

Documentary Screening
and Panel Discussion

09.25.24

6:00PM

Univest Public Media Center
SteelStacks Campus
839 Sesame Street, Bethlehem

REPAIRING THE WORLD

STORIES FROM THE TREE OF LIFE



PARTNERS INCLUDE:



Wyncote
Foundation



Resources For Our Community

Find this and more at pbs39.org/repairing-the-world

In this packet, you will find:

- Community Screening Survey QR code (*Not In Our Town*)
 - *This link will also be shared via email following the event*
- How to report a bias incident in Bethlehem (*City of Bethlehem*)
- Pyramid of Hate (*Anti-Defamation League*)
- Terms and definitions, and dialogue suggestions (*Peace Islands*)
- The Year in Hate and Extremism 2022 (*Southern Poverty Law Center*)
- White Nationalism (*Facing History and Ourselves*)
- Antisemitism and Its Impacts (*Facing History and Ourselves*)

Help us learn about the impact of the film!

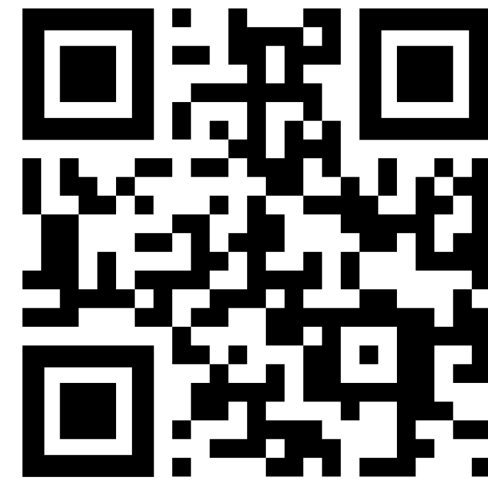
Please take a few minutes to complete this survey on your mobile device.

THANK YOU



How to Report a Bias Incident

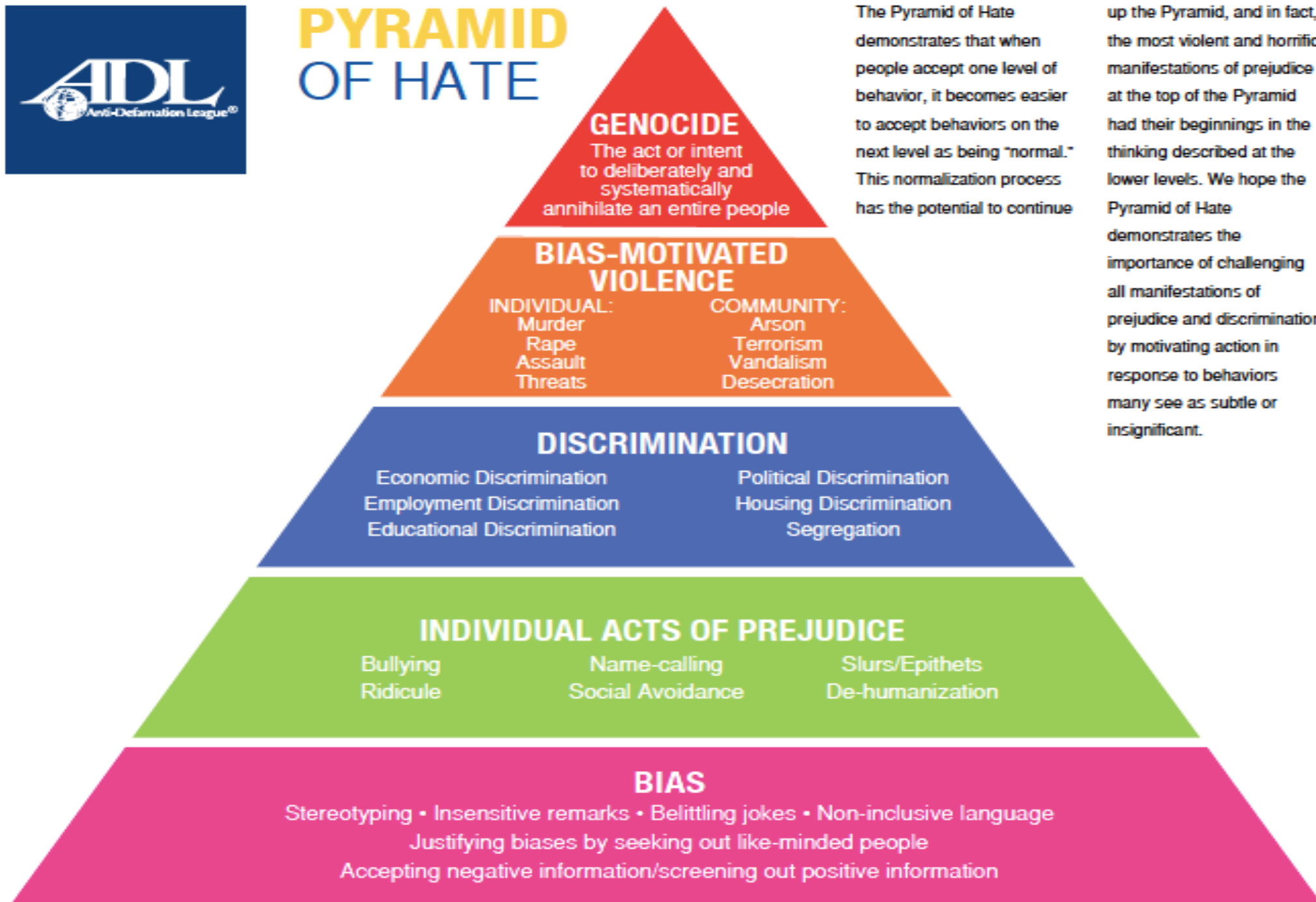
The City of Bethlehem recognizes the importance of protecting Bethlehem's diverse community through transparent reporting and documentation of all bias incidents that occur within the city. Bias incidences are believed to be grossly unreported in Pennsylvania and nationwide. Investigators base their decision on the presence or absence of certain indicators and the details of the investigation. Other factors that contribute to this situation include the reluctance of victims to report the offense to law enforcement. Please complete the following information to report a non-emergency bias incident, the incident will be forwarded to the appropriate entity for follow up. Reporting of these types of incidences helps us to track incidents, observe patterns, and provide support.



<http://bit.ly/3MXrF2l>

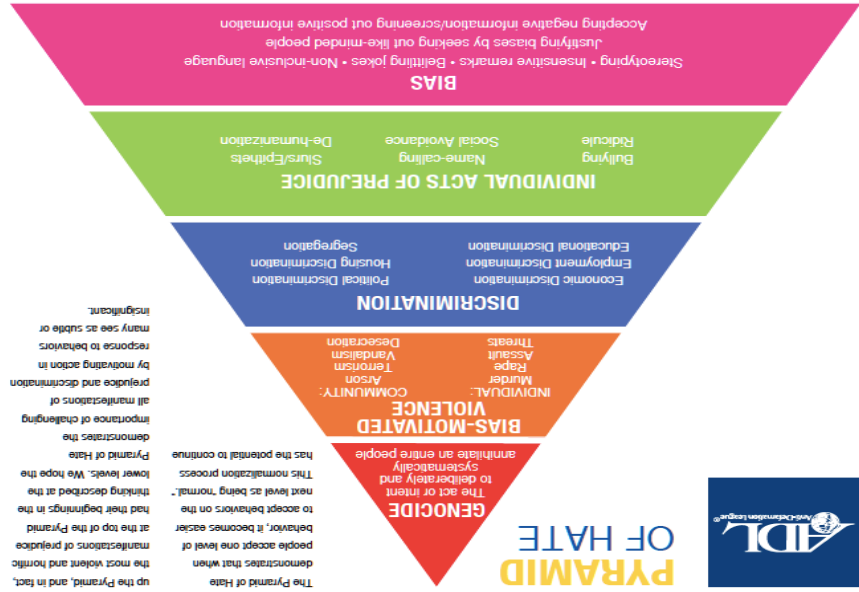
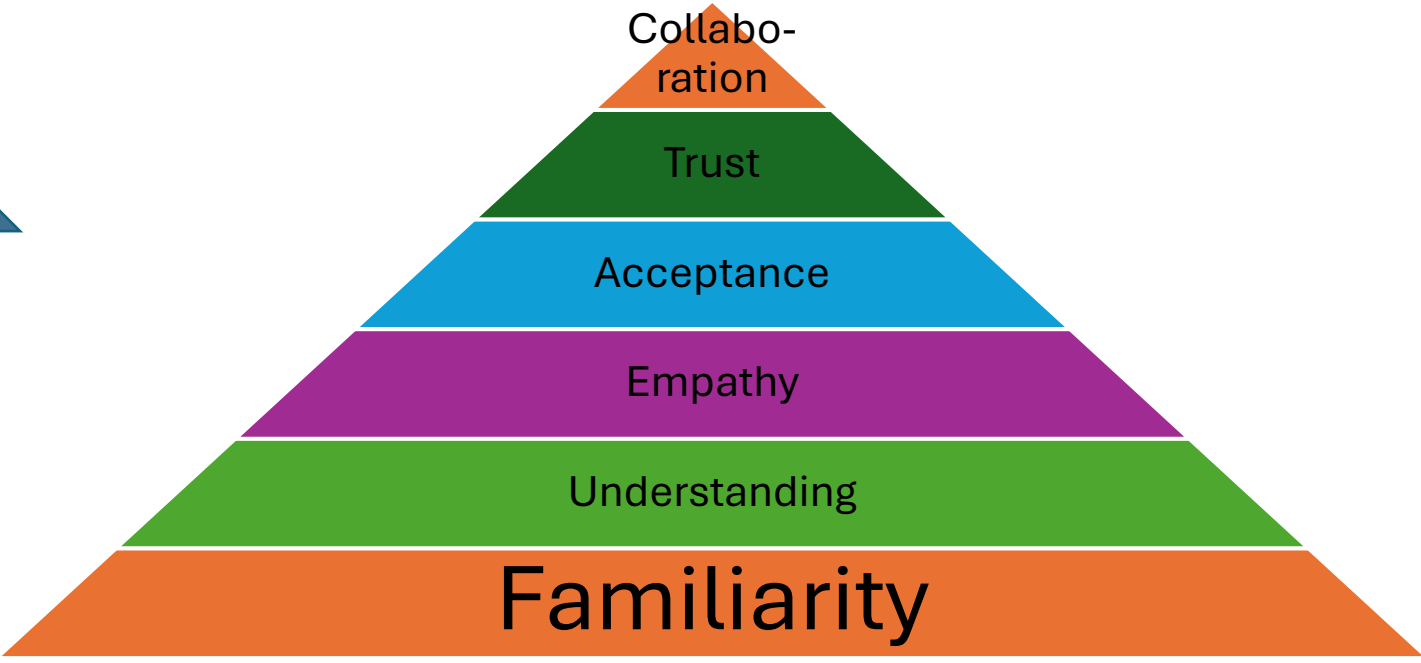


