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## The Rise of White Supremacy in the Twenty-First Century

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THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN

THE RISE OF WHITE SUPREMACY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NATIONAL SECURITY

BY

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University of New Haven

West Haven, Connecticut

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**Signature Page**

**THE RISE OF WHITE SUPREMACY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Is there an increase in domestic terrorism cases in the United States, due to the rise of White Nationalism and Right-Wing Militias caused by major political events? Many believe that there has been an uptick in White Supremacist activity which is concerning for the state of our nation. After the Capitol Riots on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the actions and uncertainty surrounding the White Supremacists (i.e. Oath Keepers, QAnon, etc.)<sup>1</sup> are now on the national and international radar. To the naked eye, these individuals started to come out of the woodwork during the past four years of the Trump Administration. In reality, there has been a rise in White Supremacist, Nationalist, Christian Identity, Right-Wing Extremism, Alt-Americans, QANON conspiracists, Proud Boys, and many more for over two decades.

While the rise of this complicated group started in the Nineteen Nineties, certain events during the twentieth century caused increases in White Supremacist activity. Some of these events include the September 11th terrorist attacks, President Obama's 2008 Election and Presidency including his 2012 Re-Election, the 2016 election, and President Trump's Presidency. In the Twenty-First century, the use of social media and individuals' reliance on the twenty-four-hour media circuit has allowed people to transition from hiding who they are under the white hoods and robes to being able to hide behind a made-up username and the Internet binary, that is domains of anonymity.

This thesis will discuss the rise of White Supremacy<sup>2</sup> in the Twenty-First century, analyzing the recruitment process with the rise of incidents and practicing individuals. The thesis

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<sup>1</sup> (Diaz & Treisman, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> White Supremacy over White Nationalist is appropriate to use in this paper because it covers the broader variety of categories of individuals and incorporates White Nationalism itself.

question is, Does the rise of White Supremacy and radicalization of new White Supremacists correlate with major political events in the United States during the Twenty-First century? The secondary thesis question is, Is there an increase in domestic terrorism in the United States perpetrated by White Supremacists due to the rise of White Supremacy in the Nation?

Numerous informative articles, scholarly papers, and books on this topic or aspects of this particular topic exist. These publications range from the radicalization of White Supremacists to rise in the number of groups and domestic attacks credited to White Supremacists or groups. These sources are analyzed to test the thesis questions and provide further information regarding the topics. The next chapter is the Literature Review and will discuss sources used to support this paper.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

This paper will study the rise of White Supremacy in the Twenty-First Century. This Study is essential because it can help predict where threat trends will go in the future. It will also allow researchers to suggest policies that can prevent the rise of dangerous secondary outcome examples. Understanding how individuals are recruited and become radicalized toward White Supremacist ideologies can help counter this outcome and prevent other individuals from following suit. It is important to have an understanding of why individuals associate with White Supremacist groups and what causes people to contribute to domestic terrorist attacks in support of White Supremacist ideologies. This paper will focus on the theme that political events within the United States have aided the rise in the number of individuals who associate with White Supremacists and their extremist ideologies. It will also discuss the recruitment and radicalization process that allows individuals to become radicalized.

I will determine if the rise of White Supremacy and radicalization of new White Supremacists correlates with major political events in the United States in the Twenty-First Century. There have been many instances in the political realm within the United States of America that have helped individuals in their radicalization of the White Supremacist ideology process. This includes the September 11th terrorist attack, the election of President Obama, the 2008 recession, and the election of President Trump. In her book, *Hate in the Homeland: The New Global Far Right*, Cynthia Miller-Idriss, discusses the different causes of the rise of White Supremacy not only in the United States but in Europe as well. She details the modern recruitment process and the reliance on social media for groups and organizations in today's society (Miller-

Idriss, 2020). She discusses recruitment and the rise, and how the groups can stay relevant and profit from other individuals who have the same ideologies.

David Neiwert's book *Alt-America: The Rise of the Radical Right in the Age of Trump*, goes into more detail surrounding the particular rise of White Supremacists and the rise in relation to specific political events (Neiwert, 2018). Neiwert also provides information on the existence of Militias in the United States, and their popularity and growth within the Twenty-First century (Neiwert, 2018).

The Department of Homeland Security publishes a yearly report called the Homeland Threat Assessment. The Threat Assessment for 2020 indicates that “the primary threat inside the United States will stem from lone offenders and small cells of individuals including Domestic Violent Extremists (DVEs) and foreign terrorist inspired Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVEs)” (Department of Homeland Security , 2020). While DVEs and HVEs can cover a large variety of individuals and threats to the United States, the 2020 Threat Assessment also states, “Among DVEs, racially and ethnically motivated violent extremists-specifically White Supremacist Extremists (WSEs) will remain the most persistent and lethal threat in the Homeland.” (Department of Homeland Security , 2020, p. 18).

Many articles from online sources cover the rise of White Supremacy and discuss the number of individuals who identify with White Supremacist groups and work within Law Enforcement. (Speri, 2017). The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released Crime Statistics that show in 2019, seven thousand three hundred and thirteen hate crimes occurred in the United States (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2019). James Chase Sanchez, a professor at Middlebury College, and a film producer discusses recruitment into White Supremacist groups in “Trump, the KKK, and the Versatility of White Supremacy Rhetoric.” He discusses how the recruitment

process has changed in the 2000s and specifically explores the rise in membership after President Obama was elected to office (Sanchez, 2018).

While we can see that there is a significant rise in White Supremacy, accompanying it is a rise in not only hate crimes but domestic terror attacks as well. The cumulation of this has led to events such as the January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Capitol Riots. Over four hundred people were arrested for their participation in the 2021 Capitol Riots. Furthermore, at least fifty-six people were found to be affiliates of extremist groups such as the Proud Boys, Oath Keepers, Three Percenters, Texas Freedom Force, and QAnon (Hymes, McDonald, & Watson, 2021).

In 2021, Dr. Robert A. Pape and the Chicago Project on Security and Threats presented “Understanding American Domestic Terrorism.” This presentation presents three different surveys that gathered information on the demographics of the individuals directly involved in the Capitol Riot (Pape, 2021). This study includes where the Insurrectionists and rioters came from, and their demographics. This also includes any group affiliations they may have and their socioeconomic information. In comparison, this presentation also compares Right-wing Extremist arrests before the insurrection to the January 6<sup>th</sup> arrests and how the demographics of the two groups differ (Pape, 2021).

The Capitol Riot is essential to note with the study on the rise of White Supremacy to better look at what can happen when action is not taken against the threat these groups and individuals present; author Cynthia Miller-Idriss also discusses this in her book, *Hate in the Homeland*. She explains that “situating deradicalization and prevention strategies within broader democracy and civil society building efforts helps ensure extremism remains marginalized and makes clear that we all have a role to play” (Miller-Idriss, 2020). In this paper, the January 6<sup>th</sup> attack, the cause of and the rise of White Supremacy recruitment member radicalization, and the roles that it plays in

advancement are all discussed. Data used to show the rise of White Supremacy is taken from terrorism databases such as the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) which is in association with the University of Maryland (START- University of Maryland, 2019), and Dr. Robert A. Pape's presentation *Understanding American Domestic Terrorism*.

