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SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR HATE SPEECH COMMERCIAL TALK RADIO AND NEW MEDIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study analyzes how social networks that form around the hosts of commercial talk radio shows can propagate messages targeting vulnerable groups. Working with recorded broadcasts from five shows gathered over a six-week period, involving 102 scheduled guests and covering 88 topics, researchers determined hosts' and guests' ideological alignment on the topics discussed most frequently—including immigration and terrorism—through a content analysis of on-air statements and website content. The findings reveal that the hosts promoted an insular discourse that focused on, for example, anti-immigration, anti-Islam, and pro-Tea Party positions and that this discourse found repetition and amplification through social media. Of the 21 guests who appeared more than once, media personalities (57 percent) and political figures (19 percent) accounted for 76 percent. Fox News accounted for nearly one-fourth (24 percent) of appearances by guests representing an organization. Political figures accounted for 27 percent of all guests, and the Republican Party and the Tea Party accounted for 93 percent and 89 percent, respectively, of all political figures appearing on the shows. Eighty-nine percent of the scheduled guests were white, and 81 percent were male.

INTRODUCTION

Today's new media provide opportunities for individuals and organizations to share and spread information more quickly and more democratically than ever before. Data gathered for the Pew Internet and American Life Project show that 77 percent of adults who use the Internet use it every day (2011). It is becoming increasingly important for the transmittal of information, as a national study by the Pew Research Center reveals: more Americans rely on the Internet as a primary news source than rely on print newspapers, and the Internet is gaining on television news as well. Forty-one percent of the adults surveyed reported that they get most of their national and international news from websites (Pew Research Center 2011).¹ Although popular news sites such as *The Drudge Report* (Drudgereport.com) and *The Huffington Post* (Huffingtonpost.com) are largely aggregators of content from traditional news outlets, web content strategist Colleen Jones has noted that new and traditional broadcast and print media now inform each other, together shaping the news "agenda." Moreover, people look to new media sources when traditional outlets fail or are slow to cover a story, further solidifying new media's credibility in the larger media landscape (Jones 2011, 84).

The Internet also helps users easily and rapidly issue and echo their and others' opinions. Pamela Geller, a neoconservative blogger, experienced an exponential increase in popularity and notoriety in 2010 with her running commentary on the proposed building of an interfaith mosque and prayer space near the site of the World Trade Center, which she decried as the "Ground Zero Mega Mosque." Actively using new media to spread her anti-Islam ideology, Geller became a prominent public voice on the proposed mosque and a go-to "source" for talk radio hosts, television news media, and the public at large.²

The impact of Geller's and other U.S. blogs with an anti-Islam message came under question following the attacks by Anders Behring Breivik, who killed seventy-seven people in Norway in July 2011. The *New York Times* reported that Breivik had been "deeply influenced" by several blogs, including *Jihad Watch*, written by ardent anti-Islamist Robert Spencer, and *Atlas Shrugs*, written by Geller. A former CIA officer noted that while one cannot necessarily attribute the violence to these bloggers, "they and their writings are the infrastructure from which Breivik emerged" (Shane 2011, 7).

This study examines how new media infrastructures that form around traditional broadcast media can promote ideologies of hate and exclusion. These infrastructures are analyzed as social networks that are determined and sustained by ideological alignment between the hosts of commercial talk radio shows and their on-air guests. Conservative talk radio, which accounts for 91 percent of total weekday talk radio programming (Halpin et al. 2007), affords exemplary instances of ideological alignment. The news-talk format—a hybrid of news commentary and opinion—provides a platform for the discussion of politically explosive topics such as immigration, religion, the Tea Party, anti-liberal and anti-federalist policies, and free speech. This study focuses on the social network generated by the hosts of five shows: *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, *The Sean Hannity Show*, *The Glenn Beck Program*, *The Savage Nation*, and *The John & Ken Show*.

A key component of the ownership structure of commercial talk radio is syndication. Four of the five programs we analyzed were nationally syndicated at the time of analysis. *The Glenn Beck Program*, *The Sean Hannity Show*, and *The Rush Limbaugh Show* were distributed by Premiere Radio Networks, a wholly owned subsidiary of Clear Channel Communications and the

largest provider of audio content in the United States (Free Press 2012).³ Premiere Radio Networks currently syndicates ninety radio programs to over 5,000 radio affiliates (Clear Channel 2012; Free Press 2012) and has over 213 million weekly listeners (Free Press 2012).⁴ The fourth program, *The Savage Nation*, was syndicated by Talk Radio Network.

Our intention is to generate knowledge about how some talk show hosts are, by virtue of their location in a social network, especially able to spread information and opinion and exert influence vis à vis ideological messages that target vulnerable groups. If a social network is active in propagating hate speech, the dynamic connections that constitute it may explain or contribute to an individual's attitudes and behaviors, including the commission of hate crimes.⁵ Determining the structure of the social network by finding ties between the shows' hosts and their guests, and between the guests and other individuals and organizations, enabled us to assess how the ideological alignments expressed by these ties support the cultivation and circulation of hate speech toward vulnerable groups.⁶

This study continues the research reported in *Quantifying Hate Speech on Commercial Talk Radio* (Noriega and Iribarren 2011). This earlier pilot study used qualitative content analysis to examine speech on U.S. commercial talk radio that targeted vulnerable groups—ethnic, racial, religious, and/or sexual minorities. We found a significant instance of speech that incorporates targeted statements, unsubstantiated claims, divisive language, and indexical terms related to political nativism. We further found a discursive pattern whereby vulnerable groups are targeted, but calls for action are directed against those identified as supporters of vulnerable groups—usually, social institutions. The targeted groups are rhetorically

positioned as outside the realm of legal protection or participation in public discourse.⁷

The current study had three objectives: (1) to develop a replicable model of analysis—a methodology—for quantifying ideological alignment within the social networks surrounding conservative commercial talk radio programs; (2) to record and analyze baseline data that can be used for future studies on media-based social networks; and (3) to integrate this study's findings with two other CSRC studies focusing on hate speech in the media (one, the qualitative content analysis of hate speech described above; the other, an examination of how medical immunology technology can measure the physiological and psychological effects of hate speech commercial talk radio).⁸ In combination, the goal of these three studies is to establish correlations between hate speech in commercial talk radio and the execution of hate crimes, if such correlations do in fact exist.

II. METHODOLOGY

Social networks play a vital role in how individuals and organizations identify and solve problems and define and achieve goals. Social network theory and methodology have been significantly expanded since their integration into the social sciences in the 1980s. In the 1990s, use of social network theory became more common in the physical sciences as well, especially biology, and in recent years it has found application in studies of digital communication technologies. As a result, the field now boasts a considerable body of theoretical scholarship (for example, Borgatti et al. 2009; Brass 1984; Freeman 1977; Garton et al. 1997; Gilbert and Karahalios 2009; Padgett and Ansell 1993; Wasserman and Faust 1994). Social network research significantly departs from traditional social research,

which conceptualizes outcomes as exclusively a function of individual traits (Borgatti et al. 2009). Indeed, Garton et al. (1997) note that within the field of computer-mediated communication (CMC), for example, social network analysis has expanded understanding beyond how individual users interface with computers to evaluating their behavior as a result, primarily, of their network connections.

The field of social network analysis provides a set of techniques and tools for a systematic study of the dynamic processes involved in the transmission of information and opinion. A social network consists of nodes (the individuals and organizations that make up the network; also called vertices or actors) and ties (the connections between nodes; also called edges). Additionally, social networks typically present multiple levels of analysis: macro, which identifies the broad categories for study and often examines the configuration of entire networks, including an identification of network components and structural positions; meso (middle-range), which refines the macro analysis, crossing the domains of macro and micro analyses; and micro, which usually focuses on individual units, often dyads, triads, other small subgroups, and ego-centered networks (Krackhardt and Brass 1994). Each level contains some exclusive and some overlapping units of analysis.

Centrality—the structural hierarchy of the network—is the most studied concept regarding nodes. Assessments of centrality and, thus, the influence of nodes within a network, are based on the notion of “distance” between nodes. Distance is a measure of how many nodes lie in the path between two nodes: the path may be direct, or it may pass through any number of intervening nodes. Researchers use several algorithms to determine centrality; each evaluates a node's importance in the network in a different way.

One of the most frequently used centrality measures is closeness centrality, which is related to how close, on average, a node is to all others in the network.⁸ It indicates how quickly a node can receive and send on information. Closeness centrality is valuable because it takes into account not only direct ties but also a node's ability to affect the flow of information. Nodes with high closeness centrality have the potential for considerable influence within a network.

Directionality is essential to any discussion of the ties that make up the network: a node may explicitly reference another without the latter referencing the former, and nodes may also reference each other. Borgatti et al. (2009) identify a "contagion of ideas," a mimetic, imitative process in which information flows from node to node. This notion had a direct bearing on our investigation of ideological alignment. As information flows from one node to another, either directly or through intermediaries, one node may influence another and similar attitudes may develop. For example, an individual unsure about how to react to proposed federal legislation may choose to restate the opinions and imitate the terminology or tone of a politician, media leader, or blogger who has established a position on the subject.

Since social networks are inherently structured, network relationships can be presented in not only

mathematical but also visual terms (Jamali and Abolhassani 2006). Methods for visualizing information allow researchers to identify patterns, trends, clusters, and outliers in their data, even within highly complex social networks. The profusion of software tools for social network analysis demonstrates the strength of interest in this area, but many of these tools are difficult to use, particularly for those who lack experience with programming languages. NodeXL, an open-source add-in for Excel, was designed especially for the analysis of social media networks, with visualization and ease of use as key components.

THE STUDY

Our goal was to assess the social network formed by talk show hosts, their guests, and other new-media sources that demonstrated ideological alignment with the hosts. We hypothesized that talk show hosts would be the most central nodes in this network by virtue of their capacity to widely disseminate ideological content. The study incorporated two approaches: a program-based analysis of the five shows and their hosts, guests, advertisers, and topics over a six-week period, and a guest-based analysis of the connections generated by one guest to new media sources that referenced at least one of the five shows.

Both analyses incorporated data that were collected from program content ("top-down" data) and

data that were collected from websites and other new media ("bottom-up" data). For instance, for the program-based analysis we used web-based research to identify the ideologies represented by the official affiliations of on-air guests, which extended the analysis beyond strictly on-air content. Although the guest-based analysis relied on web-based research to determine ties and alignment between nodes and hosts, we also utilized data collected in the program-based portion of the study.

The directionality of ties between nodes in the network was determined using the following rules:

- Unidirectional ties identified in top-down data: Talk show host explicitly endorsed the node and/or the organization(s) he or she represents.
- Unidirectional ties identified in bottom-up data: Node and/or organization(s) they represent explicitly endorse a talk show host.
- Bidirectional, or reciprocal, ties identified in top-down and bottom-up data: Talk show host and node explicitly endorsed each other either on the air or online.

Additionally, a third-party statement was only indicative of potential alignment. If alignment between a node and a host was suggested via a third party source, further investigation was conducted before the node was added to the network.

