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Jose Montalvo

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How's the #GabFam: A 2022 Characterization of the Alternative Social Media Platform Gab

Jose Montalvo

This study aimed to develop a characterization of the alternative social media platform Gab in 2022 based on the themes and narratives found in the top posts of that year. Using a qualitative content analysis, this study identified six key themes from the dataset: Suppression, Persecution/Oppression, Conspiracy, Societal Degradation, Establishment Complacency, and We're the Saviors. Based on these themes, this study argues that Gab can be characterized as a platform centered around the idea that its users are under attack, implying that ideas about marginalization may be central to group identity within alternative online environments.

Keywords: Gab, alt-tech, social media, alt-right, alternative platform

Disclaimer: This study features direct quotes from social media users. Some of these quotes include slurs against members of various marginalized groups and other offensive language. These quotes do not reflect the opinions or beliefs of the researcher.

1. Introduction

In recent years, a variety of alternative social media platforms have arisen centered around the promotion of free speech and lax content moderation. A well-known example of this phenomenon was the platform Parler which was removed from various app stores and web hosting services because of its treatment of posts that incited the violence of January 6th, 2021 (Kao, 2022). Afterward, many users from both

Parler and Twitter migrated to Gab, another free-speech platform, causing it to gain 2.3 million new users (Goodwin, 2021). Because of this recent spike in popularity within the alternative social media sphere, Gab merits special attention as a means of gaining a greater understanding of the growing trend of alternative online communities. Thus, this study aimed to analyze Gab in order to provide political scientists, policymakers, and advocacy groups with a clearer understanding of the platform's community in 2022 and the alternative media movement more generally.

2. Literature Review

Alternative social media platforms have been broadly characterized as more conservative, more associated with conspiracy theories, and more focused on unmoderated free speech than mainstream platforms (Stocking et al., 2022). Within this context, various studies have aimed to characterize Gab to understand how it fits into the greater alternative online environment.

2.1: Early Research & Gab as Alt-Right

Early literature on Gab focused on characterizing the platform based on its ideology and user base. Various studies characterized the platform as generally aligned with the American alt-right¹ and extreme conservatism (Lima et al., 2018; McIlroy-Young & Anderson, 2019; Than et al., 2020; Zannettou et al., 2018; Zhou et al., 2018). More specifically, Zannettou et al.'s early research led them to the conclusion that Gab featured a high prevalence of hate speech and was generally used by alt-right users to share news (Zannettou et al., 2018). Lima et al.'s research further supports this assertion by determining that the news being shared on Gab was overwhelmingly aligned with the political right and often came from alternative sources (Lima et al., 2018). While these studies focused on the news shared on the platform, Than et al.'s research reached a similar conclusion by analyzing the most commonly discussed topics on Gab. Based on the prevalence of topics such as Holocaust denial and antifeminism, the researchers concluded that Gab could be broadly characterized as an alt-right platform (Than et al., 2020). Finally, McIlroy-Young & Anderson's research provides a chronological perspective on the nature of Gab, concluding that once users had become accustomed to Gab and had welcomed new users to the #GabFam, discussion quickly shifted to alt-right topics (McIlroy-Young & Anderson, 2019). Thus, based on the news being shared on the platform and the discussions in which its users engage, there is ample support in the literature to treat Gab as an alt-right platform.

2.2: The Post-2020 Era & Digital Marginalization

However, more recent research on the platform has challenged this notion. In their study on Gab in the Covid era, Dehghan & Nagappa found that instead of being homogeneous, communities on Gab were highly factionalized and experienced a high degree of infighting (Dehghan & Nagappa, 2022). Zeng & Schäfer's research on Covid conspiracies on Gab provided greater insights into this phenomenon since the researchers were unable to develop uniform definitions for the conspiracy theories they studied because of variations caused by factionalization (Zeng & Schäfer, 2021). This widespread factionalization led Dehghan & Nagappa to argue that treating Gab as a uniformly alt-right platform prevented researchers from understanding the nuances that Gab's various communities exhibit. Instead, they argued that the platform's users are united by a common sense of mistrust of and separation from the mainstream (Dehghan & Nagappa, 2022). Jasser et al.'s research expands on this idea and argues that although users on Gab are generally far-right, their uniting characteristic is a sense of marginalization and persecution by mainstream social media platforms (Jasser et al., 2021). Ali et al.'s research backs this characterization as they found that when users were banned from platforms like Twitter and Reddit, they moved to Gab and often complained about their persecution by these platforms (Ali et al., 2021). Thus, there exists ample debate in the literature regarding Gab's nature as a platform, with researchers debating whether Gab is united by a shared ideology or by a shared sense of marginalization.

