



Antisemitism within Anti-Vaccination Conspiracy Theories

June **2021**

Antisemitism within Anti-Vaccination Conspiracy Theories

Moonshot has conducted an initial investigation into the presence of antisemitism within discourses surrounding anti-vaccination conspiracy theories. The first section of this report provides an overview of the key narratives identified, based on data collected since the onset of the pandemic in January 2020. Moonshot's custom suite of open source intelligence tools and techniques were used to quantify and catalogue instances of antisemitic language used in conjunction with discussions of COVID-19 vaccines. We analysed relevant global English language posts from 4chan, BitChute and Twitter, along with UK-specific English language content on Gab and Telegram. Dates for data collection differed by platform, but all data was gathered between 1 January 2020 and 31 March 2021.

Prominent themes



“Jews” created the vaccine for nefarious purposes

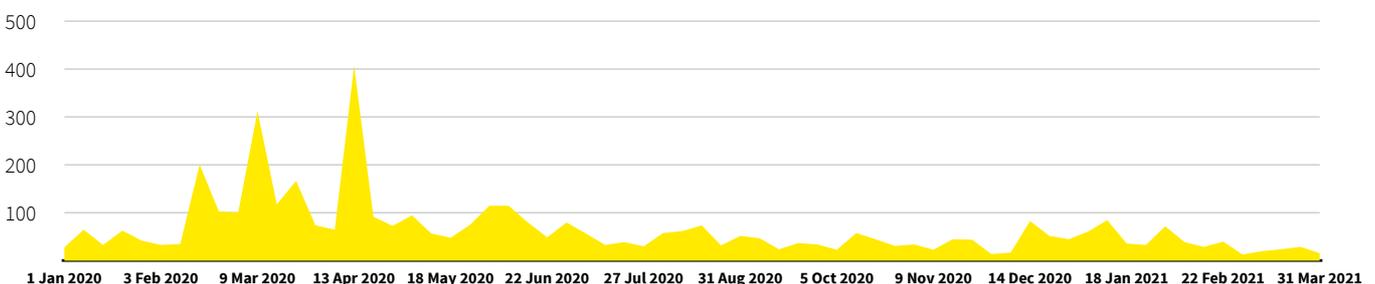
One of the most prevalent narratives to emerge from the content we analysed is the belief that “Jews” created COVID-19 vaccines for nefarious purposes. Our research found evidence of users on Gab, Telegram and 4chan promoting conspiracies that the COVID-19 vaccine was invented by the Jewish community to “sterilise” other groups, with a popular post on Telegram calling the vaccine “*the final solution to the White European problem*”. Others claimed that the vaccine’s purpose was to “*extort countries for bank reserves, embassy buildings and military bases*”, while others claimed that vaccine deaths were “*part of the depopulation plan by ZOG* (they were killed by a poison shilled as vaccine)*”. This particular form of conspiracy was often tied to wider antisemitic tropes, with individuals writing that “*A jew will never pass up a chance for some shekels or some other treasure he didn't earn*”. Antisemitic imagery was also identified across numerous threads on Telegram.



Overlap with “The Great Reset”, “New World Order” and “Great Replacement” conspiracies

A number of further antisemitic themes emerged within our research, relating to the COVID-19 pandemic more broadly. Among these were expressions of “The Great Reset”, a popular conspiracy theory alleging that “governments, corporations and international institutions” are “conspiring” in a “globalist plot” to take “control” of the global economy and establish a “New World Order” at the expense of individual liberty and national sovereignty. Our research found evidence of antisemitic narratives forming part of this discussion, with users referring to a “Jew World Order” that is using COVID-19 as a pretence to establish global control. For example, an individual wrote that “*The ZOG/Globalist are telling us about a ‘deadly virus’ but that ‘they are lying and deceiving us’ to create ‘the next stage of the Jew World Order. It’s been a long time in the planning’*”. The below graph gives a further indication of the prevalence of this conspiracy, tracking global mentions of the term “Jew World Order” on Twitter from January 2020 to March 2021, with peaks observed during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe and North America. Other conspiracies such as the “Great Replacement” were also put forward by users to suggest that Jewish people were behind the entire COVID-19 pandemic, with the goal of replacing the “white population” of the world.

Graph showing global mentions of “Jew World Order” on Twitter from 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2021



General antisemitic insults

Discourse on Gab, Telegram, 4chan, Twitter and BitChute also included many instances of antisemitic language being used to frame discussions of COVID-19 vaccinations and the pandemic. Our research found evidence of audiences mocking others to “*Be a patriot goy, take the vaccine!*”. “Goy” is a Hebrew term for a gentile or non-Jewish person, and is used here pejoratively to mock the perceived “subservience” of the general public to the wider Jewish community. Others used antisemitic language to describe individuals and institutions who advocated for COVID-19 restrictions. For example, individuals described Prime Minister Boris Johnson as a “*fkn kike*” for his role in the UK’s response to the pandemic, and the mainstream media as the “*jew media*” for their reporting on the UK’s vaccination programme.

