A Longitudinal Study of the Gettr Social Network

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Abstract

This paper presents the first data-driven analysis of Gettr, a new social network platform launched by former US President Donald Trump's team on July of 2021. Among other things, we find that users on the platform heavily discuss societal issues like covid, and politics, with a focus on the Trump campaign in the US and Bolsonaro's in Brazil. Activity on the platform has steadily been decreasing since its launch, although a core of verified users and early adopters kept posting and becoming central to it. Finally, although toxicity has been increasing over time, the average level of toxicity is still lower than the one recently observed on other fringe social networks like Gab and 4chan. Overall, we provide a first quantitative look at this new community, observing a lack of organic engagement and activity.

Introduction

Over the past months, increased efforts by mainstream social networks to police their platforms and curb the spread of online harassment, misinformation, and conspiracy theories have led to unprecedented de-platforming and moderation actions. As a consequence, a number of social media users have moved to alternative platforms. This has led to a balkanization of the Web, where a myriad of smaller Web communities were created, where like-minded individuals can gather and keep discussing topics that may lead to suspension on mainstream platforms like Twitter.

In particular, we have seen the emergence of a number of alternative platforms that promise to promote free speech and allow their users to express themselves without fear of moderation. Well-known examples include Parler (Aliapoulios et al. 2021a; Boyd 2020; Munn 2021) and Gab (Fair and Wesslen 2019; Zannettou et al. 2018). While these platforms do not have the audience of mainstream social networks like Twitter and Facebook, they constitute an important piece of the information ecosystem, and the research community needs to understand their influence in discussing news stories, popular events, as well as conspiracy theories, and misinformation.

In this paper, we perform the first data-driven study of Gettr, the most recent of these alternative social platforms. Spanning the data collection period of July 2021 to March 2022, we collect 33.95M public posts and comments made by 1.2M users. We then analyze these posts across several angles, from looking at the bios of Gettr users to the activity of accounts over time, to their hashtag and URL posting activity.

In summary, we find that:

- Similar to other alternative platforms (Aliapoulios et al. 2021a; Zannettou et al. 2018), the discussion is dominated by topics related to the Trump campaign. Additionally, `covid` being the most discussed hashtag alongside `vaccine` and `ccp` highlights large presence of conspiratorial and anti-China sentiments on the platform.

  We also observe discussions on the Bolsonaro campaign in Brazil, on cryptocurrencies, and different societal issues.
- The influx of new users on Gettr seems to have quickly slowed down after its launch. There was a surge of new users joining the platform influenced by popular right-wing figures adopting the platform, but the overall number of new users is on the decline.
- Although the level of (severe) toxicity in comments is increasing over time, it is still lower than the one observed by recent research on other alternative platforms, including Gab and 4chan (Ali et al. 2021; Aliapoulios et al. 2021a). We also find that the level of inflammatory content on the platform is growing.
- We find extensive usage of right-leaning news outlets on the posts and comments. While the link sharing on Gettr is dominated primarily by Youtube, we also observe the usage of alternate video sharing websites such as Rumble, and Bitchute.

What is Gettr?

Gettr is a social network launched by former President Donald Trumps team, led by former Donald Trump aide and spokesman Jason Miller. The platform went live on July 1, 2021 in its beta version, and was officially launched on July 4, 2021 for anyone to register. The platform advertises itself as "The Marketplace of Ideas" and lists itself as founded on the principles of free speech, independent thought, rejecting political censorship, and "cancel culture." The basic user interface and visuals of the platform loosely follows the one of Twitter: users can follow each other; and interact with others posts by liking, reposting, and replying. Gettr also uses the concepts of hashtags, highlighted hyperlinks in blue, allowing users to cluster posts related to a topic, and search posts using hashtags and trending hashtags. The user profile

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section of Gettr is very close to the one of Twitter, where they allow users to upload their profile photos and banners respectively. Similar to Twitter, user can also enter their bio, website, and location. Posts, and replies on Gettr have a maximum length of 777 characters and permit forms of media such as images, videos, GIFs, and emojis. Many popular accounts on Gettr are verified, however, the formal process of verification is not explicitly mentioned in the platform.

According to the terms of service posted on the website, Gettr reserves the right but is not committed to take down "offensive, obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, pornographic, violent, harassing, threatening, abusive, illegal, or otherwise objectionable or inappropriate" content. On its launch day, it was reported that the platform had been compromised with some of the most prominent accounts of the platform being defaced (Binder 2021). There have also been security concerns regarding the platform, as hackers reportedly got hold of 90,000 Gettr user emails and locations (Franceschi-Bicchierai 2021). The platform was also reported to have been flooded with pornographic material during the initial days, which now seem to have been removed (Zitser 2021).