This leaves a clear gap in the literature which this study aims to address by characterizing Gab based on the narratives expressed in the platform's top posts for 2022.

2.3: Research Question

Additionally, another gap exists based on time-frame. Since Gab is a social network, it is inherently

¹ "a set of far-right ideologies, groups and individuals whose core belief is that "white identity" is under attack by multicultural forces using "political correctness" and "social justice" to undermine white people and 'their' civilization." ("Alt-Right")

defined by its users and what they discuss; things that can often change over time. As seen above, interpretations of the social network's nature vary greatly based on the year a study was conducted, indicating that Gab may be a platform highly sensitive to current events. This sensitivity requires that research be conducted frequently so that researchers and policymakers can have accurate information on the platform's ever-evolving nature. By analyzing 2022's top posts, this study aims to address this gap through an up-to-date characterization of Gab.

Thus, this study aims to answer the question "How can Gab be characterized based on the narratives that emerge from a qualitative analysis of 2022's top posts?"

3. Method

Much like on Twitter or Facebook, users on Gab interact with others by making posts that other users can react to or comment on (Goodwin, 2021). In order to provide a greater understanding of the Gab community, this study employed a qualitative content analysis of these posts in order to determine the common themes and narratives that may define the platform's community.

3.1: Sample

The sample consisted of the 88 Gab posts labeled as the top posts of 2022 by the platform. Top posts are determined based on factors such as their number of likes, reposts, and comments ("Gab Social"). These posts were selected as a sample for two key reasons.

First, the use of the top posts would reconcile two leading theories within the literature on alternative online communities. The first theory is the theory of affective economies which was used in Deem's analysis of the alt-right community on Twitter. Under this framework, these groups may be treated as affective economies, a social structure where group emotions are developed through the repeated sharing of emotions among group members (Deem, 2019). In contrast to this decentralized approach, another approach more commonly used with Gab is the thought-leader model. Instead of believing that Gab operates as a decentralized network of group emotions, researchers

like Zhou et al., argue that the platform is generally organized around a few users who "lead the discussion in Gab, with most users consuming or reacting to this content" (Zhou et al., 2018). Thus, in order to bring together the inputs of both these thought leaders and the greater Gab community, this study analyzed the top posts of 2022 since they reflected the ideas of thought leaders that resonated most with Gab's overall community.

Second, using the whole year of 2022 as a sample allows this study to see how 2022's events have impacted Gab. This enables the study to provide a more up-to-date account of Gab and may help it address some of the rifts that have emerged in the literature over time.

3.2: Analysis

In accordance with much of the literature which has analyzed social media, this study uses qualitative content analysis to analyze the posts within the sample (Snelson, 2016). More specifically, this study follows a nondirected qualitative content analysis heavily based on the method used in Goossens et al.'s study of social media narratives regarding the insanity defense in Canada. In this method, the researcher develops codes used to organize posts by topic. These codes are developed inductively from the posts themselves instead of being predetermined by the researcher (Goossens et al., 2021). This is done to ensure that the characterization of Gab developed by this study is not hindered by previous characterizations of the platform. In order to develop the codes, the first 33 posts in the dataset were coded while a preliminary codebook was developed. Then, these posts were coded again in order to refine the codebook and ensure that codes are consistent and are not drifting. Following this, the entire dataset was coded to expand the original codebook. Finally, all 88 posts were coded again with the final codebook, and themes were derived from the codes. In order to characterize Gab based on the narratives that can be found in its posts, these themes were generally developed based on these narratives.