PYRAMID OF HATE



The Pyramid of Hate demonstrates that when people accept one level of behavior, it becomes easier to accept behaviors on the next level as being "normal." This normalization process has the potential to continue

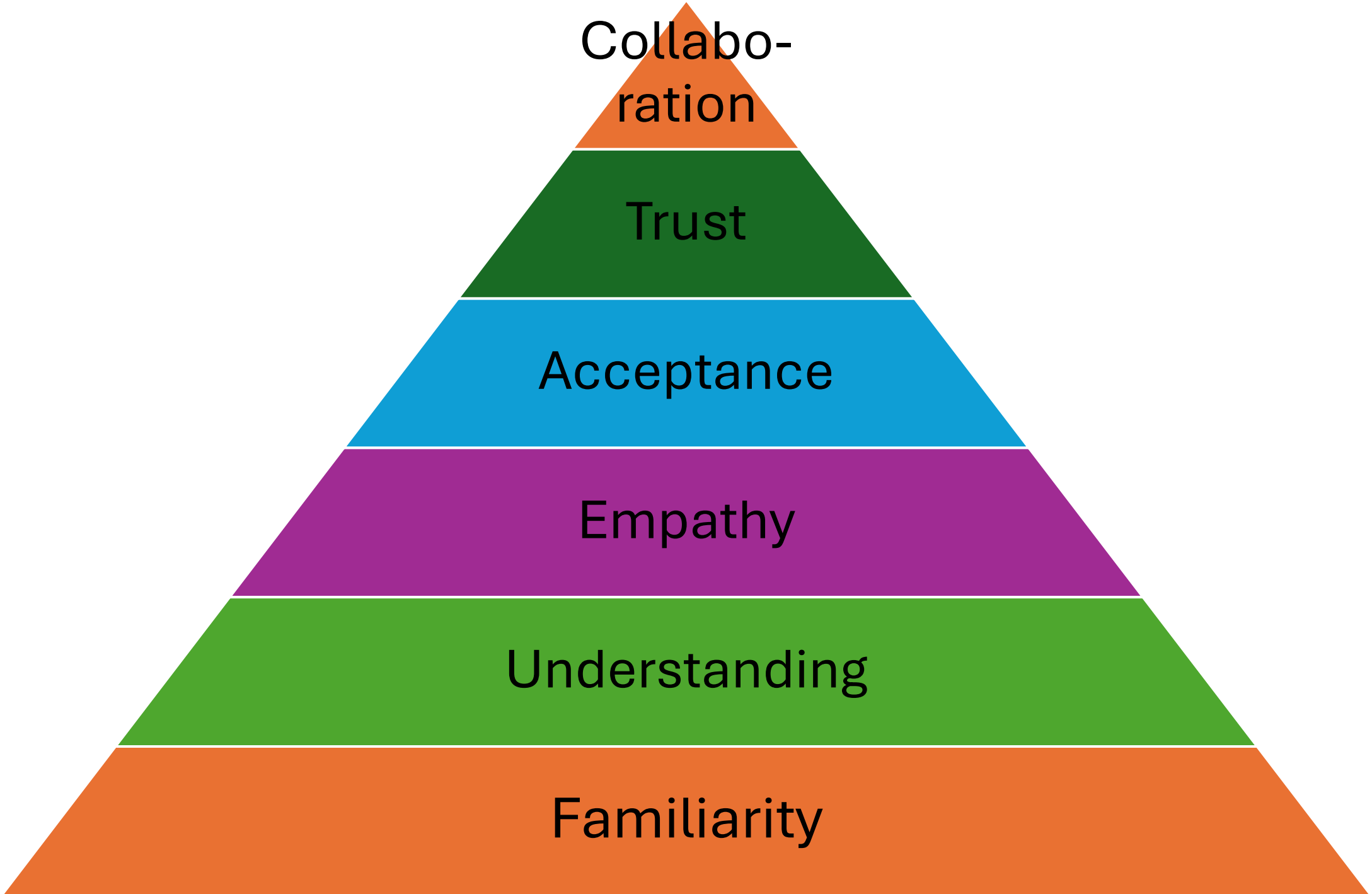
up the Pyramid, and in fact, the most violent and horrific manifestations of prejudice at the top of the Pyramid had their beginnings in the thinking described at the lower levels. We hope the Pyramid of Hate demonstrates the importance of challenging all manifestations of prejudice and discrimination by motivating action in response to behaviors many see as subtle or insignificant.



The Pyramid of Hate demonstrates that when people accept one level of manifestations of prejudice at the top of the Pyramid, it becomes easier to accept behaviors on the next level as being "normal." This normalization process has the potential to continue up the Pyramid, and in fact, demonstrates the importance of challenging all manifestations of prejudice and discrimination by motivating action in response to behaviors many see as subtle or insignificant.

PYRAMID OF HATE





Collabo-
ration

Trust

Acceptance

Empathy

Understanding

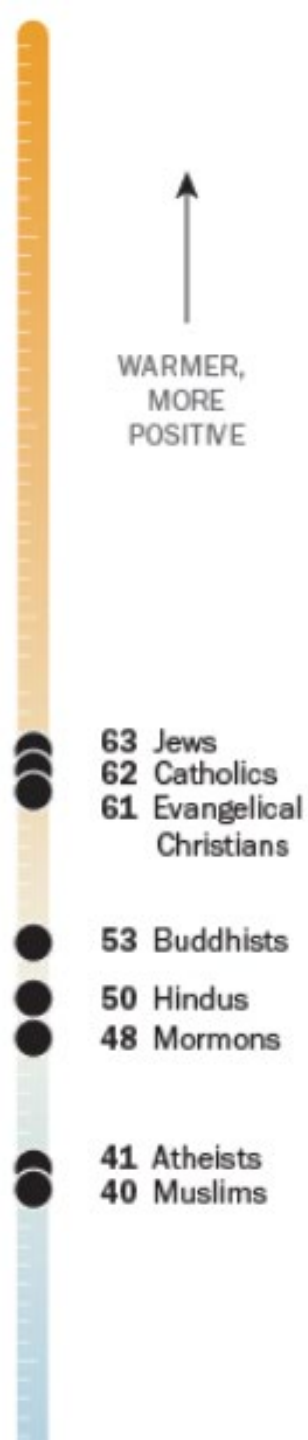
Familiarity

U.S. Public Has Warmest Feelings for Jews, Catholics and Evangelicals

Respondents in a Pew Research Center poll were asked:

"We'd like to get your feelings toward a number of groups on a 'feeling thermometer.' A rating of 0 degrees means you feel as cold and negative as possible. A rating of 100 degrees means you feel as warm and positive as possible. You would rate the group at 50 degrees if you don't feel particularly positive or negative toward the group."

Results at right show total mean ratings of each religious group



Among all Dem./
leaning Democrat

Among all Rep./
leaning Republican

↑
WARMER,
MORE
POSITIVE

Jews 62
Catholics 61
Buddhists 57
Hindus 54
Evangelical
Christians 53
Muslims 47
Atheists 46
Mormons 44

71 Evangelical
Christians
67 Jews
66 Catholics

52 Mormons
49 Buddhists
47 Hindus

34 Atheists
33 Muslims

2011: CAP Report on fear-mongers

Personal Familiarity With Group Members Linked With More Positive Views

*Mean Thermometer Ratings
(0=coldest, most negative;
100=warmest, most positive)*

Mean rating given to...	Total	Know Anyone From Group?	
		Yes	No
Jews	63	69	55
Catholics	62	64	47
Evangelicals	61	65	49
Buddhists	53	70	48
Hindus	50	63	47
Mormons	48	53	44
Atheists	41	50	29
Muslims	40	49	35

American Trends Panel (wave 4). Survey conducted May 30-June 30, 2014. REL3a-h. Based on all respondents (including those who belong to the group in question).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Pew Research (2014)

Knowing someone from a religious group is linked with having relatively more positive views of that group.

30,000 Families
(2017)



Dialogue is ...

- Any meaningful interaction and exchange
 - among people of different ethnic, social, cultural, political, religious, and ideological backgrounds
 - through various kinds of conversations and activities
 - without imposing their ideas, beliefs or values upon others,
 - in an atmosphere of equality, tolerance, honesty, openness, sincerity, and courtesy.
- (*) Based on a definition by Journal of Dialogue Studies

Dialogue is not ...

- Conversion
- Compromise
- Unification
- Debate



Civic Engagement

- The process of connecting individuals in society with one another to share common interests and work for the common good.
- A broad set practices and attitudes of involvement in social and political life that converge to increase the health of a democratic society. (*Encyclopedia Britannica*)
- Individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. (*APA*)



PUBLICATION

INTRODUCTION: 2022 THE YEAR IN HATE AND EXTREMISM COMES TO MAIN STREET

June 06, 2023

In this article

- [From the Director](#)
- [Hate and Extremism – In the Mainstream and on the Main Street](#)
- [Building New Networks To Address Targeting of Young People](#)

From the Director

By Susan Corke

Two weeks after the deadly Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection, I joined SPLC to lead its historic work to track, expose and counter hate and extremism in the United States. With our democracy in crisis and the danger of former President Trump's "big lie" exposed, I was hopeful both parties' political leaders would choose to protect our nation from extremists.

I was wrong.

Two years post-insurrection, GOP leaders have unabashedly welcomed notorious antisemites, conspiracy theorists and white nationalists. "We want to cross the Rubicon. We want total war. We must be prepared to do battle in every arena. In the media. In the courtroom. At the ballot box. And in the streets," New York Young Republican Club President Gavin Wax declared at the organization's December black-tie gala.

This is not idle chatter. Over half of Republican respondents to a [June 2022 SPLC and Tulchin Research poll](#) reported believing the U.S. is headed toward civil war. Threatened by the growing power of increasing diversity, many on the right seek to return to an America before the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and using political violence to accomplish racist goals is now widely accepted.

In 2022, the hard-right movement mobilized [hate and extremism from the mainstream to the main street](#). Extremist actors — often armed — brought hatred into our daily lives and public spaces, protesting LGBTQ inclusion, reproductive rights and classroom discussions of systemic racism.

Founded to ensure civil rights for all, SPLC has deep expertise in monitoring — and holding to account — the Ku Klux Klan, the neo-Nazi movement, racist skinheads, antigovernment militias and other domestic hate groups and extremists.

We do this as part of our work to defend and advance a multiracial, inclusive democracy. The challenges are formidable; we must cast white supremacy out of the mainstream and prevent the violent and racist harms these extremists unleash in our streets, our churches, synagogues and mosques and our schools. In 2022, we created a new DataLab to better track hate across the

digital frontier. We established a unit focused on prevention of extremism using public health models. Our investigative reporting led the national media in exposing extremist activity and influence. Our analysts helped policymakers, including the bipartisan House Jan. 6 Special Committee investigation, hold hate perpetrators accountable.

