How Trump Used Language to Appeal to White Supremacists

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Global Conflict in the Modern Era

Word count: 14620

Word count excluding bibliography: 13433

Abstract

White supremacist extremism was thought to have been pushed to the fringes of society, but has steadily become more prominent in mainstream society. There are many possible reasons as to why this is the case, such as technological advancements making it easier to connect to likeminded individuals or the increased presence of populism in right-wing politics. However, in this thesis I will make the case that President Donald Trump has played a significant role in appealing to, and encouraging white supremacists by using overt and covert racial language.

Contents

Introduction

Ever since the events of September 11, 2001, the United States has adopted a counterterrorism policy that focuses largely on religious extremist terrorism. This focus is not without reason, as Al Qaeda for example has been actively targeting American property, citizens, and military personnel since the early 1990s. After 9/11 fear of terrorist attacks spiked sharply among American citizens, and those fears have not declined since then. Many top-level officials at the time, including President George W. Bush, were certain there would come a second attack.[1] Even though that attack never came, many Americans remained fearful of Islamic terrorism from abroad.

While many Americans focused on religious extremism from outside the U.S., incidents of domestic white supremacist terrorism have skyrocketed over the past decade. The Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism reported that 71 percent of extremist-related fatalities between 2008 and 2017 were committed by members of alt-right or white supremacist movements.[2] Additionally, 60 percent of 65 terrorist related incidents in 2017 were driven by anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, or other right-wing ideologies. Muslim extremists committed "only" seven attacks.[3] According to the Homeland Threat Assessment report by the U.S.-DHS white supremacist extremism will

[1] John E. Mueller, Mark G. Stewart, *Chasing Ghosts: the policing of terrorism* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2016), 13, E-pub edition.
[2] As cited in: Janet Reitman, "U.S. Law Enforcement Failed to See the Threat of White Nationalism. Now They Don't Know How to Stop It," New York Times, November 3, 2018.
[3] Ibid.

remain the most persistent and deadly threat: out of all attacks, those perpetrated by white supremacists resulted in the most deaths.[4]

Since Donald Trump's presidency, politicians have been giving more attention to white supremacist extremism. At the writing of this thesis, Joe Biden (D) has been inaugurated as the United States' 46th President. Before he took office, he was already urged to create a White House post that would oversee the fight against ideologically inspired violent extremism.[5] The creation of this post has taken on fresh urgency after the surge on the Capitol on January 6, 2021.

The topic of white supremacy has received increased scholarly attention in recent years as well. However, white supremacist ideologies are as old as the United States, and many scholars have written about the history of white supremacy. Scholars have focused on a myriad of topics, such as the change of nature of racism. Instead of alleging that non-whites are inferior due to biological differences, ethnic racists claim that non-whites are socially and economically inferior to whites because their cultures are defective. Other scholars have focused on specific groups that subscribe to white supremacist ideologies. After the Vietnam War, some white supremacists joined together under the umbrella term White Power Movement. Then in the 1990s, the Internet presented a golden opportunity for white supremacists by offering them a new way to communicate. Lastly, some scholars connect white supremacy and racism to conspiracy theories. The Internet has played a role in making conspiracy theories a more prominent feature within

[4] U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *Homeland Threat Assessment: October 2020* (October 2020), 18. https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/2020_10_06_ homeland-threat-assessment.pdf. 17-18.
[5] Rachael Levy, "Biden Administration Urged to Take Fresh Look at Domestic Terrorism, *Wall Street Journal* (2020).

white supremacist groups, and there are many conspiracy theories that have thus gone global, like the "great replacement" theory.

While many scholars have thus focused on the origins of white supremacy and how racism changed, not many have yet focused on what motivates white supremacists now, in an age where being overtly racist is very unpopular. Thus, in this thesis I will analyze a possible connection between President Donald Trump and white supremacists. How did Trump affect the rise of white supremacy in the United States? What did Trump do that could have potentially motivated and encouraged white supremacists? This research will show the following things: first, that overt and covert rhetoric can be powerful tools to appeal to white supremacists and encourage them to enter mainstream society, especially when said encouragement comes from somewhere in power. Second, that this rhetoric can lead to real-life violence and attacks and have long lasting effects on politics.

During his 2016 presidential campaign, Trump received the endorsement of the Ku Klux Klan's official newspaper, and many other white supremacists expressed their support.[6] This shows that there is a one-way connection between white supremacists and Trump. However, this thesis will indicate whether this connection is true the other way around as well. Which words in Trump's speeches and online posts signal to white supremacists that he is at least partially on their side? This will be researched based on the following three events: the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, the Black Lives Matter protests of the spring and summer of 2020, and the surge on the Capitol on January 6, 2021. The method of analytical content analysis will be used, using qualitative

[6] John Haltiwanger, "Trump Has Repeatedly Been Endorsed by White Supremacist Groups and Other Far-right Extremists, and They've Looked to Him as a Source of Encouragement," Business Insider (2020).

observations. Analytical content analysis is a research tool that can be used to study the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts in written or spoken words. For this thesis, that means that alignment will be sought between Trump and his use of language to appeal to a certain base, in this case white supremacists. Both covert and overt language will be important. Trump is known to be overtly racist at times, for example in his insistence that President Obama was not born in the United States.[7] Trump can be covert, too, by using so-called dog whistles. These are coded messages that appeal to an audience that is already "in the know" about the real meaning of the message. In "Trump, the KKK, and the Versatility of White Supremacist Rhetoric," James Chase Sanchez argues that Trump and the KKK use similar bigoted language that may seem coded coming from Trump, but is more dangerous when associated with KKK propaganda.[8] Coded language that will be of use for this thesis include words such as law and order, patriots, history/heritage, the radical left, Antifa, and defend America.

For this research, transcripts of Trump's speeches and tweets will be used. All of the source material will range from January 2017, to January 2021. Since January 8, 2021, Twitter has permanently banned Trump's Twitter account (@realdonaldtrump) due to his alleged role in inciting the surge on the Capitol on January 6 of that same year. Thus one of the drawbacks of this research is that accessing Trump's Twitter account directly is impossible. However, there are web tools available that archived all Trump's tweets between 2009 and 2021. All of the tweets cited in this thesis will be retrieved from the Trump Twitter Archive. The website allows the user to filter based on date and

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[7] David A. Graham, et al. "An Oral History of Trump's Bigotry," *The Atlantic* (2019): https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/06/trump-racism-comments/588067/.
[8] James Chase Sanchez, "Trump, the KKK, and the Versatility of White Supremacy Rhetoric." *Journal of Contemporary Rhetoric,* 8, no.1/2 (2018): 49.

provides statistical insights regarding Trump's Twitter behavior. One of the insights available for example, is the amount of times Trump tweeted about a specific topic.

The thesis will continue as follows: first, a brief section will be dedicated to explain the terminology associated with white supremacy. In chapter 1, I will explain how white supremacy and racism have changed since the 1960s. I will show that white supremacists were able to remain active, even from the sidelines of society, because they adopted covert language techniques and have been able to quickly capitalize on developments in technology. In chapter 2, I will highlight the state of the current literature on white supremacy. There is much literature on this topic, and many scholars have focused on different reasons why white supremacy is now so prominent in mainstream society. However, when it comes to the connection between Trump and white supremacists, many scholars focus only on why white supremacists support Trump. There is not yet much literature that analyzes Trump's potential role in encouraging white supremacy itself. Thus in chapter 3, I will analyze Trump's words using speech transcripts and tweets to show that using overt and covert rhetoric, Trump has encouraged white supremacy in the United States.

Terminology

Key Concept of White Supremacy

White supremacist ideology asserts that whites are morally and intellectually superior to other races. This assertion is based on religious interpretation of holy texts, culture, and pseudo-science.[9] Traditionally, white supremacists want to reinforce a race-based hierarchy that serves to homogenize blacks and other people of color through stereotypical generalizations based on intelligence, and the rhetoric that whites and blacks are naturally different.[10] In recent years, white supremacists have targeted other minority groups as well, including LGBTQ+ groups and organizations, and immigrants from Asia and Latin America.[11]

According to a brief by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) there are five predominant types of white supremacist groups in the United States. They are the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, racist skinheads, adheres to the Christian Identity, and Aryan prison gangs.[12] These groups share a belief in white superiority, white racial purity, and white power. Additionally, they believe that the white race is facing genocide by people of other races, and that white persons collaborating with non-whites are race traitors. "White supremacy" and "white supremacists" are terms that will be used throughout this thesis, as they encompass the most significant groups still active today. However, the groups included in the overall

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[9] Alejandro Beutel, "Key Concepts to Understand Violent White Supremacy." START, 2017. start.umd.edu. 1.
[10] Christopher Brown, "WWW.HATE.COM: White Supremacist Discouse on the Internet and the Construction of Whiteness Ideology." *The Howard Journal of Communications,* 20, no.2 (2009): 199.
[11] Alejandro Beutel, "Key Concepts to Understand Violent White Supremacy." START, 2017. On start.umd.edu. 1.
[12] Ibid. 1-2.

