The Transnational Far-Right on YouTube

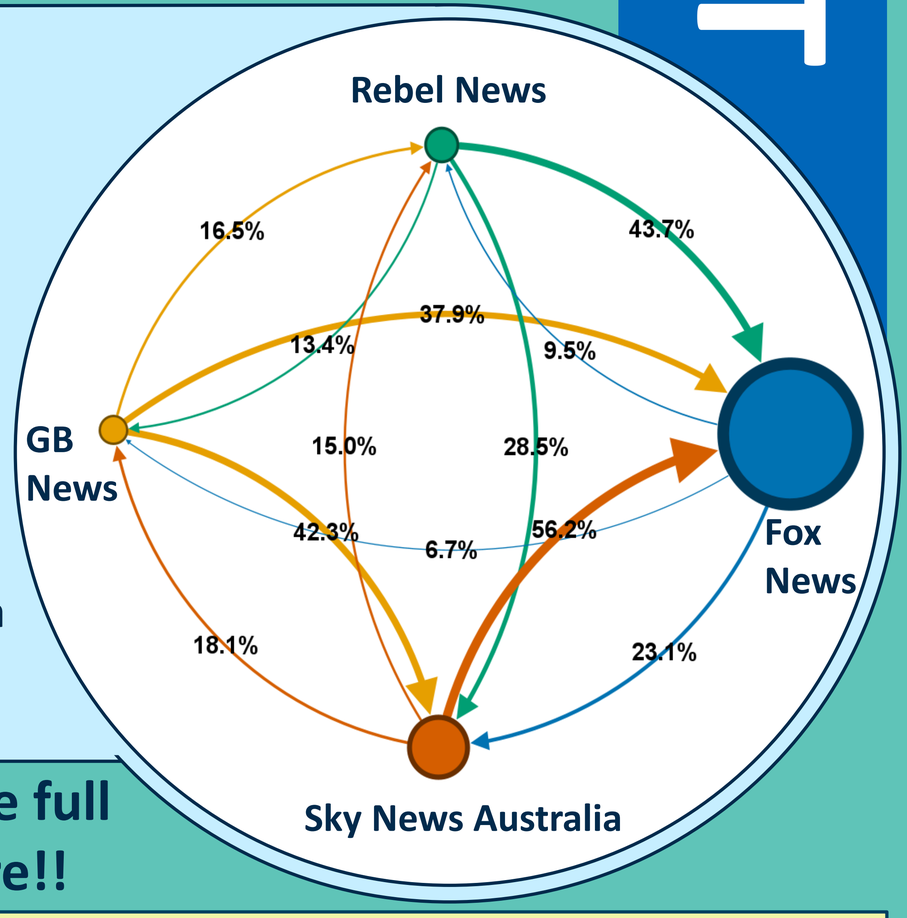
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Introduction and Motivation

Far-right movements have gained significant power around the world, threatening democratic institutions and the rights of minorities. Healthcare is a particular target: far-right actors have undermined trust in medical professionals and established treatments, notably during COVID-19, and attacked access to abortion and gender-affirming care. While the transnational convergence of the far right has been documented at elite and institutional levels [1], the transnationalisation of the digital information ecosystem remains underexplored [2].
This paper addresses this gap through a large-scale computational analysis of the content and audiences of four far-right news channels on YouTube, each based in a different English-speaking country: Fox News (United States), Sky News Australia (Australia), Rebel News (Canada) and GB News (United Kingdom).



Objectives

This paper focuses on two primary objectives:

- Find empirical evidence of the transnational far right on YouTube.
- Analyse how far-right channels target a transnational audience.

Access the full paper here!!

Methods

Challenge
Gather historically representative dataset of videos.

Solution
Develop novel data-gathering approach to collect 114,025 videos and 51,449,494 comments.

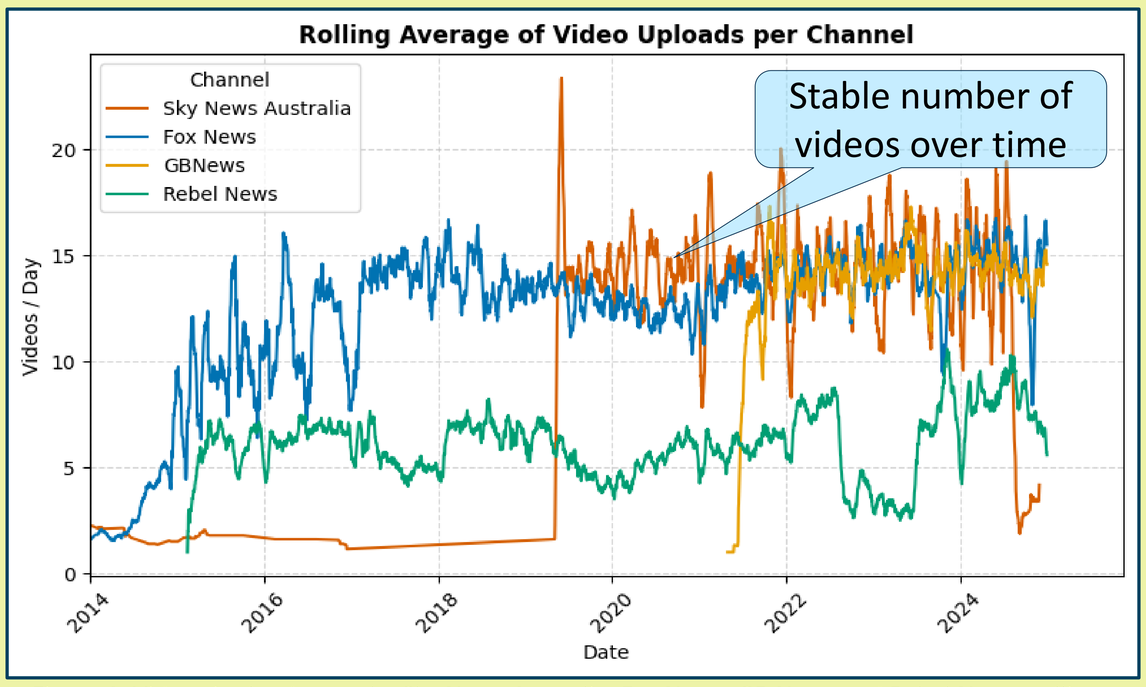


Figure 1. Videos in the dataset by Sky News Australia, Fox News, GB News and Rebel News; rolling average per day (28-day window)