The 2022 edition of *The Year in Hate and Extremism* further uncovers threats to our diverse nation and our daily lives. SPLC will continue to support impacted and vulnerable communities, working in common cause with diverse allies, grassroots activists, policymakers and the media. Together, we can counter extremism and protect our democracy.



Susan Corke, Intelligence Project director. (SPLC)

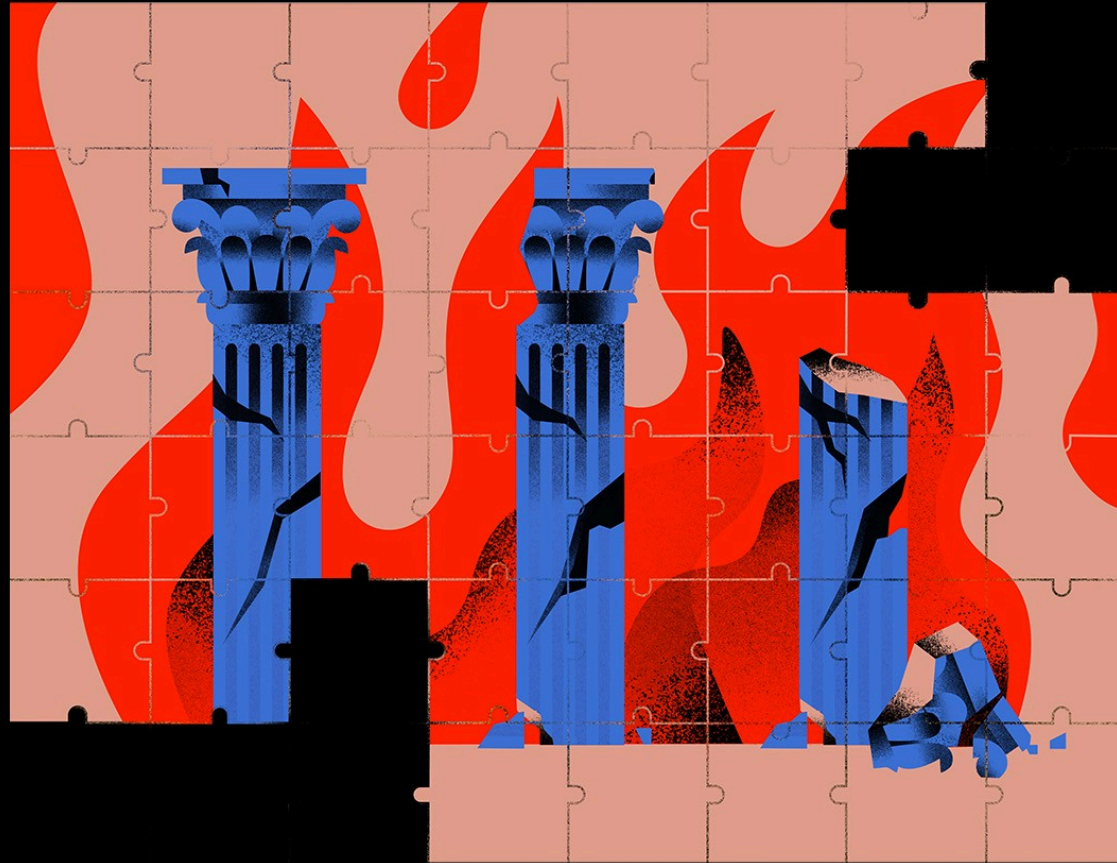


Illustration by Kasia Bojanowska

Hate and Extremism — In the Mainstream and on the Main Street

By Cassie Miller and Caleb Kieffer

In 2022, the hard-right movement succeeded in burrowing deeper into people's lives in visible and material ways, even if it did not have widespread electoral success. Its fingerprints are everywhere: people's homes, schools, doctors' offices, libraries, bars, restaurants, churches and other community spaces. The fear and pain experienced by Black, brown, and LGBTQ communities went far beyond any individual incident, deeply disrupting their ability to participate in an inclusive democracy.

Black and queer people were murdered in shocking acts of violence allegedly motivated by hard-right conspiracy theories. "As long as the White man lives, our land will never be theirs and they will never be safe from us," the alleged white supremacist mass shooter who targeted the Black community in Buffalo, New York wrote in a manifesto. Across the country, states instituted new laws that have [forced teachers to cut and alter lessons](#) addressing Black history, impacting student access to inclusive, accurate and education about the country's history of racism. A wave of anti-LGBTQ demonstrations and harassment campaigns resulted in increased security measures at drag shows, library story hours and Pride celebrations; in many cases, organizers this year cancelled queer community events out of safety concerns. A historic number of anti-trans bills now restrict the rights of trans people and, often, their ability to seek crucial gender-affirming medical care. And, because of the Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision, people in 13 states cannot seek abortions where they live, and face the loss of personal autonomy, injury and even death.

While voters rejected many of the most extreme candidates in the 2022 midterm elections, the country remains in a reactionary political moment – explained, in part, as [backlash to progressive successes](#) both real and perceived. The right is increasingly expressing fear of a so-called "great replacement" of white people and depicting demands for LGBTQ equity as dangerously radical in the wake of visible progressive mobilizations, including the racial justice protests of 2020 for Black lives and a growing trans rights movement. [Backlash is a political strategy](#) employed by the right – one that, the historian Lawrence Glickman has written, shifts the "focus from those denied equity under the law and demanding justice to those who [imagine] threat or inconvenience in the possibility of social change."

That backlash has kicked up a swarm of conspiracy theories and racist tropes: Black men are inherently criminal, immigrants are “invading” the country, LGBTQ people are “grooming” children, nefarious actors are throwing our elections, leftists are working through schools and libraries to undermine “traditional” gender roles, young people of color are engaging in voter fraud, and multiculturalism is an ideal designed to replace and eliminate white people. These ideas now circulate widely among influential right-wing figures and within the Republican party, which lends them legitimacy and allows them to influence policy.

The SPLC works to track and expose the activities and harms extremist organizations in the U.S. inflict. These include both hate groups and antigovernment extremist groups. Hate groups hold beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics, while antigovernment groups see the federal government as an enemy of the people and promote baseless conspiracy theories. These groups often work together, can hold shared beliefs, use similar strategies and negatively impact the same communities.

Hate and antigovernment groups make up the extreme edge of America’s hard right, an inherently antidemocratic movement that rejects pluralism and equity. The movement instead strives to build a society dominated by hierarchy, where [people whom far rightists deem lesser or threatening](#) – women, Black and Brown people, LGBTQ people, non-Christians and others – are socially and politically subjugated. The hard right has the advantage of building on already existing structural white supremacy, as well as its persistent and regular manifestations in everyday life and in politics.

In 2022, the SPLC documented 523 hate and 702 antigovernment extremist groups, totalling 1,225 active groups. The presence of established groups is only one way to gauge the power and impact of the hard right. Through stories, public polling and social media analysis, this report clearly shows the impact of these groups and hard-right figures in the mainstream and on Main Street, demonstrating the growing harm and threat they pose to individuals, communities and democracy itself.

GROWING GOP EXTREMISM

Hate groups, extremist activists, and one of our country's major political parties have become increasingly intertwined since Donald Trump's presidency began. Republican politicians now mingle freely with members of the organized white nationalist movement and employ their rhetoric more freely than at any other time in recent American history.

Indeed, 2022 began with a member of Congress speaking at a white nationalist event. In February, hard-right Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., was a featured speaker at the America First Political Action Conference hosted by Nick Fuentes, one of the country's most prominent white nationalists and an outspoken antisemite who has repeatedly praised Hitler. Rep. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., Arizona Sen. Wendy Rogers, R-Ariz., and Idaho Lt. Gov. Janice McGeachin all prerecorded speeches that were played at the event.

In November, Fuentes and [antisemitic rapper and designer Ye](#) (formerly known as Kanye West) ended up at a dinner at Mar-a-Lago with former President Trump, who did not distance himself from the racist and antisemitic activists when their meeting came to light. Instead, he simply posted on Truth Social that he "didn't know Nick Fuentes," and, of Ye, "We got along great, he expressed no anti-Semitism, & I appreciated all of the nice things he said about me on 'Tucker Carlson."

Less than three weeks after the Mar-A-Lago meeting, a collection of [radical right figures gathered at an event](#) hosted by the New York Young Republican Club (NYYRC) in Manhattan. Donald Trump Jr., Rudy Giuliani, Steve Bannon and Greene hobnobbed with #Pizzagate conspiracy theorist Jack Posobiec, prominent white nationalist activists Peter and Lydia Brimelow, and an array of ultranationalist European leaders.

The NYYRC gala captured the dark mood that has overtaken a growing faction of the American right: one fixated on dominating enemies, ruminating on their own perceived victimhood, and weaving a reality in which dramatic action – including violence – is justified.

"We want to cross the Rubicon. We want total war. We must be prepared to do battle in every arena. In the media. In the courtroom. At the ballot box. And in the streets," NYYRC president Gavin Wax told attendees.

[Greene ventured into even more violent territory](#), telling the audience that if she and Bannon had planned the Jan. 6 insurrection, “We would have won. Not to mention, it would’ve been armed.” At other events, Greene has alleged that Democrats pose a murderous threat to members of her own party. “I am not going to mince words with you all,” she speciously told an audience at a Trump rally in Michigan. “Democrats want Republicans dead and they have already started the killings.”

In the two years since the insurrection, the right has only increased the political temperature. Far-right activists have embraced ever more violent rhetoric, while Republican officials consistently fail to acknowledge that their words are contributing an atmosphere that breeds political violence.

A stark example came in October, when Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s husband was attacked by a man with a hammer who entered their home asking, “Where is Nancy?” Far-right media and influencers immediately embraced a grab bag of conspiracy theories, purporting, among other things, that the attack was a “false flag” meant to distract from Pelosi’s alleged corruption or to give pretext to persecute conservatives. Elected officials, meanwhile, condemned the attack but roundly chose to ignore the role played by their [years of demonizing their political opponents](#), Pelosi in particular.

VIOLENT ANTI-LGBTQ ATTACKS FUELED BY THE RIGHT

While the hard-right movement has for years increased their use of violent rhetoric, they crossed a dangerous threshold when activists from across the right doubled down on their attacks against LGBTQ people in the wake of a mass shooting at a queer club in November.



“The tragedy that happened in Colorado

Illustration by Kasia Bojanowska

Springs the other night – it was expected and

predictable,” a [guest on Tucker Carlson’s](#) Fox News show said after a 22-year-old person shot and killed five people and injured 25 others at Club Q, before suggesting that LGBTQ people were bringing attacks like this on themselves. “I don’t think it’s going to stop until we end this evil agenda that is attacking children,” she told Carlson.

