger discourse trends on the platform. We hope our attempt to look deep inside the platform is the first step towards uncovering the “truth” about the inner workings of Gettr, which, eventually will emerge.

## References

- 4chan. 2022. [4chan: What is 4chan?](#)
- Max Aliapoulos, Emmi Bevensee, Jeremy Blackburn, Barry Bradlyn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Gianluca Stringhini, and Savvas Zannettou. 2021. An early look at the parler online social network. In *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, volume 15, pages 943–951. AAAI.
- Paul Bleakley. 2021. [Panic, pizza and mainstreaming the alt-right: A social media analysis of pizzagate and the rise of the qanon conspiracy](#). *Current Sociology*, 0(0):00113921211034896.
- Thomas Colley and Martin Moore. 2022. [The challenges of studying 4chan and the alt-right: ‘come on in the water’s fine’](#). *New Media & Society*, 24(1):5–30.
- Gab. 2022. [Gab: A social network that champions free speech, individual liberty and the free flow of information online](#).
- Tiana Gaudette, Ryan Scrivens, Garth Davies, and Richard Frank. 2021. [Upvoting extremism: Collective identity formation and the extreme right on reddit](#). *New Media & Society*, 23(12):3491–3508.
- Gettr. 2022. [Gettr: The marketplace of ideas](#).
- Gabriel Hine, Jeremiah Onaolapo, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Nicolas Kourtellis, Ilias Leontiadis, Riginos Samaras, Gianluca Stringhini, and Jeremy Blackburn. 2017. [Kek, cucks, and god emperor trump: A measurement study of 4chan’s politically incorrect forum and its effects on the web](#). *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, 11(1):92–101.
- Bernardo Huberman, Daniel M. Romero, and Fang Wu. 2009. [Social networks that matter: Twitter under the microscope](#). *First Monday*.
- Brendan Kennedy, Xisen Jin, Aida Mostafazadeh Davani, Morteza Dehghani, and Xiang Ren. 2020. Contextualizing hate speech classifiers with post-hoc explanation. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2005.02439*.
- Lucas Lima, Julio C.S. Reis, Philippe Melo, Fabricio Murai, Leandro Araujo, Pantelis Vikatos, and Fabricio Benevenuto. 2018. [Inside the right-leaning echo chambers: Characterizing gab, an unmoderated social system](#). In *2018 IEEE/ACM International Conference on Advances in Social Networks Analysis and Mining (ASONAM)*, pages 515–522.
- Binny Mathew, Anurag Illendula, Punyajoy Saha, Soumya Sarkar, Pawan Goyal, and Animesh Mukherjee. 2020. [Hate begets hate: A temporal study of hate speech](#). *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact.*, 4(CSCW2).
- Alexandros Mittos, Savvas Zannettou, Jeremy Blackburn, and Emiliano De Cristofaro. 2020. [“and we will fight for our race!” a measurement study of genetic testing conversations on reddit and 4chan](#). *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media*, 14(1):452–463.
- Luke Munn. 2019. [Alt-right pipeline: Individual journeys to extremism online](#). *First Monday*.
- Luke Munn. 2021. [More than a mob: Parler as preparatory media for the u.s. capitol storming](#). *First Monday*, 26(3).
- Parler. 2022. [Parler: The premier global free speech platform](#).
- Pujan Paudel, Jeremy Blackburn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Savvas Zannettou, and Gianluca Stringhini. 2021. [An early look at the gettr social network](#). *arXiv preprint arXiv:2108.05876*.

- Emma Peironi, Peter Jachim, Nathaniel Jachim, and Filipo Sharevski. 2021. Parlermonium: A data-driven ux design evaluation of the parler platform. In *Critical Thinking in the Age of Misinformation CHI 2021*.
- Shruti Phadke and Tanushree Mitra. 2021. [Educators, solicitors, flammers, motivators, sympathizers: Characterizing roles in online extremist movements](#). *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact.*, 5(CSCW2).
- R. Miles McCain, Konrad Iturbe, Ashwin Ramaswami, and Alex Turk. 2022. GoGettr.
- Jared Schroeder. 2018. Toward a discursive marketplace of ideas: Reimagining the marketplace metaphor in the era of social media, fake news, and artificial intelligence. *First Amendment Studies*, 52(1-2):38–60.
- Skipper Seabold and Josef Perktold. 2010. statsmodels: Econometric and statistical modeling with python. In *9th Python in Science Conference*.
- Filipo Sharevski, Peter Jachim, Emma Pieroni, and Nate Jachim. 2021. [Voxpop: An experimental social media platform for calibrated \(mis\)information discourse](#). In *New Security Paradigms Workshop, NSPW '21*, page 88–107, New York, NY, USA. Association for Computing Machinery.
- Mason Youngblood. 2020. Extremist ideology as a complex contagion: the spread of far-right radicalization in the united states between 2005 and 2017. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 7(1):1–10.
- Savvas Zannettou, Barry Bradlyn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Haewoon Kwak, Michael Sirivianos, Gianluca Stringhini, and Jeremy Blackburn. 2018a. [What is gab: A bastion of free speech or an alt-right echo chamber](#). In *Companion Proceedings of the The Web Conference 2018, WWW '18*, page 1007–1014, Republic and Canton of Geneva, CHE. International World Wide Web Conferences Steering Committee.
- Savvas Zannettou, Tristan Caulfield, Jeremy Blackburn, Emiliano De Cristofaro, Michael Sirivianos, Gianluca Stringhini, and Guillermo Suarez-Tangil. 2018b. [On the origins of memes by means of fringe web communities](#). In *Proceedings of the Internet Measurement Conference 2018, IMC '18*, page 188–202, New York, NY, USA. Association for Computing Machinery.