## Chapter 3

### Introducing White Supremacy in the United States

White Supremacy is defined as “beliefs and ideas purporting natural superiority of the lighter-skinned, or ‘White’ human races over other racial groups” (Jenkins, 2021). John Philip Jenkins, a History Professor at Baylor University, also defines White Supremacy as containing “groups espousing ultranationalist, racist, or fascist doctrines” (Jenkins, 2021). White Supremacy can be thought of as an umbrella term. Many terms have the same general meaning, but they are just slightly different. For this paper, ‘White Supremacy’ will be used as the overarching term to cover all other related terms.

White Supremacists focus on race superiority, while White Nationalists focus on creating a nation for only White individuals (Perlman, 2017). The term White Supremacy and the adjective White Supremacist both are the most appropriate term for the sake of the paper because of its ability to cover the broader realm of beliefs better than White Nationalist can. In this paper, if a source is to utilize another term or subcategory of White Supremacy, it will be used over White Supremacy for the sake of the source, otherwise, White Supremacy will be the colloquial term used throughout the paper. This chapter will define the different terms that can be found under the umbrella of White Supremacy, as well as define the different groups these individuals are associated with.

#### **Alternative Right:**

‘Alternative Right’ or ‘Alt-Right’ is a branch of the White Supremacist movement that includes some Far-Right ideologies. This term also encompasses specific individuals and groups whose beliefs support the idea that “White identity is under attack” by political correctness and



the social justice movement. The Alt-Right continues to push their belief that political correctness is attempting to “undermine white people and their civilization” (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.). In 2008, White Supremacist Richard Spencer, the head of the National Policy Institute, originated the term ‘Alt-Right’. Spencer describes the term to cover ideals around both “White Identity and the preservation of Western Civilization” (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.).

Similar to White Supremacy, the ‘Alt-Right’ movement focuses on White Identity, and these individuals base their beliefs and actions around race. While building their own identity they use the Internet to push their beliefs and personal agenda. When focusing on race, the Alt-Right adopts more general hate perspectives toward more minorities and Muslims, women, or others who oppose their alternative beliefs (Dafaure, 2020). The Alt-Right can be found utilizing and often re-purposing popular photos and sayings to express their message. They use groupthink to continue the recruitment and retainment of followers. The Alt-Right fully supported President Trump during his time in office, showing their support for him in various memes<sup>3</sup> (Dafaure, 2020). They often express support for questionable conspiracy theories claiming that due to cultural Marxism, the Western civilization is declining, and it is all because of political and ideological opponents pushing their own beliefs on western society (Dafaure, 2020).

### **Extreme, Radical, and Far-Right:**

Extreme Right, Radical Right, and Far-Right can all often be synonymous, although some minimal differences exist between Extreme Right and Far-Right. All three of these terms can be used to describe the political aspect of an individual’s racial beliefs and social and religious beliefs.

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<sup>3</sup> “A cultural item in the form of an image, video, phrase, etc., that is spread via the Internet and often altered in a creative or humorous way” (Dictionary.com, 2021).

Extreme, Radical, and Far-Right can also be used as an overarching term as it is often broken into two categories.

[First] In one sphere is the White Supremacist movement, including its various sub-movements, such as neo-Nazis, racist skinheads, and the Alt-Right, among others.

[And] In the other sphere are anti-government extremist movements such as the militia movement and sovereign citizens (Anti-Defamation League, n.d.).

Unlike the Alt-Right and White Supremacy; Extreme, Radical, and Far-Right contribute politically to the terminology while also introducing antigovernment groups. While Extreme, Radical, and Far-Right can be found residing within the same terminology there are some differences among them.

Between Extreme Right and Far-Right, the differences are the individual level of conservatism which is preferred by those who identify with the term (Anti-Defamation League, n.d.). It gets broken down by the personal preference of individuals declaring themselves to belong to Extreme Right, Radical Right, or Far-Right groups. Cynthia Miller-Idriss describes the Far-Right to include “Anti-government and Anti-Democratic practices, exclusionary beliefs, existential threats, and conspiracies, and apocalyptic fantasies” (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 5). The anti-government and anti-democratic values of the Far-Right are what make it stand out from the other terms. This has nothing to do with any specific race and the beliefs of these people, but more to do about the weaknesses of the government regardless of which political party has majority power.

### **White Nationalism:**

White Nationalism is often the second term adopted by White Supremacists. It focuses on the individual’s country first and foremost while also focusing on racial identity (Anti-Defamation

League, n.d.). The Southern Poverty Law Center defines White Nationalist groups as those that “espouse White Supremacist or White Separatist ideologies. [They] often [focus] in on the alleged inferiority of non-whites” (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2020). The White Nationalist movement focuses on societal demographics. Specifically, this movement focuses on preventing other nonwhite demographics from gaining a majority within the United States. “White Nationalists seek to return to an America that predates the implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965” (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2021). Their ideal America is white, and they will take action, including violence that is needed to ensure that return occurs.

### **Christian Identity:**

Many White Supremacists are followers of Christian Identity, the Church of Later-Day Saints, or Evangelical Christianity (Kamali, 2021, p. 43). Religion other than Western anchored Christianity goes against the core beliefs of White Supremacy. As a result, Muslims and Jewish people often find themselves as White Supremacist targets. In the Evangelical community, there is White Nationalist Evangelicalism which does offer “theological support to the idea of the uniqueness of White Identity as set apart from and above that of people not deemed to be white” (Kamali, 2021, p. 43). The Church of Later-Day Saints has denounced association and shared beliefs with White Supremacist Ammon Bundy (Kamali, 2021, p. 43). Although, the religion itself does hold that the United States Constitution is divine, as well as that [their] religion is a key part of holding the country to be pure (Kamali, 2021, p. 47). The followers of these religious groups that find themselves in the world of White Supremacy are often using their religion as a way of furthering their political goals. Christian Identity is an off branch of Christianity that has similar talking points and identifiers that allows White Supremacists to relate. Christian Identity provides

a religious backing to White Supremacist ideals, as well as allows them to find others within their religious community that has the same beliefs that they hold.

Preaching a message of White racial and cultural superiority while adjuring violence in support of ultimate, divine victory for the White race, Christian Identity's teachings of White genetic superiority, White cultural victimhood, and intolerance of people regarded as non-White, Queer people, and those who follow other religions have been exploited by many within White Nationalism to sanction violence (Kamali, 2021, p. 50).