In the months leading up to the attack, the right relentlessly deployed the accusation that LGBTQ people are preying on children by “grooming” them either for the purpose of sexual abuse or to influence their sexuality and gender identity. That rhetoric was accompanied by an unprecedented legislative attack on LGBTQ people: In 2022, legislatures across the country introduced [more than 300 anti-LGBTQ bills](#), many targeting trans youth. Eighteen states now [ban transgender youth](#) from participating on sports teams consistent with their gender identity, while three states in 2022 [banned or criminalized gender-affirming](#) care for youth.

Hard-right activists and influencers used social media as their primary tool to ignite animus toward queer people. Anti-LGBTQ activist Chaya Raichik helped lead the charge with her 1.7 million-follower Libs of TikTok Twitter account. Raichik’s posts mock LGBTQ individuals and teachers who employ inclusive, anti-racist curricula, making them into targets for harassment. Her account has helped to spread the narrative that LGBTQ people (and trans individuals, especially) are mentally ill and part of a broad leftist conspiracy to sexualize and abuse children.

That notion is not confined to right-wing echo chambers. According to SPLC polling conducted in November 2022, 74% of Republicans believe that “Democrats are attempting to sexualize children by indoctrinating them into an LGBTQ lifestyle,” including over half of whom strongly agree with that statement. Among Democrats, fewer than 25% agree.

[Individuals, events and institutions targeted by Raichik](#) and her anti-LGBTQ cohort on social media have received harassment, bomb threats and death threats, and they have been targeted by extremist protesters. An Idaho Pride event Raichik drew attention to on Twitter, for example, was the target of a protest by 31 members of the white nationalist group Patriot Front. Numerous

[children's hospitals have received harassment and threats](#) after criticizing the care they provide for adolescents.

Far-right extremists have especially targeted events that include drag performers – people who boldly and visibly defy the right's strict ideas of gender and gender identity. The Proud Boys, whose chapters have grown considerably since [the group participated in the Jan. 6 insurrection](#), targeted more than 40 LGBTQ events in 2022 through harassment or protests.

But they are far from the only ones threatening drag events. According to GLAAD, [there were at least 141 protests and threats](#) against drag events across 47 states in 2022. One establishment was firebombed after hosting a drag performance, a shot was fired through the window of a brewery hosting a drag queen story hour, a library hosting a children's event was stormed by Proud Boys, and another was interrupted by a Proud Boy carrying a gun. Innumerable other events were cancelled out of concern for the safety of children and other patrons.

MALE SUPREMACY ANIMATES THE RIGHT

The campaign the right has waged against LGBTQ people is part of a broader assault on bodily autonomy and gender equity, which also targets women and those who can give birth.

The right saw the fruit of a decades-long campaign in June of 2022 when the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, leading to a wave of state-level restrictions on abortion. By the end of the year, [13 states banned abortion completely](#) while many others have enacted restrictions that make it difficult to access abortion care, including Georgia where abortion is banned at the gestational age of six weeks. These bans disproportionately affect people of color and those who live in poverty, who already faced increased obstacles to accessing reproductive care.

“People of color don't have the privilege of focusing on only one issue – everything is connected,” Monica Simpson of SisterSong penned even before the fall of *Roe*. “Reproductive justice has always been more than just being ‘pro-choice.’ [To be pro-choice you must have the privilege of having choices.](#)”

The Supreme Court decision emboldened the hard right, many of whom believed that overturning abortion would open new frontiers for their movement including overturning the Constitutional amendment that gave women the right to vote. Meanwhile, as pro-reproductive justice demonstrations surged, so did counterdemonstrations. Far-right participation in anti-abortion activism soared in 2022. Hate groups such as the Proud Boys attended [dozens of anti-reproductive justice demonstrations in 2022](#), some outside of facilities that provide abortion care.

Belief in strict, “traditional” gender roles is at the core of hard-right ideology, while resistance to feminism, combined with a belief that modern society emasculates men, has grown on the right. Tucker Carlson this year produced a fearmongering documentary called “The End of Men,” while longtime conservative establishments including the Claremont Institute published a flurry of articles warning, for example, that “woke communists” are “determined to destroy traditional sex roles as part of their project to destroy America.”

Anti-feminism is particularly noxious because it appears to unite a substantial portion of men across the political spectrum – especially younger men. In April, [a nationwide SPLC poll found](#) that 37% of people believe “feminism has done more harm than good,” including 46% of Democratic men under 50 and 62% of Republican men in the same age range. Those statistics underline how effective the appeals to preserve masculinity can be at pulling men into far-right movements.

LOCALLY DRIVEN RIGHT-WING MOBILIZATION

In the aftermath of Trump’s election loss and the insurrection at the Capitol, the right shifted tactics: Without Trump at the helm, activists have made a concerted effort to organize in the local arena, pursuing their agenda in venues where it is easier to gain power.

Schools, especially, have been on the receiving end of ramped-up and coordinated hard-right attacks, frequently through the guise of “parents’ rights” groups. These groups were, in part, spurred by the right-wing backlash to COVID-19 public safety measures in schools. But they have

grown into an anti-student inclusion movement that targets any inclusive curriculum that contains discussions of race, discrimination and LGBTQ identities.

At the forefront of this mobilization is Moms for Liberty, a Florida-based group with vast connections to the GOP that this year the SPLC designated as an extremist group. They can be spotted at school board meetings across the country wearing shirts and carrying signs that declare, “We do NOT CO-PARENT with the GOVERNMENT.” The group hijacks meetings, preventing officials and parents from conducting their normal proceedings. “I can be sitting in a meeting minding my own business, and [they turn around and scream at me](#) that I am a commie and teachers want to see all kids fail,” a teacher’s union president in Brevard County, Florida, explained to a *Washington Post* reporter.

Galvanizing supporters around supposed “parental rights” and “family values” is nothing new – similar rallying cries were adopted by those who opposed school desegregation during the civil rights movement and by the Moral Majority of the 1980s. These political slogans have been used repeatedly because they are effective, framing the organizing of far-right activists as something done solely out of real concern for children.

But Moms for Liberty activities make it clear that the group’s primary goals are to fuel right-wing hysteria and to make the world a less comfortable or safe place for certain students – primarily those who are Black, LGBTQ or who come from LGBTQ families. A Tennessee chapter of Moms for Liberty, for example, claimed that the state’s second-grade curriculum, which includes a book about Martin Luther King Jr. and another by Ruby Bridges, was “anti-White.” [Their focused attack on critical race theory](#) became a substitute for most things pertaining to Black history and culture.

Other chapters have attacked the book *Gender Queer*, a memoir about adolescence by a non-binary author, and others that explore sexuality and gender identity. The group has shown up alongside Proud Boys at multiple protests, including in [Florida](#) and [Texas](#).

Far-right activists circulate lists of books they find objectionable on social media, spurring others to petition their own school board and libraries to ban books. The campaigns have become so

charged and hate-filled that they have [reportedly caused many librarians to leave their jobs](#), while others have been fired for refusing to take certain books off the shelves.

EXTREMISTS FALL FLAT IN THE 2022 MIDTERMS, BUT ELECTION CONSPIRACIES PERSIST

While there has been a recent groundswell of far-right on-the-ground organizing, the movement continues to fight in the electoral arena. In the 2022 midterms, the SPLC Action Fund tracked 99 candidates with apparent ties to extremist groups, or who expressed sympathy toward their messages, running for public office. These candidates embraced ideologies including antigovernment extremism, antisemitic and QAnon beliefs, and anti-LGBTQ and anti-immigrant posturing.

Most extremist candidates lost their bids, including longtime militia leader Ammon Bundy in his run for governor of Idaho. U.S. House candidate Neil Kumar of Arkansas ran and lost on a ticket to “Stop the Great Replacement” and “end ‘birthright citizenship,’” the clause under the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution guaranteeing citizenship to anyone born on U.S. soil. Kumar’s platform mirrors other hate groups’ efforts to abolish birthright citizenship as part of their anti-immigrant agenda.

49 Antigovernment



26 Hate



24 Both



Results for 99 Extremists Running for Public Office in 2022
Source: SPLC Action Fund Exposing Extremism in Elections project

However, a cluster of incumbents in mostly safe districts retained their seats. In all, 23 of the 99 extremist-tied candidates tracked by the SPLC Action Fund won their election, including incumbent Reps. Marjorie Taylor Greene, Paul Gosar and Lauren Boebert.

The election was marred by inflammatory and racist rhetoric, including from a new outfit called America First Legal that is connected to former Trump adviser Stephen Miller. In the run-up to the midterm, AFL spent millions on an inflammatory ad campaign calling for an end to “anti-white bigotry.” The ads, which appeared on TV and the radio in such states as Georgia and Florida, accused the Biden administration, as well as “progressive” corporations, airlines, and universities, of being anti-white and engaging in “left-wing racism.”

Trump’s own conduct in the aftermath of the 2020 election has provided a roadmap for other anti-democracy candidates. Kari Lake, an Arizona gubernatorial candidate whose campaign was powered by anti-immigrant and anti-LGBTQ rhetoric as well as 2020 election conspiracy theories, refused to concede to winner Katie Hobbs and has filed a lawsuit against her former opponent and Maricopa County to overturn the results. Laura Loomer, a self-described “proud Islamophobe” who ran for the U.S. House in Florida, also refused to concede after losing her primary, citing alleged voter fraud.

THE GREAT REPLACEMENT CONSPIRACY UNITES THE HARD RIGHT AND FUELS VIOLENCE

Racist and conspiratorial beliefs continue to inspire violence from the far right, particularly affecting Black communities.

On May 14, 2022, a gunman killed 10 Black people at a Tops Supermarket in Buffalo, New York. The alleged shooter left behind a digital footprint of sprawling propaganda materials showing the attack was in response to a supposed “great replacement” happening in the United States. The term refers to a racist conspiracy narrative falsely asserting that there is an active, covert effort to replace white populations in current white-majority countries. The conspiracy is antisemitic,

anti-immigrant and anti-Black. According to its proponents, Jewish people are behind the anti-white scheme; immigrants are invading majority-white countries and outpacing white birth rates; and Black people are eroding white demographic power through racial intermarriage, affirmative-action policies they claim provide Black people an unfair advantage, and a campaign of violence targeted specifically at white people. This latter myth, in particular, was cited in the manifesto of the man who murdered nine Black congregants in a Charleston, South Carolina, church in 2015. The great replacement has animated many other white nationalists and extremists, inspiring additional terroristic mass shootings in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; El Paso, Texas; and Christchurch, New Zealand, among others.