*“ZOG” is a antisemitic acronym for “Zionist Occupied Government”, reflecting the conspiratorial belief that global governments are under Jewish “control”.

Antisemitism within Anti-Vaccination Conspiracy Theories

Moonshot has analysed posts on Gab and 4chan that contain combinations of keywords indicating both anti-vaccination and antisemitic sentiment. Analysis on 4chan focused on the '/pol/' board, while analysis on Gab focused on English language right-wing extremist sections of the platform. Analysis highlighted that the overlap between the two sets of keywords did not manifest on either of these platforms prior to May 2020. Exploring the volume of posts containing keywords from both sets since May 2020 presents some interesting findings.

A surge in antisemitic discourse within the context of anti-vaccination sentiment was observed on 4chan in December. This was primarily driven by the approval of a number of COVID-19 vaccines across the world, with users making statements such as *"All Covid vaccines are Jewish as fuck"*. The Pfizer vaccine was the most widely discussed, particularly allegations that *"PFIZER'S CEO IS ALBERT BOURLA. BOURLA IS JEWISH"*, which prompted users to refer to the Pfizer vaccine as "jew juice injections". The peak in discourse on Gab in July 2020 was also analysed and significant volumes of antisemitism were identified in response to reports surrounding the clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccines around the world.

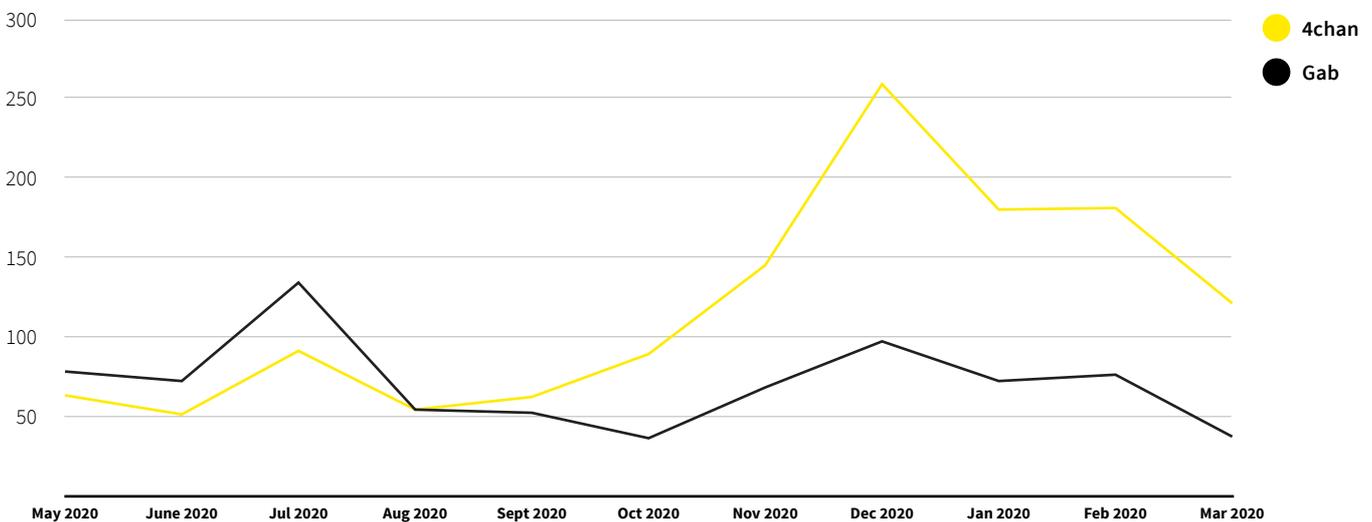


Additional research into the overlap of antisemitic and anti-vaccination discourse on the '/pol/' board of 4chan identified users sharing links to BitChute and YouTube channels, including 'The Corbett Report' and influential alt-right figure Alex Jones' 'Infowars'. A video shared from Infowars' 'BANNED.VIDEO' BitChute channel states that *"Jeffrey Epstein's friend and lawyer Alan Dershowitz"* is *"coming with your vaccine, telling me I will submit, you're assaulting me"*. In the video, Jones repeatedly compares the *"coerced administration of the COVID-19 vaccine"* to *"rape"*, prompting one user on 4chan to state *"Will you bow down to the jew jab?"*



Reviews of popular content on Gab highlighted the presence of a popular post that stated *"Eat the bugs. Wear the mask...Get vaccinated. Never forget the holocaust."* Combining antisemitic sentiment in the form of holocaust denial with anti-vaccination sentiment and calls to *"eat the bugs"*, this post involves an expression of *"The Great Reset"* conspiracy theory.