In addition to being consistent with the literature on social media, this qualitative approach was chosen in order to allow for the development of a more nuanced understanding of Gab's narratives. As explained in Colley & Moore's study on 4chan, another alter-

native social media platform, many of the ‘Big Data’ quantitative content analysis methods that have been used to study alternative communities can miss the nuances within and across different posts (Colley & Moore, 2022). Thus, this study uses a qualitative content analysis method in order to avoid this and provide a clear, nuanced account of the narratives that define Gab.

3.3: Ethical Considerations

A few ethical considerations were accounted for in the method to ensure that this study was conducted ethically and safely. First, in accordance with ethical guidelines from the Association of Internet Researchers, posters on Gab had their identity protected through pseudonymization (Franzke et al., 2020). Users had their names and identifying information removed from posts and were instead called “user 1, 2, 3, etc.” In this way, the people being observed in the study were protected without limiting the potential of analysis that incorporates the fact that a single poster may have made multiple posts. Another ethical concern is the privacy of the participants. The social media research ethics guide from the University of

Aberdeen emphasizes the importance of the difference between public and private online spaces, noting that studying private spaces without the knowledge of the participants may be unethical (Townsend & Wallace, 2016). To avoid violating the privacy of participants, this study only looked at posts that were made publicly on Gab, instead of within private networks. By doing this, this study ensured that only information and opinions that have been made public by users were analyzed.

4. Results

4.1: Codes

Over 40 codes were developed through the inductive coding process. The full codebook can be found in Appendix A (pages 27-29). A sample of notable codes, their definitions, and the number of posts they appeared in can be found here.

Code	Definition	# of Posts
Covid	Posts that reference the Covid-19 pandemic or response methods such as masking, vaccinations, or lockdowns	9
Children	Posts that mention children or their abuse through things like pedophilia or child sex abuse imagery	9
Freedom/Rights	Posts that mention or allude to freedoms and rights and/or their violation	8
Misinformation/ Misdirection	Posts that mention or imply misinformation, disinformation, misrepresentation, or deliberate misdirection by major public figures or the media	6
Resistance	Posts that mention or advocate for civilian resistance against government action	10
Trucker Protests	Posts that mention the trucker convoy protests of 2022	14
2020 Election	Posts that mention or make reference to the 2020 Election in the United States, its results, or the events of January 6th, 2021	7

4.2: Themes

Theme 1: Suppression

One of the major themes that emerged from the dataset was suppression. Many users expressed concerns about perceived efforts to suppress their expression because of their political beliefs. For example, user 64 wrote:

“Want to defend traditional European morals and ideals? The system will shut down your social media, bank account, and try to prosecute you for hate crimes.”

Other posts corroborated the idea that people with traditional or conservative values were under attack by sharing personal experiences of perceived suppression, in line with the interpretation that Gab operates as an affective economy. User 80 shared a particularly concerning and emotionally charged instance of this suppression, writing:

“My home was just SWATTED. My children were home and had to witness everything ... From what I understand, this is happening to many conservative show hosts in order to have their homes raided, their privacy violated, and to put their lives at risk.”

While these posts focus on real-world experiences with perceived suppression, other posts focused on users’ experiences of suppression within the digital world. User 20 expressed the idea of digital suppression in general terms, posting:

“The other platforms feel like hanging out in the break room at work. Everyone has to watch what they say and put their best foot forward so they don’t get fired, and certain topics are off limits and you have to be careful what jokes you even tell.”

User 23 corroborated this narrative by sharing a screenshot of the following Twitter post and writing:

“This tweet made me banned on Twitter. Am sad because I make many friends at Twitter. I learn West values very fast. No matter. I strong. I start again. I make friends on Gab now.”

Twitter Post:



Notably, both of these users place the blame for their suppression on other social media platforms, highlighting the importance of digital experiences in Gab users’ collective identity, in line with Jasser et al.’s conceptualization of the platform (Jasser et al., 2021). Taken together, these posts indicate that users on Gab share the belief that dissenting, conservative, and “Western” opinions are being suppressed by the mainstream, both online and offline.