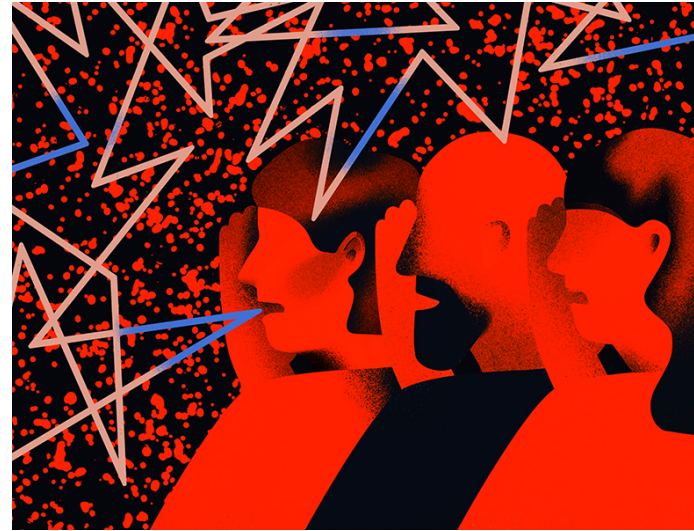


Illustration by Kasia Bojanowska

Once a fringe conspiracy, the great replacement myth has permeated the mainstream with the help of such figures as Fox News' Tucker Carlson, whose show consistently ranks [among the most-watched cable news programs in the country](#). "The great replacement. Yeah. It's not a conspiracy theory. It's their electoral strategy," Carlson said, referring to Democrats during a July 2022 episode of his show. After the Buffalo shooting, the white nationalist blogsite VDARE celebrated "the heroic Tucker Carlson" for having "noticed the Great Replacement."

The great replacement narrative has permeated the right: A [nationwide poll](#) conducted by SPLC and Tulchin Research in early 2022 found that nearly seven in 10 Republicans agree to at least some extent that demographic changes in the U.S. are deliberately driven by liberal and progressive politicians attempting to gain political power by "replacing more conservative white voters."

Some elected officials doubled down on their racist claims in the aftermath of the Buffalo shooting. Two days after the attack, Elise Stefanik, the third-ranking GOP member in the U.S. House, posted a version of replacement theory on Twitter. “Democrats desperately want wide open borders and mass amnesty for illegals allowing them to vote,” she tweeted. “Like the vast majority of Americans, Republicans want to secure our borders and protect election integrity.” After receiving criticism, Stefanik reiterated her claims, telling right-wing commentator Ben Shapiro, “There’s nothing racist about opposing mass amnesty.”

Stefanik was not the only one. In April 2022, U.S. Rep. Michael Cloud, R-Texas, tweeted his disapproval of efforts to revoke Trump’s Title 42 immigration policy, saying Biden’s administration is “complicit in this continued invasion.” In November 2022, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott even invoked an “invasion clause” in response to migrants appearing at the Texas border.

The anti-immigrant hate group [Federation for American Immigration Reform \(FAIR\)](#) gave cover to those pushing invasion rhetoric. In a November 2022 fundraising email, FAIR’s longtime president Dan Stein wrote, “We can’t allow the invasion of our borders to destroy our communities.”

The immigration advocacy group America’s Voice tracked GOP ads in the 2022 election featuring xenophobic dog whistles from elected officials and electoral campaigns. America’s Voice documented [over 300 campaign ads](#) and materials featuring “invasion” and nearly 4,000 items on immigration in general, all targeting immigrant communities and reinforcing the great replacement conspiracy. The organization also tracked nearly 600 ads about critical race theory, over 400 on “defunding the police” and over 800 on crime as part of the political attack on the accurate teaching of history and efforts to portray Black people as criminals.

The SPLC reported on anti-Muslim hate group The United West teaming up with former acting Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) director Tom Homan on a project [focused on fearmongering](#) about the Southern border. “FOREIGN INVASION - NOW AT CATASTROPHIC LEVELS,” reads a December 2022 email sent by The United West’s Tom Trento on behalf of Homan’s project.

LOOKING FORWARD

Though Trump still retains a hold on much of the political right, many [extremists are ambivalent](#) about his 2024 presidential campaign. White nationalists Nick Fuentes and Joseph Jordan (aka Eric Striker) called Trump's announcement an "EPIC FAIL" and "pathetic." The poor showing of Trump-backed candidates in the midterm elections also led some on the hard right to abandon the real estate mogul in favor of Florida governor and potential presidential hopeful Ron DeSantis. White nationalist columnist Ann Coulter – once a staunch supporter of Trump – called the midterm a "a humiliating defeat" for him and noted the strong showings of DeSantis and Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp – "the two Republicans Donald Trump hates with the hot, hot hate of a thousand suns."

The future of Trump's movement remains somewhat uncertain. While Trump has yet to face criminal charges, many insurrectionists have been charged and convicted for crimes related to their participation in the riot. The price has been especially high for the Oath Keepers and other members of the militia movement. In November, two members of the Oath Keepers, including founder Stewart Rhodes, were found guilty of seditious conspiracy and others were still facing charges at years end.

The attention brought by the insurrection has done severe damage to the militia movement, driving away members who no longer want to be associated with the day's violence and immobilizing the leader, Stewart Rhodes. Over the past three years, the number of active Oath Keepers chapters has drastically declined and left the organization's future existence in serious question.

The criminal charges brought against other groups have been less impactful. While members of the Proud Boys also face charges of seditious conspiracy, the group, overall, has continued to grow. In fact, members have embraced their identity as insurrectionists and turned "Proud Boys did nothing wrong" into a political slogan and a meme shared in "alt-tech" social media spaces during the Jan. 6 Congressional hearings. Their numbers have grown dramatically since 2020,

reaching 78 chapters in 2022, as the group continues to organize and hold local protests throughout the country.

The continued growth of such groups as the Proud Boys, as well as the continued violence emanating from and encouraged by the right, make it clear that the racist, authoritarian politics Trump ushered in will not dissipate in his absence. Even if Trump's continued political aspirations fall flat, there will be plenty of others – influencers, think tanks, hard-right activists, media figures, and politicians – who are ready and able to pick up the torch.

The movement for civil and human rights must be prepared for a new string of hard-right activists. In order to interrupt, neutralize and effectively counter the hard-right hate and antigovernment extremist movement in the U.S., the strategies and tactics of such actors must be exposed for their falsity, manipulation and the harm they cause in people's daily lives. Organizing to prevent the roll-back of civil and human rights is more effective when armed with the knowledge of how these movements operate and attempt to divide communities.



Members of the PERIL team (Credit: Sharun Huang)

Building New Networks To Address Targeting of Young People

By Aaron Flanagan

In early 2020, the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Laboratory (PERIL) at American University formed a strategic partnership to pilot innovative models and resources that help educate, equip and empower communities to address youth radicalization toward extremism and violence. Our work began with listening to impacted community members to identify pressing problems. We then designed resources that are tested for safety and effectiveness and continually refined based on our findings. In spring 2020, we released [*Building Resilience & Confronting Risk in the COVID-19 Era: A Parents & Caregivers Guide to Online Radicalization*](#) and subsequently revised this resource for use beyond that era. In November 2022, we released a new resource, the first edition of our [*Building Networks & Addressing Harm: A Community Guide to Online Youth Radicalization*](#).

The best way to prevent radicalization is to address its root causes, far upstream from potential harms. As we detail in our new guide, it is imperative to “inoculate” young people against radicalizing individuals and material before they ever encounter them. That requires a whole-of-community effort, encompassing the trusted adults who make up a young person’s support network. Such adults are, therefore, at the forefront of building community resilience and preventing harms stemming from radicalization.

Our new *Building Networks* guide aims to expand on its companion, our [*guide for Parents & Caregivers*](#) and accompanying resources. This new guide is designed to help equip, educate and empower broader networks of trusted adults, offering knowledge and insights about how to identify and effectively intervene when a young person is becoming radicalized, to help young people build resilience against radicalization and to help those targeted and harmed feel safe and included. In December, we asked our partners at PERIL to reflect on the urgent need to release this new resource.

SPLC: Why was producing the *Building Networks & Reducing Harms* guide important? How were stakeholder groups selected and what are their needs discovered through testing? How does this resource aim to meet those needs and better support these stakeholder groups included in the guide?

Pasha Dashtgard, Director of Research (PERIL): *The Building Networks and Reducing Harms* guide builds on our prior guide for parents and caregivers. It is part of our longer-term effort to equip all adults across local communities with the tools to recognize youth exposure to online harms and feel empowered to intervene. The oft-repeated adage, “It takes a village,” is true in this case; we need to equip all the adults in youth’s lives — their coaches, employers, mentors, extracurricular leaders and more — with the knowledge and skills to step in and prevent harm.

SPLC: In 2020, our partnerships released the guide specifically for *Parents & Caregivers* to help them safely intervene to prevent harms related to extremism and radicalization. The new guide addresses numerous overlapping audiences: How does our new “Building Networks” guide complement the previous guide and what are some key differences between the two?

Pasha Dashtgard, Director of Research (PERIL): The original *Parents & Caregivers Guide* was always intended to address the needs of noncustodial caregivers as well as parents and caregivers who live with young people. However, much of the original guide provided information and strategies that benefit from close, personal contact with the youth susceptible to radicalization.

The new *Building Networks* guide takes these same principles of connecting deeply with youth, listening to understand who is influencing them and what about the radicalizing rhetoric is appealing to them. But the new guide also takes into account the distinct roles and varying relationships that people who live outside of the home have in the lives of young people. A coach or an after-school caregiver can be a safer, more trusted adult in the life of a child who is grappling with exposure to hate-fueled ideologies. So, while both guides provide trusted adults with the specific knowledge, background information and skills necessary to intervene in the life of a



Pasha Dashtgard, Director of Research, PERIL. (Credit: PERIL)

young person at risk of radicalization, we modify these strategies in the *Building Networks* guide for the particular role/relationship of an extended network of trusted adults, such as school mental health counselors, tutors, grandparents and other youth mentors, with the recommended strategies varying by level of proximity to the youth.

SPLC: In *Building Networks*, we note that trusted adults who understand their roles within young people’s “networks of care” can more effectively help prevent harms related to radicalization. We also note the important role they can play supporting those who have been targeted or harmed by hate and bigotry.

Pasha Dashtgard, Director of Research (PERIL): This guide invites community members to reflect critically on the role(s) they play in the lives of young people. Beyond your role as a parent or caregiver, are you a mentor to a young person? Do you have youth in your life that look up to you or treat you as an authority figure? If so, how can you leverage your role in their life in order to help protect them from radicalization to extremist ideologies? The answer to that question is not obvious or often considered, but this is exactly what the *Building Networks* guide prepares adults to reflect on. How can we help young people resist propaganda aimed at convincing them to hate Jews, feminists and people of color? How can we help young people build media literacy such that they can recognize when someone is embedding racist, sexist, hateful ideas into seemingly benign jokes, memes or forum posts? By giving trusted adults the skills and knowledge to engage in conversation with youth on difficult, politically/socially fraught topics, we can build communities that support adults in deploying preventative, non-carceral approaches to countering extremist recruitment strategies targeting youth and adolescents.