Volume of posts containing antisemitic and anti-vaccination sentiment



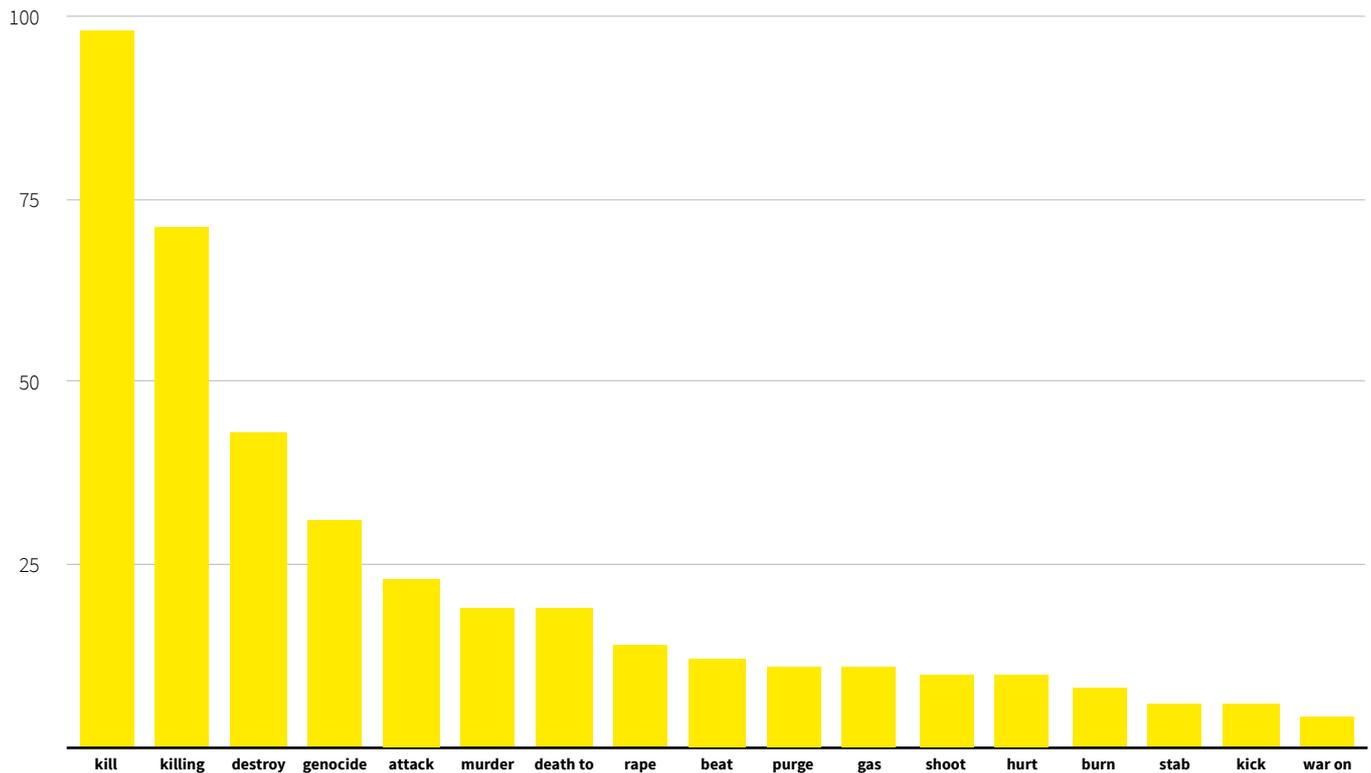
Investigations into English language right-wing extremist groups and channels on Telegram found that overlaps between antisemitic and anti-vaccination discourse appeared as early as April 2020, when audiences reacted to news reports that *"anti-israel boycotters"* were *"happy to receive a vaccine made in Israel"*. Despite this, these references featured in lower volumes than on Gab and 4chan (above).

Antisemitism within Anti-Vaccination Conspiracy Theories



Calls to action and expressions of violence

Our research also found evidence that the expression of antisemitic and anti-vaccination conspiracy theories motivated violent discourse. This included the claim that “*dangerous [COVID-19] vaccines... are jewish weapons that will change our dna*”, and calls to action on the basis of this conspiracy: “*these enemy jews who wage war on humanity need to be hunted down, mob attacked and wiped off the earth*”. More general calls to antisemitic violence were also observed, with one user on Gab writing “*if any of you... get infected with a Corona virus, please buy a ticket to Israel and meet as many jews as possible and abuse their public transportation... If you can't go to Israel, going to places like Jew York or just your local synagogue will suffice*”.



This graph provides an indication of the most popular expressions of violence identified within the overlap between antisemitic and anti-vaccination sentiment. Despite Gab accounting for a lower overall volume of posts, our analysis found that users on the platform were twice as likely to express violent sentiment when sharing antisemitic views within the context of anti-vaccination conspiracies than users on 4chan.