PROGRAM-BASED ANALYSIS

For the program-based portion of the study we gathered data from six weeks of radio programming, from April 2 to May 14, 2010. We selected these broadcast dates after the start of a project grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, awarded through the National Hispanic Media Coalition. The project start date coincided with the debate surrounding Arizona Senate Bill 1070, which proposed the broadest and strictest immigration measures in the United States at that time. Our study dates include the three weeks leading up to the bill's presentation to Arizona governor Jan Brewer on April 23, 2010, and the three weeks following its signing into law. Immigration policy was a frequent discussion topic across talk radio programs during this time. The data were gathered from five shows hosted by established commercial radio talk show personalities:

Rush Limbaugh (*The Rush Limbaugh Show*), Sean Hannity (*The Sean Hannity Show*), Glenn Beck (*The Glenn Beck Program*), Michael Savage (*The Savage Nation*), and the Los Angeles-based duo John Kobylt and Kenneth Chiampou (*The John & Ken Show*) (table 1).

Trained researchers (graduate students) listened to archived recordings of each show's programs for every day that the show aired during the study period. These programs were posted on each show's official website. The number of hours that were analyzed varied, depending on the program.¹⁰ Researchers made note of all guests participating and all discussion topics covered during the hours examined. They then counted the number of appearances by each guest during those hours and noted the guest's political party affiliation and whether he or she was a scheduled or a call-in guest. The number

of advertisements and their named sponsors were also counted, but because some shows excised their advertising content prior to online archiving, these data were incomplete and therefore are not included in this report.¹¹

We identified the ideological positions most frequently expressed by hosts and guests through a content analysis of on-air statements. Additional ideological analysis was based on a limited content analysis of hosts' and guests' websites and blogs, public and media appearances, recommended websites, and YouTube videos; together, these sources helped verify guests' ideological positions.

Graphs and tables illustrating findings for the program-based portion of the study were generated using Microsoft Word, Excel, and NodeXL. These programs allowed us to create sortable metrics and layouts that represent program content and guest appearances.

Table 1. Description of Programs

Host	Show	Schedule	Syndicated or Local
Glenn Beck	<i>The Glenn Beck Program</i>	Weekdays 9:00 a.m.–noon	National syndication on Premiere Radio Networks
Sean Hannity	<i>The Sean Hannity Show</i>	Weekdays 3:00–6:00 p.m.	National syndication on Premiere Radio Networks
John & Ken	<i>The John & Ken Show</i>	Weekdays 3:00–7:00 p.m.	Local in Los Angeles area on KMI 640AM
Rush Limbaugh	<i>The Rush Limbaugh Show</i>	Weekdays noon–3:00 p.m.	National syndication on Premiere Radio Networks
Michael Savage	<i>The Savage Nation</i> (a.k.a. <i>The Michael Savage Show</i>)	Weekdays 6:00–9:00 p.m.	National syndication on Talk Radio Network

GUEST-BASED ANALYSIS

The program-based portion of the study informed the guest-based portion, in which we wanted to examine a “bottom-up” social network by tracing the social media ties that guests established between themselves and the talk shows and/or their hosts. Because 102 unique scheduled guests appeared on the five radio shows during the six-week period of study, a complete analysis was not possible: the exponential scale of the potential data would have exceeded our resources. We therefore decided to undertake an extensive study of the ties generated by one guest. We wanted to show the extent of a social network, so we chose a guest who was engaged with one popular political topic during the study period and who also had a strong new media presence.

Given the controversy over the proposed mosque near Ground Zero in New York City, we selected Pamela Geller, who appeared as a guest on Sean Hannity’s program on May 14, 2010. Geller has developed her own “messaging platform” via her blog *Atlas Shrugs* (atlasshrugs2000.typepad.com) as well as two organizations she has cofounded with Robert Spencer: Stop Islamization of America (siononline.com) and Freedom Defense Initiative (freedomdefense.typepad.com). In addition, Geller has become a frequent commentator in the traditional news media. She has made regular appearances on television news shows, including those on CNN, MSNBC, and Fox News (Media Matters 2010), in addition to various talk radio shows.

To develop a set of nodes for this portion of the study, we first performed a comprehensive search of *Atlas Shrugs* and the websites for Stop Islamization of America and Freedom Defense Initiative. The search allowed us to

determine Geller’s connections to the talk show hosts and to identify an initial set of nodes—persons and organizations—for inclusion in the network. To establish that ideological alignment existed between these Geller-generated nodes and any of the talk show hosts, one of the following criteria was required:

- Explicit endorsement of a host.
- Explicit reference to a host or the host’s programming within the context of discussing a vulnerable group.
- Posting of links (listed as either a “sister” or a “recommended” link) to a host, a host’s show, or other organization affiliated with the host.¹²
- Posting of, or presence in, a video related to a host or other organization affiliated with the host.
- Presence as a featured speaker, invited by a host or related organization, at a public or media event organized around a shared ideological belief.

These criteria had to be met through evidence found on either traditional news sites or a new media platform—a website or a blog. When ideological alignment with a host was found, the tie was termed a “first-degree tie.” A first-degree tie was deemed reciprocal if the host also endorsed the node. If we found no proof of alignment with a host, we labeled the node a “second-degree endpoint.”

Next we conducted targeted online searches (covering the websites of traditional news sources, blogs, and media watchdog groups, among others) through which we identified additional individuals and organizations that had a direct tie (without intermediary nodes) to Geller. These nodes were considered for inclusion in the bottom-up network using the

alignment criteria. If a node had a first-degree tie to a talk show host, we also evaluated nodes that emanated from that node. This process was repeated until only second-degree endpoints remained.

Once we exhausted the search for nodes with direct ties to Geller, we expanded the network by pursuing new connections that originated with the initial set of Geller nodes. As before, if a new node had a first-degree connection to a talk show host, we continued to expand the network; if not, that connection string would end and the node would be designated a second-degree endpoint. The final guest-based network incorporated the nodes with direct ties to Geller as well as nodes that possessed direct ties to a host or hosts but not necessarily to Geller herself. The methodology for the guest-based portion of the study was developed to investigate ties stemming from a single guest, but it maintained the study’s focus on the talk show hosts.

NodeXL graphs present the social network that emerged from the nodes and ties identified in the research centered on Gellar. By focusing on first-degree ties, we attempted to minimize the risk of creating a perception of guilt by association. In other words, just because A, who has a first-degree tie to a talk show host, has a tie to B does not necessarily mean that B has a first-degree tie to a host. Only when B proved to be tied to a host through at least one criterion for first-degree connectivity did we explore the ties emanating from it. Word searches on the website or blog of each node—in particular, searching for the hosts’ names—were useful in ascertaining the presence of first-degree ties to a host.

III. FINDINGS

The findings draw on 2,596 data points generated from our analyses of the broadcast excerpts from the five shows. Combined, the excerpts include 144 guest appearances and 88 unique discussion topics (with or without guests present).

PROGRAM-BASED ANALYSIS

The researchers used an Excel spreadsheet to record evidence of social network interrelationships among broadcast radio program hosts, their guests, and other individuals and organizations. Researchers noted show name, air date, time code, hour, topic, guest, guest type, guest name, political party or organization affiliation, declared ideology of guest or represented organization, and evidence of alignment (quotes

drawn from the broadcasts and related websites). The data can be presented from various starting points; for this report we focus first on topics discussed.¹³ We then look at the guests, particularly their ideological positions, the ideological positions of the organizations they represented, and the party affiliation of guests identified as political figures.

TOPICS

After identifying topic segments in each of the excerpts, researchers recorded the number of times that each topic was discussed with and without guests.¹⁴ Table 2 lists the 10 topics (of 88 total topics) that were discussed most frequently. Immigration (428 topic segments) was discussed the most, followed by party politics (269), the economy (234), various (when three or more political topics were discussed

simultaneously or indistinctly) (152), and personal (statements about hosts' personal life or listeners calling in to support the host without mentioning a specific political topic) (150).

Table 2 shows that hosts John and Ken discussed immigration significantly more often than other topics; party politics was a distant second to immigration.¹⁵ Michael Savage discussed three or more topics ("various") and personal topics more frequently than did the other hosts. Rush Limbaugh gave the most voice to party politics and the economy, followed by immigration. When compared to the other hosts, Limbaugh and Savage together had roughly twice as many topic-driven discussions. Overall, Rush Limbaugh covered the most topics and John and Ken the fewest.¹⁶

Table 2. Ten Topics Discussed Most Frequently

Topic	Number of Topic Segments	Percentage of All Topic Segments	Glenn Beck ^a		Sean Hannity ^b		John & Ken ^b		Rush Limbaugh ^a		Michael Savage ^a	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Immigration	428	23.9%	65	22%	66	29%	107	63%	79	13%	111	23%
Party politics	269	15.0%	46	16%	31	14%	35	20%	101	16%	56	11%
Economy	234	13.0%	44	15%	18	8%	6	4%	131	21%	35	7%
Various	152	8.5%	3	1%	6	3%	0	0%	56	9%	87	18%
Personal	150	8.4%	40	14%	22	10%	2	1%	30	5%	56	11%
Tea Party	109	6.1%	22	8%	29	13%	5	3%	37	6%	16	3%
Healthcare	101	5.6%	22	8%	13	6%	4	2%	49	8%	13	3%
Terrorism	95	5.3%	9	3%	17	8%	3	2%	38	6%	28	6%
Gulf Coast oil spill	89	5.0%	6	2%	17	8%	0	0%	44	7%	22	4%
Military	82	4.6%	6	2%	1	0%	1	1%	23	4%	51	10%
Media	82	4.6%	27	9%	3	1%	5	3%	32	5%	15	3%
Total	1791	100%	290		223		168		620		490	

^aThree-hour program block.

^bTwo-hour program block.

Note: Includes the ten most frequently mentioned topics. A topic segment began when a topic was introduced and ended when the discussion moved to a different topic. Each broadcast excerpt could contain more than one segment about one topic; more than one topic segment could be discussed simultaneously. Topic segments were determined by consensus. Percentages may not total 100% because of rounding.