Theme 2: Persecution/Oppression

Another major theme was the idea that Gab users were being persecuted in the real world by a variety of forces. Some users treated the mainstream media as the force that was persecuting them, supporting the idea that Gab users see themselves as separated from and antagonized by mainstream environments. For example, user 9 complained about the way the media was treating members of the Canadian trucker convoy, asking:

“Why isn’t the media reporting on all the food we gave the homeless? We spent over \$100,000 feeding hungry Canadians.”

Other users placed the blame for their oppression on governments, like user 11 who implied government violence on citizens when they wrote:

“I didn’t see the left screaming “Freedom for Canada” when the citizens were getting beaten in the street by their own government just a week or two ago”

Notably, this post also attacks the political left, indicating an antagonistic relationship that other posters on Gab corroborated. Finally, some users portrayed members of the political left as the people persecuting them and portrayed their persecution as a violation of their rights. For example, user 2 posted:

“I have nearly \$90,000 in mask fines from Speaker Nancy Pelosi because I refuse to wear a mask on the house floor. Masks have not stopped the spread of Covid and it is a violation of my rights to force me to wear a mask.”

Taken together, these posts indicate that users on Gab believe that both they and their rights are under attack by forces like the mainstream media, their government, and the left-wing leaders who may be leading those governments.

Theme 3: Conspiracy

Many users on Gab expressed ideas implying that covert conspiracies were at play in the world around them. These conspiracies tended to be about 2 topics: Covid 19 and the 2020 Election. Some users simply questioned the effectiveness of Covid 19 response measures, like user 36 who wrote:

“If masks, distancing, lockdowns, and these vaccines could stop a pandemic, they would have by now.”

However, other users more explicitly attacked these measures by implying they were being used to harm people. For example, user 13 wrote:

“Congrats to all those who didn’t have their DNA tampered with in 2021”

(Note: this post was included in the dataset since the top posts for the year were collected on December 31st, 2022 so posts from December 31st, 2021 were included. Given the popularity of this post and its potential to expand the understanding of medical conspiracies on Gab, it was kept in the sample.)

Other users also questioned the validity of the pandemic itself, like user 82 who referred to it as the “plandemic.” User 5 also promoted the idea that the Covid 19 pandemic was deliberately created while

connecting it to the platform’s other main topic of conspiracy, writing:

“Gab is the only place where you can say things like this: Covid-19 was created and leaked by the Globalist American Empire to steal the 2020 election, facilitate the largest transfer of wealth and power in human history, and usher in totalitarian global communism.”

When it came to the 2020 election, various users shared the idea that the election was fraudulent. For example, user 58 posted:

“Only in America will we stop a football game, drag out measuring chains and look at a play 15 times from 6 different angles to make sure we make the right call, but will not verify the integrity of an election of the highest office in our nation!”

Finally, some users believed the events of January 6th, 2021 were also part of a conspiracy relating to the 2020 election. For example, user 67 shared a photo of a Twitter post calling the events of January 6th “a legal protest that was turned into a riot by the FBI punks antifa and Black Lives Matter devils posing as Trump supporters” and commented:

“took the words right out of my mouth! F–ck China joe binden, the DEM who were behind the violence, and the coward RINOs who turned a blind eye”

Thus, users on Gab seem to share the belief that there are hidden conspiracies at play that aim to harm them, although they vary when it comes to the specifics of those conspiracies. This suggests that conspiracy and the idea that all is not as it seems are key components of the Gab worldview and affective economy. Notably, these varying theories and degrees of conspiracy regarding the pandemic and 2020 are in line with the interpretation of Gab’s conspiratorial environment as highly factionalized (Zeng & Schäfer, 2021).

Theme 4: Societal Degradation

Many users in the dataset seemed to believe that society was in a state of decline. Some users, like user 49, who remarked we live in a “disgustingly low-trust world”, did not explicitly identify any factor or group

that was responsible for this decline. However, other users placed the responsibility for this decline on specific groups, although they often differed on which groups these were. Some users blamed the political left and LGBTQ community for this decline, like user 38 who posted:

“America has zero moral authority to criticize the choices of another nation’s leader. There aren’t hundreds of photos of Putin sniffing little children while his son smokes crack and gets blown by every sex slave in Ukraine while mentally-ill trannies in his administration openly work to normalize pedophilia and sex with dogs. The Biden Administration has literally made America a global embarrassment.”

