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Review 2 of "Hate Exhaustion, Emotional Support, and Desistance from White Supremacist Groups"

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I thoroughly enjoyed reading this article for this several reasons. First of all, the topic of this article is timely and highly relevant. By exploring the issues of hate exhaustion and emotional support, the article contributes significantly to recent discussions in the field of disengagement studies. Another strong point of this article is the fact that the author actively crosses disciplinary boundaries by drawing on neighboring problem domains. Most intriguing, in this respect, are the comparisons drawn between the topics of (dis)engagement, conversion, and burnout, which make for a unique, but meaningful addition to the field. Additionally, the article presents empirical data from life-history interviews with twelve former white supremacists. As a research method, life-history interviews are certainly well-suited to explore the meaning and impact of hate exhaustion and emotional support on processes of engagement in and disengagement from white supremacy. The quotes presented in this article are well chosen and offer some insight into the lived experiences of the research participants. While the analysis of these interviews is mostly descriptive, the article does present new or original findings, such as the pattern of emotional support which appears to run as a connecting thread throughout the arc of white supremacist engagement, or how the experience of "having to present as hateful when they did not fully describe – or were beginning to doubt – their groups' ideologies" can give rise to emotional exhaustion. The conclusions and implications of this article are clearly presented and well argued.

Despite the merits of this article, there are a number of points that would need to be addressed before proceeding to publication:

1. There are still some writing/typing errors in the text.
2. The introduction is somewhat lacking in coherence. In detailing the context of this research project, the author tends to skip from one subject to another while, as a reader, it is quite difficult to follow what white supremacy, conversion, Identity Theory of Desistance, and emotional support all have to do with each other. Overall, it would make more sense to first establish that our understanding of emotional support is

limited before introducing theoretical perspectives that could help broaden our understanding of this topic.

3. There are four research questions introduced at the beginning of the article, but they are not addressed in any of the following sections. They could probably be eliminated by expanding on the research aims.

4. Table 1 and 2 both present the minimum, maximum and average of various (demographic and membership) variables, but this makes little sense for the variables in question. Instead, one table which offers an overview of any relevant variables for all twelve research participants would be preferable.

5. The assertion that "emotional exhaustion fits within Paternoster & Bushway's (2009) ITD" should be explained more. One element of the ITD that has not been covered by this article, but might have much conceptual utility, is the notion of a "crystallization of discontent". How does this notion compare against the respondents' experiences of disengaging?