Table 3 breaks down the data further to reveal how often the ten topics were discussed by the hosts alone, or with guests. Here the data reveal that Glenn Beck, John and Ken, and Rush Limbaugh spoke more often about immigration when guests were not present. The opposite proved true for Sean Hannity and Michael Savage.¹⁷

Table 3. Topics by Type of Discussion

Topic	Number of Topic Segments																			
	Glenn Beck ^a				Sean Hannity ^b				John & Ken ^b				Rush Limbaugh ^a				Michael Savage ^a			
	With guest		Without guest		With guest		Without guest		With guest		Without guest		With guest		Without guest		With guest		Without guest	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Immigration	15	5%	50	17%	45	20%	21	9%	24	14%	83	49%	35	6%	44	7%	67	14%	44	9%
Party politics	18	6%	28	10%	17	8%	14	6%	9	5%	26	15%	28	4%	73	12%	36	7%	20	4%
Economy	9	3%	35	12%	11	5%	7	3%	0	0%	6	4%	32	5%	99	16%	24	5%	11	2%
Various	2	1%	1	0%	2	1%	4	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	56	9%	1	0%	86	18%
Personal	22	8%	18	6%	18	8%	4	2%	1	1%	1	1%	16	3%	14	2%	40	8%	16	3%
Tea Party	6	7%	16	6%	24	11%	5	2%	2	1%	3	2%	15	2%	22	4%	11	2%	5	1%
Healthcare	4	2%	18	6%	8	4%	5	2%	1	1%	3	2%	16	3%	33	5%	10	2%	3	1%
Terrorism	1	0%	8	3%	6	3%	11	5%	0	0%	3	2%	9	1%	29	5%	9	2%	19	4%
Gulf Coast oil spill	0	0%	6	2%	12	5%	5	2%	0	0%	0	0%	12	2%	32	5%	15	3%	7	1%
Military	3	1%	3	1%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	5	1%	18	3%	27	5%	24	5%
Media	3	1%	24	8%	1	0%	2	1%	0	0%	5	3%	13	2%	19	3%	6	1%	9	2%
Subtotal	83		207		145		78		37		131		181		439		246		244	
Total	290				223				168				620				490			

^aThree-hour program block.

^bTwo-hour program block.

Note: % = percentage of total topic segments. Includes scheduled and call-in guests. A topic segment began when a topic was introduced and ended when the discussion moved to a different topic. Each broadcast excerpt could contain more than one segment about one topic; more than one topic segment could be discussed simultaneously. Topic segments were determined by consensus. Percentages may not total 100% because of rounding.

Finally, table 4 divides the guest data into two categories: scheduled guests and call-in guests. *The Rush Limbaugh Show* typically does not include scheduled guests, and in these excerpts all guests except one were call-in guests. All hosts except John and Ken discussed the ten topics more frequently with call-in guests than with scheduled guests. Only when discussing healthcare did Michael Savage rely substantially more on scheduled guests than on call-in guests (8 and 2 guests, respectively); healthcare was one of his least-covered topics.

Table 4. Topics by Type of Guest (Scheduled or Call-In)

Topic	Number of Topic Segments																			
	Glenn Beck ^a				Sean Hannity ^b				John & Ken ^b				Rush Limbaugh ^a				Michael Savage ^a			
	Scheduled		Call-In		Scheduled		Call-In		Scheduled		Call-In		Scheduled		Call-In		Scheduled		Call-In	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Immigration	2	2%	13	16%	9	6%	36	25%	14	38%	10	27%	0	0%	35	19%	7	3%	59	24%
Party politics	7	8%	11	13%	5	3%	12	8%	9	24%	0	0%	0	0%	28	15%	4	2%	32	13%
Economy	1	1%	8	10%	4	3%	7	5%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	32	18%	6	2%	18	7%
Various	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Personal	0	0%	22	27%	0	0%	18	12%	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	16	9%	0	0%	40	16%
Tea Party	2	2%	4	5%	3	2%	21	14%	0	0%	2	5%	0	0%	15	8%	5	2%	6	2%
Healthcare	1	1%	3	4%	1	1%	7	5%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%	16	9%	8	3%	2	1%
Terrorism	0	0%	1	1%	2	1%	4	3%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	9	5%	1	0%	8	3%
Gulf Coast oil spill	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	12	8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	12	7%	0	0%	15	6%
Military	0	0%	3	4%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	3%	6	3%	21	9%
Media	0	0%	3	4%	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	12	7%	2	1%	4	2%
Subtotal	15		68		24		121		24		13		1		180		39		206	
Total	83				145				37				181				245			

^aThree-hour program block.

^bTwo-hour program block.

Note: % = percentage of total topic segments. A topic segment began when a topic was introduced and ended when the discussion moved to a different topic. Each broadcast excerpt could contain more than one segment about one topic; more than one topic segment could be discussed simultaneously. Topic segments were determined by consensus. Percentages may not total 100% because of rounding.

Figure 1, a NodeXL diagram, provides a visual representation of the topics discussed with and without guests. Each host is linked to each of their show topics, and the width of the tie reflects how often each

topic was discussed on each show, with a thicker line indicating more-frequent discussion.

Using the data collected in the program-based analysis, researchers identified by consensus ten

recurring ideological positions that the scheduled guests expressed. These positions, which are listed in table 5, formed the basis for assessing ideological alignment between hosts and their guests.

Figure 1. Topics Discussed by Hosts

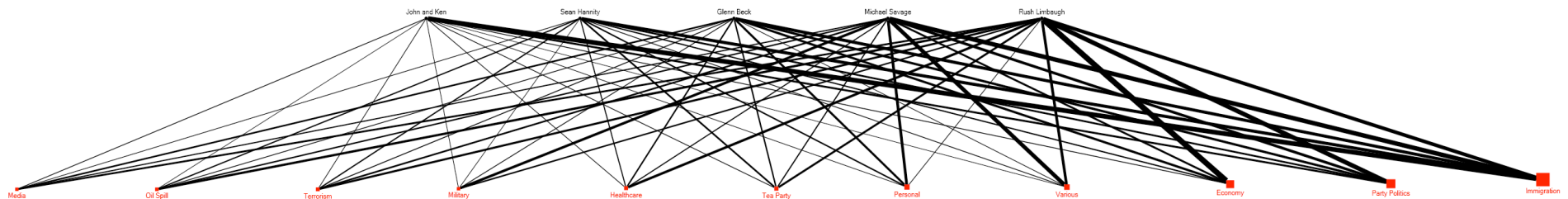


Table 5. Ideological Positions Expressed on Programs and Online

Anti-Democrat	An overt rejection of the Democratic Party's policies, positions, or members.
Anti-federalism	In this study, an overt rejection of federal programs that benefit the welfare of the majority of the population (e.g., Social Security).
Anti-Hollywood	An overt rejection of personalities or entities tied to the entertainment industry, whose positions are considered to be contrary to the welfare of the U.S.
Anti-immigration	An overt endorsement of policies and/or attitudes that are contrary to the welfare of many immigrants to the U.S.
Anti-Islam	An overt endorsement of policies and/or attitudes that are contrary to the welfare of those who practice or are associated with Islam.
Anti-liberal	An overt rejection of the values, policies, entities, and personalities perceived and described as antithetical to the values, policies, entities, and personalities perceived and described as conservative, patriotic, and good for the country. Includes use of the word "liberal."
Pro-conservative	An overt endorsement of the values, policies, entities, and personalities perceived and described as paradigmatic of what is good for the country. Includes use of the word "conservative."
Pro-religion	An overt endorsement of Christianity and/or Judaism, including its description as a harmonious theological entity that is antithetical to Islam.
Pro-Republican	An overt endorsement of the Republican Party's policies, positions, or members.
Pro-Tea Party	An overt endorsement of the policies, positions, or members of the Tea Party faction that is aligned primarily with the Republican Party (as opposed to factions aligned to traditional libertarian values and an antiwar ethos).
Various	Indicates that three or more topics were discussed simultaneously or indistinctly.
N/A	Indicates that nothing political or of relevance to the study was discussed.

GUESTS

During the study period, the combined shows presented 102 unique scheduled guests and included 144 total scheduled guest appearances.¹⁸ (*The Rush Limbaugh Show* typically does not include scheduled guests; there was only one scheduled guest during the period we analyzed.) Of these 102 guests, 91 were white, 4 were Latino, 3 were black, and 2 were Asian (the race/ethnicity of two guests could not be determined). Eighty-three (81 percent) were male, and 19 (19 percent) were female (fig. 2).

Guests were counted once for each broadcast excerpt in which they appeared. For example, one guest appearing on one show for two days would be counted twice, and one guest appearing one day on two shows would be counted twice. For each guest researchers noted the topics that the guest discussed on the air, any organization represented by that guest, and the ideology of that organization. Organizational affiliation was gleaned from the guest’s self-identification, the host’s identification, and/or the subject tags used to label the archived broadcasts on the show’s website. The ideological position (or positions) of each organization was determined through an examination of on-air and online statements. Using the terminology listed in table 5, researchers used a consensus method to establish the position of each organization. We graphed these data in four ways to show the interconnections among guests, hosts, and ideological positions.

Figure 2. Race/Ethnicity of Scheduled Guests

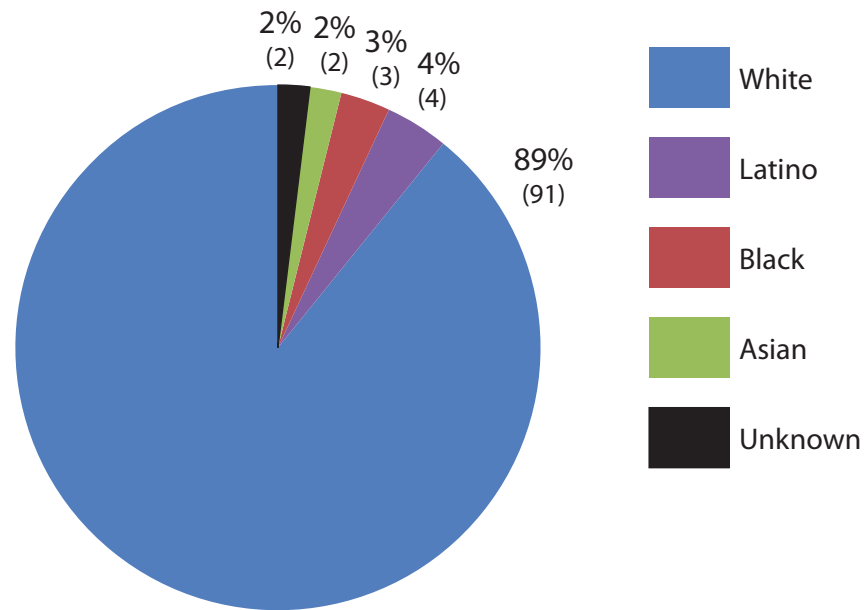


Table 6 shows the twelve organizations that were represented by two or more scheduled guest appearances. With three exceptions, these organizations are media related, with Fox News being represented most frequently; the network accounted for 17 appearances made by 12 guests.¹⁹

Table 6. Organizations Represented by a Scheduled Guest in Two or More Appearances

Organization Represented at Time of Study	Organization Type	Organization Ideology	Guests	Total Number of Appearances
Fox News	Media (broadcast)	Anti-Democrat, Anti-federalism, pro-religion, anti-Islam	Bob Beckel, Linda Chavez, Susan Estrich,* Newt Gingrich,* Rudy Giuliani, Phil Kerpen,* KT McFarland,* Dick Morris,* Bill O'Reilly, Sarah Palin, Stuart Varney, Juan Williams	17
Heritage Foundation	Non-profit 501(c)(3)	Anti-federalism	James Carifano, Dean Cheng, Curtis Dubay, James Gattuso, Bruce Klingner, David Kreutzer, David Mason, James Phillips	9
NewsMax	Media (print, web)	Pro-Republican, pro-conservative, anti-Islam	James Hirszen,* Ken Timmerman	9
Left Coast Report	Media (web)	Anti-Hollywood, Anti-liberal	James Hirszen	7
Robert Scott Bell Blog	Media (web)	Anti-federalism	Robert Scott Bell	7
Christian Broadcasting Network	Media (broadcast)	Pro-religion, anti-Islam	Erick Stakelbeck	6
Charleston City Paper	Media (print)	Anti-federalism	Jack Hunter	6
Cato Institute	Non-profit 501(c)(3)	Anti-federalism, pro-capitalism	Mark Calabria, Michael Tanner, Jeffrey Miron*	3
Breitbart.com	Media (web)	Anti-federalism, pro-Tea Party, anti-Islam, anti-Democratic	Andrew Breitbart	2
American Congress for Truth (ACT!)	Non-profit 501(c)(3)	Anti-Islam	Brigitte Gabriel	2
The Lynn Woolley Show	Media (broadcast)	Pro-conservative, pro-Republican	Lynn Woolley	2
Foundation for Pluralism and World Muslim Congress	Media (web)	Pro-Islam, pro-immigration	Mike Ghouse	2

Note: For some shows, some guests appeared in more than one broadcast excerpt. Because the *Rush Limbaugh Show* does not include scheduled guests, it is not included in this analysis. *Not identified as a representative of the associated organization during the broadcast but was on that organization's payroll at the time of the broadcast.

