damage that even one person can do, as Anders Brievik, Dylann Roof, and others have demonstrated. I agree that the AR and white nationalism in general will remain marginalized, but I would say that it is equally true that we cannot afford to imagine that the extreme will remain on the margins, or that marginal means unimportant or even nonthreatening.

Response to Damon T. Berry

doi:10.1017/S1755048318000421

George Hawley
University of Alabama

Professor Berry raised many important points in his review, and I am grateful for his thoughtful reading. Studying the extreme right in this disruptive period poses unique challenges. Events develop quickly, and work rapidly becomes out of date. In the case of *Making Sense of the Alt-Right*, many of the questions I raised have already been answered. The Alt-Right appears to be finished as a meaningful force in American life. The meaning of the Alt-Right's rise and collapse remains unclear, however.

At the time I was writing the book, just before and after the 2016 presidential election, I noted that the Alt-Right would try to move beyond the Internet and into the real world. It was unknown at the time whether they would be successful. In his review, Berry predicted that the "amorphousness and ludic nature of the movement coupled with the rampant divisions within may in fact keep this from happening." He is almost certainly correct.

The Alt-Right has experienced little but defeat over the last year and a half. After the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, VA, which resulted in the death of an anti-racist protester, the Alt-Right brand suffered a devastating blow, the movement has been mostly deplatformed from online payment processers, major trolls have been banned from social media, and infighting has turned the movement into a circular firing squad.

In short, the Alt-Right increasing looks like the ineffectual and self-destructive groups that Berry analyzed in his book, groups that the Alt-Right once derisively described as "White Nationalism 1.0." The most notorious figures of the Alt-Right may soon be as little remembered as Ben Klassen and Revilo Oliver. Rather than a permanent fixture of

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048318000421 Published online by Cambridge University Press

American political life, we may remember the Alt-Right as just one more oddity of the Trump era, ultimately signifying little.

By pointing out the Alt-Right's present weakness, I am not suggesting that its opponents should be complacent. As we have seen, even a marginalized and weakened extreme right can be incredibly dangerous. In fact, if the Alt-Right continues to decline, and its chances of achieving any real success as a conventional political movement effectively disappear, its likelihood of spawning violent groups may increase. It is easy to imagine new groups analogous to The Order appearing on the scene. I am very concerned about new white supremacist groups like Atomwaffen Division, for example. Extreme right lone wolf attacks are also a significant threat, and very difficult to predict and prevent.

The Alt-Right's decline also raises new questions. Did the Alt-Right implode because it made mistakes, or was it destined to fail because too few white Americans are amenable to its message? Could more skillful propagandists have brought a white nationalist mass movement into the real world? Much of the Alt-Right apparently thinks so, which is why debates about strategy and "optics" became so acrimonious in the movement toward the end of 2017.

The Alt-Right's recent optimism was partially justified. Anti-racists across the rest of the political spectrum were similarly right to be worried as the Alt-Right's prominence grew. As Berry noted, recent political developments, especially the 2016 presidential election, indicate that many white Americans possess the kinds of racial anxiety and animus that the Alt-Right sought to harness. The Alt-Right thought "normies" could be persuaded to embrace explicit white identity politics.

The Alt-Right's hopes were not realized, but it is still unclear to me how much ideological distance there really is between the typical Trump voter and the Alt-Right. The overwhelming majority of white Americans recoil at swastikas, right-wing violence, and rhetoric about ethnic cleansing. At the same time, the President of the United States campaigned as a right-wing populist and nativist. It is obvious that many white Americans simultaneously feel high levels of racial resentment, while rejecting the theatricality of the extreme right.

Berry correctly noted that the problem of racism is much deeper than the Alt-Right and its major voices. Fixating only on extreme manifestations of racism can furthermore blind us to more banal, but apparently intractable, sources of social inequity. On the other hand, the quest for a unified theory of racism may have pitfalls of its own.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048318000421 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Berry described "white nationalism, and by extension the AR, as mutations of institutionalized racism that has long been a part of the social and political life of the United States." I think this statement is true, but it also seems incomplete. Do all forms of racism arise from the same sources? Is racial prejudice a one-dimensional sliding scale, on which Richard Spencer and William Pierce are merely extreme versions of a Trump voter who resents hearing Spanish at the hardware store? Is "Jews will not replace us"—the words chanted by the Alt-Right at Charlottesville—just a more explicit version of "Make America Great Again?" I do not know the answer to these questions at this time, but am hopeful that greater clarity is forthcoming.

Berry correctly implied that scholars of the radical right sometimes suffer a myopic view of their subjects, examining them in isolation from the broader structure of American life. This is certainly a blind spot in my work. I hope future scholarship will help us better understand which historical, cultural, and institutional variables are upstream from the creation of movements like the Alt-Right. Real progress depends on discovering the root causes of these problems.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048318000421 Published online by Cambridge University Press