

Introduction

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is an established legal advocacy group that tracks many American social movement groups that advance socially deviant ideals. Founded in 1971 during the American Civil Rights movement, the SPLC has purposed itself to expel hate, bigotry, and social injustices. It has routinely filed successful lawsuits against violent, socially extreme groups that seek to discriminate and exploit vulnerable members of society. Further, the SPLC is often recognized as a prominent force in continuing the fight against institutional racism.

The SPLC releases a quarterly publication listing all domestic groups they track, along with additional commentary and information concerning studied organizations. Data on the social movements was acquired from the SPLC Spring 2009 Intelligence Report, which is comprised of a collection of 771 groups that promote their extreme social perspectives through real world activism in the United States, who also maintain strong virtual presences and participate in virtual activism (Table 1).

Ideological Class	Subclasses	Description	# of Groups
Patriot	militia, media, ministries, publishing, support, vendor, political/citizen groups, and sovereign/common law/jural	opposed to the 'new world order' or advocates extreme antigovernment doctrines	141
Hate	Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazi, white nationalist, racist skinhead, Christian identity, neo-confederate, black separatist, and general hate	advocate extreme prejudice or violence on the basis of race or religion	630

Table 1 – SPLC 2009 Intelligence Report Data

Collection

Out of the 771 groups, 103 of them possessed websites that served as a means to spread information on held social perspectives, to organize organizational events, and to recruit new members. We crawled all 103 of these websites, totaling 29 patriot militia groups and 74 hate groups. The contents of these websites are made available within this archive.

Final SPLC Collection			
<i>Web Pages</i>	<i>Patriot Groups</i>	<i>Hate Groups</i>	<i>Avg. Pages per Group</i>
23,243	29	74	225

Table 2 – Crawled Collection Statistics

Example Use of Data

The websites contained within this collection are rich in social perspectives, multimedia, and web linkage. Researchers can understand the relationships between different social movement organizations by studying their virtual personas. We present an example in Figure 1. In this example, we examine website content similarity of the American Patriot Friends Network within other select patriot militia groups. The American Patriot Friends Network (APFN) characterizes the "American patriot" as an individual who upholds the American constitution and is skeptical of the American government operating within the legal bounds of the constitution. It has strong content similarities with other groups who share constitutionalist perspectives, and weak linkages with groups that make focus their activism on other causes. One strong instance of content similarity exists between the APFN (A) and the Conservative USA

(B). Both of these groups share similar perspectives in referencing the constitution as the highest authority in America. This behavior is again observed between the APFN and the Lawful Path group (C). The Lawful Path group is dedicated to ensuring that the United States government abides by the constitution, an interest shared with the APFN. However, the APFN has much weaker content similarity with groups that refer to constitutional authority, but actually focus on different topics. For example, the Liberty Gun Rights (D) group focuses their efforts on advancing gun rights, and only use the constitution as a small justification of why gun ownership should be unregulated; the APFN has weak content similarity with this group.



Figure 1 – Content Similarity among Patriot Militia Group