### **Militias, White Nationalist Groups, and President Obama's Election:**

Individuals forming groups with like-minded people to support their beliefs is not a new concept. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) has been around since 1865. While they have taken many different forms in those years, the group that we know it to be rose during the 1950s (History.com, 2021). Since the 1860s there has been time for many different groups to form. Some groups are the general hate groups that do not take many actions, others are groups such as Militias that are always prepared for the worst-case scenario (Belew, 2018).

Militias are organized civilian groups some individuals in the group have a military background, others do not. These groups are considered to be civilian armies ready to take armed action when they feel necessary (Belew, 2018). Current Militias often have anti-government sentiments and began to form in significant numbers in the late 1980s. Militia groups, at this point, tried to distance themselves from White Supremacy, although, they often still associate themselves with White Supremacy organizations (Belew, 2018, p. 4). "Not all Militias are extremist, and not all extremist groups are militias. But sometimes the two overlap, and that is where you can end up with a dangerous combination" (Rogers, 2021).

Militia groups dissipated at the beginning of the twentieth century during George H.W. Bush's Administration. They resurged during the 2008 Election time due to the potential election

of the first Black American President. Politically, their correlation was the Republican creation of the Tea Party (Neiwert, 2018, p. 139). “The prospect of the first Black President sparked a sharp rise in Far-Right groups from so-called Patriot Movement adherents to anti-government Militias according to analysts at Department of Homeland Security (DHS)” (Bergengruen, Hennigan, & Zorthian, 2019). Militias are, supporters, and defenders of the U.S. Constitution, Second Amendment’s Right to Bear Arms (Neiwert, 2018). The Second Amendment states that “a well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed” (Gould, 2021).

White Supremacist groups use their beliefs to push a political agenda to support the White Identity they say is threatened by minority populations. There are hundreds of active White Supremacist groups and Militias in the United States. According to the Southern Poverty Law Centers data from 2020, there were over eight hundred active White Supremacist groups (Santucci, 2021). Described below are a few of the common groups within the United States that are active and responsible for hate crimes across the country. They all fall under the broad White Supremacist term heading or are anti-government Militias with racial inferiority or minority inferiority-hate based beliefs.

#### **Atomwaffen Division:**

Founded in Texas in 2015, Atomwaffen Division (AWD) is a Neo-Nazi Organization that forms terror cells and actively works toward civilizational collapse (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2021). Atomwaffen in German means nuclear weapon. The group takes a lot of notes from Nazi beliefs. A member of AWD in 2018 killed a college student who was gay and Jewish (Stanford CISAC, 2021). The Atomwaffen Division believes that creating the perfect White ethno-state creates an apocalyptic society to aid racial cleansing. “Such a purge is meant to lead to a national

socialist order replacing a world that ... is a dystopian, apocalyptic hellscape where only the enemies of the white race profit and flourish” (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2021). While AWD has its roots in Nazi Germany they were founded in Florida and operate as a decentralized group. Many Far-Right extremist groups in Europe have taken on AWD’s brand as a part of their group and become associates since 2018 (Stanford CISAC, 2021).

### **The Base:**

The Base is a neo-Nazi militia that formed in 2018. They “portray themselves as vigilante soldiers defending the European race, against a broken system that has been infected by Jewish values” (Anti-Defamation League, 2021). The group has Hitler-inspired ideologies and wants to use the polarization of political parties to their advantage in starting a race war in the United States. The founder of the Base, Norman Spear, tweeted in 2018, “We need to decide if we want to save the USA or save our Race – We can’t have both. We already have enough ‘red pill’d’<sup>4</sup> to accomplish the latter – It’s only a matter of getting enough of them on the same page with the solution to do so” (Anti-Defamation League, 2021). Members of The Base are ready to take action to assure a White European America, even if it means the destruction of the United States as we know it.

### **The Boogaloo Boys:**

The Boogaloo Movement comes out of the term ‘Boogaloo,’ which is code for the impending racial civil war. They aim to overthrow the current United States Government (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 143). “Some want an ultra-libertarian society, and others want a White ethno-state.

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Red pill’ is a slang term used to refer to seeing the truth of reality, particularly in terms of ideas that can be disillusioned. “Online, red pill is especially used among anti-feminist and white supremacist groups to refer to ‘waking up’ to the truth that women and liberal politics are oppressing men and white people” (Dictionary.com, 2021)

But, at their core, this is a violence-oriented movement that is advocating for armed insurrection against the state” (Miller, 2020). The movement started in 2019 and quickly gained speed on the Internet, using memes to convey specific messages and share their ideology. In 2020, their activities increased beyond the online and the cyber realm to the real world. The result was the Boogaloo Boys’ presence at various protests and rallies ranging from gun rights, and pandemic restrictions, to police killings (Anti-Defamation League, 2021). Individuals within the group can have individualized beliefs, including anti-racism and anti-police, but the corresponding common belief is a strong anti-government format.

### **The Council of Conservative Citizens:**

The Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC) is most notably responsible for the radicalization of Dylan Roof, who murdered nine African Americans during a Bible study in Charleston, South Carolina in 2015 (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 147). The CCC is a White Nationalist group from St. Louis, Missouri, and stems directly from the White Citizens Councils of the 1950s and 1960s (Anti-Defamation League, 2013). Dylan Roof discovered the CCC on the Internet when researching ‘Black on White Crime.’ The CCC focuses on non-white immigration, any attacks on the Confederate Flag, and anything regarding ‘traditional southern culture (Anti-Defamation League, 2013). The group is known to have many connections to politicians at all levels of the government (Neiwert, 2018, p. 227).

### **The Ku Klux Klan:**

Today, there are about twenty-four active Klans in the United States (CNN, 2021). The most notable White Supremacist group is the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). They have targeted Black Americans and Jewish individuals, non-European immigrants, and those who are a part of the

LGBTQ community. (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2021). The KKK was initially formed in Tennessee in 1865 by Nathan Bedford Forrest.

Since President Trump was elected, the KKK has seen a drastic increase in supporters and members. This was from the very beginning of his candidacy and through his election, President Trump and his rhetoric helped direct like-minded individuals, those who feel they had a place to go, by joining the KKK. A spokesperson for the KKK said just after Trump's election in November 2016, "Our membership grows by the day", he also expressed how President Trump's election was an indicator of what "America has become" (Mindock, 2016).

There have been fluctuations in membership over the years, however, currently, they are seeing a downward shift in numbers; this time due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and the inability to safely gather (CNN, 2021).

### **Oath Keepers:**

The Oath Keepers is a Militia formed in 2009 by Stewart Rhodes, a former U.S. Army paratrooper. The group considers itself a "defender of the rights of Americans from what it views as a tyrannical government" (Lucas, NPR, 2021). The Oath Keepers have approximately 5,000 active members throughout the country (Lucas, NPR, 2021). They are known recently for having members at the Capitol Riots on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Multiple Oath Keepers have pled guilty to participation in this failed insurrection attempt (The Department of Justice, 2021).