Table 7 shows the scheduled guests who appeared two or more times; some guests appeared in multiple excerpts from one or more shows. Of the 21 guests with multiple appearances, 7 did not represent an organization per se: 4 were current or former elected

officials, 2 were interviewed about a recent publication (one was an author, the other was the subject of a news article), and 1 was a well-known musician. Of the 14 guests representing organizations, 12 represented a media outlet or program, and 2 represented

an issue-based, non-profit organization. Like table 6, table 7 shows the predominance of media organizations (both traditional and new) represented on these shows during the study period.²⁰

Table 7. Scheduled Guests with Two or More Appearances

Name	Organization Represented at Time of Study	Organization Type	Number of Appearances	Host(s)
Robert Scott Bell	Robert Scott Bell Blog	Media (blog)	7	Michael Savage (7)
James Hirsen	Left Coast Report	Media (blog)	7	Michael Savage (7)
Jack Hunter	Charleston City Paper	Media (print)	6	Michael Savage (6)
Erick Stakelbeck	Christian Broadcasting Network	Media (broadcast)	6	Michael Savage (6)
Michele Bachmann	None: U.S. Representative (R-MN)	—	4	Sean Hannity (1), Michael Savage (3)
Stuart Varney	Fox News	Media (broadcast)	3	Sean Hannity (3)
Andrew Breitbart	Breitbart.com	Media (web)	2	Glenn Beck (1), Sean Hannity (1)
Brigitte Gabriel	American Congress for Truth (ACT!)	Non-profit 501(c)(3)	2	Michael Savage (1), Sean Hannity (1)
Mike Ghouse	Foundation for Pluralism and World Muslim Congress	Media (web)	2	Sean Hannity (2)
Newt Gingrich*	Fox News; former U.S. Representative (R-GA)	Media (Broadcast)	2	Glenn Beck (1), Sean Hannity (1)
Nadine Hays	None: featured in local news story	—	2	John and Ken (2)
J.D. Hayworth	None: candidate for U.S. Senate; conservative talk show host; former US Representative (R-AZ)	—	2	John and Ken (2)
Duncan Hunter	None: former presidential candidate; former U.S. Representative (R-CA)	—	2	Michael Savage (1), Sean Hannity (1)
David Kreutzer	Heritage Foundation	Non-profit 501(c)(3)	2	Michael Savage (2)
Marcus Luttrell	None: author; former Navy Seal	—	2	Glenn Beck (2)
Ted Nugent	None: musician	—	2	Glenn Beck (2)
Bill O'Reilly	Fox News	Media (broadcast)	2	Glenn Beck (2)
Marco Rubio	None: GOP senate candidate; former GOP representative, Florida legislature	—	2	Sean Hannity (2)
Ken Timmerman	Newsmax	Media (print, web)	2	Michael Savage (2)
Juan Williams	Fox News	Media (broadcast)	2	Sean Hannity (2)
Lynn Woolley	The Lynn Woolley Show	Media (broadcast)	2	Michael Savage (2)

Note: Because the *Rush Limbaugh Show* rarely includes scheduled guests, it is not included in this analysis.

*Not identified as a representative of the associated organization during the broadcast but was on that organization's payroll at the time of the broadcast.

Table 8 presents the frequency that the identified ideological positions were represented on the talk shows. The data allow us to enumerate the number of times an ideological position was represented simply by virtue of a scheduled guest's presence in a broadcast excerpt, whether or not the ideology was discussed on the air. The ideological positions represented by the largest number of scheduled guests were

anti-federalism and pro-Republican (23.6 percent and 19.1 percent, respectively), followed by pro-Tea Party (12.1 percent) and anti-Islam (11.1 percent). The four shows had roughly similar numbers of scheduled guests voicing pro-Republican, pro-conservative, and anti-Democrat positions; *Savage Nation* had markedly more guests voicing views related to anti-federalism, anti-liberalism, and pro-religion.

We broke down the information further to reveal the ideological positions of each scheduled guest, whether these positions were expressed on the air, online, or both (see the Appendix). The number of times a guest appeared on the air during the study period is indicated by the number of times each guest's name is listed. For example, Robert Scott Bell and James Hirszen each appeared seven times.

Table 8. Ideological Positions of Scheduled Guests

Ideological Position*	Number of Guests Aligned with Position	Percentage of All Scheduled Guests	Number of Guests per Show
Anti-federalism	47	23.6%	Glenn Beck (7), John and Ken (3), Michael Savage (25), Sean Hannity (12)
Pro-Republican	38	19.1%	Glenn Beck (11), John and Ken (8), Michael Savage (9), Sean Hannity (10)
Pro-Tea Party	24	12.1%	Glenn Beck (5), John and Ken (8), Michael Savage (5), Sean Hannity (6)
Anti-Islam	22	11.1%	Michael Savage (11), Sean Hannity (9), Glenn Beck (2)
Anti-immigration	17	8.5%	Glenn Beck (4), John and Ken (7), Michael Savage (1), Sean Hannity (5)
Anti-Democrat	13	6.5%	Glenn Beck (4), Sean Hannity (5), Michael Savage (4)
Pro-conservative	11	5.5%	John and Ken (2), Michael Savage (5), Sean Hannity (4)
Anti-liberal	10	5.0%	Glen Beck (1), Sean Hannity (2), Michael Savage (7),
Pro-religion	9	4.5%	Glenn Beck (3), Michael Savage (6)
N/A: no explicit ideological position expressed	8	4.0%	Glenn Beck (5), John and Ken (2)
Total	199	99.9%**	

Note: Because the *Rush Limbaugh Show* rarely includes scheduled guests, it is not included in this analysis. Researchers listened to three-hour program blocks for *The Glenn Beck Program*, *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, and *The Savage Nation*, and two-hour program blocks for *The Sean Hannity Show* and *The John & Ken Show*.

*Ideological position was determined from on-air and online content.

** Because percentages are rounded, total does not add up to 100 percent.

Figure 3, a NodeXL diagram, provides a visual representation of the ideological positions represented by scheduled guests on the four shows analyzed. The width of the tie (edge) that connects each host to an ideological position varies to reflect the number of guest appearances associated with that particular

position. A thicker edge indicates a greater number of guest appearances.²¹

Some scheduled guests were identified as political figures, as figure 4 and table 9 show. At the time of the study, 15 were in public office; 6 guests had previously held office; 6 were candidates with no previous experience in office; and 1 was a previous candidate

with no previous experience in office. Additional data were collected on the self-identified party affiliations of these guests, as well as whether they had a declared affiliation with any branch of the Tea Party. Twenty-six of the 28 political figures identified themselves as members of the GOP, and 25 also or otherwise affiliated themselves with the Tea Party.²²