Other users blamed immigrants for the decline of society, like user 74 who shared a tweet remarking “Controlling who enters your country matters” and then wrote:

“There is nothing wrong in wanting to maintain the civilization & culture of the Nation that your ancestors built for ‘you’ ... Invasion & societal degradation was never part of their future vision.”

Notably, this post also frames immigrants as invaders, reflecting the idea that emotions and particularly fear play an important role in discourse on Gab. Finally, some users blamed teachers and teachers’ unions, like user 83 who shared a tweet reading “If it takes a law to stop you from holding a classroom discussion with 5-year-olds about sex, you shouldn’t be a teacher. Actually, you shouldn’t be allowed within several miles of a school”, and then wrote:

“Crush the Satanist Teachers Unions #savethechildren”

Thus, users on Gab seem to agree that society is in a state of decline, but they differ when it comes to who they blame for this decline.

Theme 5: Establishment Complacency

Many posts that discussed conspiracy theories and perceived evils in the world also complained about the role of established political and social institutions in upholding these processes. Often, the institution ac-

cused of complacency was the Republican party. For example, user 4 accused members of the GOP of being complacent with a stolen election when they posted:

“Donald Trump won the 2020 election. It was stolen. Republicans who refuse to say this won’t really fight to secure elections going forward.”

In contrast, other users went beyond accusing members of the GOP of complacency and instead accused them of directly facilitating the theft of the 2020 election. User 74, for example, shared the following image and wrote:

“Wake up, people! The #GOP was complicit, and the #UNIPARTY is REAL. #FIX2020”



Finally, other users accused the broader conservative establishment of helping steal the election. User 25 expressed this sentiment while reflecting Gab’s greater mistrust of traditional media sources when they wrote:

“18 months ago, the entire GOP establishment AND the conservative think tanks AND Fox News were telling you that election fraud never happened. That’s because they all helped get Biden elected. Never Forget.”

Another traditional institution Gab users believed was upholding conspiracy theories was the Supreme Court of the United States. More specifically, users accused the Supreme Court of spreading false, harmful information about the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, user 10 wrote:

“Supreme Court Justices just falsely claimed:

1. The jab prevents transmission
2. Omicron is as deadly as Delta
3. 100K children are hospitalized with COVID, many on ventilators
4. Vax mandates would prevent 100% of cases
5. Hospitals are overrun

Every point is provably false. Even a ‘casual’ look at the medical literature would have enlightened the Justices.

Their ignorance and dangerous spreading of misinformation is a serious problem. #SCOTUS”

In response to this perceived abandonment by traditional institutions, some users began encouraging people to take matters into their own hands. User 82 expressed this sentiment, writing:

“I don’t need the Supreme Court telling me what I can or can’t do regarding this plandemic. People are hoping for them to make the right decision so they don’t have to defend themselves. I understand, but at some point, we have to rely on ourselves.”

Thus, many users on Gab seem to believe that a variety of traditional institutions (spanning from the mainstream media to conservative parties) are part of the forces upholding the degradation and destruction of society, causing some users to encourage the abandonment of these institutions and greater self-reliance.

Theme 6: We’re the Saviors

Users on Gab expressed the belief that the Gab community and the people it supports were filling the gaps left by traditional institutions when it came to defending things like freedom. For example, user 9 expressed support for the trucker convoy protests writing:

“Truckers have done more to fight for freedom in Canada in the last week than the entire GOP has for us in the last 40 years.”

Other users believed that Gab itself served as a bastion of free speech on the internet. Hence, user 5 began their post proposing a global conspiracy theory by saying

“Gab is the only place where you can say things like this:”

Moreover, some users framed this in stark contrast to other social media platforms, reflecting Gab users’ perceptions of themselves in relation to other online communities. Thus, user 20 praised Gab, writing:

“Being on Gab feels like hanging out with friends at a bar. People say whatever they want and don’t give a crap about being politically correct or offending anyone. Everyone can be themselves.

The other platforms feel like hanging out in a break room at work. Everyone has to watch what they say and put their best foot forward so they don’t get fired, and certain subjects are off limits and you have to be careful what jokes you even tell.

