Call for papers for an *ephemera* special issue on:

**Styles of organization in right-wing activism**

**Issue editors:** Benjamin Richards, Hauke Dannemann, Beverly Geesin, and Emil Husted

In what increasingly seems like a world spinning into further ecological, political, and social crises, alternative styles and forms of organizing from the right and associated bordering spaces continue to manifest in response. Organization through right-wing activism takes many forms and is increasingly entangled with the normalisation of far-right and postfascist movements and discourse (Traverso, 2019; Brown et al. 2021). It is also recently accompanied by several *diagonalist* and *traversal* movements (Slobodian and Callison, 2021) that position themselves beyond the traditional left-right spectrum, such as conspiracy theory and survivalist movements (Schreven, 2018; Husted et al., 2023). From the Alt-Right and Alt-lite in America, Identitarianism and right-wing nationalism in Europe, to online and sub-cultural movements and activism found within a new generation of predominately ‘angry white men’ (Negra and Leyda, 2021), movements that span from the centre to the extremes of the right have proliferated and spread across the Global North and beyond.

In response to an increased scholarly interest in new forms of progressive and emancipatory activism, social movements and alternative means of
organization often associated with the left, this special issue calls for critical counterpoints on such phenomena found within activism, movements and organization positioned in the spaces associated with the right (Caiani et al., 2012; Castelli Gattinara and Pirro, 2019). In particular, it seeks to understand the modalities and realities of such organization found in-between the centre and the extremes of right-wing politics, ideology, and culture, in order to query whether there is something to learn from them and ultimately to be better at countering them (du Plessis and Husted, 2022).

The extreme aberrations of misogyny and racism found within certain movements of the right are reflected in the darker sides of organization that reveal the deeper motivations of human behaviour, often grounded in both sex and violence (Linstead et al., 2014). By understanding certain right-wing masculine and gender strategies (Sunderland, 2022), as seen in various ‘Mens Rights activism’ (O’ Donnell, 2020), we may further see the inherent violent and patriarchal structure of organization itself and provide further reflections on the whiteness and the inherent racism built into universities and academia (Dar et al. 2021; Liu, 2019; Liu, 2021).

Beyond these rather continuous characteristics of right-wing organization, recent mainstreaming and normalisations of far-right and associated movements are particular in being shaped by their transnational and online organization as well as their countercultural and anti-authoritarian appeal, blurring boundaries between centrist, radical, and even emancipatory movements. These transnational processes can be described as one of the key causes of the manifestation and mobilisation of a seemingly undivided right, whose nebulous ideologies coalesce across borders and conflicting right-wing spaces (Caiani and Kröll, 2015; Froio and Ganesh, 2010). Therefore, it challenges the ‘normality’ of the Western project of modernisation at large and also brings the role of far-right politics and its normalisation in the Global South to attention (Masood and Nisar 2020).

Beneath and beyond the borders of ‘normal’ society, alternative social media ecologies such as Telegram and Gab (Rogers, 2020) serve as the spaces for the disparate and marginal niches of online subculture that are often the
breeding grounds for right-wing organization (Fielitz and Thurston, 2018). Like progressive social movements of the left then, the right has also moved towards a post-heroic turn in leadership (Barthold et al., 2020), where a narrated leadership mythos like ‘Trumpism’ embodies the ambition of a nostalgic and imagined past and thus the need for change, rather than advancing or organizing its agenda (Mollan and Geesin, 2020). The online environment of right-wing activism requires no such leadership, change is affected virtually and protest through disruption and chaos, consumerist boycotts, and collective identity and action manifest as organizing forms (Cambefort and Pecot, 2020; Guenther et al., 2020).

Further, right wing and associated movements attempt to build legitimacy by incorporating contemporary political and social movement principles such as identity related beliefs, collective action, prefigurative politics, attitudes of liberation and the use of new media, marketing and political aesthetics into their organizing forms (Richards, 2019; Dannemann, 2023). Many of these movements perceive themselves as countercultural, anti-authoritarian, emancipatory, rebellious, and democratic grassroots avant-gardists that are critical about science, experts, and elites – characteristics otherwise commonly associated with the political left (Blühdorn 2022; Butzlaff 2022; Lütjen 2022). Seeking to shift discourse, ideology, and culture away from the perceived status-quo, certain right-wing movements engage in so-called ‘metapolitics’, fantasy, myth, and spectacle as exercises in organizational disorder (Richards and Mollan, 2022).

Gaps then exist in our collective understanding of the perceived presence of seemingly progressive and emancipatory beliefs and practices of those found on the fringes and spaces in-between the right-wing of the political-ideological spectrum. The present call for papers challenges this blind spot and looks to strike-up a conversation on the alternatives to organizing economies, cultures, and societies from those whose perspectives we may often find ourselves opposed to. We invite researchers of all disciplines and backgrounds to contribute to the otherwise marginal dialogue on styles, forms, and modes of organization found within right-wing activism, its extreme aberrations, beyond and between the left-right spectrum and the spaces in-between. We encourage participation in a variety of formats.
including articles, research notes, interviews, photo essays, short films, book reviews, artistic performances, and experimental contributions. If interested in submitting a contribution in a format that deviates from the traditional formats (articles, notes, reviews), please reach out to the editors prior to submission. Possible topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Modes and styles of organization in right wing politics, ideology, culture, and activism.

- The use of violence and militarism as organizational activity and its basis in racism and misogyny.

- Right-wing organization outside of the Global North and challenges to its assumed political and social normality.

- Processes of mainstreaming and normalisation of the far and extreme right and the role of both the political left and right mainstream and emancipatory movements in it.

- Differences, similarities, crossovers between left and right forms of organization and the spaces in between: How is what is happening on the Left reflected in/by the Right?

**Deadline and further information**

The deadline for submissions is **March 1, 2024**. All submissions should be sent to all of the special issue editors: Benjamin Richards (Benjamin.richards AT stir.ac.uk), Hauke Dannemann (hauke.dannemann AT wu.ac.at), Beverly Geesin (beverly.geesin AT northumbria.ac.uk) and Emil Husted (eh.ioa AT cbs.dk). The submissions will undergo a double-blind review process. All submissions should follow *ephemera*’s submission guidelines, which are available at http://www.ephemerajournal.org/how-submit (see the ‘Abc of formatting’ in particular). For further information, please contact one of the issue editors.


the editors

Benjamin Richards is a Lecturer in the Management School at the University of Stirling and a contributor to ephemera. His research primarily focuses on the polarizing processes of management and organization. His recent doctoral work focused on the sign systems of postfascist movements, exploring myth and noise to find the hidden relation between the ideational and material to uncover a style of (dis)organisation.
Hauke Dannemann is a research and teaching assistant at the Institute of Social Change and Sustainability at the Vienna University of Economics and Business. Interested in the social basis for a socio-ecological transformation, he works on the far right and sustainability and asks how the recent mainstreaming and normalisation of the far right irritates core convictions of emancipatory social and environmental criticism in theory and practice.

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Beverly Geesin is Senior Lecturer in Organisation, Work and Employment at Northumbria University. Her research interests are in power, resistance, discourse, precarious labour and management theory. With an interest in the intersection of management thought and politics she is currently working on a number of projects on the anti-managerialism of Trumpism and the influence of management theorist Stafford Beer on other fields including music.

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