### **Patriot Front:**

The Patriot Front was formed in Vermont as a White Nationalist group. They formed in 2017 after the Charlottesville, 'Unite the Right' Rally. Initially, they were part of another group,



called Vanguard America (Syed, 2019). The Patriot Front’s manifesto describes their beliefs, hinting at their fear of Whites being attacked, this drives the majority of their actions.

From the varied nations and cultures of Europe, a new nation was forged in the flames of conquest. E Pluribus Unum was the new creed that bound our people together with their pan-European identity as Americans. To be an American is to be a descendant of conquerors, pioneers, visionaries, and explorers. This unique identity was given to us by our ancestors, and this national spirit remains firmly rooted in our blood (Syed, 2019).

### **Proud Boys:**

The Proud Boys are a Hate Group<sup>5</sup> founded in 2016. They regularly state that they have no connection to the Alt-Right scene. They state their focus is on “spreading an anti-political correctness and anti-white guilt agenda” (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2021). Proud Boys are often found at anti-Muslim demonstrations and were vocal in their support of President Trump’s Muslim Ban. Senior members were even at a ‘March Against Sharia’ rallies held by ACT! for America, an anti-Muslim hate group. The March Against Sharia occurred on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in over 28 different cities across the country (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2021). This supports their claim of being a general hate group, they stand in opposition to all groups that may not have the same beliefs as they do. “The Proud Boys have regularly stood in opposition to immigration, feminism, social justice movements such as Black Lives Matter (BLM), LGBTQ+ movements, and most notoriously anti-fascist mobilization” (Kriner & Lewis , 2021). Members of the group were arrested for their part in the Capitol Riots in January 2021. Due to this association, the Canadian Government designated the Proud Boys as a terrorist organization in February of 2021 not long after the group’s role in the January 6<sup>th</sup>, Insurrection. (Coletta, 2021).

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<sup>5</sup> “An organization or collection of individuals that – based on its official statements or principles ... has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics” (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2020).

## **QANON:**

QAnon is the basis of an Internet conspiracy group. The group consists of those who believe in QAnon and the remarkable, but debunked conspiracies that have grown out of the Internet and their following (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2021). QAnon got its name when they began posting to the Internet anonymously only using Q as their identifier. Q claims to be a person with access to top-secret information via their security clearance, and that they are privy to information on the ‘deep state’<sup>6</sup> and the illegal activities of politicians (Tully-McManus, 2020). The main claim of QAnon is that Washington D.C. Politicians and Hollywood Executives are all cooperating, running a pedophile ring, and are cannibals (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2021, p. 142). The 2020 Election even found two QAnon supporters as 2020 elected Congresswomen, Marjorie Taylor Greene from Georgia, and Lauren Boebert of Colorado (Tully-McManus, 2020). Many of the believers of QAnon are Extreme, Far, and Radical Right Extremists who were also found at the January 6th, 2021, Insurrection. They are strong believers that the 2020 Presidential Election was stolen from President Trump, and that he was the true winner. Q took to their platform to recruit individuals for “the Storm” which concluded with arrests of four hundred individuals after a mob of individuals stormed the Capitol Building hoping to stop the electoral vote count (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2021).

## **Wolverine Watchmen (WW):**

The Wolverine Watchmen is a Far-Right Extremist militia that in 2020 saw thirteen members arrested in the attempted kidnapping of Michigan’s Governor. Their actions were in response to Governor Whitmer’s declaration of a state of emergency, thereby locking down the

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<sup>6</sup> Deep State refers to “an alleged network of especially nonelected government officials and sometimes private entities operating extralegally to influence and enact government policy” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

state to combat the rising Covid-19 infection rates. The WW intended to create a new 'boogaloo.' While the group grew in strength during the Covid-19 pandemic, their ideologies are Second Amendment Rights and the literal interpretation of the U.S. Constitution (Sosa, 2020). In the past, they were not considered to be violent, this changed in 2020 with their opposition to Covid restrictions. Six Wolverine Watchmen members were charged with the attempted kidnapping, after entering the Michigan Capitol on April 30, 2020, (Macklin, 2021). "They decided they needed firearms and tactical training and homemade bombs to blow up police vehicles and two hundred men to storm the Capitol and take hostages" (Witsil, 2020). They are also known to support the Black Lives Matter movement when at protests, claiming their militia is for anyone who feels oppressed by the government (Macklin, 2021, p. 4).

## **Chapter 4**

### **Terrorism Changing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Terrorism is not, and will never be, a conceptually clean label ... Terrorists are complex actors that may simultaneously inhabit multiple identities – terrorist and drug trafficker, terrorist and freedom fighter, terrorist and revolutionary, Marxist and Nationalist- but at their core all groups ... have one thing in common: they are prepared to indiscriminately and violently target civilians for political gain (Parker & Sitter, 2016).

The FBI Director, Christopher Wray, in a 2020 House Judiciary Committee meeting said, Militant White Nationalists “collectively pose a steady threat of violence and economic harm to the United States.” (Kamali, 2021). He continued that, White Nationalists are “the primary source of ideologically motivated lethal incidents and violence in 2018 and 2019 (in the United States) and have been considered the most lethal of all domestic extremism movements since 2001” (Kamali, 2021, p. 8).

Directly after the September 11th, terrorist attacks, there was a focus shift on terrorism. As a society, the United States saw foreign and Islamic terrorism as the main priority. While the main focus domestically was on Islamic terrorism, domestic violent extremism at the hands of Homegrown White Supremacists was growing. In 2017, the U.S. Government Accountability Office reported on terrorism in fifteen years from September 12, 2001, to December 31, 2016. This study showed that in ten of those years, there were more attacks by right-wing violent extremists than by Islamist violent extremists (Kamali, 2021, p. 7). The shift in terrorism within the United States showed that the most violent extremists were Far-Right extremists from within the White Supremacists category. While the numerical shift was happening, Government agencies, the public, and the media paid little to no attention. The main priority was still Islamic terrorists and

groups such as al-Qaeda and later ISIS (Kamali, 2021, p. 7). While the government was focusing on foreign terrorist threats, the United States saw a steady rise in domestic Far-Right attacks.