What Andrew Torba has built here is truly American, and the dedication he has to preserve free speech online is amazing.”

Thus, users on Gab believed that as the world was falling apart and they were under attack, Gab provided a space for free expression and opposition to the forces they saw as corruptors of the world.

4.3: The Gab Narrative

All these themes can be used to develop a shared narrative for Gab. This “Gab narrative” appears to be built on the following ideas. Themes 3 and 4 (Conspiracy and Societal Degradation, respectively) imply that users on Gab believe that society itself is under attack, although they seem to disagree on who or what specifically is attacking society. Theme 5 (Establishment Complacency) demonstrates users’ feeling that the institutions meant to protect them from these forces have abandoned them and may even be supporting their oppression. Themes 1 and 2 (Suppression and Persecution/Oppression, respectively) show users’ belief that when they take matters into their own hands to defend themselves and their society, they are silenced or attacked. Finally, theme 6 (We’re the Saviors) shows how users see Gab as a place where they are able to come together to fight back without feeling like their opinions will be silenced. Thus, the follow-

ing may be seen as the “Gab narrative”.

Society is under attack by various forces, some of them covert. As traditional institutions have failed to protect us, we have taken matters into our own hands and have faced persecution in both virtual and real environments. However, Gab allows us to come together and fight back.

5. Discussion & Conclusions

5.1: Gab in 2022

The above themes and narratives imply 2 major things about Gab in 2022: that its users hold diverse opinions within a set of widely accepted ideas and that it is centered around ideas of marginalization and the systems that uphold it. Within themes, users frequently differed on the specifics of their arguments. For example, in theme 4, some users blamed immigrants for societal decline while others blamed members of the LGBTQ community and the political left. In themes 3 and 5, users varied greatly when it came to the degree to which they believed in the various conspiracy theories they shared. These variations lend support to previous researchers’ conclusions that Gab does not neatly fit under one political ideology (Dehghan & Nagappa, 2022; Zeng & Schäfer, 2021). What did seem to unite Gab was a sense of marginalization. Themes 1 through 4 show that users within the dataset tended to see themselves or their society as under attack, implying that marginalization plays a major role in Gab users’ self-perception. Additionally, in line with previous research, users in this study expressed that they were being marginalized by mainstream forces and social media platforms (Dehghan & Nagappa, 2022; Jasser et al., 2021; Ali et al., 2021). Thus, based on the top posts of 2022, Gab can be characterized as a platform most heavily defined by its users’ sense of marginalization by both mainstream and covert forces.

This study also makes a novel contribution to the field’s understanding of marginalization on Gab with the theme of establishment complacency. The presence of this theme advances the field by demonstrating that a significant component of these users’ sense of marginalization may be the idea that they have been abandoned by traditional institutions they ex-

pect to protect them and represent their views such as political parties and news outlets. This may open the way for future researchers to continue exploring the role of these themes of abandonment or betrayal on Gab or within other alternative online communities.

5.2: Connections to Other Alternative Communities

None of this is to say that Gab does not bear significant similarities to other alternative online communities. Gab’s defining theme of marginalization also seems to appear within the alt-right. In a study of this group on Twitter, the researcher characterized the online alt-right based on its use of narratives relating to ideas of white victimization and the need for white members of society to “take back” their societies (Ganesh, 2020). This theme of marginalization as a uniting theme for alternative online communities is further corroborated in the literature that has studied the ‘manosphere,’ a term used to refer to various extremely misogynistic communities online. Marwick and Lewis’s research found that many of the members of this group are united by the narrative that modern feminism is victimizing men and poses a serious threat to their well-being (Marwick & Lewis, 2017). Gab’s similarity to these communities because of its focus on marginalization provides insights into the way it fits into the greater alternative online environment and opens the way for potential future research into the similarities and differences between specific ideas about marginalization within these communities.