Figure 3. Ideological Position of Scheduled Guests

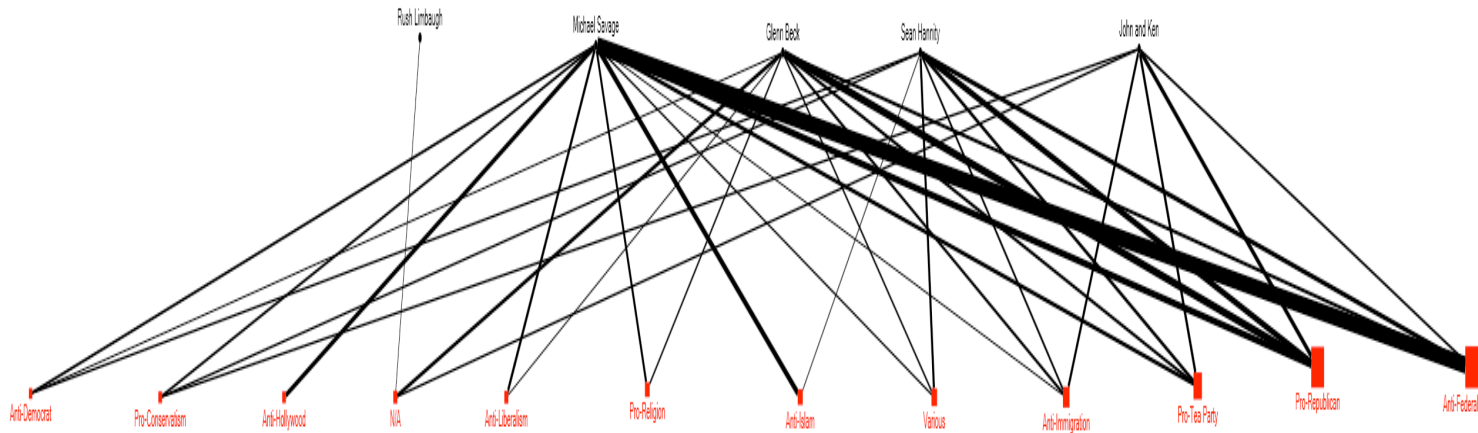


Figure 4. Political Guests by Major Party Affiliation

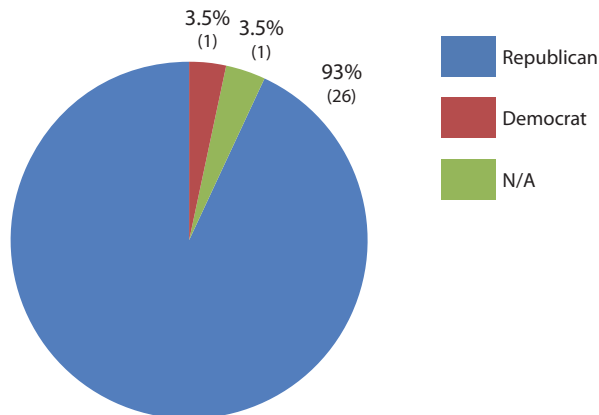


Table 9. Party Affiliation of Scheduled Guests Identified as Political Figures

Guest	Political Party	Political Status at Time of Study, April–mid-May 2010 (Updated status as of March 2012 is given in parentheses when it could be determined)	Tea Party Affiliation?
Paul Ryan	GOP	U.S. Representative from Wisconsin, took office in 1999. (Re-elected in November 2010.)	Y
Dan Patrick	GOP	Senator, Texas legislature, took office in 2007. Talk radio host. (Remains in office.)	Y
Mike Lee	GOP	Candidate for U.S. Senate from Utah. (Elected in November 2010.)	Y
Pat Toomey	GOP	Candidate for U.S. Senate from Pennsylvania. Former U.S. Representative, 1999–2005. (Elected in November 2010.)	Y
Jason Chaffetz	GOP	U.S. Representative from Utah, took office in 2009. (Re-elected in November 2010.)	Y
Sarah Palin	GOP	Former governor of Alaska, took office in 2006. Former vice presidential nominee, 2008. (Regular commentator for Fox News; hosted TV show for The Learning Channel.)	Y
Marlin Stutzman	GOP	Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives from Indiana. Senator, Indiana legislature, 2009–2010. Former Representative, Indiana legislature, 2002–2008. (Elected in November 2010.)	Y
Newt Gingrich	GOP	Former U.S. Representative from Georgia, 1979–1999; speaker, 1995–1999; minority whip, 1989–1995. (Ran for GOP presidential nomination in 2012.)	Y
Dale Peterson	GOP	Candidate for agriculture commissioner, Alabama. (Was not elected.)	Y
Pat Buchanan	GOP	Conservative political commentator, syndicated columnist, and broadcaster. Former presidential nominee, Reform Party, 2000, and Republican Party, 1992 and 1996. Senior adviser to presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Ronald Reagan; hosted CNN's Crossfire. (Dismissed from MSNBC in early 2012; remains regular guest on <i>The McLaughlin Group</i> .)	Y
Michele Bachmann	GOP	U.S. Representative from Minnesota, took office in 2007. Founder of the Tea Party Caucus. (GOP presidential nominee in 2012.)	Y
Marco Rubio	GOP	Candidate for U.S. Senate. Former Representative, Florida legislature, 2002–2008; speaker, 2007–2008. (Elected in November 2010.)	Y
Chris Christie	GOP	Governor of New Jersey, took office in 2010. Former U.S. Attorney for the District of New Jersey. (Rumored as contender for GOP presidential nomination in 2012 but did not run.)	Y
Duncan D. Hunter	GOP	U.S. Representative from California, took office in 2009. (Remains in office.)	Y
John McCain	GOP	U.S. Senator from Arizona, took office in 1987. Former Republican nominee for president, 2008. Former U.S. Representative, 1983–1987. (Re-elected in November 2010.)	Y
Rudy Giuliani	GOP	Lawyer and businessman. Former mayor of New York City, 1994–2001. Former U.S. Attorney, 1983–1989. (Remains a lawyer and businessman.)	Y
George Runner	GOP	Candidate for California Board of Equalization. Former Senator, California legislature, 2004–2010; Republican caucus chair, 2004–2009. Former Assemblyman, California legislature, 1996–2002. (Elected in November 2010.)	Y
Tom Harman	GOP	Senator, California legislature, took office in 2006. Former Assemblyman, California legislature, 2000–2006. (Remains in office; serves as GOP Caucus chair as of January 2012.)	N
Thomas Hodgson	GOP	Sheriff, Bristol County, MA, took office in 1997. (Remains in office.)	Y
Chuck Devore	GOP	Candidate for U.S. Senate. Assemblyman, California legislature, 2004–2010. (Not elected in 2010; now a visiting senior scholar for fiscal policy at the Texas Public Policy Foundation.)	Y
Bill Hunt	GOP	Candidate for Sheriff, Orange County. (Not elected in 2010.)	Y
Joe Arpaio	GOP	Sheriff, Maricopa County, AZ, took office in 1993. (Remains in office.)	Y
JD Hayworth	GOP	Candidate for U.S. Senate, 2010. Former U.S. Representative from Arizona, 2003–2007. Former conservative talk radio host, 2007–2010. (Not elected in 2010.)	Y
James Hosking	N/A	Candidate for Superior Court, San Bernardino County, CA. (Elected in June 2010.)	N
Mickey Kaus	DEM	Candidate for U.S. Senate, California. (Not elected in 2010; continues to write "Kaus Files" blog on <i>The Daily Caller</i> website)	N
Vic Williams	GOP	Representative, Arizona legislature, took office in 2009. (Re-elected in November 2010.)	Y
Ted Poe	GOP	U.S. Representative from Texas, took office in 2005. (Re-elected in November 2010.)	Y
Allen West	GOP	Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives, Florida. (Elected in November 2010.)	Y

GUEST-BASED ANALYSIS

The guest-based portion of the study focused on the ties generated by one guest, Pamela Geller. After determining Geller’s connections to the talk show hosts, we evaluated data from Geller’s blog and her organizations’ websites, as well as other websites and blogs that mentioned Geller, as described above. We followed ties to nodes that were named on these sites and determined whether each node had a first-degree tie to a talk show host or was instead a second-degree endpoint. We repeated these evaluations until only second-degree endpoints remained. We documented 591 unique ties and 136 unique nodes associated with Geller. This information, plus proof of first-degree ties (statements taken from the nodes), was recorded

in an Excel document. Connections were not documented for *The John & Ken Show*, partly because it has a regional rather than a national listenership.²³

Using this data, we determined the hierarchical structure of the network. Notably, 67 nodes are referenced by other nodes at least once (e.g., node Andrew Breitbart is mentioned on *Stop Islamization of America*, one of Geller’s websites), evidencing a certain amount of insularity within the network.

FIRST-DEGREE TIES

To illustrate the extent of the network originating with Geller, we determined the number of first-degree nodes and their degree of remoteness from a host.²⁴ Remoteness indicates a node’s hierarchical position relative to a host; it is the shortest path to the host

by way of Geller. For example, Pamela Geller leads to Andrew Breitbart, which has a first-degree tie to Rush Limbaugh; Breitbart is thus removed from the host by two degrees of remoteness. Breitbart leads to Fox News, meaning that Fox News is removed from the host by three degrees of remoteness.²⁵ This series of ties was extended until a second-degree endpoint was reached.

Figure 5 shows the degree of remoteness for each of the 85 first-degree nodes. Twenty-seven nodes were separated by only two degrees of remoteness from a show host. Laurie Roth and Michelle Bachmann were the most remote from a host; each was removed by six degrees.

Figure 6, a NodeXL graph, shows the social network formed by these relationships. Arrowheads

Figure 5. First-Degree Nodes’ Degree of Remoteness from Host

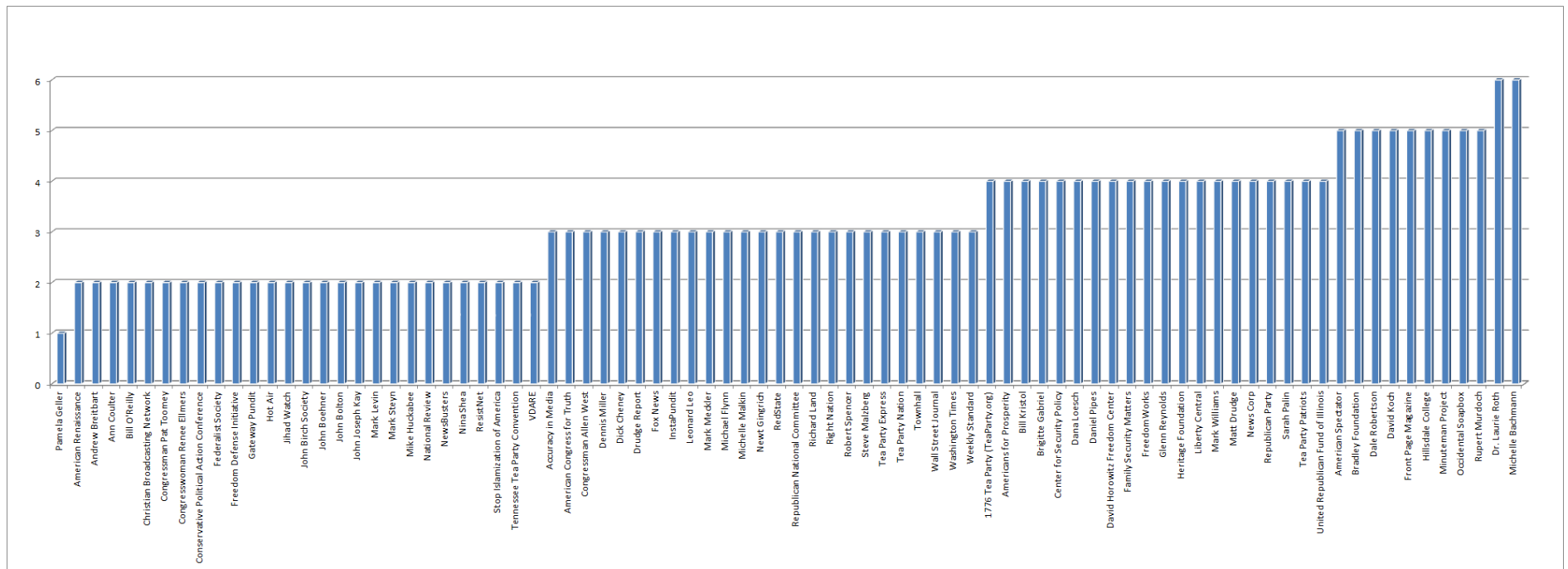
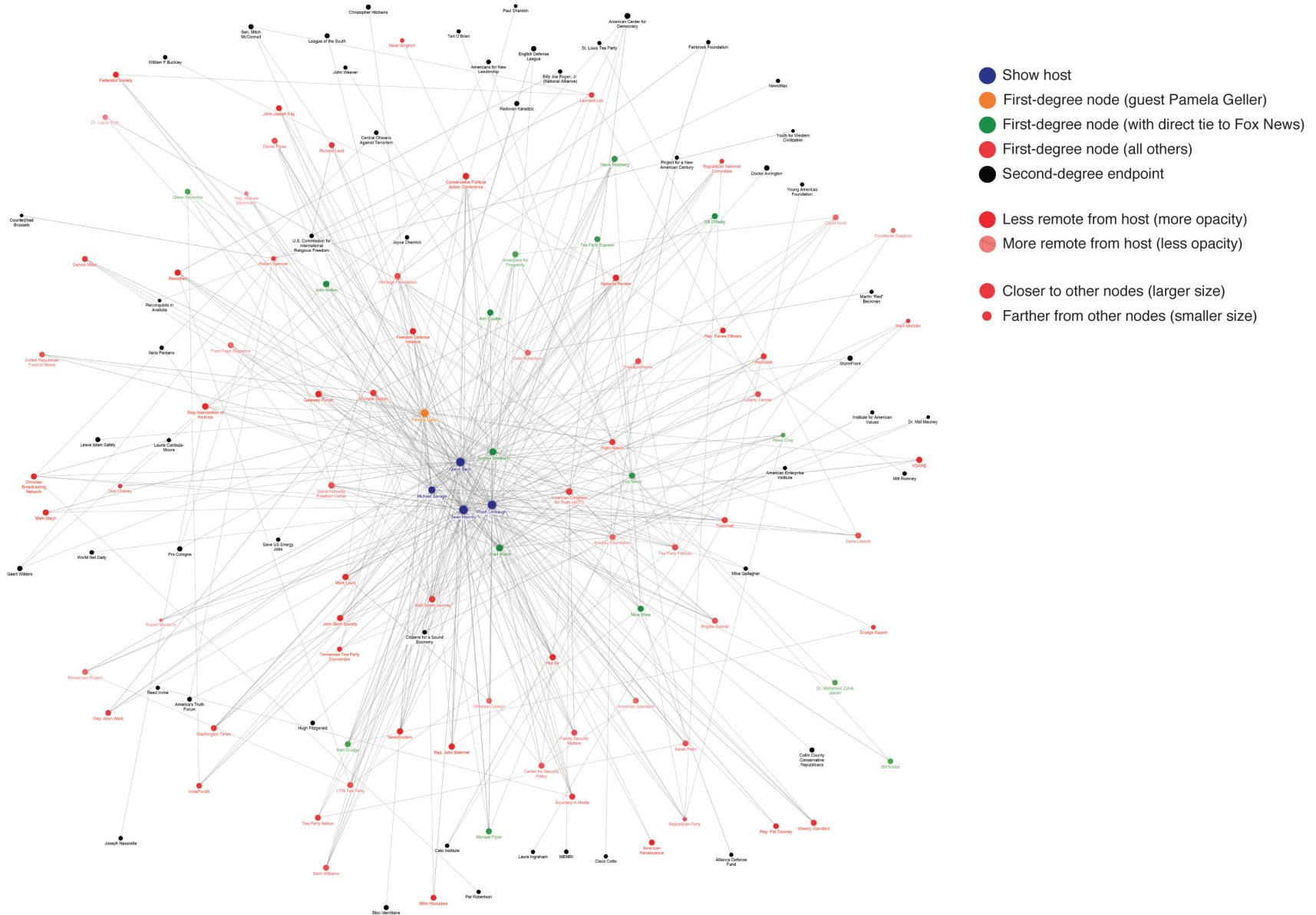