The media played an important role in drawing attention away from the shift from foreign terrorism to domestic Far-Right extremist violence perpetrated by White Supremacists. The media and Terrorism have relied upon one another for a long time. “For journalists, terrorist violence [fulfills] core news values that help attract and secure larger audiences. For terrorists, news coverage provides a sense of legitimacy and the oxygen of publicity vital to their cause” (Ahmad, 2021). Terrorism brought another light for the media to be able to focus on and, due to the recent attacks and the new focus of the ‘War on Terror,’ in the early 2000’s the focus was on Muslim terrorists. “In America ... scholars have shown how terrorist attacks involving Muslim perpetrators tend to receive around 375% more attention than when the culprit is a non-Muslim” (Ahmad, 2021). Just as America was focused on Islamic terrorists, the reality is less than three percent of attacks and less than one percent of deaths by terrorism in western nations are religion-based. Instead, they are ethno-nationalist terrorist attacks (Ahmad, 2021). The news will always report what they view and will gain the most interest from viewers. While the Nation was focused on the ‘War on Terror’, the media utilized their attention to spotlight Islamic terrorist attacks. In reality, at this time, there was a consistently growing number of attacks perpetrated by White Supremacists as well as other types of terrorists.

### **Waves versus Strains theories:**

“The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism” by David Rapoport, a Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Los Angeles, discusses how modern terrorism, terrorism as we know it from the 1880s to 2020s, comes in waves of different types. The Anarchist wave

was the first of these waves, then came the Anticolonial, New Left, and finally Religious terrorism waves, Rapoport states these will last until approximately 2025 (Rapoport).

Rapoport concludes, that the waves of terrorism come and go, and promptly switch to the next form of terrorism after a period. The length of time for different waves varies; it is a matter of how long the groups run, once the wave is finished a new one begins.

1 <sup>st</sup> Anarchist Wave:	1878 -1914
2 <sup>nd</sup> Anticolonial Wave:	1914 -1955
3 <sup>rd</sup> New Left Wave:	1955 - 1979
4 <sup>th</sup> Religious Wave:	1979-current

Figure 1. (Rapoport).

**The Waves:**

The Anarchist wave started in Russia in 1878 and consisted of Citizens of multiple nations, revolting against their governments. The second wave, the Anticolonial wave, started at the end of World War I. Those countries that are considered unstable by themselves, were a part of colonialization and were determined to fight for their independence. The New Left or third wave was during the Vietnam War. In nations across the western world, groups of young individuals were fighting against their governments, similar to the first two waves. The final wave is the Religious wave. This came out of minority groups searching for religious freedoms, as well as religious groups, or individuals associated with religious groups, who began taking violent action in the name of their religion and the religious differences they found themselves facing (Rapoport).

**Rapoport's Flaw:**

One major flaw in Rapoport's article surrounds the wave's life and the overlap. Multiple groups, such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA), managed to survive and continue through multiple waves. The IRA, in particular, started during the second wave in 1919 and remains active today (Cowell-Meyers, n.d.). Arguments on the validity of Rapoport's theory are prominent, Rapoport explains this by stating, "when an organization transcends a wave, it reflects the new wave's influence" (Rapoport). He believes that the waves will not overlap or combine, instead of an organization such as the IRA is to continue from one wave to the next, then the organization itself will change to adapt to the new wave of terrorism. In the Waves Theory, there is a strict cut-off, unlike in other terrorism theories that exist.

### **The Strains Theory:**

"The Four Horsemen of Terrorism: It's Not Waves, It's Strains" by Tom Parker and Nick Sitter, author and former Policy Director for Terrorism, Counterterrorism and Human Rights at Amnesty International USA and a professor of Public Policy at the Central European University respectively, is a counter to the Waves and Strains article by Rapoport. Their understanding of how terrorist groups and the type of terrorism that is prevalent at one point in time is slightly different from Rapoport's. Rapoport believes that terrorism comes in waves, and the waves do not overlap. Tom Parker and Nick Sitter believe that the strains<sup>7</sup> are continuous and not set in stone the way they would be with the Waves. Parker and Sitter argue that "thinking about different types of terrorism as strains rather than waves better reflects both the empirical reality and the idea that terrorists learn from and emulate each other" (Parker & Sitter, 2016).

### **Strains vs Waves:**

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<sup>7</sup> Strains refers to how Parker and Sitter believe "terrorists learn from and emulate each other. Whereas the notion of waves suggests distinct iterations of terrorist violence" (Parker & Sitter, 2016).

The Strains Theory when compared to the Waves theory has many differences. Within the Waves Theory, if groups are unable to build support, then the current wave will disappear, and a new wave and type of terrorist movement will begin. Parker and Sitter believe that with Strains, “the concept of four strains fits the historical record better, and more plausibly explains how terrorism spreads and evolves from one conflict to the next” (Parker & Sitter, 2016). One main significance of the Strain Theory is, that Strains develop separately yet still can combine with other Strains. This is important because when domestic terrorism is being discussed, it has changed since 2001 after the September 11th, attacks compared to how domestic terrorism looks today. The Wave Theory argues that it is impossible for Islamic terrorism and White Supremacist terrorism could not exist at the same time. The Strain Theory as explained below disproves this. Multiple types of terrorism can exist at the same time because they evolve from one another.

The Four Strains are:

- Nationalist terrorism,
- Socialist terrorism,
- Religious terrorism,
- Social Exclusion terrorism.

In the Strains Theory White Supremacy can be found under Religious terrorism and Social Exclusion. As mentioned previously most White Supremacists also practice a form of Christianity and use their beliefs as the basis for their actions. This is especially true for those who identify with Christian Identity and the basis of that being the teachings of White Eugenics. Along that same line, White supremacists can be found espousing white victimhood, they are the victims because they are losing their majority population status (Kamali, 2021, p. 50).



Religious terrorism according to Parker and Sitter, has impacted other Strains before rising once again to become the religious extremists we know, such as al-Qaeda. This strain dates back to 1856 when abolitionist John Brown motivated by his faith attacked Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, in hopes to inspire more people to rise against American Slavery. The Islamic terrorists who society most consider when hearing Religious terrorists dates back to 1928, with the creation of the Muslim Brotherhood<sup>8</sup> (Parker & Sitter, 2016). Caroline Mala Corbin, a Law Professor at the University of Miami, writes about how society views terrorism. She lists two things most associated with terrorism in the United States. “The first is that ‘terrorists are always (brown) Muslims’ and the second, that ‘white people are never terrorists’” (Corbin, 2017, p. 456). The association with Muslims primarily as terrorists predates the September 11<sup>th</sup>, terrorist attacks, how Muslims have been portrayed through media in the U.S. is partially to blame for this situation (Corbin, 2017, p. 259).

“Social Exclusion describes a situation where not everyone has equal access to the opportunities and services that allow them to lead a decent, happy life” (Liberties EU, 2021). Social Exclusion Terrorism can be seen through the actions of organizations during and directly after the United States’ Civil War. “The racism that underpinned the institution of slavery, and thus inevitably the Confederate cause, gave rise to the Ku Klux Klan around which opposition and resistance to the Unionist reconstruction of the south coalesced” (Parker & Sitter, 2016). Social Exclusion terrorism is what society is seeing today, it exists once again due to the rise of White Supremacy. Social Exclusion directly counters the argument that terrorism comes in waves, it has existed in every century and decade where terrorism has existed.