movement have several notable differences. Not all groups believe in the Zionist Occupied Government, or in the Jewish conspiracy to destroy the white race. Not all groups are holocaust deniers, and not all groups view Christianity as a Jewish conspiracy.[13] Among white supremacists, there are disagreements on how to achieve their goals. In 2019, many white supremacists embraced increasingly violent rhetoric, while others are trying to distance themselves from violence.[14] The increasingly violent wing of white supremacists calls themselves "accelerationists," whereas other groups are more image-conscious and call themselves "dissident right."[15] It is the latter group that puts their energy toward bending the current conservative right to white supremacist ideas.[16]

Additional terms and definitions

The terms white supremacy and white nationalism can generate confusion, as they are often used interchangeably. It's not the media that views them as different, but rather white supremacists themselves. White supremacy is the original term to characterize this belief system: the belief that whites should have dominance over people of a non-white background; whites should live in a white-only society; white people have a culture superior to others' and white people are genetically superior to other people. White nationalism originated among white supremacists as a euphemism. In other words, white

[13] Alejandro Beutel, "Key Concepts to Understand Violent White Supremacy." START, 2017. start.umd.edu. 2.
[14] "White Nationalist," Southern Poverty Law Center. Accessed Nov. 30, 2020. https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/white-nationalist.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

nationalism and white supremacy are two terms to describe the exact same thing.[17]

The Alt Right and Extreme Right are terms that appear in the media quite often, and are similar, yet have slight differences. The Alt Right is actually a collective term for a loose collection of individuals and small groups that reject mainstream conservatism, and instead seek to inject it with explicit racism, anti-Semitism, and white supremacy. The Extreme Right is more often used to describe larger political, social, and religious movements. For this research, the Alt-Right and Extreme Right have been included under the umbrella term of white supremacy.

[17] "Defining Extremism: A Glossary of White Supremacist Terms, Movements, and Philosophies" on ADL.org.

Chapter 1: A Brief History of White Supremacy in the United States

Donald Trump is not the cause of white supremacy in the United States. The country has a long history with this ideology, and even when it was pushed to the fringes of society, it never quite went away. In this chapter I will give a brief overview of the evolution of white supremacy in the United States since the 1960s. Using existing literature, I argue that in the latter half of the 20th century white supremacists became increasingly aggressive to minority groups besides black Americans; started to change their image, and became increasingly adapt at using modern technology to spread their ideas.

Jim Crow started in the late 19th century. The laws were based on white supremacy, and in *Plessy v. Ferguson* the Supreme Court ruled that facilities for black and white people could be separate but equal. Thus, segregation began. At this point in time, racism was still largely based on perceptions of biological differences. However, due to many whites' fear of losing jobs and resources to blacks, racism took a malicious turn as well. Many blacks were subjugated to intimidation, beatings, and in extreme cases, lynching.

However, by the 1950s segregation became increasingly unpopular, and would eventually come to and end with the signing of the civil rights act in 1964. Yet in the former confederate states, there was significant pushback against overturning *Plessy v. Ferguson.* It was a time marked by a flare-up of KKK activity, and many other groups

and individuals tried to influence voters and government officials in favor of continued segregation. Southern working class whites provided the main recruiting pool for the KKK, and some low-income northern whites that lived in areas with a large black population joined the civil rights backlash as well.[18] It was also a time when pro-segregationist governor of Alabama, George Wallace, campaigned for the presidential election of 1968. Even though he lost, he secured almost 10 million votes on the Independent Party ticket. His campaign appealed to whites that were increasingly fearful of black activism, rebellion, student radicalism, the emerging women's movement, and anti-war protests.[19]

The Vietnam War in particular was an important tipping point for white supremacy. The war started in 1954 in an attempt to protect the free world from communism, and eventually turned into one of the most unpopular wars ever fought by the United States. Thousands of servicemen died during the conflict, and many of those who did come home brought with them trauma and feelings of resentment. Furthermore, the Vietnam War upended notions of the "triumphant American warrior;" threatened the balance of world power; and in some people intensified the fear of communism.[20] The war radicalized people on both sides of the political spectrum, but on the right many veterans narrated the war as government betrayal and so laid the groundwork for white supremacist activism.[21] Thus, as Kathleen Belew explains in *Bring the War Home: the White Power Movement and Paramilitary America,* the Vietnam War story went as

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[18] Chip Berlet, Matthew N. Lyons, *Right Wing Populism: too close for comfort,* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2000), E-pub, 265.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: the White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), E-pub. 19.
[21] Ibid.

follows: the corrupt government sent young men to Vietnam and then denied them permission to win by limiting their use of force against a beastly, subhuman enemy.[22] In other words, there were many American soldiers in the Vietnam War who thought that the people they were fighting against were inferior, and they could not understand why the government would not allow them to use excessive force. Many who returned from the war yearned to reclaim the time before the civil rights act was enacted, and thus many took up arms for white supremacist movements. They brought with them knowledge of military tactics, training, and weaponry, and were thus the perfect people to recruit.[23] Many of these people banded together under the umbrella of the "White Power Movement," which consisted of people that differed in ideology, but were likeminded enough to want to work together to achieve their common goal of founding a racial utopian nation, achieved through revolution and separation.[24]

The 1960s were also a time where many traditional hierarchies were demolished, and new groups emerged into society, such as LGBTQ groups and immigrants from Latin America and Asia.[25] In 1965 President Lyndon B. Johnson abolished the immigration quota system that was in effect since 1924. The new immigration policy would reunite families and attract skilled workers.[26] However, there were also many that demanded a reassertion of white male heterosexual power and privilege. Many white supremacist groups active at this time were openly fascist, but some also started to realize that coded

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[22] Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), E-pub. 21.
[23] Ibid 19.
[24] Ibid. 10.
[25] Chip Berlet, Matthew N. Lyons, *Right Wing Populism: too close for comfort,* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2000), E-pub, 343.
[26] Andrew Glass, "LBJ hails immigration reform, Oct. 3, 1965," *Politico* (2018): https://www.politico.com/story/2018/10/03/this-day-in-politics-october-3-854145.

racist messages would appeal to a broader audience. This so-called "dog whistle language" will be more thoroughly discussed in chapter 2, but for now it is important to note that the key to dog whistling is to talk about sensitive issues such as race, without actually mentioning race. In the 20th century, many right-wing politicians accomplished this by speaking negatively about, for example, welfare. Recipients of welfare would be constructed as lazy people who refused to work. However, considering many welfare recipients at the time were black, the "lazy welfare recipient" became associated with black Americans. Even though cutting welfare would affect many whites as well, it has become a dog whistle with racist undertones. However, since race is not mentioned, right-wing politicians and white supremacists could easily deny any allegations of being racist. Part of this was made possible because politicians whittled down racism to its most visible form: sheet-wearing KKK members. The result was many colorblind policies that on the surface seemed equal, but undermined decades of oppression and social and economic set-backs.[27]

During the 1960s, the nature of racism changed as well, both in governmental spheres and on the ground. Instead of following the biological narrative, white supremacists and right-wing politicians shifted toward the more complex cultural, or ethnic, racism.[28] White supremacists and others adhering to this notion sought to exploit the existing differences between the various social and ethnic groups that now occupied the United States. They pitted ethnic groups against each other, immigrants against

[27] Carol Anderson, *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide,* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), E-pub, 89.
[28] Chip Berlet, Matthew N. Lyons, *Right Wing Populism: too close for comfort* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2000), E-pub, 344.

native-borns, and middle-class versus the poor.[29] Many conservative politicians used ethnicity as a reason why minority groups are socially and economically behind whites. In other words, minority groups have an inferior position in society because their cultures are defective.

Thus white supremacy and politics are not strictly separated, even in the latter half of the 20th century. One of the most prominent white supremacists of this time was David Duke. In 1988 he ran for President, in 1989 he was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives, and in 1990 he ran for United States Senate on a GOP ticket.[30] His use of coded racial language not only won him Republican votes, but many middle-class Democratic votes as well.[31] However, before starting his political career, Duke was a KKK member, and even became the youngest ever Grand Wizard at the age of 24. He implemented many cosmetic changed to the group that would eventually help bring white supremacist ideas into mainstream society. He introduced business suits to replace the usual white robes, denounced the Klan's violent history, and opened up membership to women and Catholics for the first time.[32]

Looking at white supremacy in the 1960s and the 1980s already presents several differences. The nature of racism changed from biological to ethnic: instead of blaming non-whites' inferiority on their cellular makeup, white supremacists and right-wing politicians blamed it on their different cultures. Of course, there are still many white supremacists that believe that there are biological differences between whites and non-

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[29] Chip Berlet, Matthew N. Lyons, *Right Wing Populism: too close for comfort* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2000), E-pub, 345.
[30] Ibid. 357.
[31] Ibid. 375.
[32] Brett Barrouquere, "White Shadow: David Duke's Lasting Influence on American White Supremacy," Southern Poverty Law Center. May 17, 2019. Accessed Nov. 27, 2020.

whites. However, it is ethnic racists that are more successful in politics. This is because politicians and prominent white supremacists realized that overt racism was becoming increasingly unpopular. Where it would still garner votes in the 1960s, using overt racism in the late 20th century was not a good campaign tactic. Thus many modern white supremacists like David Duke started to use a subdued version of racism that would still appeal to their base, while at the same time preventing others from being able to claim their statements are racist. However, the 1990s into the 2000s truly started to change how white supremacy spread itself through society. This was the time that personal computers became more accessible, and the Internet was made available to the public.