Figure 6. Social Network Illustrating Remoteness of First-Degree Nodes

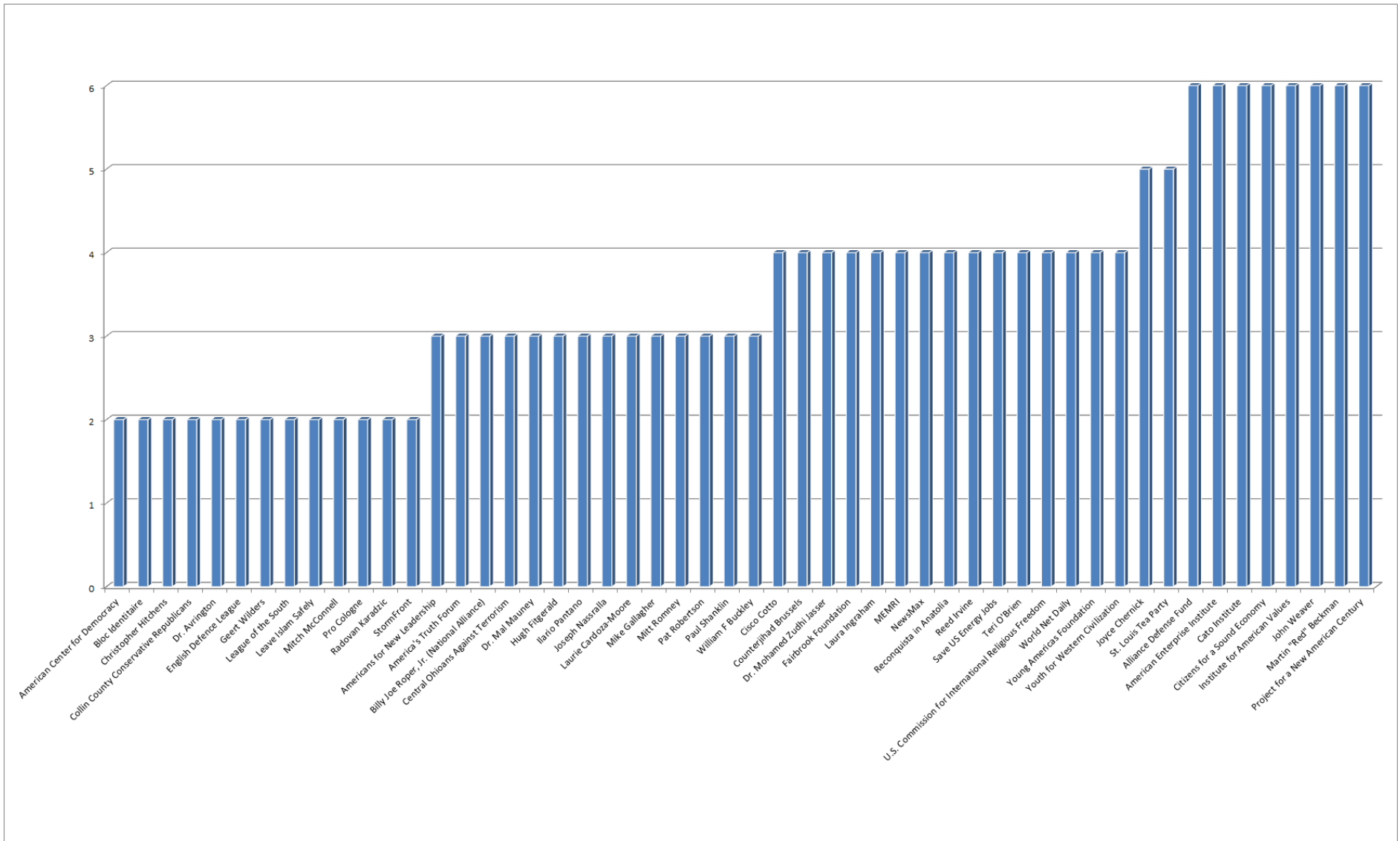


Note: Glenn Beck is both a host and a first-degree node with a direct tie to Fox News. "Closer to" and "Farther from" refer to closeness centrality.

represent whether the tie between two nodes is unidirectional or reciprocal. A node's size indicates its closeness centrality: the larger the node, the more central it is within the network. Nodes with high closeness centrality tend to have greater access to information. The opacity of a first-degree node correlates to its degree of remoteness from one of the four hosts: the more opaque the node, the fewer the number of intervening nodes between it and a host by way of Geller.²⁶

Researchers also counted the number of the second-degree endpoints—nodes found through Geller that do not have a first-degree tie to a host. The network contains 51 second-degree nodes. Although these nodes do not have a first-degree connection with a host, we can still determine their degree of remoteness, as shown in figure 7. Several are removed by six degrees of remoteness.²⁷

Figure 7. Second-Degree Nodes' Degree of Remoteness from Host



In addition to closeness centrality, researchers developed a measure for bottom-up centrality—how frequently a node appears in the bottom-up network. Bottom-up centrality was assessed by counting the number of times each of the 136 bottom-up nodes was referenced via ties to another node. This number is referred to as the “node value.” Table 10 lists the nodes with the ten highest node values. Jihad Watch (10.3 percent of the ten highest values), David Koch (8.6 percent), Bill O’Reilly (8.3 percent), and Americans for Prosperity (8.1 percent) are at the top of the list, indicating that these organizations and individuals are most central to Geller. Fox News and representatives of Fox News (Bill O’Reilly, Bill Kristol, Mohamed Zudhi Jasser) account for 143 occurrences (31.4 percent). Rupert Murdoch and News Corporation—which owns Fox News—account for another 16 (3.6 percent).

Table 10. Ten Highest Node Values

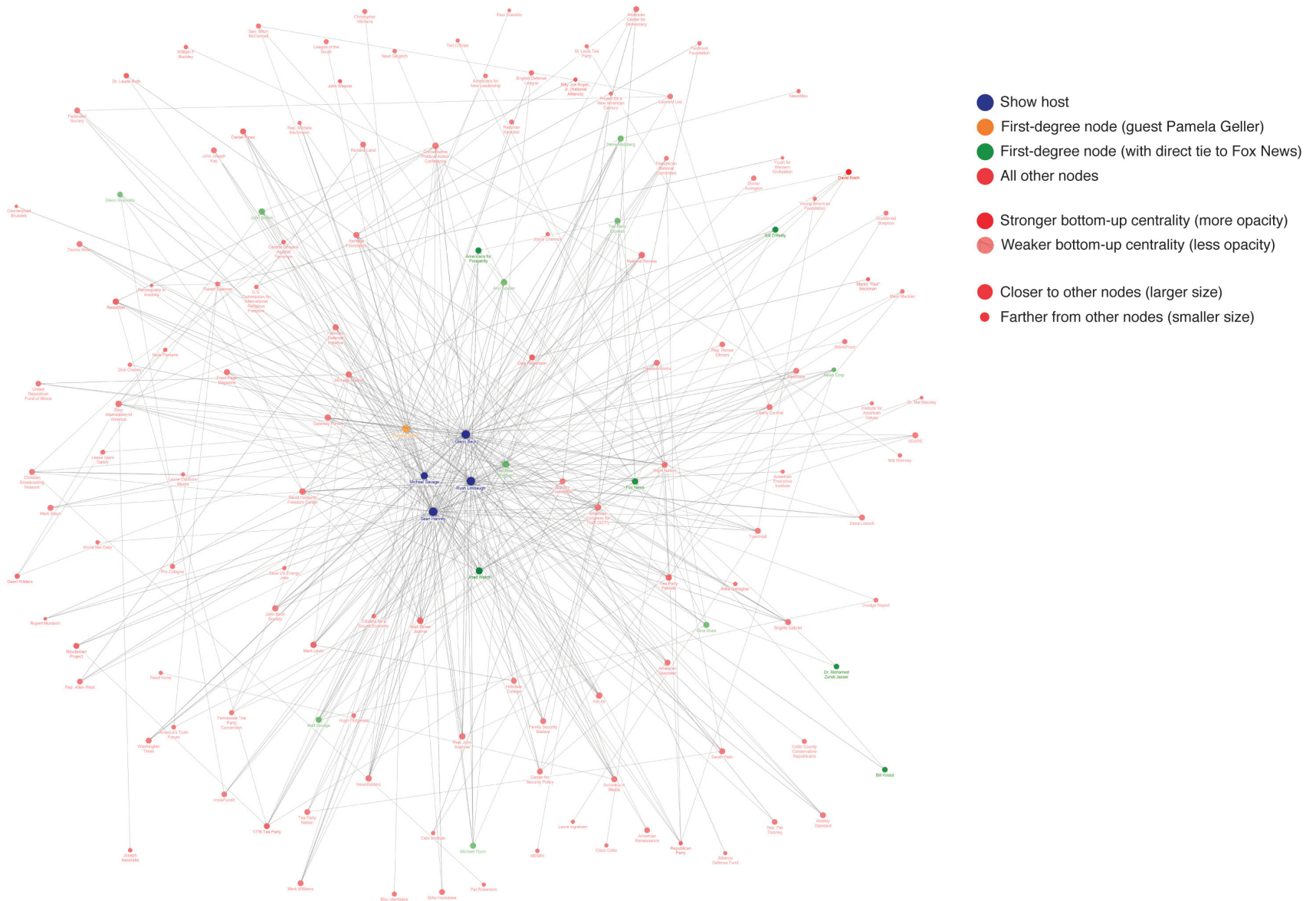
Individual or Organization	Node Value (Number of References)	Percentage of the Ten Highest Values
Jihad Watch	47	10.3%
David Koch	39	8.6%
Bill O’Reilly	38	8.3%
Americans for Prosperity	37	8.1%
Bill Kristol	35	7.7%
Mohamed Zudhi Jasser	35	7.7%
Fox News	35	7.7%
Tea Party Express	35	7.7%
Pamela Geller	14	3.0%
Billy Joe Roper, Jr. (National Alliance)	11	2.4%
ResistNet	11	2.4%
1776 Tea Party (TeaParty.org)	10	2.2%
Dale Robertson	10	2.2%
Laurie Roth	10	2.2%
John Weaver	10	2.2%
Martin “Red” Beckman	10	2.2%
Minuteman Project	10	2.2%
Republican Party	10	2.2%
Mark Levin	9	2.0%
Daniel Pipes	8	1.8%
News Corporation	8	1.8%
Rupert Murdoch	8	1.8%
Tea Party Patriots	8	1.8%
Wall Street Journal	8	1.8%
Total	456	100.3%