Dataset

In this section we describe our dataset. First, we give a brief overview of the Gettr API. We explain the methodology we used to collect 33.95M posts and comments from 1.2M users. We also discuss the limitations of our collection methodology and ethical concerns with the collection.

The Gettr API

Although a full description of Gettr's API is beyond the scope of this paper, a quick overview is in order. Before continuing, we note that Gettr's API is open but undocumented. That said, there have been many community efforts to reverse engineer and document the various endpoints Gettr exposes, e.g., (Stanford Internet Observatory 2021). In this paper, we make use of eight of these endpoints.

`/uinf`: This endpoint is used to retrieve basic user information. E.g., their username, account creation date, user set location, language preferences, etc.

`/followers`: This endpoint is queried to retrieve a list of users that follow a given user.

`/followings`: This endpoint is queried to retrieve the list of users that this user follows.

`/posts`: This endpoint is queried to retrieve the list of posts posted by a given user.

`/comments`: This endpoint is queried to retrieve the list of comments under a given post.

`/liked`: This endpoint is queried to retrieve the list of users who liked a given post.

`/shared`: This endpoint is queried to retrieve the list of users who shared a given post.

`/post`: This endpoint is queried to retrieve details about a given postid. The endpoint returns "Content not found" when the post corresponding to the postid is not present.

Collection Methodology

We initially start our collection with user discovery, following a standard snowball sampling approach. We seed our crawler with a list of eight users on the "Suggested for you" page on Gettr. Based on our preliminary analysis, this functionality returns a growing list of users, composed mostly of verified right-wing personalities and news media (newsmax,revolvernews,mikepompeo). To discover more users, we query the `/followers` and `/followings` endpoints for this set of seed users. As new users are discovered, their followers and followings are also queried. For each user we discover, we retrieve their posts and comments via the corresponding endpoints. Likewise, for each comment or post we collect, we also query their `liked` and `shared` endpoints to get the list of users who liked and shared the comments, and posts.

The primary limitation of our snowball sampling strategy is that we can only discover users that can be reached from our set of seed nodes. We take additional measures to explore any additional posts that might have been missed by the snowball sampling strategy. We use the observation that all newly created accounts on Gettr follow the Gettr Support & Help account (@support) by default. We frequently update our list of users with the followers of the @support account to get newly created accounts that might have been missed by our snowball sampling approach. This way, the initial choice of users used to sample would not effect the overall collection architecture.

Another limitation with our strategy is that since we only crawl user timelines periodically (every 5 days), we might miss posts and comments that are either deleted by the users themselves or by Gettr (e.g., spam content) between two successive recrawls. Although we believe that our dataset is representative, we also suspect that getting a *complete* dataset for Gettr will involve aggregating the results of ongoing data collection efforts from other researchers.

The summary of the data collected is presented in Table 1.

	Count	#Users
Posts	17,469,032	620,812
Comments	16,478,095	608,990
Total	33,947,127	1,229,802

Table 1: Overview of our dataset.

Ethical Considerations

Collecting and analyzing social media data at scale has ethical implications. In this work, we only analyze data posted publicly and do not interact with users in any way. As such, it is not considered human subjects research by the IRB at our institution. Nonetheless, we adopt standard ethics guidelines to protect users (Rivers and Lewis 2014). More specifically, we only present aggregated data and we do not make efforts to further deanonymize the users in our dataset.

User Analysis

We first look at the characteristics of Gettr users. We are particularly interested in understanding the geographical distribution of the user base and their demographics, as well as the distribution of the number of followers and followings on the platform. Finally, we are interested in the evolution of posting and commenting activity on the platform.

Location	#Users	%Users
Brasil	37,997	2.05%
Texas	11,070	0.60%
USA	9,662	0.52%
Florida	8,391	0.45%
São Paulo	4,619	0.25%
California	4,089	0.22%
Rio de Janeiro	3,808	0.20%
Germany	3,327	0.18%
Arizona	2,951	0.15%
Ohio	2,907	0.15%
Michigan	2,781	0.15%
Canada	2,462	0.13%
Australia	2,350	0.12%
New York	2,317	0.12%
Georgia	2,314	0.12%
Tennessee	2,186	0.11%
North Carolina	2,103	0.11%
France	1,763	0.09%
Alabama	1,758	0.09%

Table 2: Top 20 user locations based on user bios.