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<sup>8</sup> Muslim Brotherhood is an Islamic group started in 1928 in Egypt and soon gained upwards of half a million members. They are still politically active in Egypt and surrounding countries, despite crackdowns from local governments (Britannica, 2021).

Social Exclusion is currently seen on two different tracks, the first track is focusing on individuals who are targeted by Social Exclusion. This is the case of minorities being refused their rights and access to opportunities that much of the population has access to. White Supremacists seek out chances to deprive minorities of their rights and single-handedly use Social Exclusion to do so. In addition to this are those who feel they are directly affected by social exclusion and become radicalized to commit terrorist activities to reclaim their societal standing (Renstrom, Back, & Knapton, 2020). White Supremacists may see themselves as victims of Social Exclusion, which is why they feel the need to take action against minorities. They believe that it is unjust for the white population to become the minority in the United States.

Social Exclusion started during the American Civil War and was going strong through the Civil Rights era, through to today. It was present in 1906 with a Russian anti-Semitic group called the Black Hundreds, and most notably in Germany during the 1920s with the Nazi party (Parker & Sitter, 2016). One of the main points of the Strain theory is that terrorist groups can learn, grow, and evolve from one another, in order to exist on multiple plains and throughout history. This can be directly seen within Social Exclusion and the Number of White Supremacists and Militia members are associate themselves with Neo-Nazis. They are mirroring themselves directly to the Nazi party and their approach to excluding the Jewish population, minorities, and many others from all aspects of society. The Neo-Nazis are looking to continue the acts that the Nazis had done in the 1940s.

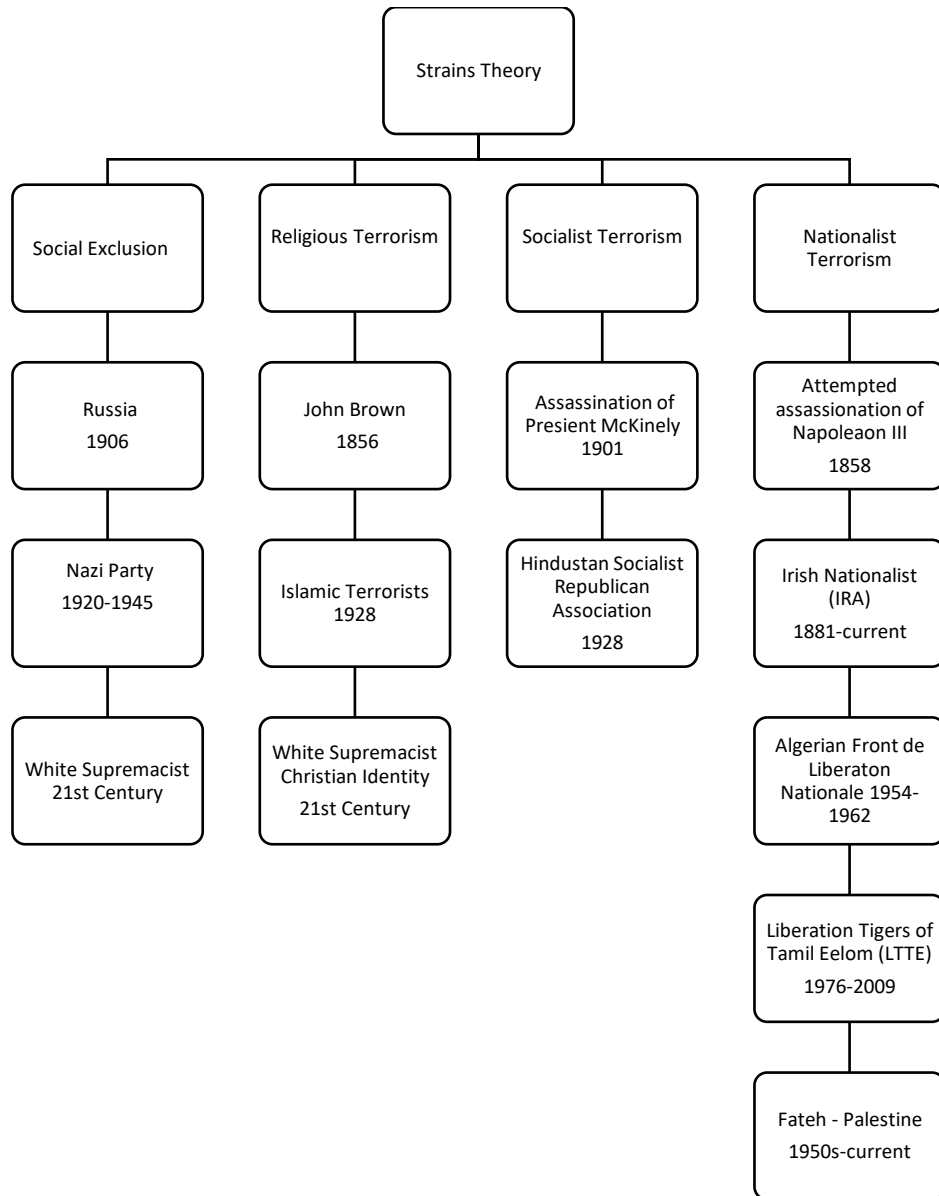


Figure 2. (Parker & Sitter, 2016).

**Domestic Terrorism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (the 2000s):**

As previously mentioned, terrorist attacks have been executed by White Supremacists and individuals who held Far-Right extremist beliefs throughout history. Groups have been partaking in terrorist activities since the early 1900s, to provide illumination and, to gain perspective focus on the attacks that have taken place in the last twenty years. The following terrorist attacks were

all before the September 11th, attacks and were implemented by White Supremacists or individuals who held Far-Right extremist beliefs.

### **Historic Snapshots of White Supremacist Domestic Terrorism:**

- In the summer of 1921 Tulsa, Oklahoma saw horrific riots at the hands of White Supremacists which may also have included U.S. Army members. In the neighborhood of Greenwood, also known as Black Wall Street<sup>9</sup>, a white mob including local police officers burned down over three thousand homes and killed over three hundred African Americans (White & The Editors, 2001).
- On September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1963, The Ku Klux Klan bombed the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church in Birmingham Alabama. The results were four young girls' death and fourteen others injured. The Civil Rights Movement in Birmingham, AL, saw multiple bombings of Black individuals, homes, and businesses made by White Supremacists (Parrott-Sheffer, 2021).
- On April 19, 1995, Timothy McVeigh, a former U.S. Army Soldier, Anti-Government Extremist, and White Supremacist sympathizer blew up the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. This explosion killed one-hundred and sixty-eight people, including nineteen children from the daycare housed inside the building (FBI , n.d.). To date, this is the worst case of homegrown domestic terrorism executed on U.S. soil.
- At the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, a pipe bomb explosion during a concert at Centennial Olympic Park, killed one and injured one hundred individuals. The bomber Eric Rudolph was caught in May 2003 and confessed to the bombing as well as other bombings at abortion clinics and an LGBT nightclub. In his confession, he stated that the

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<sup>9</sup> Black Wall Street refers to Tulsa Oklahoma's Greenwood District, "an affluent African-American community seen as a threat to white dominated American Capitalism" (Fain, 2017).

bomb was “to confound, anger and embarrass the Washington government in the eyes of the world for its abominable sanctioning of abortion on demand” (Waxman, 2016).