Note: Because percentages are rounded, total does not add up to 100.

In figure 8, a NodeXL graph, the node value of all 136 nodes are presented. Node size indicates closeness centrality, as it does in figure 6, but here a node's opacity indicates its node value, or its bottom-up centrality: the more opaque the node, the higher its bottom-up centrality.²⁹

Another measure of a node's importance in a network, Eigenvector centrality, takes into account not only the number of connections that each node has (as shown in figure 8) but also the number of connections possessed by every linked node. This measure assigns relative scores to all nodes in the network based on the principle that a node's connection to an important (high-scoring) node contributes more to its importance than its connection to a less important (low-scoring) node. For example, if Node A has a connection to many nodes, a node whose *only* connection is to Node A still has a great deal of importance, even though it has just one connection. Another node, Node Z, might be connected to three nodes, but if those nodes are not of high importance, the importance of Node Z is similarly low.

Figure 8. Social Network Illustrating Bottom-Up Centrality



Note: Glenn Beck is both a host and a first-degree node with a direct tie to Fox News. "Closer to" and "Farther from" refer to closeness centrality.

Table 11 shows the ten nodes with the highest Eigenvector centrality scores. At the top of the list are the four hosts and Geller, as would be expected. Among the other nodes that fall within the top ten, however, are some whose importance is not as evident when assessed with other measures of centrality (see table 10).

Table 11. Nodes with the Ten Highest Eigenvector Centrality Scores

Node	Eigenvector Centrality Score
Sean Hannity	1.00
Glenn Beck	0.97
Rush Limbaugh	0.95
Pamela Geller	0.67
Michael Savage	0.60
Andrew Breitbart	0.56
Jihad Watch	0.41
American Congress for Truth (ACT!)	0.35
Wall Street Journal	0.35
Conservative Political Action Conference	0.34
National Review	0.34

Note: Scores are adjusted values rounded to nearest hundredth.

IDEOLOGICAL POSITION

Using the protocols established in the program-based portion of the study, we identified the number of times any of the 136 bottom-up nodes offered online evidence of support for any of the ten ideological positions identified in the program-based analysis (see table 5). We cross-referenced these organizations and individuals via Google to more accurately detail and categorize their organizational ideology. Table 12 presents the number of times each ideology was identified. For example, 1776 Tea Party is associated with anti-immigration, pro-military, and anti-federalism. The most frequently expressed topics were anti-Islam (22.9 percent), pro-conservative (18.2 percent), anti-federalism (13.6 percent), and pro-Republican (11.7 percent).²⁷

Table 12. Frequency of Ideological Positions

Ideology	Number of Occurrences	Percentage of All Occurrences
Anti-Islam	49	22.9%
Pro-conservative	39	18.2%
Anti-federalism	29	13.6%
Pro-Republican	25	11.7%
Anti-Democrat	21	9.8%
Anti-liberal	17	7.9%
Pro-Tea Party	11	5.1%
Pro-military	9	4.2%
Pro-capitalism	8	3.7%
Anti-immigration	6	2.8%
Total	214	99.9%

Note: Because percentages are rounded, total does not add up to 100

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data demonstrate the mutual referencing among a relatively small cluster of nodes that include hosts, guests, and other affiliated individuals and groups. The findings reveal that these individuals and groups were connected by certain ideological sentiments targeting vulnerable groups. For example, discussions around immigration and Islam were framed in oppositional and absolutist terms: immigrants as “illegal” and law breaking, and Islam as the context of terrorism.

If talk radio and social media sustain a social network, they do so within a narrow range of ideological positions reflected by the hosts and guests. What’s more, the predominance of guests that represent media organizations not only minimizes alternate voices but also facilitates the mass broadcast and echoing of the shared ideologies that are discussed on the air. What emerges is a discourse that remains insular rather than open and that finds alignment, repetition, and amplification through social media. This becomes even more significant in light of the fact that social networks, rather than search engines, increasingly becoming “gateways” to the Internet; in this scenario, network members are more likely to be directed to sites, and therefore connect with nodes, with similar points of view (Jones 2011, 127).

What is surprising about this insularity is the extent to which it is dominated by political figures and media personalities, and less so by issue-driven organizations, advocacy groups, and experts. The 28 political figures listed in table 9 account for 27 percent of all guests, and among them there is an almost complete overlap between Republican Party membership (93 percent) and Tea Party affiliation (89 percent). Among the 21 guests appearing two or

more times, political figures (19 percent) and media personalities (57 percent) account for 76 percent of the total. There is also overlap between these two categories, with a number of former elected officials and candidates working as media commentators. In contrast, the frequency of pro-religion discussions and the number of representatives of religious organizations were relatively minimal on these talk shows. While we have focused on program hosts as the central nodes in this social network, Fox News plays a notable role with regard to the centrality of program hosts and guests. The data showed that Fox News accounted for 24 percent of the talk radio appearances by guests representing an organization (data from the program-based analysis) and 35 percent of the ties to the programs by way of Pamela Geller (data from the guest-based analysis). Further study can expand on the role of Fox News and other organizations identified in the program-based study with regard to the catalytic role of commercial talk radio in the development of social networks.²⁸ Of particular interest to us is how biomedical research into physiological and psychological effects can provide indicators of the impact of hate speech targeting vulnerable groups as it circulates through social networks sustained by commercial talk radio.

NOTES

Thanks to Martin Forstrom, who contributed summer research assistance.

1. Although adult Internet use is high, only 28 percent of those surveyed went online daily to obtain news and information about politics; 45 percent indicated they searched for general news (Pew Internet and Daily Life Project 2011). Traditional media—commercial broadcast and print media—remain the major sources of news and information for the general populace.

2. Geller gained prominent media attention for her public opposition to the proposed Cordoba House in New York City, which Geller dubbed a “Ground Zero Mega Mosque.” The story had received little media attention before May 2010, when the Associated Press published a story whose title inaccurately referred to the community project as a “WTC’ Mosque”; Geller posted a blog that same day titled “Monster Mosque Pushes Ahead in Shadow of World Trade Center Islamic Death and Destruction.”

3. Programs syndicated by Premiere Radio Networks include those hosted by Rush Limbaugh, Jim Rome, Glenn Beck, Sean Hannity, Leo Laporte, and Randi Rhodes.

4. Clear Channel Communications was acquired by the private equity firms Bain Capital and Thomas H. Lee Partners in 2008 (Crain 2009). Free Press (2012) notes that with revenue of \$6.2 billion in 2011, Clear Channel is the largest radio station owner in the country and that approximately half of its earnings were generated from radio broadcasting and half from advertising companies and other investments. Deregulation of media ownership rules by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has had a major impact on Clear Channel’s consolidation and growth (Leeds 2002).

5. In this study “dynamic” connections are ties that have ideological alignment, either bidirectionally or uni-directionally. The methodology and criteria for establishing ideological alignment between nodes is discussed in the Methodology section.

6. For our definition of hate speech, we use the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) report to Congress, which addressed the role of telecommunications in the commission of hate crimes. The report defined hate speech as either (1) “words that threaten to incite ‘imminent unlawful action,’ which may be criminalized without violating the First Amendment”; or (2) “speech that creates a climate of hate or prejudice, which may in turn foster the commission of hate crimes” (U.S. Department of Commerce 1993, 6). The

NTIA report draws its definition from the Hate Crimes Statistics Act (1990), which established two criteria for hate speech: that it targets a vulnerable group, and that it threatens or fosters the commission of hate crimes against that group, as defined by law.

7. Our study relies on the original target groups for hate speech put forward by the 1993 National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Report: “‘Hate speech’ would therefore encompass words and images that ‘manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.’” That said, our use of “vulnerable group” as a generalized description for hate speech targets allows for the fact that the groups constituted as vulnerable may change over time or across different contexts.

8. This study should be completed in August 2012.

9. Two more measures of centrality—bottom-up centrality, a metric designed by the research team, and Eigenvector centrality—were used this study; these measures are discussed in notes 26 and 27. Two other frequently used measures of a node’s position in the network, measures that were not employed in this study, are degree centrality and betweenness centrality. Degree centrality is based on the number of direct connections a node has; it indicates how active a node is in the network. It does not necessarily indicate how important a node is, since the node’s connections may be to nodes that have little importance. Betweenness centrality is based on where a node is positioned in relation to important nodes in the network; it indicates the amount of influence a node has. A node with high betweenness controls the flow of information from an important node to other nodes in the network.

10. Full, three-hour program blocks were available for *The Glenn Beck Program*, *The Savage Nation*, and *The Rush Limbaugh Show* in their archives. Due to research constraints, researchers listened to recordings of two-hour blocks of *The John & Ken Show* (a four-hour broadcast) and *The Sean Hannity Show* (a three-hour broadcast) during peak listening hours. For *The Glenn Beck Program*, *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, and *The Savage Nation*, researchers analyzed approximately 93 hours of on-air content per program. For *The Sean Hannity Show* and *The John & Ken Show*, approximately 62 hours per program were analyzed. The total number of hours analyzed for the five shows was approximately 403.