We collect all user profile information for 1,844,911 Gettr accounts created between July 1, 2021 and March 30, 2022. 1,262,018 accounts out of the total 1,844,911 made no posts or comments during our data collection period. We also collect all posts, comments, and corresponding media posted by the accounts in our dataset until March 30, 2022.

User location and language. To understand the geographical makeup of Gettr users, we analyze the location and language from the bios of all Gettr users in our dataset. Users can enter any arbitrary text as their location, which may not correspond to any physical location. User languages are part of their profile settings where they can select languages to see posts, people, and trends in any language they choose.

Table 2 reports the most popular locations of the users in our dataset. The most popular used location in user bios is Brazil, with 2.05% of users (we combine "Brazil" and "Brasil" as a common location). The next most popular locations are US states like Texas (0.60% of users), Florida (0.45% of users), and California (0.22% of users). We can also observe a few users from other countries such as Germany (0.18% of users), Canada (0.13% of users), Australia (0.12% of users), and France (0.09% of users).

Table 3 reports the most popular language of the users in our dataset. Despite Brazil being the most popular location, we find that the vast majority of Gettr users set English as their language (89.27% of users), followed by Portugese (3.69% of users). The next most popular languages are Portugese (3.69% of users), Spanish (2.42% of users) and Chinese (1.83% of users). French, Japanese and German only account for 1.43% , 0.81% and 0.11% of the users, respectively.

User bios. Next, we analyze the language included by Gettr users in their bios. To this end, we extract the most popular words and bigrams used in bios. Table 4 reports the top keywords and bigrams observed in user bios in our dataset. As it can be seen, a large fraction of users include keywords related to former President Trump and his campaign, indicated

Language	#Users	%Users
English	1,647,007	89.27%
Portuguese	68,138	3.69%
Spanish	44,766	2.42%
Chinese	33,864	1.83%
French	26,550	1.43%
Japanese	15,051	0.81%
German	2,131	0.11%

Table 3: Popularity of languages in our Gettr users.

by users supporting him (3.01% of all users included the term "trump," "trump supporter," "trump won," "president trump," "maga," "don t"). We also find that many users self identify as patriots (4.40% of the users use "patriot," "american," "proud," "country"), conservatives (2.06% of the users use "conservative," "conservador," "christian conservative"), and religious (2.81% of the users use "god," "christian," "crist"). We also observe 2.02% of users using personal qualifiers such as retired, father, wife, and mother in their bios. These results suggest that the user base of Gettr is very similar to the one of other alternative social platforms like Gab and Parler (Zannettou et al. 2018; Aliapoulios et al. 2021a).

Table 5 lists the top hashtags included by Gettr users in their bios. As it can be seen, the use of hashtags in bios is dominated by hashtags supporting former President Trumps campaign (0.38% of users using #MAGA , #TrumpWon, #Trump2024, #KAG). We can also see instances of the QAnon conspiracy theory (Aliapoulios et al. 2021b; Papasavva et al. 2021; Phadke, Samory, and Mitra 2021) (0.06% of users using #WWG1WGA), and hashtags indicating patriotic sentiments (0.07% of users using #AmericaFirst, #SaveAmerica, #Patriot).

Gettr users can also add website in their user bios, either by including a URL in the bio field or through a separate field called "website." Table 4 lists the most popular domains included in user bios in our dataset. 4.60% of all the users include a website or link in their bio, with 21.18% of users including links to other social media, including YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. We can also see traces of pornographic websites on user bios 4.29% . We also observe 1.90% users including links to personal blogs (blogspot, wordpress, wix).

Post and comment activity. As discussed in Section , users on Gettr can get a verification badge, similar to what happens on other social networks. In this section, we compare the posting and commenting activity of general Gettr users compared to verified ones. To this end, we extract 4,594 users in our dataset that are verified by Gettr (0.24%).

We plot the cumulative distribution function (CDF) of the number of posts per user split by user type (verified, normal) in Figure 1. In general, verified users are more active posting on the platform than non-verified users. More than 80% of the unverified Gettr users have less than 10 posts, which shows that a large chunk of accounts exists on the platform with little to no activity. Verified users engage more in posting behavior than unverified users, but not at the frequency that we would expect, as almost 80% of the verified users post at most 100 times during our observation period. Still, there are more verified users who have between 100-1000

Word	#Users	Bigrams	#Users
trump	25,863	acima de	4,941
patriot	24,894	don t	4,785
god	22,133	trump won	4,585
conservative	22,037	trump supporter	3,920
american	17,263	america first	3,472
christian	14,627	husband father	3,438
freedom	14,017	god family	3,173
america	13,650	american patriot	2,980
retired	13,597	proud american	2,903
country	12,307	my country	2,752
proud	11,591	deus acima	2,625
maga	11,379	the truth	2,540
family	10,611	christian conservative	2,518
father	9,566	president trump	2,305
google	9,045	wife mother	2,277
jesus	8,769	pro life	2,064
wife	8,476	free speech	1,939

Table 4: Top 20 words and bigrams on user bios.