6. Limitations & Suggestions for Future Research

This paper has a few limitations, both in its method and its conclusion. At the method level, the paper’s results may be limited by the fact that codes were developed inductively and then applied by a single person. This means there is a high potential for bias to come through in the codes and analysis of themes in this paper. Although a codebook with clear definitions was used in an effort to limit this from occurring, future research replicating this study’s method could be sig-

nificantly improved by the use of multiple coders. This paper's conclusion is limited by the fact that the study was conducted on a somewhat small sample of posts within just one year. Because the posts evaluated came only from the top posts of 2022, this characterization of Gab may only provide a surface-level understanding of what Gab looked like only in 2022. This may account for the fact that topics like Holocaust denial did not appear in the sample despite their prevalence in other studies. To better understand Gab, future researchers could conduct a similar study in future years with a few key differences. In addition to having multiple coders, the study could look at the top posts in addition to posts within specific communities on Gab to understand the diversity of views on Gab and avoid the bias involved with coding popular posts. Posts with highly radical ideas may not have appeared in the dataset because their fringe beliefs within Gab prevented them from going viral. Future researchers should continue to use qualitative methods to analyze Gab as it can provide a useful complement to the quantitative data that has dominated research on Gab as expressed earlier.

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Appendix A: Full Codebook

Code	Definition	# of Posts
Abortion	Posts that mention abortion or the court cases <i>Roe v. Wade</i> or <i>Dobbs v. Jackson</i>	1
America	Posts that mention the United States of America	15
Canada	Posts that mention Canada	13
Communism	Posts that mention Communism	2
Community	Posts that mention community or aim to build a stronger community on Gab	7
Corruption	Posts that mention or imply political corruption	5
Covid	Posts that reference the Covid-19 pandemic or response methods such as masking, vaccinations, or lockdowns	9
Children	Posts that mention children or their abuse through things like pedophilia or child sex abuse imagery	9
China	Posts that mention China	1
Discrimination	Posts that mention or imply discrimination	1
DNA	Posts that mention DNA or its alteration	1
Drug Abuse	Posts that mention drug abuse or people who abuse drugs	2
Education	Posts that mention education, educational environments like schools or universities, or their students	6
Elections	Posts that mention elections or election fraud	3

A 2022 CHARACTERIZATION OF THE ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM GAB

Elites	Posts that mention or make reference to “Elites”	2
Firearm	Posts that mention firearms or their use	4
Freedom/Rights	Posts that mention or allude to freedoms and rights and/or their violation	8
Gab	Posts that mention Gab	6
Gender	Posts that mention gender	1
Global Finance	Posts that mention global financial systems and institutions	3
GOP	Posts that mention the Republican Party/GOP or its members	12
Government Violence	Posts that mention or imply government violence	2
Healthcare	Posts that mention healthcare	3
Hong Kong	Posts that mention Hong Kong	1
Immigration	Posts that mention immigration, immigrants, or deportation	3
K. Rittenhouse	Posts that mention or reference Kyle Rittenhouse, his actions, his trial, or its results	2
Law Enforcement	Posts that mention law enforcement	5
LGBTQ	Posts that mention or reference the LGBTQ community	3
Media	Posts that mention mainstream media/news sources	2
Misinformation/Misdirection	Posts that mention or imply misinformation, disinformation, misrepresentation, or deliberate misdirection by major public figures or the media	6

A 2022 CHARACTERIZATION OF THE ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM GAB

Patriotism	Posts that mention patriots or allude to patriotism as a value	2
Pornography	Posts that mention pornography	3
Race	Posts that mention race	3
Religion	Posts that mention religion	8
Resistance	Posts that mention or advocate for civilian resistance against government action	10
Russia	Posts that mention Russia	6
SCOTUS	Posts that mention the Supreme Court of the United States, its rulings, or its justices	6
The Left	Posts that make reference to the political left, liberals, the Democratic Party, the Canadian Liberal Party, or their voters/members	11
The West	Posts that mention or allude to the political West and or “Western values”	3
Trucker Protests	Posts that mention the trucker convoy protests of 2022	14
Tyranny	Posts that mention or imply some form of tyranny or tyrannical government	2
Ukraine	Posts that mention Ukraine or the ongoing conflict in the country	3
2020 Election	Posts that mention or make reference to the 2020 Election in the United States, its results, or the events of January 6th, 2021	7