White supremacists have always been opportunists who recognize the use of technology whenever it became available to them. As early as 1915, for example, filmmaker D.W. Griffith released his film *Birth of a Nation*, which is regarded as incredibly racist. Nevertheless, it inspired the KKK to create their own film company, and make their own films such as *The Toll of Justice* and *The Traitor Within.* Films such as these were screened at churches, schools, and outdoor events, which ultimately helped spread the KKK's message and boost membership.

In the 1990s, the Internet provided the same opportunity: to use a public resource to create and spread white supremacist ideas. When the Internet was first made available, the industry described itself as "race-less:" a place where like-minded individuals could freely connect with each other, free of government regulation and state borders.[33] In 1995, Professor Eugene Volokh remarkably accurately predicted what type of changes

[33] Jessie Daniels, "The Algorithmic Rise of the Alt Right," *Contexts* 17, no. 1 (2018): 62, accessed Nov. 30, 2020, DOI: 10.1177/1536504218766547.

the Internet would make. Among his predictions were streaming devices such as Spotify and Netflix, the emergence of handheld tablets, and how people could custom design what they see, hear, and read.[34] However, Volokh could also see a darker side. The Internet would lower organization costs for hate groups, and as soon as the Internet went public, white supremacists saw it as an opportunity.[35] Using David Duke yet again as an example, he joined hands with Don Black, former KKK Grand Wizard, to help establish the KKK's presence on the Internet. Black launched his own website, Stormfront, in 1996 which hosted Duke's podcast and had more than 300,000 registered users.[36] Thus the Internet became a place where organizations, movements, and parties can present themselves. Additionally, the anonymity of the Internet makes it easy to express opinions in mailing lists, chats, forums, and forms of social media. Even though blatant hate speech will often get flagged and taken down, there are many online places where white supremacists can congregate and share ideas. On top of that, accessing online media has only become easier since the 1990s. Most Americans own a smartphone, and can download whichever apps they want. But apps can also be created, sometimes with questionable purposes. The social media app Parler is a recent example of this. It was created as a counterpart to Twitter, where people were guaranteed the right to express what they wanted. It ended up becoming a place where hate speech was prominent, and white supremacists mixed with Trump supporters.[37] After the surge on the Capitol, it was removed from all app stores.

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[34] As cited in: Richard L. Hasen. "Cheap Speech and What it has Done," *First Amendment Law Review,* 16, no. 1. (Fall 2017): 200.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Jessie Daniels, "The Algorithmic Rise of the Alt Right," *Contexts* 17, no. 1 (2018): 63, accessed Nov. 30, 2020, DOI: 10.1177/1536504218766547.
[37] Luke Munn, "More than a mob: Parler as preparatory media for the U.S. Capitol storming," *First Monday* 26, no.3 (2021): https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v26i3.11574.

The advancement of the Internet and social media platforms not only helped white supremacists spread their ideas and recruit new adherers, it also helped make conspiracy theories take a more prominent position within white supremacist ideologies. Conspiracy theories have always existed, but believers were often shunned to the very fringes of society. However, the Internet, and social media in particular, help white supremacist conspiracy theorists find each other. That is not to say that every conspiracy theorist is a white supremacist and vice versa, but there is significant overlap. Additionally, some conspiracy theories have their origins in white supremacy. One of the most well known conspiracy theories among white supremacists is that of "white genocide," which is part of a larger theory that the Jewish race wants to exterminate the white race.[38] However, many white supremacists also believe that this can be achieved by increased immigration from non-white countries. Thus many white supremacists are vehemently anti-immigration. The white genocide conspiracy theory also lives on the Internet, particularly in hash-tags and usernames on Twitter. Trump himself once notably retweeted an anti-Jeb Bush tweet coming from a user with the handle "@WhiteGenocideTM."[39]

The advancement of the Internet and social media has made the spread of conspiracy theories a lot easier, and many more people are reached. This is not just limited to the United States: conspiracy theories can easily go global. The so-called "replacement theory," for example, originated in France, but found a home in New-Zealand native Brenton Tarrant, who committed a terrorist attack against two

[38] Defining Extremism," Anti Defamation League, Accessed April 24, 2021, https://www.adl.org/education/resources/glossary-terms/defining-extremism-white-supremacy.
[39] Anjali Athavaley, "Candidate Trump Retweets White Genocide Account, Drawing Outrage," Reuters, January 22, 2016, https://www.reuters.com/article/usa-election-trump-tweet-idINKCN0V02EM.

Christchurch mosques in which 51 civilians died and 50 more were injured.[40] The Christchurch shooter in turn inspired the gunman who on August 3, 2019, shot and killed 23 civilians in El Paso, Texas.[41] His manifesto included the words: "In general, I support the Christchurch shooter and his manifesto. The attack is a response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas. … I am simply defending my country from cultural and ethnic replacement brought on by an invasion."[42] Conspiracy theories have become a fundamental feature in white supremacist groups and individuals, but they have also infiltrated politics. Trump seems to be quite susceptible to believing certain conspiracy theories, as evidenced by his fixation on Obama's citizenship. His belief in the "birther" conspiracy theory likely convinced many other believers that it is true. Whether Trump believes in white genocide or not is impossible to tell based on a single retweet, but it does send the message to white supremacists that he may be an ally.

White supremacy has evolved fairly extensively since the 1960s. As mentioned before, much of that has to do with the change from biological racism to ethnic racism. Additionally, many white supremacist groups and individuals have expanded their target to not only include blacks, but also Hispanics, Asians, lesbians, gays, and other minorities. The advancement of modern technologies has aided white supremacists both in spreading their ideas and recruiting new adherers. Furthermore, this new way of obtaining information has brought conspiracy theories to the forefront of white

[40] Jacob Davey, Julia Ebner, "The Great Replacement: the violent consequences of mainstreamed extremism," Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2019, accessed April 30, 2021, https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/The-Great-Replacement-The-Violent-Consequences-of-Mainstreamed-Extremism-by-ISD.pdf.
[41] Rosa Schwarzburg, "The 'white replacement theory' motivates alt-right killers the world over, *The Guardian,* August 5, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/aug/05/great-replacement-theory-alt-right-killers-el-paso.
[42] Ibid.

supremacist thinking, which can have violent and deadly consequences.

White supremacist groups were also allowed to grow extensively in the 20th century. Not in terms of membership, but in terms of individual active groups. The Southern Poverty Law Center reports that hate groups have exploded in number since the turn of the century.[43] The SPLC has identified over 900 hate groups, of which 450 are white supremacist.[44] Old white supremacist groups like the KKK still exist and are still active, but many new groups have emerged as well. That's not to mention the many individuals that exist in online spaces, too. One very important observation can be made here: white supremacy has been decentralized. Propaganda techniques of the 1960s no longer work effectively in 2021. Instead, many take to closed off online spaces, creating a number of hubs where white supremacy can flourish. Not only is it thus easier for white supremacists to spread their ideas, it is also easier for future adherers to come in direct contact with white supremacists.[45]

This chapter detailed how white supremacy evolved, but the next chapter will detail where various scholars stand regarding the reemergence of white supremacy in mainstream society.

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[43] Ashley Eady, "But How Many White Supremacists are There, Really? See on This Hate Map," *The Wrap* (2017): https://www.thewrap.com/how-many-white-supremacists-splc-hate-map/.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Maia Niguel Hoskin, "Google's the Current Reveals the New Face of Violent Online White Supremacist Organizations and How to Get out of These Radical Groups," *Forbes* (2020): https://www.forbes.com/sites/maiahoskin/2020/12/16/googles-the-current-reveals-the-new-face-of-violent-online-white-supremacist-organizations-and-how-to-get-out-of-these-radical-groups/?sh=41ec921937b1.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this thesis is to find how Trump affected the renewed rise of white supremacy in the United States. It is common knowledge that Trump had a large white supremacist following, but did he have a direct influence on the rise of white supremacy during his term? In other words, this research will explore whether a two-way connection between Trump and white supremacists exists. It is not an explanation of white supremacy itself, as the previous chapter has shown that white supremacy has existed far longer than Trump has been alive. However, this research might provide an explanation for why white supremacy has become more prevalent in mainstream society. In his chapter, the state of the literature on white supremacy will be discussed. Despite the abundance of literature on white supremacy, there is not yet much literature on whether Trump encouraged white supremacists or not. Instead, many scholars have focused on other ways white supremacy has reinserted itself in society as politics, such as through the Internet and the increased presence of populism in right-wing politics. Even though all these elements surely have merit and are to some degree true, I contend that Trump's language has had an influence on the rise of white supremacy as well, and thus the language of politicians should not be ignored when researching extremist groups.