Hashtag	#Users	Domain	#Users
MAGA	3,500	gogirls	41,593
TrumpWon	1,258	youtube	4,713
WWG1WGA	880	instagram	2,717
americafirst	709	vipdeit	2,454
Trump2024	672	twitter	2,322
fjb	634	facebook	1,548
trump	575	linktr	1,436
patriot	511	blogspot	685
saveamerica	447	turnmeon	637
bolsonaro2022	430	gettr	593
kag	373	discord	508
letsgobrandon	359	pornhub	433
freedom	332	gab	387
prolife	307	wordpress	372
BackTheBlue	297	linkedin	335
Conservative	292	tiktok	329
pureblood	278	vk	298
bitcoin	255	rumble	283

Table 5: Top 20 hashtags and domains on user bios.

posts, compared to the very skewed distribution of unverified users posting in the same range. We run a two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnoff (KS) test (Lindgren 1993) on the two CDFs, and find that the differences between the difference in the distribution of posts and comments between the two user types is statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level.

We observe similar patterns in the case of commenting behavior in Figure 2. However, while verified users tend to post more than comment, the opposite is true for regular users. Close to 90% of the verified users have less than or equal to 100 comments. In the case of unverified users, close to 40% of the users comment between 3-10 times. Again, a two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnoff (KS) test finds that the distribution of comments between verified and regular users shows statistically significant differences at the $p < 0.001$ level.

User followers/followings. Next, we look at the number of

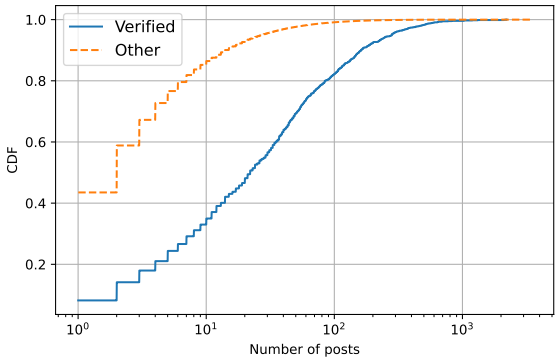


Figure 1: CDF of the number of posts made by users. Note the log scale for the x-axis.

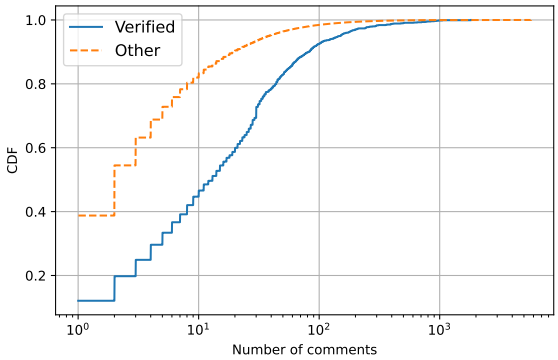


Figure 2: CDF of the number of comments made by users. Note the log scale for the x-axis.

accounts that users followed or are followed by on Gettr. To this end, we plot the cumulative distribution function (CDF) of the followers count per user, split by verified or unverified status in Figure 3. As it can be seen, a large fraction (close to 80%) of the unverified users have less than 10 followers, and more than 95% of the users have less than 100 followers. On the other hand, verified users garner a good number of followers, with 29.34% of the verified users having more than a thousand followers. Upon further investigation, the only two unverified user accounts with more than 100,000 followers had usernames `presdonaldtrump`, and `trumpteam`, most likely impersonating Donald Trump and his team. The accounts are now suspended at the time of writing. The other unverified users who have a high number of followers (`carlazambelli` with 87,107, and `canalhipocritas` with 37,750) are related to Brazilian politics. We also found other accounts trying to impersonate popular right-wing personalities like Tucker Carlson (28,901 followers), Donald Trump Jr. (24,716 followers), and Alex Jones (11,035 followers), some of which have now been suspended.