SPLC: The problem of youth radicalization is complex, but our partnership has captured evidence that trusted adults can intervene safely and effectively. If they are educated and equipped with the right resources, our studies together show they will be better empowered to intervene proactively. And together this year we will launch a community engagement effort to design and test solutions at community level. Can you discuss some of our partnership’s findings, this upcoming effort and why they give you hope?

Pasha Dashtgard, Director of Research (PERIL): Some of the most exciting findings consistently demonstrate it is truly possible to equip local communities with the tools to prevent hate and violence. We have demonstrated that it takes only seven minutes of reading, on average, for parents and caregivers to improve their knowledge about harmful online content, supremacist propaganda and other hateful conspiracy theories and to feel more confident about intervening when they recognize warning signs in a young person they know. We have shown that it is possible to bridge partisan divides and bring people together around shared concerns about harmful online worlds and rising hate and violence. And we have shown that equipping everyone in the lives of young people with these tools – from parents and relatives to youth mentors, coaches and teachers – has the potential to help build social cohesion and create understanding and responsiveness to rising hate that can bring communities together rather than further polarizing them.

Importantly, the content found in our *Parents & Caregivers Guide* was well received by both Democrats and Republicans, and parents who identify as male or female. The information and strategies contained in the *Building Networks* guide are not intended to speak to only one group or type of person. We have developed resources that speak to trusted adults across the political and social spectrum.

By providing trusted adults with strategies and approaches to difficult conversations, information about propaganda techniques and resources that trusted adults can refer to if they suspect a child is susceptible to radicalization to hateful ideologies, we can empirically see a rise in confidence and willingness to engage young people on these difficult topics.

Now it is time for us to scale up these resources and make sure that every community across the country has access to them – because everyone deserves access to strategies that we know work to prevent violence, hate and harm.

Editor's note: Unfortunately, our ability to represent the full range of respondents' gender identities and social/family roles is limited by online survey recruitment platforms. Future research should focus on any differences in caregivers gender identity and their reception of the project's tools.

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Antisemitism: The Equal Opportunity Ideology

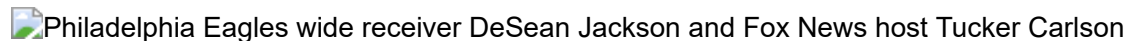
Submitted by Theresa Riley on August 3, 2020 - 1:15pm

Eric K. Ward is a senior fellow with the Southern Poverty Law Center and executive director of Western States Center. This post (<https://medium.com/@westernstatescenter/somebody-must-be-blamed-antisemitism-the-equal-opportunity-ideology-b47c017253f>) ^[1] first appeared on Medium.

Normally I might have whiplash. One day I'm being asked for comment by national media outlets about a Black NFL player and the next, about FOX News celebrity Tucker Carlson. On the surface Tucker Carlson and DeSean Jackson would appear to have very little in common. But together they illustrate a growing danger in this moment of populist fervor: antisemitism.

Antisemitism is emerging as an equal opportunity ideology.

Antisemitism crosses every line of race, political party, and primary stances on a wide range of issues. Like the novel coronavirus, this virulent ideology disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable — the Jewish population — but in fact imperils us all.

Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver DeSean Jackson and Fox News host Tucker Carlson

Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver DeSean Jackson and Fox News host Tucker Carlson

The Jewish community is right to be concerned in this moment of populist impulses across the ideological spectrum: from the grievances that propelled a B-list reality TV star into the presidency to the cry for justice that brings throngs of people into the streets in defense of Black lives. Historically, populist moments have always fed on and in turn fueled attacks on Jewish people. This is just such a moment.

Even before the surge in antisemitism that has accompanied the global pandemic, documented incidents in the United States had reached a new high: over 2,000 in 2019, a 12 per cent increase over the prior year, according to ADL's Center on Extremism's annual tabulation. The last few months have created a perfect storm — a life-threatening disease resulting in social isolation and economic collapse — activating the age-old call that "Somebody must be blamed." From anti-Semitic tropes like depicting Jewish people as disease-carrier rats,

to using the word “heil” with a swastika or other Holocaust imagery to critique common-sense public health measures, to deadly attacks — antisemitism is, alarmingly, becoming normalized. In mid-March I asked the staff at Western States Center to start sending me a daily log of key incidents of antisemitism. In only 12 weeks, the tally stands at 198 entries.

I repeat, the Jewish community is right to be concerned.

Here is why we should all share their concern: antisemitism is the paper upon which racial nationalism is written; it is also the template for poisoning populist moments. Antisemitism is not just a form of religious bigotry; it is a racialized form of bigotry that imagines a supernatural race, a threatening “other”. The conspiracist belief that Jews are the all-powerful puppet masters behind a range of concerns from left to right — everything from economic inequality to civil rights gains by the Black community — whips up populist fervor by appealing to everyday folks who feel like the elites are holding out. As others have stated, antisemitism convinces us we’re punching up, when actually we’re punching down. Antisemitism is about not being clear where power really resides.

Just as much of America is waking up to the stake we all have in dismantling anti-Black racism, so too must we realize that a truly inclusive American democracy requires that every community understand and fully disavow antisemitism, whether on the right or left.

Tucker Carlson: The present-day Father Coughlin?

A recent feature on the Fox News star who “for years... has stoked racial anxieties and courted white supremacists,” poses the question: “Tucker Carlson, Trump’s heir apparent and 2024 candidate?” While this is important to consider, we need to ask a deeper question: Is Tucker Carlson the present-day Father Coughlin?

Students of antisemitism and racial hate in the 20th century will remember Father Charles Coughlin, “the Radio Priest,” as one of the primary voices of the 1930s in American politics, reaching 45 million listeners via weekly radio broadcasts. Coughlin was a politically radical populist who upheld the rights of ordinary people against those he saw as the elites. While he railed against the abuses of all systems of political and economic control from capitalism to socialism, he saw the chief enemy as “international bankers,” aka the Jews. As History Matters documents, “By the mid-1930s, his talks took on a nasty edge as he combined harsh attacks on Roosevelt as the tool of international Jewish bankers with praise for the fascist leaders Benito Mussolini and Adolph Hitler.” Coughlin’s 1937 sermon “Twenty Years Ago Today” tuned his audience’s ear to the antisemitic undertone that reverberates in today’s populist moment: “Somebody must be blamed.”

Tucker Carlson has largely avoided overt antisemitism, unlike some of his Fox News colleagues. But we need to ask, why has the Nazi website Stormfront called Carlson “literally our greatest ally”? As I told *The Guardian* earlier this week, “Tucker Carlson appears to be playing at least a verbal footsie with white nationalists. His bigotry and hatred are infectious. They are as dangerous of a virus as Covid-19. And rather than making people sick, it makes Americans turn on one another.”

What I said next to *The Guardian* applies equally to the subject of my conversation with ESPN: “Tucker Carlson, whether that is his intent or not, is fueling that extremism through his irresponsible rhetoric. And Fox must hold him responsible.”

DeSean Jackson and the Responsibility of the NFL

Two days before being asked to comment on Carlson, who is white, I spoke with ESPN about the anti-Semitic remarks made by Philadelphia Eagles player DeSean Jackson, who is Black. Jackson has apologized and acknowledged that he needs to learn; that’s the first step. He may well be sincere in stating that he intended no harm. But those of us who work on systemic forms of bigotry know that intentions matter less than outcome. Unintentionally or intentionally, Jackson opened space for anti-Semitism. That’s not only irresponsible and disappointing, but potentially dangerous as well.

As I shared in the conversation with ESPN, what Jackson posted goes far beyond a mere anti-Semitic stereotype. He, as a public figure, shared an ideological position, a position used to justify two racial terror attacks and murders on the Jewish community seven months ago in the New York metro area. One of the gunmen in Jersey City, who murdered three people in a kosher market, was connected with the Black Hebrew Israelite movement and had posted anti-Semitic conspiracy content online before the attack.

The biggest failure in Jackson’s story isn’t his as an individual; it’s a failure within his organization, the NFL, to protect its most valuable employees from ideologies grounded in racial nationalism. That gap needs to be closed. That’s the real lesson and opportunity. DeSean Jackson’s mistake presents the opportunity to go beyond an individual call-out to an appeal to institutional accountability. This organizational accountability needs to be based in an understanding of the larger dynamics of inequality that impact the communities in which these teams live and thrive in. Players like Jackson work damn hard to get to where they are; very few from many of their communities actually make it. We should applaud the way many major league athletes are stepping forward to use their platforms to speak out on behalf of tolerance, opportunity, and diversity. Their organizations shouldn’t restrict that speech — but they should make sure these players are speaking with as much information as they can muster. Without tampering the urgency and passion of their words, their organizations have an obligation to make sure their employees aren’t bringing stereotypes and bigotry into the 21st century civil rights movement.

There’s another lesson DeSean Jackson can teach us, about power differentials. Intersecting forms of bigotry make Jackson a perpetrator of one form of systemic hatred — antisemitism — while experiencing, daily, the anti-Black hate that is also systemic. That racism means Jackson is likely to experience a level of accountability and consequence that white people expressing antisemitism never face in similar circumstances. When someone like Tucker Carlson or Donald Trump traffics in race-baiting, they get rewarded. When someone like Jackson does, he gets an example made of himself. There is no evidence that Jackson was seeking to build a power base through his comments. There are no rewards for him when he traffics in this offensive ideology. But when Trump and his echo chamber do the same thing, with the much clearer intention of increasing viewership or approval ratings, they pay no price.

Taking Antisemitism Seriously, All of Us

I recently spoke to a group of Jewish organizational leaders who wanted to know how they could best support the Movement for Black Lives. I think every jaw on the Zoom screen dropped when they heard my answer:

What should the Jewish community do to fight racism?

Fight antisemitism even harder.

What I meant is that antisemitism isn't just making the lives of Jews harder; it's killing the rest of us too. Latinos died in El Paso because the conspiracy-infected shooter thought he was at war with a Jewish cabal. The nine worshippers at the Charleston church died not only because they were Black, but also because the shooter believed he was at war with a Jewish conspiracy. Scratch below the surface of most mission-oriented hate crimes against Sikhs, Muslims, Jews, Blacks, and Latinos, and you will find the equal-opportunity poison, the ideology of antisemitism.

The most common theme in the hate messages sent to me, a Black civil rights leader, is that I'm a puppet; whatever I've accomplished — whatever we've accomplished as a Black community over the last 70 years — is to the credit or the blame of whoever is using me for some greater agenda. Because it doesn't look like anti-Black racism, we may think it's not a big deal. But I think it's the biggest deal. Antisemitism is an effective conspiracy theory that dehumanizes all of us.

Taking antisemitism seriously as a threat to everyone's civil rights and humanity means challenging it wherever it arises, within our own ranks as well as in our opponents. Opposing antisemitism can't be used to make partisan or other ideological points. We can't choose only to point it out when it comes from white nationalists; nor can we ignore or treat it more harshly when it's expressed by those fighting for civil and human rights. Hypocrites don't solve problems, they reinforce problems. Our fight against antisemitism has to be value based.