2.1: Technological Advancements

As mentioned in chapter 1, technological advancements such as the Internet and social media have played, and continue to play, a significant role in helping spread white supremacist ideas. Thus scholars have focused on the various ways the Internet has provided a space for white supremacists. In the early days of the Internet research on online white supremacy was already being done. Burris et al mapped the white supremacist network by focusing on links that appeared on white supremacist websites. They emphasize that the white supremacist movement in general has become increasingly decentralized, but their research also shows that there still exist connections between different factions. Furthermore, their research shows that more than two-thirds of links within the white supremacist movement connect to websites outside the United States, showing that even in the early 2000s, white supremacists were already using the Internet to go global.[46] This research makes some valid points, but the combination of the volatility of the white supremacist movement and the speed with which technology develops also makes it somewhat outdated. However, the research does make the important point that the Internet provides white supremacists with resources that may keep them in the movement.[47] Today, that is still the case. Many white supremacists congregate on anonymous online spaces. In *Alt America,* David Neiwert argues that the website 4Chan is an especially important brooding place for white supremacist ideas. Signing up requires no e-mail address, and one also does not have to use their real name

[46] Val Burris, et al., "White Supremacist Networks on the Internet," *Sociological Focus,* 33 no. 2 (2000): 232, DOI: 10.1080/00380237.2000.10571166.
[47] Ibid.

when posting.[48] That is not to say that 4Chan is inherently racist. In fact, it was originally created as a messaging board for manga and anime enthusiasts. Currently it has subsections devoted to topics such as video games, technology, business, LGBTQ issues, and more. This goes to show that white supremacist networks can exist within the same space where normal, every day topics are discussed. Mike Wendling has researched white supremacy on 4Chan as well, and argues that white supremacists mostly congregate on a subsection called "Politically Incorrect (/pol/)." Wendling cites research that showed that 12 percent of posts on /pol/ contain hateful terms, compared to just 2 percent in regular social media posts. Furthermore, 2 percent of those posts contain the word "nigger," which taking 4Chan's activity rates into account, amounts to the word being used 120 times per hour.[49] 4Chan is relatively niche, but as mentioned before also has many mainstream topics. More mainstream than 4Chan is the website Reddit, which like 4Chan has subsections called "sub-reddits" about every day topics, but also has subsections similar to /pol/. According to Wendling, posts that do well on 4Chan or Reddit may also be shared on Twitter, where many people will inevitably see or maybe even interact with white supremacist content.[50]

Interacting with white supremacist content is an important way for white supremacist ideas to spread and reach people previously unaffiliated with it. Jessie Daniels has focused on algorithms, and argues that they play a significant role in facilitating the spread of white supremacist ideas. Algorithms are neither good nor bad on their own; they are simply tools used to order content. They sort posts and publications

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[48] David Neiwert, *Alt-America: the rise of the radical right in the age of Trump* (Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2017), E-Pub. 205.
[49] Mike Wendling, *Alt Right: From 4Chan to the White House* (London: Pluto Press, 2018), E-pub, 55.
[50] Ibid. 57.

based on relevance to the user, instead of publish time. The idea is that a user sees content they more likely want to see and interact with. For the spread of white supremacy, this means several things according to Daniels. First, algorithms deliver search results for those seeking confirmation of their racist ideas. Second, they speed up the spread of white supremacist ideology.[51]

In conclusion, many scholars have focused on white supremacy in the context of the Internet. They have argued that the Internet provides a space for white supremacists to congregate, but to also spread their ideas. The various factions that exist online have made it clear that the white supremacist movement is a decentralized entity, but connections between them still exist. Even though I agree that the Internet has played a significant role in spreading white supremacist ideas, and makes it possible for white supremacists to infiltrate mainstream online spaces, it does not paint the whole picture of why white supremacy is so visible today. Especially considering that many white supremacists congregate in anonymous spaces.

2.2: Populism

While some scholars have focused on the technological aspect of white supremacy, other scholars have taken a top-down approach to research why white supremacy is more prominent today. In other words, they have focused on politics. Oscar Winberg argues that by the 1990s the Republican Party had adopted and refined populism, and that Trump's rise should be understood as fueled by anti-establishment,

[51] Jessie Daniels, "The Algorithmic Rise of the Alt Right," *Contexts* 17, no. 1 (2018): 62, DOI: 10.1177/1536504218766547.

anti-intellectual, and racist appeals.[52] However, right-wing populism has been prominent in politics for decades, especially in the GOP. At this point it is important to note that populism is defined by rhetoric, and is not limited to a single ideology. Right-wing populism in the United States was created in the 1940s as a reaction to the left-wing populism of labor unions and socialism, and combined with a growing fear of communism, right-wing populists started to point toward a rapidly growing government, and portrayed celebrities and journalists as the real enemies of the people.[53] Thus populism became directed against social reform and intellectualism. Even though populists of that time did not hold the majority in the GOP, prominent politicians ended up adopting populist rhetoric that helped them win elections. Both Nixon and Reagan became fluent in populist rhetoric.[54]

Chip Berlet also researched right-wing populism, but argues that its rise is due to continued economic stratification, particularly in rural communities, and that it involves complex relationships with pre-existing white supremacist groups. Berlet argues that white supremacist groups do not cause prejudice – they actually exploit it.[55] Berlet specifically focuses on Patriot movements, which even though are not explicitly white supremacist, and even claim to denounce racism, do have overlap with white supremacist ideology. For example, they appeal mostly to farmers and ranchers, who are 96% white, but ignore the migrant labor workforce, which obviously is mostly non-white.[56] Aside from appealing to men and women on the ground, Patriot movements have also created

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[52] Oscar Winberg, "Insult Politics: Donald Trump, Right-Wing Populism, and Incendiary Language," *European Journal of American Studies* 12, no.2 (2017): 5, DOI: 10.4000/ejas.12132.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Chip Berlet, Spencer Sunshine, "Rural Rage: The roots of right-wing populism in the United States," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 46, no. 3 (2019): 485, DOI:10.1080/03066150.2019.1572603.
[56] Ibid. 499.

various inroads into the Republican Party where some city and county officials are adherents.[57]

Right-wing populism has a long history in the United States, which is further complicated by its association with white supremacist and Patriot groups. Politicians like Nixon and Reagan were able to adopt the populist rhetoric and use it in their favor. However, as Berlet has shown, there are many people on the ground that are weary of the Federal government, and yet embrace populist rhetoric when it comes from Patriot movements. It does seem that right-wing populism remains a convenient rhetoric in today's politics, as evidenced by the election of Donald Trump. However, scholars are divided on whether Trump is a populist or not. Winberg for example, argues that Trump's style of populism is inauthentic because there is little evidence that he would actually work for the common American.[58] Additionally, he cites former President Obama that Trump's remarks are better to be described as nativist or xenophobic.[59]

2.3: Coded Language

Many scholars agree that rhetoric is very important when it comes to populism and white supremacy. Just like how white supremacist groups attempted to distance themselves from overtly racist language, politicians have done so as well. Thus many scholars have focused on researching the perseverance of white supremacy through the lens of dog whistle language. Ian Haney López argues that dog whistle language has

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[57] Chip Berlet, Spencer Sunshine, "Rural Rage: The roots of right-wing populism in the United States," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 46, no. 3 (2019): 485, DOI:10.1080/03066150.2019.1572603. 496-497.
[58] Oscar Winberg, "Insult Politics: Donald Trump, Right-Wing Populism, and Incendiary Language," *European Journal of American Studies* 12, no.2 (2017): 3, DOI: 10.4000/ejas.12132.
[59] Ibid.

served as a racial pandering tool in the United States for decades in order to win elections in the Southern states. Like mentioned before, President Reagan employed dog whistle language by painting blacks as lazy welfare cheats, and whites as the hard workers and taxpayers, without ever mentioning race, making "welfare" an effective dog whistle.[60] Trump has been known to use dog whistle language as well, but with the added caveat that sometimes he abandons all subtlety and becomes overtly racist. Despite overt racism being incredibly unpopular in politics, it seemed to have helped Trump get elected.

I concur that dog whistle language has proved to be an important factor in the renewed rise of white supremacy, however current political rhetoric is not limited to dog whistles anymore. Politicians of the 20th century appealed to middle class whites by uttering terms like "inner cities," "welfare," and "forced busing." Even though these utterances did have implicit racial undertones, they do not compare to the language of Trump. In fact, Trump used explicit racism in his campaign many a time, for example by calling Mexicans rapists and vowing to ban Muslims from entering the country. Jennifer M. Saul has focused her research on the shifting boundaries of permissible language, and how this changes perceptions of racism. According to Saul, Trump uses what she calls "racial figleaves" – an utterance made after a statement that could be perceived as racist.[61] A figleaf is used in order to avoid confrontation based on a racial statement. Examples that Saul gives of figleaves are "I am not racist, but…" and "Some of my best friends are black, but…"[62] Such statements are nearly always followed by a racist statement. Just like dog whistle language, racial figleaves provide the opportunity to

[60] Ian Haney Lopez, *Dog Whistle Politics,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), E-Pub, 73.
[61] Jennifer M. Saul, "Racial Figleaves, the Shifting Boundaries of the Permissible, and the Rise of Donald Trump," *Philosophical Topics* 45, no. 2 (2017): 103.
[62] Ibid. 103-104.

people to deny being racist. Saul thus argues that racial figleaves shift perceptions of permissible language. After all, the racial figleaf leaves room for doubt that a statement was overtly racist, which removes the obligation to object.[63] When it comes to Trump, his overt racist language combined with racial figleaves makes the audience accept that one can say racist things without worrying about being seen as racist.[64]

Thus there are many factors that scholars say contribute to the rise of white supremacy in the United States. The Internet provides a handy tool for white supremacists to congregate on, and it is also used to spread white supremacist ideas. White supremacy on the Internet is decentralized, but social networks do link like-minded groups and individuals together. Other scholars have focused on right-wing populism's contribution to the rise of white supremacy. The GOP became increasingly populist in the latter half of the 20th century, but Patriot movements provided populist rhetoric on the ground by solely appealing to white farmers and ranchers that were far removed from the Federal center of the United States. Lastly, dog whistle language and racial figleaves have been, and continue to be used, by politicians seeking to express racial language without the possibility of being labeled a racist. This has proved to be especially important for Trump, who aside from often times using covert racial language, also often enough used overt racial language. It is this last argument that will prove most important to my thesis. However, even though these scholars agree that racial pandering has become a prominent feature in politics, there is not yet much research done on the contents of Trump's language. Thus, in the next chapter I will analyze Trump's rhetoric,

[63] Jennifer M. Saul, "Racial Figleaves, the Shifting Boundaries of the Permissible, and the Rise of Donald Trump," *Philosophical Topics* 45, no. 2 (2017): 109.
[64] Ibid.

which will prove to be important, because it will show that authority figures can have a direct influence on violent fringe groups, and in the case of Trump, mostly get away with it.