The CDF of distributions of users following is plotted in Figure 4. As seen in most of the social media platforms, the majority of verified users follow fewer people than they are followed by (Cha et al. 2010). We also find that five verified users follow more than eight thousand users, which is a relatively high number of followings for a verified user. These

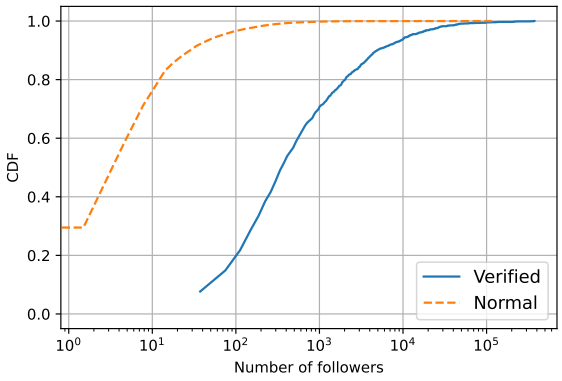


Figure 3: CDF of the number of followers of users. Note the log scale for the x-axis.

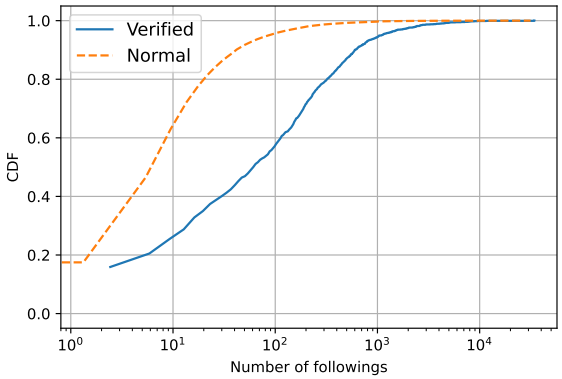


Figure 4: CDF of the number of followings of users. Note the log scale for the x-axis.

were found to be anti-CCP news outlets posting their content in Chinese. Following the similar Kolmogorov-Smirnoff (KS) test we did for posts and comments, we find that the differences between the distributions of followers and followings between the two user types are statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level.

User creation date. The Gettr platform appeared online first on July 1 and was officially launched on July 4. In this section we look at when the accounts in our dataset were created, to get a sense of the user influx on Gettr. Figure 5 shows the number of accounts created daily during our observation period. As it can be seen, a large number of accounts were created during the first month of the platform creation. The number of users joining the platform has been on the decline since the official launch, however the number of users joining the platform has been in the order of ten thousands per month. Interestingly, we also observe a spike during January 2022 when personalities such as Joe Rogan, and Marjorie Taylor Greene joining the platform led to a surge of new users (Reimann 2022).

Daily user activity. Next, we are interested in looking at the daily activity of users on Gettr. Figure 6 shows the progression of the daily number of posts and comments observed in our dataset. As it can be seen, during the initial months the

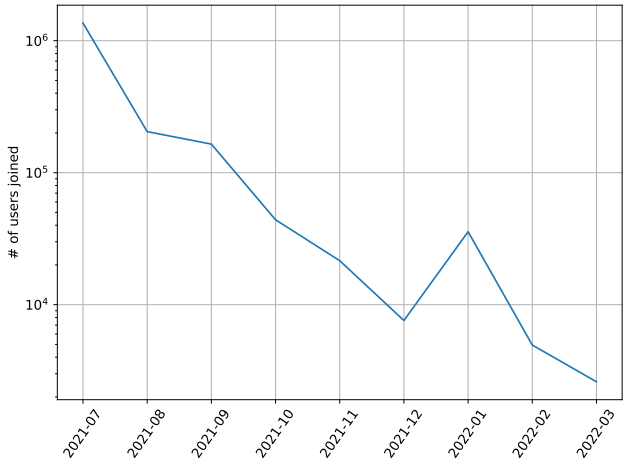


Figure 5: Evolution of number of unique users joining the platform. Note the log scale on x-axis.

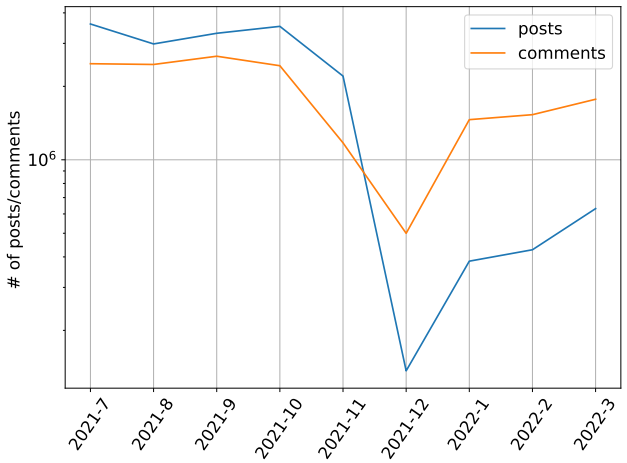


Figure 6: Evolution of user activity.

number of posts and comments increase steadily throughout October. We see user activity, both posts, as well as comments, plunge in volume until the end of the year. With the onset of new year, and the influx of new users, the activity starts increasing on the platform. We also notice that users start commenting more than posting as of late.