It's from our common values — inclusion vs exclusion, treating each other as we would want to be treated, liberty and justice for all, no exceptions — that we can have courageous conversations with each other. Conversations like the one New England Patriots player Julian Edelman started with DeSean Jackson, suggesting they walk together through the halls of the Holocaust Museum and the Museum of African American History and Culture. Private conversations, dialogue on social media, organizational education, and institutional engagement are all critical.

The way forward is by strengthening the understanding of leaders in every sector about how antisemitism weakens our quest for racial equity in this country. By raising awareness of how the chaos and disorderly manner of populist moments magnifies and increases antisemitism. By building an analysis and commitment to solidarity in all our social justice movements that protects all targeted communities and punches up at the real levers of power.

We have an amazing opportunity right now to construct a 21st century civil rights movement. Black and Jewish community alliances were essential in the 1960s; they remain essential today. We must refuse to let antisemitism and the conspiracy theories it underwrites be the agent provocateur that derails the righteous energy of this moment. I'm an old-school idealist in the weary body of a pragmatist. What I know is that values run deeper than ideology. Let's focus on what we can agree on and take on together. This common ground is the foundation on which we can build an America we can all be proud of, an America dedicated to the common good.

Read more posts (<https://medium.com/@westernstatescenter>) [2] by Eric K. Ward at Medium and visit the Western States Center website (<https://www.westernstatescenter.org/>) [3] for more on their advocacy work.

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EXPLAINER

Antisemitism and Its Impacts

Note to Teacher: This Explainer is designed to be a student-facing handout. The **Antisemitic Tropes Chart** can be used in conjunction with the Explainer or separately, depending on your curricular needs.

What Is Antisemitism?

Antisemitism is anti-Jewish prejudice, discrimination, hatred, hostility, violence, or oppression.

What Forms Does Antisemitism Take and Where Does It Show Up?

Because humans often divide our societies into “in” groups and “out” groups, and because we often blame groups of people for tragedies or changes we can’t explain or control, antisemitism is constantly repackaged to reach new generations in new contexts. It can show up in a school as an anti-Jewish bullying incident, in organized white nationalist ideologies, and in memes promoted by politicians, celebrities, and social media influencers. How antisemitism looks changes over time, but the attitudes, stereotypes, and social media influencers. How antisemitism looks changes over time, but the attitudes, stereotypes, and conspiracy theories underneath the packaging (as well as the harm they cause) remain largely the same.

While many people associate antisemitism with the Holocaust, this hatred and the acts fueled by it did not begin in the 1930s, nor did they end in 1945 when the Nazis were defeated. Jews have been stereotyped, exiled, and violently assaulted based on a wide range of false accusations and assumptions for thousands of years. Anti-Jewish ideology has been around for so long that it can be difficult, at times, to recognize. Antisemitic attitudes span the political spectrum, and even in communities without a visible Jewish population, anti-Jewish stereotypes and behavior can exist. People can pass on negative stereotypes about Jewish people or Judaism without realizing it, even when they personally don’t feel hatred toward Jews.

Middle and high school students are particularly at risk of encountering antisemitic content in unmonitored digital spaces—meme culture, social media, and gaming platforms. By understanding what antisemitism is, how it shows up, and how it impacts individuals and communities, we are more likely to recognize and, more importantly, challenge antisemitism when we encounter it.

Is Antisemitism Racism?

Prejudice against those who practice Judaism (the world’s oldest monotheistic religion) dates back to the ancient world when Jews lived first among polytheists (those who worship or believe in more than one god) and then, among early Christians, who wanted to distance themselves from Judaism.

Racialized antisemitism refers to the idea that Jews are a distinct “race” of people who have fixed traits that they are born with, traits which make them inferior to white, Christian people. This false idea developed in fifteenth-century Spain, where all Jews, even those forced to convert to Christianity, were forbidden from entering universities, enlisting in the military, taking on certain government positions, and marrying non-Jews.¹ During this period, hundreds of thousands of Jews as well as Muslims were expelled from Spain or killed.

These racist attitudes toward Jews persisted. Near the end of the nineteenth century, as Western European countries and the United States expanded their power and territory, scientists within these regions created false theories on race to justify and preserve white Christian dominance. During this period, Jews were granted broader civil rights in Germany, which made some people, like German journalist Wilhelm Marr, resentful. To Marr and a growing number of other Europeans, all Jews belonged to a separate “Semitic race.” While the term *Semitic* refers to a group of languages traditionally spoken in the Middle East and parts of East Africa (like Hebrew, Amharic, and Arabic), it is not a racial category. Marr invented the term *antisemitism* specifically to voice and gain support for his opposition to Jews, forming the League of Antisemites in Berlin in 1879.

Racialized antisemitism was also central to the Nazi worldview that fueled the Holocaust in the mid-twentieth-century and continues to fuel white supremacy ideology today. White nationalists falsely believe that Jews disguise themselves as white people to gain power, wealth, and status. Such beliefs not only uphold the myth that Jews are a distinct, inferior race but also perpetuate the generalization that all Jews identify as white. In fact, according to a 2021 Pew Research Center report, 15% of American Jews ages 18–29 identify with other racial or ethnic categories.² Racialized antisemitism was and is a form of racism.

Why Does Antisemitism Persist?

In addition to humans creating divisions in their societies, often based on racist beliefs, antisemitism exists in part because Jews have served as **scapegoats**—those who are irrationally blamed for societal problems—for over two thousand years. With scapegoating comes the creation of conspiracy theories. **Conspiracy theories** attempt to explain the occurrence of harmful events, social changes, or even everyday circumstances we don’t like by blaming them on a small group of people. According to the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism, classic antisemitism links Jews to forces of evil. Some common antisemitic conspiracies include the false belief that “the Jews” control the government, banks, and media, and the false belief that Jews are responsible for spreading disease, such as COVID-19.³

Philosophy professor Kwame Anthony Appiah describes **conspiracy theory** as “a way of fitting all things that don’t fit together, together. It’s a way of making sense of the world by saying, ‘Well, that can’t be an accident, so I have to have a story about why it connects. And so someone offers me this preposterous story, but at least it connects two things.’ Once you’ve got this sort of mindset, you can see the evidence wherever you look. Understanding the world is hard. . . and getting explanations is difficult. And making them up as opposed to finding the right ones is easier than finding the truth.”⁴

- 1 Paola Tartakoff in Facing Hate: Antisemitism, Racism, and White Supremacy (on-demand webinar), Facing History and Ourselves.
- 2 Becca A. Alper and Alan Cooperman, “10 key findings about Jewish Americans,” Pew Research Center, May 11, 2021.
- 3 “The Jerusalem Declaration On Antisemitism,” March 25, 2021.
- 4 Kwame Anthony Appiah in “Conspiracy Theories” (video), Facing History and Ourselves.

Antisemitic conspiracy theories rely on **tropes***—widely shared ideas, stereotypes, phrases, images or stories. Tropes can be neutral, like common movie or literary tropes, but antisemitic tropes cause great harm.

When someone uses code words to communicate a racist trope with others who share the same belief in order to avoid being called out or censored for hate speech, this tactic is called **dog whistling**. Dog whistling often occurs on social media and in public speeches. Antisemitic dog whistles include referring to “the Hollywood elite” with the intent to promote the conspiracy theory that Jews control the entertainment industry or claiming there is a Jewish “cabal” (secret political group) that controls global outcomes and referring to them as “Zionists.”

**For a more in-depth look at antisemitic tropes, see the [Antisemitic Tropes Chart](#).*

How Does Antisemitism Impact Individuals and Communities?

Suppression of Personal Identity

When young people witness or are the targets of antisemitism in their communities, they may feel isolated or more vulnerable. Those who are Jewish may become afraid to state or show their Jewish identity for fear that they will become targets of further antisemitic comments on social media and in person. Suppression of identity—being afraid to bring your whole self into your various communities—is one potential impact of antisemitism. Another critical component is how others respond to antisemitic behavior and actions. Is antisemitism being recognized and challenged in the community? Do Jews feel they have allies who stand in solidarity with them?



“Before, I guess, I ‘came out’ as Jewish on my TikTok, before people knew, I was getting almost all positive responses,” Massey said. “And now, every single TikTok I’ve made since that video, I’ve received anti-Semitic comments, regardless of the content.”⁵

—Massey, 18, on the antisemitism she has encountered
on social media once she identified as Jewish

“At the end of the day, I don’t want to get attacked on the train.”⁶

—Blake, 20, on why he takes off his yarmulke
(a small round cap) when he goes out in New York

“The anger consumed me and I really didn’t know what to do. I knew I didn’t belong there.”⁷
—Paige, 17, on feeling unsupported by other students
after a string of antisemitic acts at her high school

5 Quoted in Kalhan Rosenblatt, “Jewish teens say life on TikTok comes with anti-Semitism,” NBC News, September 25, 2020.

6 Quoted in Mallory Simon, “Not just neo-Nazis with tiki torches: Why Jewish students say they also fear cloaked anti-Semitism,” CNN, July 1, 2021.

7 Quoted in Sharon Otterman, “She Was Excited for a New School. Then the Anti-Semitic Jokes Started,” *New York Times*, March 4, 2020.



*"It's intense. I've gotten death threats, I've gotten sexual assault threats, I've gotten called lots of slurs, my family's gotten death threats."*⁸

-Julia, 20, on the antisemitism she's experienced online after starting a "Jewish On Campus" group on social media

Violence

Despite Jews making up only 2% of the United States population (and 0.2% of the global population), hate crimes that target Jewish communities made up more than half of the reported religious-based crimes in 2021.⁹ According to the New York Police Department, there has been a 400% increase in attacks targeting Jews in February of 2022 compared to the previous February.¹⁰ In 2021, American Jews, both adults and children, were punched, stabbed, bludgeoned, shot, burned by fireworks, verbally assaulted, and spit upon while going about their daily lives in their communities.¹¹

The consequences of absorbing antisemitic conspiracies into one's worldview can go beyond violent assaults against Jewish individuals to broader acts of terror. In the January 2022 hostage crisis at the Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in Colleyville and the 2018 mass shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, the perpetrators of these hate crimes were motivated by antisemitic conspiracy theories that Jews have power and influence over US institutions and policies ranging from the criminal justice system to immigration. Even in the 2019 Walmart mass shooting in El Paso and the 2015 Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church mass shooting in Charleston, where Latinx and Black people were the targeted victims, respectively, both shooters were revealed to not only hold anti-immigrant, anti-Latinx, and anti-Black beliefs, but antisemitic ones as well. These different forms of racism are often intertwined, all being rooted in white supremacy.