Analysis

- Commenters as proxy for audience.
- Compare commenters between channels to quantify audience overlap.
- Co-Commenting network to visualise audience communities.
- BERTopic on video transcripts to analyse the content.

Results

- Significant and sustained audience overlap between all channels.
- 56% of Sky News Australia commenters have also commented on US-based Fox News.
- Many shared topics between channels, including anti-immigration, transphobia, and COVID-19 misinformation.

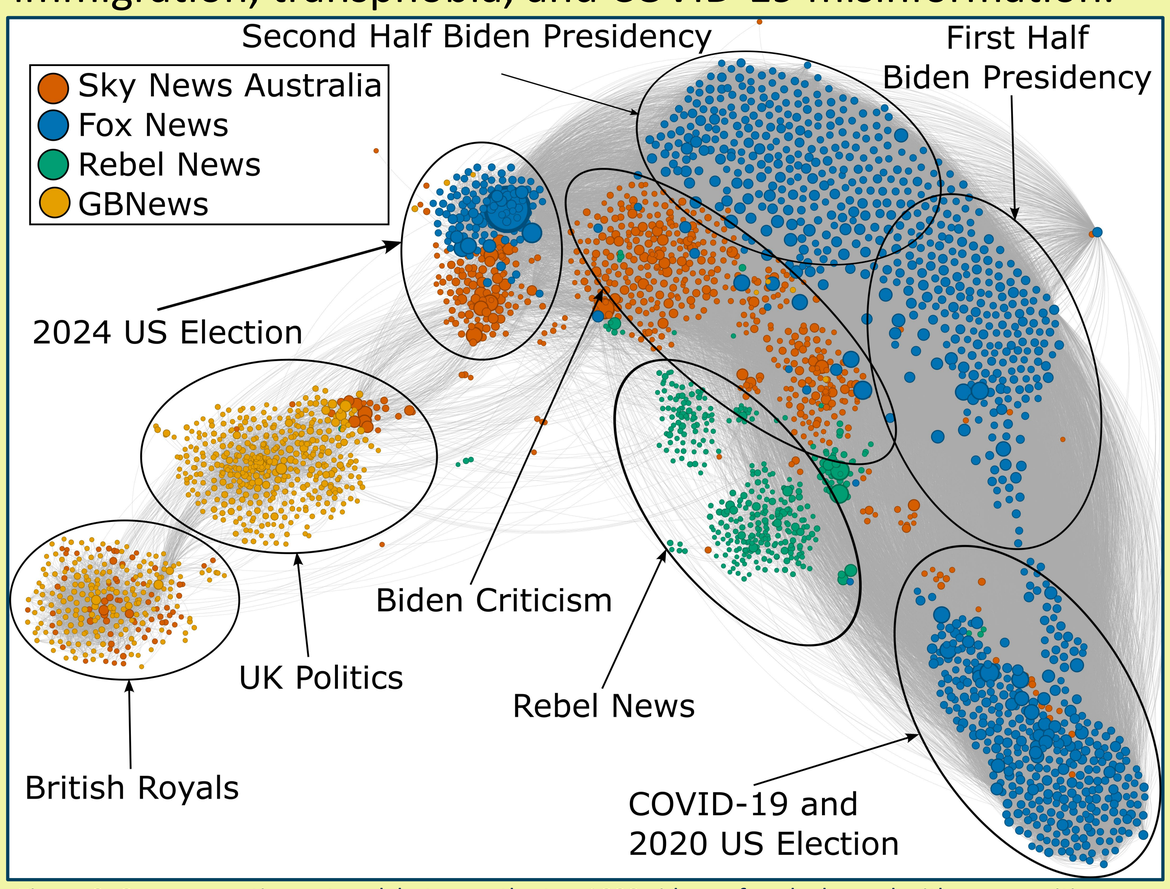


Figure 2. Co-commenting network between the top 1000 videos of each channel with communities. Nodes are videos, edges filtered for over 200 shared commenters.

Discussion

- Strong empirical evidence for a transnational English-speaking far-right information environment on YouTube.
- US figures (Trump) and topics feature prominently in other countries.
- Channels target transnational audience by producing content focusing on transnational topics, internationally recognised figures, and issues from other countries.

References

This research was conducted by the ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society (CE200100005) and the Laureate Fellowship project FL210100051 *Determining the Drivers and Dynamics of Partisanship and Polarisation in Online Public Debate.* It was funded by the Australian Government through the Australian Research Council.

1) Caiani M (2025) The Transnationalization of the Far Right between Movements and Parties. In: Milan C, Buzogány A (eds) *Contentious Politics in the Transnational Arena: Political Contention in Europe and Its Wider Neighbourhood*. Palgrave Macmillan Cham, 211–236.
2) Heft A, Knüpfer CB, Reinhardt S, et al. (2021) Toward a transnational information ecology on the right? Hyperlink networking among right-wing digital news sites in Europe and the United States. *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 26(2): 484–504.