Chapter 3: Analysis

In this chapter, Trump's speeches, tweets, and other materials will be analyzed in order to determine whether there is a connection between him and white supremacist groups and individuals. Earlier in the thesis, it was already established that white supremacists tend to support Trump, but is it true the other way around as well? Historically, white supremacist activity goes down whenever a President occupies the White House that least somewhat shares their views, or when laws dictate what non-whites can or cannot do. Such was the case during the Jim Crow era. However, with Trump in the White House, white supremacist activity saw a significant surge. In 2020 right wing extremists were behind 90 percent of all attacks and plots, according to data compiled by CSIS.[65] Interestingly, more former military and police personnel have joined white supremacist causes.[66] According to the CSIS data, white supremacist violence has increased, rather than decreased during Trump's presidency.

At this time, a note must be made on Trump's use of language. His favorite means to communicate with the people was through Twitter. His tweets used simple language, and were generally unprofessional. Twitter specifically is defined by three main characteristics: impulsivity, simplicity, and incivility.[67] Trump's tweets follow this pattern a well. His lexicon is simple and limited, repetitively using words like "good" or "bad," and his tweets are overwhelmingly negative.[68] Listening to Trump speak, it is like

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[65] Seth G. Jones et al, "The Escalating Terrorism Problem in the United States," CSIS Briefs (2020), https://www.csis.org/analysis/escalating-terrorism-problem-united-states.
[66] Ibid. 4.
[67] Brian L. Ott, "The Age of Twitter: Donald J. Trump and the politics of debasement," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 34, no. 1 (2017): http://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2016.1266686. 60.
[68] Ibid. 64.

he follows the same pattern. His lexicon remains simple, using words like "stupid" more than any other President before him.[69] Additionally, his language use is pessimistic, and he sees "stupid people" everywhere.[70] Trump's use of language has changed political discourse. His way of tweeting and speaking have taught people to see others as less-than human and they inspire hatred and violence.[71]

Using analytical content analysis, Trump's language will be analyzed to determine whether he established a connection between him and white supremacists, and thus encouraged them. The Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Black Lives Matter protests, and the surge on the Capitol will form the basis of the analysis. The source material will range from transcripts between January 2017, and January 2021. This chapter is divided into three sections; one for each incident. In each section the incident will be briefly explained, and followed by an analysis of Trump's words regarding the incident.

4.1: The Charlottesville Rally

The Unite the Right Rally took place in Charlottesville, Virginia, on August 12, 2017. It was organized by self-described "pro-white" activist Jason Kessler, as a response to the planned removal of a statue of confederate general Robert E. Lee.[72] Many white supremacists joined Kessler in descending upon Charlottesville's streets. "White

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[69] Jeremy B. Merrill, "How Donald Trump Talks," *New York Times* (2015): https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/12/05/us/politics/donald-trump-talk.html?_r=1.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Brian L. Ott, "The Age of Twitter: Donald J. Trump and the politics of debasement," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 34, no. 1 (2017): http://doi.org/10.1080/15295036.2016.1266686. 64.
[72] Dara Lind, "Unite the Right, the violent white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, exaplained, *Vox,* August 14, 2017, https://www.vox.com/2017/8/12/16138246/ charlottesville-nazi-rally-right-uva.

supremacist" is used as an umbrella term here; the people who attended were affiliated with neo-Nazi groups, and the KKK.[73] Additionally, Kessler himself was a newly sworn in member of the pro-Trump group "Proud Boys." The Proud Boys have achieved status of notoriety over the past 5 years. The group was founded during the 2016 presidential election, and even though they deny any connection to white supremacy, members repeatedly spout white supremacist memes and maintain affiliations with other known white supremacist groups.[74]

Even though the threat of violence was in Charlottesville long before the rally actually happened, the American Civil Liberties Union defended the rally-goers' rights. Nevertheless, clashes with counter-protestors occurred mere minutes after the rally started, and the police disbanded it.[75] That did not stop the rally-goers from proceeding with their march, and ultimately a reported Nazi-sympathizer drove his vehicle into a crowd of counter-protestors killing one and injuring 19 others.[76] The Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville was unique in that it was a bold display of white supremacy the likes of which had not been seen in the United States for quite some time.

The Unite the Right rally enjoyed an immense amount of media attention, and required a presidential response. Many news headlines from that time condemned what Trump said regarding the incident, and many others claimed his remarks were taken out of context. Regardless, there is much to unpack, and the analysis that follows will show how Trump's words regarding the event resonated with white supremacist supporters.

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[73] Dara Lind, "Unite the Right, the violent white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, exaplained, *Vox,* August 14, 2017, https://www.vox.com/2017/8/12/16138246/ charlottesville-nazi-rally-right-uva.
[74] "Proud Boys," Southern Poverty Law Center, accessed May 3, 2021. https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys.
[75] "Proud Boys," Southern Poverty Law Center, accessed May 3, 2021. https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys.
[76] Ibid.

On August 15 Trump held a press conference on infrastructure in front of the Trump Tower in New York. The transcript from the event opens with Trump's remarks about the state of the infrastructure in the United States, but the second reporter to ask a question asks Trump why he waited so long to denounce neo-Nazis.[77] Trump claimed he did not wait long, and then said the following:

> As I said on remember this, Saturday, we condemn in the strongest possible terms this egregious display of hatred, bigotry and violence. It has no place in America.[78]

Trump evidently did condemn the violence and hatred that took place, but continued to give vague answers to the reporters. Trump often uses a rhetoric technique called "whataboutism," which is a particular way of avoiding answering a critical question by shifting the focus to someone, or something that has arguably done worse. The technique was used in the USSR, and is still used by Russian President Vladimir Putin today.[79] Whataboutism is an important technique used by populist leaders, who want to keep their supporters on their side. Getting too specific on a certain policy or position risks alienating some of those supporters.[80] Additionally, whataboutism erases moral nuances and one is either "good" or "bad." However, since no one can be one hundred percent "good," whataboutism gives people a license to do all sorts of imperfect things.[81]

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[77] "Full text: Trump's comments on white supremacists, 'alt-left' in Charlottesville," *Politico* (New York, August 17, 2017): https://www.politico.com/story/2017/08/15/full-text-trump-comments-white-supremacists-alt-left-transcript-241662.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Danielle Kurtzleben, "Trump Embraces one of Russia's Favorite Propaganda Tactics - Whataboutism, *NPR* (2017): https://www.npr.org/2017/03/17/520435073/trump-embraces-one-of-russias-favorite-propaganda-tactics-whataboutism?t=1620220509938.
[80] Danielle Kurtzleben, "Trump Embraces one of Russia's Favorite Propaganda Tactics - Whataboutism, *NPR* (2017): https://www.npr.org/2017/03/17/520435073/trump-embraces-one-of-russias-favorite-propaganda-tactics-whataboutism?t=1620220509938.
[81] Ibid.

The following examples from Trump's remarks in New York will show how he uses whataboutism tactics to avoid answering whether he believes participants in the Unite the Right rally were white supremacists or not.

> …what about the alt-left that came charging at [indiscernible] – excuse me – what about the alt-left that came charging at the, as you say, the alt right? Do they have any semblance of guilt? … What about the fact that they came charging – they came charging with clubs in their hands swinging clubs?[82]

The reporters continue to ask Trump about what they deem neo-Nazis at the rally, and Trump continues to be evasive. This is when he makes the remark that would dominate the headlines for weeks. One of the reporters states that the neo-Nazis started the rally by showing up in Charlottesville, upon which Trump remarks:

> They didn't put themselves down as neo-Nazis, and you had some very bad people in that group. But you also had people that were very fine people on both sides.[83]

Trump manages to accomplish two things in this very short passage. He first asserts that the protestors in the Unite the Right rally did not call themselves neo-Nazis, but rather that that was what they were named by everyone else. Second, by asserting that there were good people on both sides, he takes blame away from the instigators. Most importantly, during this Q and A session he never specifically says that he thought there were white supremacists present at the rally.