Tolerance for antisemitism in a society can be an indicator that democracy is fragile. In some cases, a causal relationship has been established between unchallenged antisemitism and increases in other kinds of persecution and bias in society. A Human Rights First report on antisemitism and extremism in France warns that "[j]eft unchecked, antisemitism leads to . . . an overall increase in repression and intolerance. An increase in antisemitism is a harbinger of societal breakdown."¹² Like any other form of intolerance, hatred, or discrimination, antisemitism is destructive to an entire community because it encourages suppression or even the extinction of difference, rather than bridge building, cultural literacy, empathy, and conflict resolution. As writer Dara Horn notes, "One appeal of conspiracy theories is that they absolve their believers of accountability, replacing the difficult obligation to build relationships with the easy urge to destroy."¹³

8. Quoted in Mallory Simon, "Not just neo-Nazis with tiki torches: Why Jewish students say they also fear cloaked anti-Semitism," CNN, July 1, 2021.

9. "Six Facts About Threats to The Jewish Community," ADL, January 16, 2022.

10. Yossi Lempkowitz, "In New York City, anti-Jewish hate crimes jump 400% in February compared to last year, reports NYPD" European Jewish Press, March 13, 2022.

11. Rudy Malcom, "New York mayor decries recent assaults against Jews," Forward, February 14, 2022.

12. "Breaking the Cycle of Violence," Human Rights First, January 7, 2016

13. Dara Horn, *People Love Dead Jews* (NY: W. Norton & Company, 2021), 127.

EXPLAINER

White Nationalism

White nationalism is a dangerous ideology that was the motivating force behind nearly 350 terrorist attacks between 2011 and 2017.¹ Recent attacks motivated by white nationalist ideology include the shootings in a Walmart in El Paso, Texas; in mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand; in the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. White nationalist violence is not a new phenomenon, even if it is taking on new forms. In the United States, the 1979 Greensboro shootings, various attacks committed in the 1980s by “the Order,” and the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, were all motivated by the white nationalist ideology.² Increasingly, white nationalists are targeting young people for recruitment online, and white nationalism has been linked to bullying, threats, and violence in schools. For these reasons, it is critical that we all understand what white nationalism is and why it is harmful.

What beliefs do white nationalists have in common?³

What do white nationalists believe?

There is a “white race,” and it is genetically and culturally superior to other “races.”

What you should know

In reality, the concept of “race” was invented to justify the African slave trade and European colonialism. Statistically, a person is likely to have more in common genetically with any given person of a different “race” than someone who shares their “race.”⁴ Variations in skin color have existed throughout human history, but it was only in modern times that these variations were considered to be linked to immutable differences between groups of people. There is no scientific evidence demonstrating that skin color is linked to any “superior” or “inferior” characteristics.

White people should have their own nations, where they hold the power.

It is not possible to define clearly who is “white” and who is not, since racial categories are subjective. If a person were to walk across Europe and Asia—from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean—it would be impossible to determine where one “race” ends and another begins, because groups always blend into each other. Most genetic variation occurs at an individual level, and genetic differences do not map directly onto modern racial categories.⁵ Certain groups of people have been labelled both as “white” and as “non-white” in different contexts, which reveals how arbitrary racial classifications are. For example, people with Japanese heritage were considered to be white in South Africa during Apartheid, but non-white in the United States at the same time.

Even if it were possible to categorize people racially, creating a country for just one group of people would require the segregation and subjugation, violent removal, or killing of everyone who is not considered as belonging.

What do white nationalists believe?

Majority white countries are suffering (economically and culturally) because of non-white immigration and increased civil rights for women, religious minorities, LGBTQ people, and people of color.

Jewish people have infiltrated powerful institutions and are conspiring to bring about the downfall of white people.

White women should be under the control of white men and have more children in order to increase the white population.

What you should know

Many countries are experiencing growing economic inequality. When people suffer economically, or fear that cultural changes will result in a loss of their status, they are more likely to be intolerant toward historically marginalized groups of people.⁶ However, immigration and rights movements are not the cause of inequality. In fact, immigration can help countries thrive. Countries with declining birth rates rely on immigration in order to sustain their economies. Additionally, immigrants to the United States—including unauthorized immigrants—are less likely to commit violent crimes than native-born residents.⁷ Currently, Germany hosts over one million refugees, and yet in 2017, crime was at its lowest level in 25 years.⁸

This conspiracy theory draws on a harmful yet persistent antisemitic trope that falsely claims that Jewish people secretly control powerful institutions and are manipulating social and political changes to bring about the fall of the “white race.” Many white nationalists believe that Jewish people are working to increase immigration and promote social justice movements in order to cause “white genocide,” which is an unfounded conspiracy theory that white people are being erased or replaced. Antisemitic tropes, such as this one, fuel hatred and violence.⁹

White nationalists often use the idea that white women need to be “protected” as a justification for their violence, while in reality, white nationalist ideology may constrain women’s ability to exercise their rights, including the right to work outside the home, hold political power, and control their own bodies.¹⁰

How do white nationalists spread their ideas?

They target people whom they think will connect with some aspects of their ideology—such as people living in areas with high unemployment, recent demographic shifts, or recent migration waves—and then slowly indoctrinate them to the rest. White nationalists specifically target children and teenagers for recruitment.

They harass, assault, and may even kill people whom they consider to be a threat to their goal of creating a “white nation,” and then use the publicity to recruit more followers.

They take advantage of social media algorithms to get their content recommended to new audiences. Algorithms on some sites, such as YouTube, have a tendency to show viewers increasingly extreme content on a topic. The first time someone is exposed to white nationalist content, it may seem extreme and unappealing, but often the more immersed they become in white nationalist content, the more normal it seems.

They create content that disguises white nationalist ideology behind humor and coded language—which feeds dangerous stereotypes without appearing overtly discriminatory—and then try to get people to unknowingly share this content online.

They manipulate scientific studies to falsely claim that white people are superior and that “white genocide” is a reality.¹¹

How does white nationalism impact schools?

White nationalists target teenagers for recruitment. They are not allowed to directly recruit at schools, but they reach out to youth in online spaces. Teenage boys who lack strong community ties are especially vulnerable to recruitment.

White nationalist ideology may appear in schools in numerous forms, such as graffiti or flyers that contain white nationalist symbols or promote white nationalist ideology. Some students may also raise white nationalist ideas in class or try to form clubs that are aligned with white nationalism.

White nationalism can contribute to a harmful school atmosphere. The ideology can fuel violence and bullying in schools.¹²

Terminology

The Alt-Right

Short for the “alternative right,” this is a recent term coined by a white supremacist in an attempt to make the movement sound more acceptable. This rebranding is part of an effort by members of the movement to influence mainstream conservative groups in order to advance a white supremacist agenda. “Alt-right” is now used to refer to a loose network of white nationalist groups in the United States that espouse white nationalist ideology.

Neo-Nazis

A subset of the white nationalist movement that reveres Adolf Hitler and focuses its hatred particularly against Jews. Neo-Nazis believe that Jewish people control the government, and many are Holocaust deniers.

“Race War”

Many white nationalists believe that by attacking and killing non-white people, they can incite a “race war,” in which violence would escalate until non-white people are killed or driven from their homes, and white people can create white-only nations.

“White Genocide”

A term white supremacists use in their propaganda. It refers to a conspiracy theory that Jewish people are working to erase the “white race,” by promoting immigration, intermarriage, and multiculturalism. The “Great Replacement” is another term for the white genocide conspiracy theory.

White Power

This is the preferred term of some scholars to refer to the white nationalist movement. Kathleen Belew, for example, argues “white power” is a more appropriate term, because “white nationalism” refers to only a section people who are in the “white power movement,” or “the social movement that brought together members of the Klan, militias, radical tax resisters, white separatists, neo-Nazis, and proponents of white ideologies such as Christian Identity, Odinism, and Dualism.”¹³

White Separatism

This term is meant to make white nationalism sound more acceptable to the mainstream by implying that whites just want to live separately and obscuring the fact that creating separate white nations requires killing and displacing non-white people. White people also have more power around the world, since fascism is embedded in global systems. Thus, any white-only nation would be a white supremacist nation.

White Supremacy

Systems that uphold the dominant status of white people over all other people. White supremacists believe in the superiority of white people.

- ¹ Weiji Cai and Simone Landon, "Attacks by White Supremacists are Growing. So Are their Connections," *New York Times*, April 3, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/03/world/white-extremist-terrorism-christchurch.html>.
- ² Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home*, (Harvard University Press, 2018).
- ³ *White nationalism is an ideology, or a set of ideas that try to explain problems in society, offer a vision for the future, and tactics for how to reach that future. Not all white nationalists believe in every aspect of the ideology. This document describes key aspects of the ideology.*
- ⁴ Angela Saini, *Superior: The Return of Race Science* (Beacon Press, 2019).
- ⁵ Angela Saini, *Superior: The Return of Race Science* (Beacon Press, 2019).
- ⁶ Rubin, Taylor, Pollitt, Krapels, and Pardal, "Intolerance in Western Europe," *Rand Corporation*, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR300/RR334z1/RAND_RR334z1.pdf.
- ⁷ Frances Bernat, "Immigration and Crime," *Oxford Research Encyclopedias* 2017, <https://oxfordre.com/criminology/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264079.001.0001/acrefore-9780190264079-e-93>; "Illegal Immigration Does Not Increase Violent Crime, 4 Studies Show," *NPR Morning Edition*, <https://www.npr.org/2018/05/02/607652253/studies-say-illegal-immigration-does-not-increase-violent-crime>.
- ⁸ "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018," *UNHCR*, 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2018/>; Christopher F. Schuetze and Michael Wolgelter, "Fact Check: Trump's False and Misleading Claims About Germany's Crime and Immigration," *New York Times*, June 18, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/18/world/europe/fact-check-trump-germany.html>.
- ⁹ "With Hate in their Hearts: The State of White Supremacy in the United States," *ADL*, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR300/RR334z1/RAND_RR334z1.pdf.
- ¹⁰ "When Women Are the Enemy: The Intersection between Misogyny and White Supremacy," *ADL*, <https://www.adl.org/resources/reports/when-women-are-the-enemy-the-intersection-of-misogyny-and-white-supremacy>.
- ¹¹ "The Rhetoric Tricks, Traps, and Tactics of White Nationalism," *Medium*, June 14, 2018, <https://medium.com/@DeoTasDevil/the-rhetoric-tricks-traps-and-tactics-of-white-nationalism-b0bca3caeb84>; "The Making of a YouTube Radical," *New York Times*, June 8, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/08/technology/youtube-radical.html>; Angela Saini, *Superior: The Return of Race Science* (Beacon Press, 2019).
- ¹² "Hate speech is showing up in schools. Censorship isn't the answer," *The Washington Post*, November 30, 2018, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2018/11/30/saluting-nazis-or-kneeling-against-racism-which-students-get-first-amendment-rights>.
- ¹³ Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home*, (Harvard University Press, 2018), ix.

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