Despite this history, after the terrorist attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, there was a U.S. law enforcement, military, and intelligence community focused not on domestic terrorism but, instead, on foreign terrorism. President George Bush addressed a Joint Session of Congress and the Nation only nine days after the 9/11 attacks. “Our war on terror begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated” (Bush, 2001). President Bush sought to assure Congress and the Nation that action would be taken and that the United States would not bow to foreign terrorists. Once the first plane hit the north tower on September 11<sup>th</sup>, even the memory of domestic terrorism and domestic Far-Right Extremism was no longer the main threat, repeating the likes of Timothy McVeigh’s Oklahoma City Bombing (Neiwert, 2018, p. 229). Now, the focus of the government and the United States was on foreign terrorism and getting those who were responsible for the September 11<sup>th</sup>, attacks (Bush, 2001).

The aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup> saw the country come together to grieve while simultaneously growing the discourse and resentment turned outward to foreign elements, which allowed White Supremacy to thrive for the next twenty years. Rightfully angry after a major terrorist attack like September 11<sup>th</sup>, Americans began to take their anger out on innocent Muslims all around the country. Young people were being bullied for their religion and Arabic ethnicity; people were attacked on the streets for wearing hijab (Abdalla, 2021). “Suddenly, day-to-day life for American Muslims became a subject for broad public consumption, their faith was racialized, and all communities faced intense scrutiny from American society like never before” (Abdalla, 2021).

According to the Pew Research Center, “In a September 2001, survey, 28% of adults asked said they had grown more suspicious of people of Middle Eastern descent; that grew to 36% less than a year later” (Hartig & Doherty, 2021). The poll continues to discuss the increase and decrease of beliefs over the next few years stating how Republicans associating Islam with violence grows throughout these simultaneous years, and the number of Democrats supporting this belief declines. The increased response of associating Islam with violence helps aid the xenophobic beliefs of White Supremacists. This allowed for attention to be on the potential for danger from Muslims rather than those who are making Muslims the potential victims and those who are in danger.

In 2002, 32% of Republicans and 23% percent of Democrats believed that “Islam was more likely than other religions to encourage violence among its believers. About twice as many, 51% said it was not” (Hartig & Doherty, 2021). In 2021, the numbers have significantly grown for both Democrats and Republicans. Republicans believe this view at an astonishing 72% while Democrats believe it at 32%. Which is still a significant rise from where they were in 2002 (Hartig & Doherty, 2021). While these beliefs may be problematic, they do not show the rise of White Supremacy. However, those who are White Supremacists are likely to share these same opinions towards Muslims in general presenting cause for concern.

The rise of anti-Muslim sentiment in the aftermath of September 11th, has had a profound effect on the growing number of Muslims living in the United States. Surveys of U.S. Muslims from 2007-2017 found increasing shares saying they have personally experienced discrimination and received public expression of support (Hartig & Doherty, 2021).

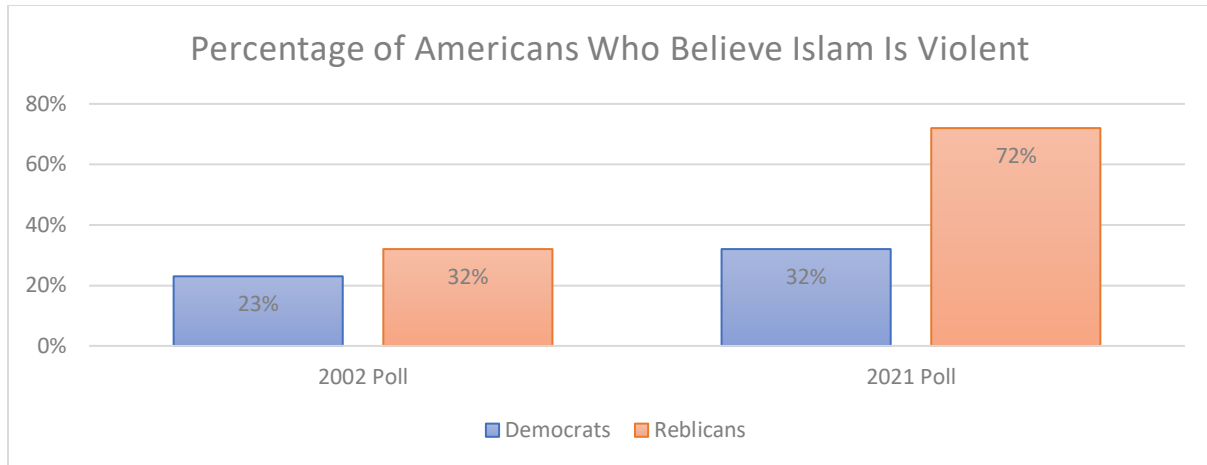


Figure 3. (Hartig & Doherty, 2021)

### **The Perpetrators of Attacks in the Homeland:**

*There have been more deaths on U.S. soil caused by White Supremacists since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, than there have been by Islamist fundamentalists.* The FBI and DHS state in their Strategic Intelligence Assessment from May 2021, that during 2017, 2018, and 2019 Domestic Violent Extremists (DVEs) in particular,

“lone offenders would continue to be the primary actor in these attacks, and would continue to pose significant mitigation challenges due to their capacity for independent radicalization and mobilization, and [a] preference for easily accessible weapons” (Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security, 2021, p. 5).

The Joint FBI and DHS Intelligence Assessment break down the prominent White Supremacist offenders:

- Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists (RMVEs),
- Anti-Government/Anti-Authority Violent Extremists (AGAAVEs),
- Animal Rights/Environmental Violent Extremists,

- Abortion-Related Violent Extremists, and All other Domestic Terrorism Threats (Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security, 2021, p. 5).

In 2017, there were five attacks perpetrated by DVEs and, of the five, four of them executed by RMVEs resulted in seven deaths. “RMVEs espousing the superiority of the white race conducted two attacks resulting in two deaths, and RMVEs who used racism or injustice in American society to justify their use of violence conducted the other two attacks resulting in five deaths” (Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security, 2021, p. 7).

In 2018, lone offenders were the cause of six deadly attacks which were fatal for seventeen individuals. Sixteen of the seventeen deaths were at the hands of RMVEs. The other one was conducted by a Sovereign Citizen Extremist, which is a subgroup of Anti-Government (Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security, 2021, p. 8).