As mentioned before, the protesters on the Unite the Right side were in Charlottesville to protest the removal of the statue of Confederate general Robert E. Lee,

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[82] Donald J. Trump "Q&A about Infrastructure in New York City" (New York, August 17, 2017), in *Politico,* https://www.politico.com/story/2017/08/15/full-text-trump-comments-white-supremacists-alt-left-transcript-241662.
[83] Ibid.

and the subsequent renaming of the park in which it stands. Trump acknowledged that the statue was very important to this group, and continued using whataboutism by saying the following:

> …George Washington was a slave owner. Was George Washington a slave owner? So will George Washington now lose his status? Are we going to take down – excuse me. Are we going to take down, are we going to take down statues to George Washington? How about Thomas Jefferson ? What do you think of Thomas Jefferson? You like him? Okay, good. Are we going to take down his statue? He was a major slave owner. Are we going to take down his statue?[84]

In this passage, he minimizes the crimes of Robert E. Lee by reminding the reporters present that many of the founding fathers were slaveholders, and thus not innocent either. Whataboutism works to appeal to non-supporters as well. At first glance, shifting the blame widens the context of the issue, offers a counterpoint, and can be seen as thought provoking. However, in the end it is just a rhetorical technique that serves nothing but to confuse rational listeners.[85] Two days after the remark, Trump posted a series of tweets regarding the removal of Robert E. Lee's statue in Charlottesville:

> Sad to see the history and culture of our great country being ripped apart with the removal of our beautiful statues and monuments. You can't change history, but you can learn from it. Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson – who's next? Washington, Jefferson? So foolish! Also the beauty that is being taken out of our cities, towns and parks will be greatly missed and never able to be comparably replaced![86]

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[84] Donald J. Trump "Q&A about Infrastructure in New York City" (New York, August 17, 2017), in *Politico,* https://www.politico.com/story/2017/08/15/full-text-trump-comments-white-supremacists-alt-left-transcript-241662.

[85] Dan Zak, "Whataboutism: The Cold War tactic, thawed by Putin, is brandished by Donald Trump, *The Washington Post* (2017): https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/whataboutism-what-about-it/2017/08/17/4d05ed36-82b4-11e7-b359-15a3617c767b_story.html.

[86] Donald J. Trump (@realdonaldtrump), Twitter, August 17, 2017, retrieved from: Trump Twitter Archive, https://www.thetrumparchive.com/. Henceforth: TTA.

Speaking positively about America's Confederate history can be construed as a dog whistle, as it is related to the "heritage" dog whistle. It will appeal to those who already think that this part of history is being erased, and Trump's remarks indeed found a home with white supremacists and other individuals associated with right-wing groups, of which several prominent members have spoken out about Charlottesville and Trump's words. Matthew Heimbach, chairman of the Traditionalist Worker Party, had the following to say regarding Trump's remarks about taking down the statue of Robert E. Lee: "I think he's speaking to the fact that a nation should respect its heritage, its identity, its heroes, and we shouldn't engage in anti-white multicultural political correctness.[87]

One last detail from August 15's press conference can be pointed out. Twice Trump said that the counter-protestors did not have a permit, in contrast to the white supremacists that did. By emphasizing this, he is saying that it does not matter how violent or racist the attendees of the Unite the Right rally were, what matters is that they were there legally, and the counter-protestors were not. This can be seen as a weak dog whistle that is part of a much larger dog whistle: "law and order." In the next section about the Black Lives Matter protests, law and order rhetoric will be central.

4.2: Black Lives Matter Protests

Unlike the Unite the Right rally, the Black Lives Matter protests were not a single event, but rather a multitude of events throughout the summer of 2020. It was not the first time that such protests were organized, but the scope of those of the past summer

[87] Hunter Walker, "White supremacists cheer Trump's evolving response to Charlottesville," *Yahoo News* (2017).

surpassed any organized before. The Black Lives Matter organization can be traced back to 2013, after black teen Trayvon Martin was shot dead by a white policeman.[88] His shooter's acquittal sparked outrage across the country, but also set in motion the start of what would become a global phenomenon.

The Black Lives Matter protests of 2020 were sparked by the arrest and subsequent murder of George Floyd; African American native to Minneapolis, Minnesota. On May 25 police arrived outside a convenience store after Floyd used a counterfeit 20-dollar bill to pay for his cigarettes. Seventeen minutes later he was pinned on the ground and unconscious.[89] Eventually, he died of suffocation. The officers at the scene violated multiple policies of the Minneapolis police, and were subsequently fired.[90] The protests that followed were not limited to Minneapolis, but swept through the entire United States, and eventually the globe. Between the day of Floyd's death and August 2020, there were almost 8000 protests in 2440 locations across all 50 states and Washington D.C.[91] 93 percent of all protests remained peaceful, however a recent poll suggested that 42 percent of respondents believe that protesters associated with Black Lives Matter are out for violence and destroying property.[92] One explanation for that is media framing, with disproportionate messaging on protests turned violent. Waning

[88] Aleem Maqbool, "Black Lives Matter: from social media post to global phenomenon," *BBB News* (2020): https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-53273381.
[89] Evan Hill et al., "How George Floyd was Killed in Police Custody," *New York Times* (2020): https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/george-floyd-investigation.html.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Roubadeh Kishi, Sam Jones, "Demonstrations and Political Violence in America," The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, September 2020, https://acleddata.com/2020/09/03/demonstrations-political-violence-in-america-new-data-for-summer-2020/.
[92] Ibid.

public support may also come from the Trump administration reinforcing its "law and order" rhetoric.[93]

On June 2, 2020, Trump held a press conference in the White House Rose Garden, where he promised to mobilize federal resources to stop the protests and restore order. In his speech he acknowledges that the death of Floyd was revolting, and that justice should be served. However, during the remainder of the speech Trump focused heavily on law and order, violent protestors, and the police. The following passage is an excerpt from this speech:

> He [George Floyd] will not have died in vain. But we cannot allow the righteous cries and peaceful protestors to be drowned out by an angry mob. The biggest victims of the rioting are peace-loving citizens in our poorest communities. And as their President, I will fight to keep them safe. I am your President of law and order, and an ally of all peaceful protestors. In recent days, our nation has been gripped by professional anarchists, violent mobs, arsonists, looters, criminals, rioters, Antifa, and others.[94]

One dog whistle can immediately be pointed out: Trump reminds attendees and viewers that he is their "President of law and order." He uses this dog whistle quite often. In fact, research has shown that during his presidential campaign alone, Trump used the words "law and order" 76 times.[95] President Nixon created this dog whistle in a specific historical moment. After slavery was abolished, former slaveholders noticed a loophole

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[93] Roubadeh Kishi, Sam Jones, "Demonstrations and Political Violence in America," The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, September 2020, https://acleddata.com/2020/09/03/demonstrations-political-violence-in-america-new-data-for-summer-2020/.

[94] Donald J. Trump, "Speech at Rose Garden Regarding Protests," (speech, Washington D.C., June 2, 2020), *ABC News,* https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/transcript-trump-mobilize-federal-resources-stop-violence-restore/story?id=71008802.

[95] Brian P. Tilley, "'I am the Law and Order Candidate:' A Content Analysis of Donald Trump's Race-Baiting Dog Whistles in the 2016 Presidential Campaign." *Psychology,* no. 11 (2020): DOI: 10.4236/psych.2020.1112123. 1957.

in the thirteenth amendment that would allow involuntary servitude as punishment for committed crimes.[96] Thus the Southern states created a criminal justice system built around the incarceration of blacks. Crimes that previously meant paying a fine, now amounted to jail time, and the system of convict leasing was born.[97] Essentially, it was slavery made legal again. When Nixon used the law and order dog whistle in the late 1960s, he put renewed power in in the false assumption the blacks commit more crimes.[98] In the time between Nixon and Trump's use of the term, the mass incarceration of African Americans took a huge toll, mitigating the achievements of the civil rights movement.

Law and order rhetoric appeared in Trump's tweets regarding the protests as well, as did putting the blame on violent leftists and Antifa. This is similar to his remarks about the Charlottesville rally: his words distract from the overall problem, which in this instance is police brutality. Trump's insistence that violent leftists are the instigators of riots, takes attention away from protests that are peaceful. During the days that followed Floyd's death, and the subsequent protests, Trump posted an abundance of tweets in which the "radical left" was mentioned negatively eight times.[99] On May 30, Trump tweeted out "It's ANTIFA and the radical left. Don't lay the blame on others!"[100] Shifting the blame takes a troubling turn considering that the Department of Homeland Security considers white supremacists a greater threat than Black Lives Matter or

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[96] Ian Haney Lopez, *Dog Whistle Politics,* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), E-Pub, 57.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid. 60.
[99] "Trump Twitter Archive," filtered on "radical left," accessed May 10, 2021. https://www.thetrumparchive.com/?dates=%5B%222020-05-25%22%2C%222020-09-
[100] Donald J. Trump (@realdonaldtrump), May 30, 2020, TTA.