Our dataset also has 203,565 posts and 22,829 comments that appeared before the platform went live on July 1, which are most likely content automatically imported from Twitter. The posts and comments imported from Twitter are mostly concentrated near the days close to July 1, as Twitter only allows retrieval of the past 3,200 tweets of a user profile. The importing of tweets functionality was blocked by Twitter on July 10 (Morse 2021).

The general trend of user activity indicates that as time progresses the number of posts on Gettr strictly declined, while the number of comments stabilized.

Content Analysis

Gettr bills itself as a place for "unbiased" discussion, in the same vein as Parler and Gab before it. A major differentiat-

ing factor with Gettr is that it has direct ties to former, high-ranking members of the Trump administration (along with alleged ties to Chinese billionaire, Guo Wengui (Nguyen 2021)). Although a deeper exploration of the underlying organization and business model of Gettr is out of scope of this paper, we note that these ties to known political actors is a strong indicator that Gettr is *not* unbiased.

With the above said, in this section we analyze the content posted to Gettr along several axes. First, we take a brief look at the most popular sites linked to in Gettr posts and comments. Because Gettr is in large part a functional clone of Twitter, we also explore the use of hashtags. Finally, we measure how toxicity and spam has evolved on Gettr over time.

Hashtags. As a first step to understanding the conversation on Gettr, we look at the most popular hashtags. Previous explorations of Gab and Parler via hashtags have made it clear that their user base had a clear right-wing bias, with Trump-related hashtags dominating the discussion (Aliapoulios et al. 2021a; Zannettou et al. 2018), and this mostly holds for Gettr as well.

Table 6 lists the top 20 hashtags that appeared in posts within our dataset. `#covid` was the most popular hashtag in posts, accounting for 4.12% of all hashtags. 9.49% of the hashtags used in posts are Trump related (`#trumprally`, `#trumpwon`, `#maga`, `#trump2024`), specifically pushing "The Big Lie (Wolf 2021)," with `#biden` accounting for another 0.48% of the total hashtags.

Interestingly, 5,185 posts used `#bolsonaro2022`, which fits with the over 5.4% of accounts reporting their location as being in Brazil. There are several potential explanations for this. One explanation is that the contingent of Brazilian accounts are legitimate and aligned with Bolsonaro's politics. Another, a more cynical explanation is that these are not legitimate accounts and are involved in anything ranging from a simple spam campaign to a more sophisticated operation a-la state sponsored social media trolls (Badawy, Ferrara, and Lerman 2018; Starbird et al. 2018; Zannettou et al. 2019). We also observe a few unexpected hashtags in posts. For example `#fjb` is referring to an abbreviation of the hashtag Fuck Joe Biden, which occurs 22,522 times.

Table 7 lists the top 20 hashtags that appeared in comments within our dataset. Although the overall theme of the most popular hashtags used in comments is the same as those used in posts, there are some notable differences. For example, the QAnon related hashtag `#wwg1wga` appears in 3,952 comments. We also see some hashtags clearly related to The Big Lie, but here some additional nuance comes into the picture with `#trumplost` appearing in 1.3K comments. On closer examination, this hashtag seems to be used almost exclusively by left-leaning (and often clearly left-wing) accounts to troll Trump supporters. We also observe the hashtag `#fjb` being critical of Joe Biden, and another hashtag `#letsgobrandon` which has been a popular code phrase for insulting Joe Biden. Finally, we see `#transrights` and `#transrightsarehumanrights` showing up in 1,719 comments. From the manual examination, these again appear to primarily be engaged in trolling behavior. For example, a Ben Shapiro-related parody account made use of `#transrightsarehumanrights` (along with many other hashtags) as did an account posting various K-Pop related posts.

Hashtag	#Posts
covid	95,376
trump	79,814
gettr	69,276
trumprally	56,763
maga	56,328
biden	42,872
trumpwon	38,876
covid19	36,211
freedom	31,510
usa	26,855
ccp	26,407
america	25,304
trump2024	24,794
vaccine	23,798
bitcoin	22,783
fjb	22,522
news	21,643
americafirst	20,000
saveamerica	19,204

Table 6: Top 20 hashtags on user posts.