11. This data category is incomplete for a number reasons: first, the programs we analyzed were archived on the shows’ websites, and some hosts excised advertisements (paid-for

“plugs”) from these downloadable programs. Glenn Beck, for example, rarely included advertisements in his archived programs. We also limited our documentation of Sean Hannity’s and John and Ken’s programs to two hours per program, so the advertising data are accordingly limited. In addition, the advertising data that we did collect did not fully convey some of the themes promoted by the programs’ sponsors. One theme that reoccurred in sponsors’ advertisements was a “doomed” future. In online and on-air advertisements, sponsors of multiple shows promoted products aimed at survivalists, including emergency food pantries, food insurance, and investment in gold as a safeguard against the collapse of the dollar. Beck, for instance, has received national media attention for his ties to Goldline International; the longest guest interview Beck held during our research period was with Goldline CEO Mark Albarian.

12. Via official affiliation and/or paid employment.

13. The percentages shown in tables 2–4 provide a sense of the relative frequency of each topic within and across shows.

14. A topic segment, also called a “discussion,” began when a topic was introduced and ended when the discussion moved to a different topic. Each broadcast excerpt could contain more than one topic segment, and more than one topic could be discussed simultaneously, generating multiple topic segments. Topic segments were determined by consensus. This discussion is based on a macro analysis of the data.

15. We did not tabulate the amount of airtime dedicated to particular topics; instead, we focused on the frequency with which topics were discussed (as well as other units of analysis). Duration could prove a valuable addition to future analyses of talk radio or television programming.

16. Even factoring out topics that were coded as “various” and “personal,” Savage continued to have a significantly larger number compared to others.

17. In table 3 the category “guests” includes casual call-in listeners as well as scheduled guests (who may or may not be professional “experts”).

18. The difference between these two figures is accounted for by repeat guest appearances.

19. This discussion is based on a meso analysis of the data.

20. This discussion is based on a micro analysis of the data.

21. This graph employs the Sugiyama layout algorithm, which displays the nodes in layers, with minimal crossings. The hosts are at the top and ideological positions are at the bottom, which emphasizes the directionality of the analysis.

22. The compilation of guests who are political figures is based on a micro analysis of the data. Little significant public information was available for lesser-known political figures.

23. *The John & Ken Show* was previously nationally syndicated, during the period covered by the earlier study.

24. We created two measures for determining remoteness from a host(s) for any given node in the hierarchical database: the “highest” hierarchical position in the network represents the shortest path required to “travel” from a given node to a host. This is the measure we used to calculate the remoteness of a node for this report; this measure of remoteness is represented by node opacity in figure 6. The “lowest” hierarchical position represents the longest path between a given node and hosts. When the highest hierarchical position is used to determine remoteness, the data extend down six “levels,” meaning that the most “remote” node in the network has five intermediary nodes (of which Geller is always one) between it and a host; using the lowest hierarchical position, the data extend down 11 levels.

25. There are often multiple paths possible for “traveling” from one node to another. For instance, David Koch has a remoteness of 5, indicating that the shortest path from the hosts to David Koch (a first-degree node) involves four intermediary nodes, of which Geller is one. One can also travel from Koch to the hosts via a more elongated network trajectory involving 11 intermediary nodes. We used only the shortest possible path between nodes for our calculations of remoteness. The breakdown of first- and second-degree nodes is based on meso analyses of the data.

26. Closeness centrality is based on an algorithm that computes a node’s average distance, which is based on how many nodes lie between that node and all others within the network. A node with few ties is likely to have lower closeness centrality, and thus less power, than a node with many ties. Where a node appears in the NodeXL graph is not an absolute indication of its closeness; the software positions the nodes so that they will not overlap.

27. We created a hierarchical database in Excel to track all the ties in the guest-based network, beginning with Geller and the nodes tied directly to Geller (that is, without any intervening nodes), and then emanating outward from those nodes. Nodes without a direct tie to Geller were included only if they possessed a first-degree connection to a host. Thus, a node such as the Cato Institute can be a second-degree endpoint while being six

“degrees”—that is, levels of connection—removed from a host (see fig. 7).

Bottom-up centrality, created using the information in our hierarchical database, differs from closeness centrality, although both are used to assess a node’s value within the network. Bottom-up centrality measures how often a node is referenced in the bottom-up network via its connections to other nodes. Thus, if Node A is connected to Node B, every time Node B is referenced in the hierarchical database, Node A is also counted. A node may have relatively lower closeness centrality but relatively higher bottom-up centrality (or vice versa). If a node has a small number of ties, but the nodes to which it is tied are prominent within the network, it may have higher bottom-up centrality and somewhat weaker closeness centrality. For example, Dr. Mohamad Zudhi Jasser has one of the highest bottom-up centrality values in the network (see table 10), yet possesses comparatively lower closeness centrality (see fig. 6). While possessing few connections (three in total), two of Dr. Jasser’s connections (host Sean Hannity and Fox News), are prominent nodes in the network, which increases Dr. Jasser’s bottom-up centrality. NodeXL graphs for bottom-up centrality (and second-degree endpoints) were generated using the Fruchterman-Reingold algorithm, which measures the force between any two nodes.

28. This discussion is based on a macro analysis of the data.

29. A recent survey by Fairleigh Dickenson University’s PublicMind research center found that exposure to “partisan sources” has a negative impact on people’s knowledge of current events. Those surveyed who watched only Fox News were less informed than those who reported watching no media at all (PublicMind 2012, 1).

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Appendix. Ideological Positions of Scheduled Guests

Guest	Anti-Federalism	Pro-Republican	Pro-Tea Party	Anti-Islam	Anti-Immigration	Anti-Democrat	Pro-Conservative	Anti-Liberal	Pro-Religion	N/A
Aaron Klein						x				
Allen West		x	x							
Amy Kremer	x		x							
Andrew Breitbart	x		x	x		x				
Andrew Breitbart	x		x	x		x				
Andrew Durham	x			x		x				
Arvin West					x					
Bill Cunningham	x			x		x				
Bill Hunt			x		x		x			
Bill O'Reilly	x			x		x				
Bill O'Reilly	x			x		x				
Bob Beckel										
Brad Meltzer										x
Brian Domitrovic	x									
Brian Vickers										x
Brigitte Gabriel				x						
Brigitte Gabriel				x						
Bruce Feiler									x	
Bruce Klingner										
Chris Christie		x								
Chuck DeVore		x	x							
Cliff Kincaid										
Curtis Dubay	x									
Dale Peterson	x		x		x					
Dan Patrick		x	x							
David Barton		x							x	
David Goldman									x	
David Kreutzer	x									
David Kreutzer	x									
David Mason	x									
Dean Cheng						x				
Dianna Deriano					x					
Dick Morris	x			x		x				
Dr. Roy Spencer										
Duncan Hunter		x	x		x					
Duncan Hunter		x	x		x					
Erick Erickson	x			x				x		
Erick Stakelbeck				x					x	

Appendix (cont.)

Guest	Anti-Federalism	Pro-Republican	Pro-Tea Party	Anti-Islam	Anti-Immigration	Anti-Democrat	Pro-Conservative	Anti-Liberal	Pro-Religion	N/A
Erick Stakelbeck				x					x	
Erick Stakelbeck				x					x	
Erick Stakelbeck				x					x	
Erick Stakelbeck				x					x	
Erick Stakelbeck				x					x	
Francisco Hernandez										
Frank Caliendo										x
George Runner	x	x	x							
Harvey Silverglate	x									
Herman Cain	x			x	x					
Jack Hunter	x									
Jack Hunter	x									
Jack Hunter	x									
Jack Hunter	x									
Jack Hunter	x									
Jack Hunter	x									
James Carifano						x				
James Delingpole										
James Gattuso	x									
James Hirsén								x		
James Hirsén								x		
James Hirsén								x		
James Hirsén								x		
James Hirsén								x		
James Hirsén								x		
James Hirsén								x		
James Hosking										x
James Phillips							x			
Jason Chaffetz		x	x							
Jay Sekulow					x					
JD Hayworth		x	x		x					
JD Hayworth		x	x		x					
Jeffrey Miron										
John McCain		x								
John Rich										x
Juan Williams							x			
Juan Williams							x			
Katie Tagle										

Appendix (cont.)

Guest	Anti-Federalism	Pro-Republican	Pro-Tea Party	Anti-Islam	Anti-Immigration	Anti-Democrat	Pro-Conservative	Anti-Liberal	Pro-Religion	N/A
Katy Abram						x				
Ken Timmerman		x		x			x			
Ken Timmerman		x		x			x			
Kerry McGonigle										
Kris Kobach					x					
Kristin Jarnagin										x
KT McFarland										
Linda Chavez		x								
Lynn Woolley		x					x			
Lynn Woolley		x					x			
Marco Rubio	x	x	x							
Marco Rubio	x	x	x							
Marcus Luttrell					x					
Marcus Luttrell					x					
Margaret Dugan										
Mark Albarian										
Mark Calabria	x									
Mark Levin	x	x		x				x		
Marlin Stutzman	x	x								
Martin Mawyer				x						
Mary Joe Matalin						x	x			
Michael Werbowksi										
Michale Tanner	x									
Michele Bachmann		x	x							
Michele Bachmann		x	x							
Michele Bachmann		x	x							
Michele Bachmann		x	x							
Mickey Kaus					x					
Mike Ghouse										
Mike Ghouse										
Mike Lee	x	x								
Mindy Galiani										
Moreen Berand										
Nadine Hays	x									
Nadine Hays	x									
Newt Gingrich		x								
Newt Gingrich		x								
Pamela Geller				x						

Appendix (cont.)

Guest	Anti-Federalism	Pro-Republican	Pro-Tea Party	Anti-Islam	Anti-Immigration	Anti-Democrat	Pro-Conservative	Anti-Liberal	Pro-Religion	N/A
Pat Toomey		x								
Patrick J. Buchanan							x			
Paul Ryan		x								
Phil Kerpen	x									
Richard Paul Evans										x
Robert Scott Bell	x									
Robert Scott Bell	x									
Robert Scott Bell	x									
Robert Scott Bell	x									
Robert Scott Bell	x									
Robert Scott Bell	x									
Robert Scott Bell	x									
Rudy Giuliani		x				x				
Russ and Tim	x							x		
Sarah Palin		x	x							
Scott Gottlieb	x									
Sheila Jackson										
Joe Arpaio					x					
Shu Ono										
Stuart Varney	x									
Stuart Varney	x									
Stuart Varney	x									
Susan Estrich										
Ted Bell										x
Ted Nugent		x								
Ted Nugent		x								
Ted Poe		x	x		x					
Thomas Hodgson		x	x							
Tom Harman		x	x				x			
Vic Williams		x			x					
Total	47	38	24	22	17	13	11	10	9	8

Note: Because the *Rush Limbaugh Show* does not include scheduled guests, it is not included in this analysis. Researchers listened to three-hour program blocks for *The Glenn Beck Program*, *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, and *The Savage Nation*, and two-hour program blocks for *The Sean Hannity Show* and *The John & Ken Show*.



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