Antifa.[101] White supremacists have participated in Black Lives Matter protests, but mainly to incite riots. According to Mia Bloom, the demographics of the protests turned violent fit the characteristics of the white supremacist sub-group called accelerationists, whose goal is to accelerate the end of society by encouraging political tensions.[102] Another tweet that is worth mentioning is the following:

> … These THUGS are dishonoring the memory of George Floyd, and I won't let that happen. Just spoke to Governor Tim Waltz and told him that the military is with him all the way. Any difficulty and we will assume control but, when the looting starts, the shooting starts. Thank you![103]

With this small passage, Trump justifies violence against protestors. Even if Trump's words did not directly reference white supremacist protestors, his words do provide an opportunity for them to capitalize on existing tensions. After Trump blamed Antifa for the rioting, white supremacist group Identity Evropa created a fake Antifa account on Twitter with which they attempted to incite violence, particularly in dominantly white neighborhoods.[104] This shows that white supremacists are very adapt at capitalizing on quickly changing situations by using freely available resources like social media. Additionally, many white supremacist groups and individuals realized that ongoing protests were spreading police forces thin, thus creating the perfect opportunity to stage a terror attack. One post on a neo-Nazi website hypothesized about how many synagogues

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[101] Myron B. Pitts, "DHS ID's White Supremacists, not Black Lives Matter or Antifa, as greatest threat," *The Fayettesville Observer* (2020): https://eu.fayobserver.com/story/opinion/columns/2020/09/12/dhs-ids-white-supremacists-not-blm-antifa-greatest-threat/3462713001/.
[102] Mia Bloom, "Far-Right Infiltrators and Agitators in George Floyd Protests: Indicators of White Supremacists," Just Security, last modified May 30, 2020. https://www.justsecurity.org/70497/far-right-infiltrators-and-agitators-in-george-floyd-protests-indicators-of-white-supremacists/.
[103] Donald J. Trump (@realdonaldtrump), May 29, 2020, TTA.
[104] David Gilbert, "White supremacist group Identity Evropa posed as Antifa on Twitter and called for looting and violence," *Vice* (2020): https://www.vice.com/en/article/m7jvq8/white-supremacist-group-identity-evropa-posed-as-antifa-on-twitter-and-called-for-looting-and-violence.

they could target while the police, firefighters, and paramedics were tied up in rioting cities.[105] Another account called for attacking critical infrastructure, because if the power were to go out in any of the affected cities, they would likely shatter.[106] The only time that Trump mentioned white supremacists in his tweets was when quoting Fox and Friends, who said:

> "I don't see any indication that there were any white supremacist groups mixing in. This is an ANTIFA organization. It seems that the first time we saw it in a major way was Occupy Wallstreet. It's the same mindset." @kilmade @foxandfriends TRUE![107]

Two main themes can be picked out regarding Trump's words on the Black Lives Matter protests. First, he heavily relies on law and order rhetoric to justify deploying the National Guard and even the military in order to regain control and reinstate peace. Second, his insistence that Antifa and radical leftists are the only ones inciting violence and riots clears the way for more nefarious actors like white supremacists to infiltrate the protests and incite violence themselves. They know that the former President will not blame them for the violence, because he is too focused on Antifa. Even though no major terrorist attacks were committed during the protests, it is clear that white supremacist groups hypothesized about it.

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[105] Ben Makuch, "Neo-Nazi Accelerationists Calling for Terror Attacks During Protests," *Vice* (2020): https://www.vice.com/en/article/5dzbv3/neo-nazi-accelerationists-calling-for-terror-attacks-during-social-unrest
[106] Ibid.
[107] Donald J. Trump (@realdonaldtrump), June 1, 2020, TTA.

4.3: The Surge on the Capitol

On January 6, 2021, thousands of people marched on the Capitol in Washington D.C. to protest what Trump called the massive election fraud that, according to him, took place after he was not reelected. Many voters had the opportunity to vote by mail due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and even though there were some isolated incidents with wrong and abandoned ballots, there is no evidence that this constituted fraud.[108] Nevertheless, many were convinced that Trump should secure the election, and subsequently a hash-tag was created on Election Day called "#StoptheSteal." A Facebook group by the same name was created as well, and it garnered nearly half a million likes and comments before Facebook removed it.[109] Many posts concerned conspiracy theories that thousands of deceased people had voted, and that the voting machines were programmed to switch votes for Trump to votes for Biden.[110] However, a number of posts called for civil war and revolution as well.[111] The surge on the Capitol was preceded by Trump supporters and counter protestors on November 8. While there were many mainstream conservatives present, there were also many members of far-right groups, including the Proud Boys, Patriot militias, and far-right promoters of conspiracy theories.[112]

January 6 began with Trump delivering a speech urging protestors to converge on the Capitol. Eventually the protestors were able to bypass the Capitol police, and gain

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[108] "US Election 2020: Do postal ballots lead to voting fraud?" *BBC News* (2020): https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-53353404.
[109] Shayan Sardarizadeh, Jessica Lussenhop, "The 65 days that led to chaos at the Capitol," *BBC News* (2021): https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55592332.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Shayan Sardarizadeh, Jessica Lussenhop, "The 65 days that led to chaos at the Capitol," *BBC News* (2021): https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55592332.

entry to the main building. Video footage showed protestors breaking through doors, attempting to find either congressmen and women, or anything else to hold against them. One protestor is heard saying: "there's got to be something we can use against these scumbags," while rifling through a stack of papers.[113] In the evening the sergeant-at-arms declared the Capitol secure, though many who were still inside continued to shelter.[114] Two days later, on January 8, Twitter began to purge its platform from the most prominent pro-Trump accounts, and eventually, permanently banned Trump himself from the platform "due to the risk of further incitement of violence.[115] The purpose of the section that follows is to analyze Trump's words from that day; both before and after the surge took place, and the two days leading up to his Twitter ban. The analysis will show that Trump used overt and covert language to simultaneously encourage his supporters by sympathizing with them, and discourage his supporters from further violence. In that way, Trump's words are more akin to his words regarding the Charlottesville rally than the Black Lives Matter protests. At the same time, this shows that Trump alters his rhetoric based on who he believes are the perpetrators of violence. With Charlottesville and the Capitol surge, he remains mostly positive and sympathetic. However, regarding the Black Lives Matter protests, he became increasingly negative and called for harsh action against violent protestors, who he believed were Antifa and radical leftists. Additionally, the surge on the Capitol perfectly shows how an authority figure can incite violence merely by using words.

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[113] "Capitol Riots Timeline: The evidence presented against Trump," *BBC News* (2021): https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-56004916.
[114] Emily Cochrane, Neil Vigdor, "Sergeant-at-arms declares the Capitol cleared of a raging mob," *New York Times* (2021): https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/01/06/us/washington-dc-protests#sergeant-at-arms-declares-the-capitol-cleared-of-a-rampaging-mob.
[115] Shayan Sardarizadeh, Jessica Lussenhop, "The 65 days that led to chaos at the Capitol," *BBC News* (2021): https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-55592332.

Trump spent the months leading up to the election on November 3 convincing his supporters of an easy victory, but as mentioned before, when he did not win he spent weeks attempting to overturn the results. His speech on January 6, which has been dubbed the "save America speech" (which is a dog whistle in itself), has been scrutinized by Congress seeking to prove Trump's influence on the Capitol surge, and by lawyers defending Trump. The first notable passage from the speech is said quite early on:

> Hundreds of thousands of American patriots are committed to the honesty of our elections and the integrity of our glorious republic. All of us here today do not want to see our election victory stolen by emboldened radical left Democrats, which is what they're doing and stolen by the fake news media. …We will never give up. We will never concede, it doesn't happen. You don't concede when there's theft involved. …To use a favorite term that all of you people really came up with, we will stop the steal.[116]

Innocent as it seems, the word "patriot" may be construed as a dog whistle in context with Donald Trump. For Trump, patriots are his supporters, and everyone else (e.g. democrats and leftists) are not patriots and thus bad for the United States. Like mentioned in chapter 2, the Patriot Movement is a collective term for anti-government extremist movements that have some overlap with white supremacists. Mainly though, they share a conviction that the mainstream government has been infiltrated and is no longer legitimate.[117] Anyone who can be considered part of the Patriot Movement has a distorted relationship with authority – their extreme skepticism turns into extreme gullibility when conspiracy theories confirm the narrative they want to believe.[118] In the context of

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[116] Donald J. Trump, "Save America rally," (speech, Washington D.C., January 6, 2021), in REV, https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/donald-trump-speech-save-america-rally-transcript-january-6.
[117] "Patriot Movement," Anti Defamation League, Accessed 12 May, 2021. https://www.adl.org/resources/glossary-terms/patriot-movement.
[118] David Neiwert, *Alt-America: the rise of the radical right,* (London: Verso, 2017), E-Pub. 41.