URL analysis. Another mechanism for getting a high-level view of an online community is the type of off-platform content its users link to. For example, looking at the political leaning or trustworthiness of the most popular news outlets shared within a community can be used in a variety of higher order analyses (Wang et al. 2021; Zannettou et al. 2017).

In Table 8 we show the top 20 domains linked to in Gettr posts. The most popular domain is `youtube.com`, and by a very wide margin (17.57%). Prior to their deplatforming, 6.89% of links on Gab (Zannettou et al. 2018) and 13.59% of links on Parler (Aliapoulios et al. 2021a) pointed to YouTube. In addition to YouTube, links to alternative video sharing websites like Rumble (6.30%), bitchute (1.39%) (Trujillo et al. 2020), and odysee (0.77%) are also quite popular.

The only news sites appearing in the top 20 are conservative ones (Fox News) and well-known peddlers of conspiracy theories, and mis- and dis-information (Epoch Times,Breitbart,Dailymail,NewsMax). Gnews, which is predominantly an anti-CCP website linked to Steve Bannon, contributed to 2% of the URLs shared in Gettr posts.

Gettr is notable here because of exclusively right-leaning news outlets. For example, on Gab's Dissenter platform, the BBC was more popular than Fox News, and The Guardian also appeared in the top 10 most linked sites (Rye, Blackburn, and Beverly 2020).

Table 9 lists the top 20 domains that appeared in comments within our dataset. We observe that Twitter links happen to be the second most shared links on the posts (6.59%) and fourth most shared links on the comments (4.65%). This is an interesting observation as one of Gettrs primary goals is to become an alternative to Twitter. We can also see sharing of external links to other social media such as Tiktok and Facebook. We also find instances of far-right websites being pushed in the comments, such as

Hashtag	#Comments
gettr	16,854
fjb	15,352
trumpwon	12,279
maga	11,935
covid19	10,801
ccp	11,473
freedom	10,418
trump	10,135
america	10,033
letsgobrandon	6,596
trump2024	6,501
biden	6,368
twitter	6,026
news	5,844
bolsonaro2022	5,754
impeachbiden	5,639
takedowntheccp	5,209
saveamerica	5,114
wwg1wga	3,952
transrights	3,852

Table 7: Top 20 hashtags on user comments.

Domain	#Posts
youtube	983,396
twitter	547,896
rumble	447,349
thegatewaypundit	304,974
foxnews	140,850
gnews	131,658
breitbart	129,313
theepochtimes	117,230
instagram	108,673
bitchute	91,717
facebook	69,899
nypost	63,942
gettr	50,714
tiktok	46,270
ept	45,915
citizenfreepress	40,917
dailymail	39,337
newsmax	37,297
gab	36,621

Table 8: Top 20 URL domains on user posts.

`maga-patriot2024.com`, `usapatriots4ever`, `rawconservativeopinions.com`, and `trumpbookusa.com`.

Next, we quantitatively study the nature of political bias in the URL shared on Gettr. To this end, we use Media Bias Fact Check[1] as the source to assign political leaning to URL shared which are news articles. Media Bias Fact Check assigns the following possible labels of bias to a domain: i) Left, ii) Left Center, iii) Right, iv) Right Center, v) Least Biased, and vi) Extreme Right. The distribution of URLs according to different political leaning is displayed in Table 10. We find that the news article shared on posts are heavily right leaning, with close to 84% of the links being shared to right leaning websites. Alarmingly, 20.51% of the URLs shared lean towards Extreme Right bias, which is concerning. On the other hand, we see a slightly more balanced share of political leaning on news articles shared in comments.

Finally, we assess the source trustworthiness of the news articles shared on Gettr by checking the credibility scores of the URL with NewsGuard[2]. NewsGuard provides a quantitative score ranging from 0 to 100 to news sources based upon 9 journalistic criterias [3]. We use the rating criteria used by NewsGuard to label news articles as "trustworthy" if the rating score is above 60, and untrustworthy otherwise. We find that 47.88% of the news article shared on Gettr belong to untrustworthy news outlets, whereas 33.77% of the link shared on comments belong to untrustworthy news sources. The higher proportion of untrustworthy news outlets shared on Gettr is concerning when compared to other platforms as (Wang et al. 2021) reported 6.3% of URLs coming from four other communities (Reddit, Twitter, 4chan, and Gab) as untrustworthy. Overall, we can see that the link sharing activity is highly dominated by sources with Right, Right Center, and Far Right bias, and untrustworthy news outlets.