Donald Trump this means that with the passage above Trump confirms Patriots' fear that the established government is illegitimate, and thus he is their only legitimate authority figure.[119]

As mentioned before, the stop the steal hash-tag was created on social media to fight against election fraud, but it was also used to spread false conspiracy theories. Trump adopting the phrase signals that all allegations made using that hash-tag have merit. Trump continues his speech by emphasizing his belief that under President Biden, caravans of immigrants coming from Mexico and other Latin American countries will overrun the United States. Trump believes that illegal immigrants will tear the United States apart, and thus the following statement was made on January 6 to all people who wish to "defend" America from this prospect:

> … the caravans are forming again. They want to come in and rip off our country. Can't let it happen. As this enormous crowd shows, we have truth and justice on our side. We have a deep and enduring love for America in our heart. We love our country. We have overwhelming pride in this country, and we have it deep in our souls. Together we are determined to defend and preserve government of the people, by the people and for the people …And we fight. We fight like hell, and if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country anymore.[120]

Two elements of this passage can be pointed out, and they involve overt and covert messages. First, Trump's words regarding immigration overtly show his supporters that it is acceptable to assume that illegal immigrants are making the United States worse. As mentioned in chapter 1, many white supremacists are against diversifying society and are hostile toward non-white immigrants. Additionally, Trump uses a dog whistle that

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[119] David Neiwert, *Alt-America: the rise of the radical right,* (London: Verso, 2017), E-Pub. 41.
[120] Donald J. Trump, "Save America rally," (speech, Washington D.C., January 6, 2021), in REV, https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/donald-trump-speech-save-america-rally-transcript-january-6.

resonates with many white supremacists, namely the word "defend." In a white supremacist context, "defend" can mean many things: defending their family, their neighborhoods, and their way of life. This chivalric notion goes back again to early ideas of racism: being white was associated with being chivalrous, while being non-white was associated with criminality and lack of honor.[121] Dedicated white nationalists and Patriots genuinely think that they are the heroes needed to save the country from immigrants.[122] From this passage, it is not possible to prove that Trump used this dog whistle specifically to appeal to white supremacists, but plenty took up the cry regardless and stormed the Capitol. Trump did not march on the Capitol with his protestors, but did send out a couple of tweets when the surge started to become increasingly violent:

> I am asking for everyone at the U.S. Capitol to remain peaceful. No violence! Remember, WE are the Party of Law & Order – respect the law and our great men and women in blue. Thank you![123]

Again, Trump used the law & order rhetoric, this time to hopefully discourage his supporters from becoming violent. However, there is a clear contrast between how he used law and rhetoric here compared to during the Black Lives Matter protests. When it came to the surge on the Capitol, Trump politely asked protestors to remain peaceful. However, no such words have been uttered during the Black Lives Matter protests: Trump immediately attempted to crack down on the protests by wanting to deploy the National Guard. Trump said that he attempted to deploy the D.C. National Guard straight

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[121] Cord J. Whitaker, "The Secret Power of White Supremacy – And How Anti-Racist can Take it Back, *Politico* (2020): https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/10/29/knighthood-white-supremacy-433569.
[122] David Neiwert, *Alt-America: the rise of the radical right,* (London: Verso, 2017), E-Pub. 327.
[123] Donald J. Trump (@realdonaldtrump), January 6, 2021, TTA.

on January 6 straight away, but this turned out to be false. Pentagon spokesmen have confirmed that they have not spoken with Trump about deploying the National Guard at all.[124] Moreover, former Acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller testified in Congress that Trump requested deployment of the National Guard to do whatever necessary to protect the protestors exercising their right to protest.[125] This request was denied. Just after six p.m. Trump tweeted out the following regarding the surge:

> These are the things and events that happen when a sacred landslide victory is so unceremoniously and viciously stripped away from great patriots who have been badly & unfairly treated for so long. Go home with love & in peace. Remember this day forever![126]

What is notable in this passage is that Trump taps into white victimhood. This is not out of the ordinary for Trump, as he employed the same method during the Charlottesville rally, when he alleged that the history of the United States is being erased. Either way, tapping into it now confirms for many white supremacists that they genuinely are victims. Indeed, this is shown in the following two passages, which were posted on Parler and the Oath Keepers website after the surge had taken place:

> If America falls so does the world. If America falls darkness will soon follow. This is not about politics. This is about preserving our way of life and protecting the generations that follow. We are living in Biblical times. Children of light vs. children of darkness. United against the Invisible Enemy of all humanity.[127]

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[124] Lauren Giella, "Fact Check: Did Trump call in the National Guard after rioters stormed the Capitol? *Newsweek* (2021): https://www.newsweek.com/fact-check-did-trump-call-national-guard-after-rioters-stormed-capitol-1560186.
[125] Jan Wolfe, "Trump wanted troops to protect his supporters at Jan. 6 rally," *Reuters* (2021): https://www.reuters.com/world/us/congresswoman-says-trump-administration-botched-capitol-riot-preparations-2021-05-12/.
[126] Donald J. Trump (@realdonaldtrump), January 6, 2021, TTA.
[127] Luke Munn, "More than a mob: Parler as preparatory media for the U.S. Capitol storming," *First Monday* 26, no.3 (2021): https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v26i3.11574.

> I believe the war has started. The only way we can get justice for ourselves and protect the Constitution is if we begin fighting back.[128]

By now Parler has been removed from app stores, but before the surge it was a useful tool for white supremacists. As mentioned before, it was created as an answer to Twitter, but with the added benefit of guaranteed free speech.[129] It became a haven of hate where Trump supporters mixed with white supremacist groups and individuals.[130] In anticipation of the January 6 rally, Parler served to mobilize groups, incite violence, and legitimize it.[131]

The surge on the Capitol has shown that Trump's words can, and will, resonate with white supremacist groups. During his speech on January 6 he confirmed many of their fears, and when Trump told them to "fight like hell," they took that quite literally and stormed the Capitol. The surge showed that authority figures can have great impact on extremist groups, and that inflammatory rhetoric encourages them to become increasingly violent.

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[128] "Extremists React to Pro-Trump Siege on Capitol," Anti Defamation League, January 7, 2021. https://www.adl.org/blog/extremists-react-to-pro-trump-siege-on-capitol.
[129] Luke Munn, "More than a mob: Parler as preparatory media for the U.S. Capitol storming," *First Monday* 26, no.3 (2021): https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v26i3.11574.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.

Conclusion

How did Trump affect the rise of white supremacy in the United States? Did Trump establish a connection between himself and white supremacist supporters? The analysis above suggests yes. It would be incredibly hard to prove that Trump is a white supremacist himself. Even though he has been overtly racist often enough, his use of dog whistle language serves to give him plausible deniability of being racist. However, Trump's inflammatory speech and use of dog whistles certainly sent the message to white supremacists that Trump is at least partially on their side. Thus Trump's rhetoric encouraged white supremacists to continue fighting for their goals. In this thesis, this has been shown based on three events: the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, the Black Lives Matter protests in the summer of 2020, and the surge on the Capitol on January 6, 2021. Trump's words were analyzed by drawing upon speech transcripts and tweets, in which overt and covert language were used. In all three events, white supremacists felt encouraged by Trump's language. During the Unite the Right rally, Trump alleged that white supremacists and counter-protestors were both to blame for the violence, and tapped into the idea that the United States' cultural history is being erased, thus giving merit to the idea of white victimhood. During the Black Lives Matter protests, Trump focused heavily on Antifa and violent leftists, which not only took attention away from the problem of police brutality, but also cleared the way for white supremacist groups to use Antifa as a cloaking mechanism to incite violence. The surge on the Capitol further proved that Trump's words have an effect on white supremacists looking for violence. That is not to claim that all persons in attendance on January 6 were white supremacists,

but the surge itself strongly suggests that Trump's words "fight like hell" were interpreted by white supremacists as to mean "preserve the country through whatever means necessary."

Now that Trump is no longer President, some white supremacist groups seem to have disbanded. While that may seem like a positive development, it does raise concerns about lone extremists.[132] Additionally, deplatforming extremists on social media platforms like Twitter has the potential for dangerous consequences. White supremacists will regroup in smaller online spaces, as they have done so since the 1990s, thus making them harder to track.[133] That is not to say that with Trump leaving the Oval Office, open displays of white supremacy have gone away. On the contrary, Trump's "America first" rhetoric remains popular within the GOP. At the end of April 2021, reports were made of a new faction in Congress that wants to continue Trump's agenda. A seven-page document was released as well, in which the authors called for respect for the United States' Anglo-Saxon traditions and its European architecture.[134] Civil rights advocates are concerned that the subtle white supremacist language in the document signifies the growing clout of extremism in the GOP.[135] Thus Trump's rhetoric not only had an effect on white supremacist groups and individuals outside of government, they also encouraged people to enter government and continue his legacy. Trump's rhetoric has had dangerous consequences for society, and for government. His words not only have the capability to incite violence in extremist groups, they also show people that

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[132] Callum Borchers and Allison Hagan, "2 Months after Capitol riot: what's happening with extremist groups?" *WBUR* (2021): https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2021/03/04/extremist-groups-capitol-riot.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Savannah Behrmann and Phillip M. Bailey, "'Normalization of Hate:' White nationalist language of America First caucus sets off new alarms of racism," *USA Today* (2021): https://eu.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/politics/2021/04/22/america-first-caucus-platform-sets-off-alarm-bells-racism/7261157002/.
[135] Ibid.

marginalizing minority groups through hateful language is acceptable in politics and society. I shall end this thesis with a quote by Andrew Anglin, founder of the neo-Nazi website the Daily Stormer, which he made after Trump's speech on the Unite the Right Rally: "He uses our talking points. … This man is doing absolutely everything in his power to back us up and we need to have his back."[136]

[136] Hunter, Walker, "White supremacists cheer Trump's evolving response to Charlottesville," *Yahoo News* (2017).

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