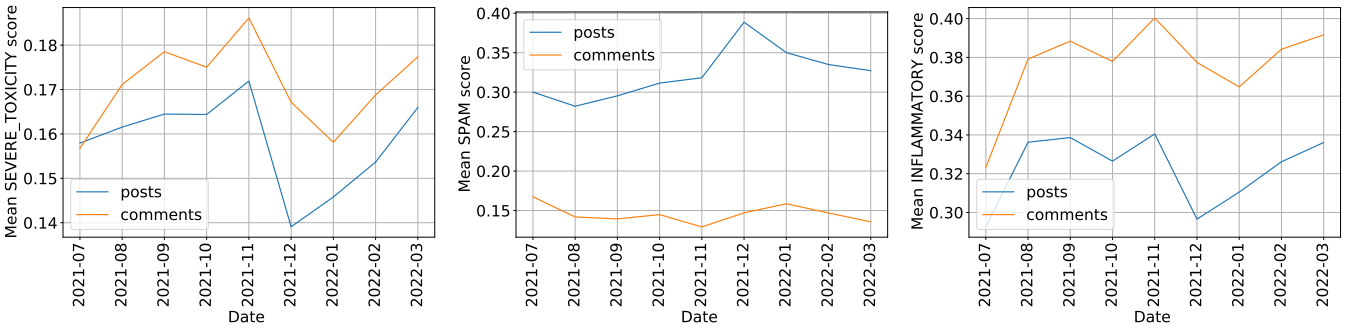
Progression of content. We use Google's Perspective API (Perspective API) to measure Gettr posts and comments in terms of toxicity, spam, and profanity in the posts and comments. We use three different models made available in the Perspective API: 1) *Severe toxicity* (Figure 7(a)) 2) *Spam* (Figure 7(b)) 3) *Inflammatory* (Figure 7(c)). We sampled 50,000 monthly posts/comments and plot the monthly mean of the Perspective scores in the figures.

From Figure 7(a), we see that generally speaking, comments are more toxic than posts, and more specifically, the toxicity trends of posts and comments follow each other very closely. That said, the average level of toxicity on Gettr is lower than what was recently reported by research on other alternative platforms like Gab (Ali et al. 2021) and 4chan (Aliapoulios et al. 2021b). Another interesting insight we find from Figure 7(b) is that posts have relatively higher spam likelihood than the comments throughout our observation period. This is an anomalous behavior as we might expect comments to be filled with spams and unrelated to discussions, while posts being more filled with spam, and by a significant margin prompts future works to dive deeper into the text. Finally, we see that comments have been steadily growing inflammatory in Figure 7(c) throughout our data collection period.

Conclusion

In this paper, we took a first data-driven look at the Gettr social network. We find that the user base of Gettr is similar to that of other alternative social network platforms like Gab and Parler. We also find that while user activity steadily decreased from the early days of the platform until the end of 2022, there seems to be a revival of platform activity with the onset of 2022. We also observe a turn of the tide in platform activity in 2022 with more commenting activity than posts. Our analysis identified several interesting directions

[1] https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/
[2] https://www.newsguardtech.com/
[3] https://www.newsguardtech.com/ratings/rating-process-criteria/



(a) Severe Toxicity (b) Spam (c) Inflammatory

Figure 7: Average Perspective scores over time.

Domain	#Comments
gettr	114,664
youtube	86,251
rumble	49,005
twitter	31,504
bitchute	18,173
usapatriots4ever	13,612
thegatewaypundit	6,530
blogspot	5,154
redrepublicanarmy	4,936
redrights	4,568
gnews	4,509
substack	3,909
facebook	3,700
google	3,431
conventionofstates	3,132
gab	2,469
odysee	2,446
frankspeech	2,354
gtv	2,350
theepochtimes	2,108

Table 9: Top 20 URL domains on user comments.

	Posts %	Comments %
Left	1.91	6.22
Left Center	8.83	22.44
Least Biased	3.29	13.80
Right	49.82	29.61
RightCenter	15.56	13.81
Extreme Right	20.51	14.079

Table 10: Political bias of news article shared.

that could be explored as future work. First, the crystallization of the activity on Gettr around a core of verified users and early adopters could give interesting insights into how like-minded online communities form and evolve. Second, it would be interesting to analyze the presence of disinformation and conspiratorial content in more depth, to better understand its effect on online discourse.

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