The Assessment notes in 2019, that RMVEs who advocate for the superiority of the white race would yet again be the most lethal DVE threat to the United States. In 2019, there was also the most lethal DVE year in twenty-four years. Five attacks ended in thirty-two deaths, twenty-four of which were caused by White Supremacist RMVEs (Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Homeland Security, 2021, p. 8).

A data report from the U.S. Government Accountability Office, “Countering Violent Extremism,” contains statistics on DVE attacks between September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001, and December 21, 2016. This report states that in ten of the fifteen years of the study the attacks caused by Far-Right Wing Extremists were more than those caused by Radical Islamist Extremists (US Government Accountability Office, 2017). In three of the fifteen years, there was the same number of deaths by attacks from both groups. Eighty-five of these incidents ended in death. The Far-Right was to



blame for sixty-two incidents, while Islamist extremists were responsible for the other twenty-three (US Government Accountability Office, 2017).

Among these attacks include James Cummings, from Maine, who was killed trying to make a dirty bomb. He was a White Supremacist who revered Hitler and was disappointed by President Obama winning the Presidential election (Parker & Sitter, 2016). In 2003, investigators discovered a weapons collection that belonged to William Krar a 63-year-old White Supremacist. The collection included enough Sodium Cyanide to kill thousands of people (Parker & Sitter, 2016).

At the time of this writing, since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, there have been one-hundred and fourteen individuals killed by White Supremacists in over three dozen separate attacks. In contrast, one-hundred and seven people were killed in fourteen attacks by Islamic Radical Extremists (Walters & Chang, 2021). For some, the January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Capitol attack can be seen as a cumulation of the rise of White Supremacy and domestic terrorism over the past twenty years. FBI Director Christopher Wray stated after the January 6<sup>th</sup> insurrection, “The problem of domestic terrorism has been metastasizing across the country for a number of years” ... “White Supremacists comprise the biggest chunk of our domestic terrorism portfolio overall and have been responsible for the most lethal attacks over the last decade” (Walters & Chang, 2021).

Below is a graph showing the cumulative number of individuals killed by White Supremacists since the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks, compared to the number killed by Islamic Extremists in the same time.

## Since 9/11, the cumulative people killed by right-wing extremists is greater than those killed by Islamist extremists

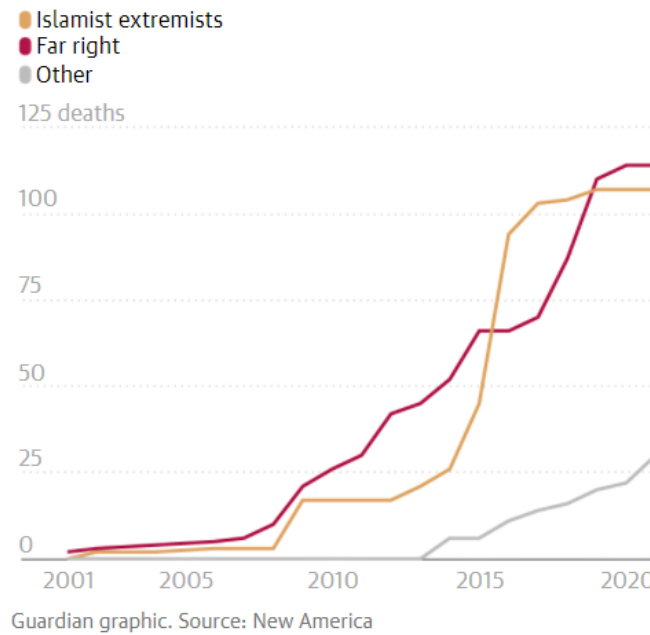


Figure 4. (Walters & Chang, 2021).

### White Supremacist attacks since September 11, 2001:

One of the first acts of terror by White Supremacists after September 11th, was on September 15<sup>th</sup>, when Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh, was shot outside of his gas station in Mesa Arizona (Elias, 2012). Additionally, in 2003 two Anti-Government extremists - sovereign citizens had a fourteen-hour standoff with Police Officers in Abbeville, South Carolina (Anti-Defamation League, 2003). Both Rita and Arthur Bixby had previously been part of a New Hampshire radical group called Constitutional Revivalists. Ultimately Rita and Arthur left the group because they found it was not radical enough for their liking (Anti-Defamation League, 2003). After surveyors for the State were threatened while on the property of Arthur and Rita Bixby, a Police Officer, Danny Wilson went to the house (Anti-Defamation League, 2003). Hours later he was seen via a police robots video camera, he was shot point-blank in the chest (Anti-Defamation League, 2003). Two more officers went to the scene to confront the Bixbys, and Officer Donnie Ouzts was then

shot in the back attempting to run away from the Sovereign Citizens. The violence was not limited to the main crime scene, Rita Bixby, who was not at the house, threatened to shoot people at a separate apartment complex location if anyone hurt her husband or her son.

After disabling police robots, starting grill fires, and starting another shootout with police officers, at ten o'clock that night Steven Bixby, Arthur, and Rita's son surrendered (Anti-Defamation League, 2003). Instances such as these were not isolated behavior earlier in 2003, there was another instance where Michigan State Trooper Kevin Marshall, was killed by Scott Alan Woodring, who belonged to a Michigan Militia and was also a Sovereign Citizen follower (Anti-Defamation League, 2003). Anti-Government and Sovereign Citizen actions such as these fall under our definition of White Supremacy established earlier; therefore, these actions support the shift of Right-Wing terrorism after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. Noting this was just the beginning of what would become a rise of White Supremacist attacks in the 2000s.

In 2008, in Knoxville, Tennessee, Jim David Adkisson walked into the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church fatally shooting two individuals and wounding six others (Dewan, 2008). The motivation behind this particular attack was Adkisson's hatred for the 'liberal movement' as well as liberals and those in the LGBT community overall. His four-page manifesto stated, "he hated the church's liberal politics and Democrats, whom he believed were responsible for his woes" (NBC News, 2009). Adkisson entered the church, posing as a musician, with a sawed-off shotgun in a guitar case. After the shooting began, multiple churchgoers wrestled his weapon away from him, preventing him from killing or injuring anyone else. His original plan was to continue his rampage until Police Officers killed him (NBC News, 2009).

Scott Roeder killed Dr. George Tiller for his role in providing women with late-term abortions. Roeder is an anti-abortion extremist who entered the Reformation Lutheran Church in

May of 2009 while Tiller was ushering and fatally shot him (Stumpe & Davey, 2009) (Adams, 2010). George Tiller was no rookie to anti-abortion harassment before his death, and anti-abortion extremists were not a new concept. President Obama commented on this event saying, “however profound our differences as Americans over difficult issues such as abortion, they cannot be resolved by heinous acts of violence” (Stumpe & Davey, 2009). Many anti-abortion extremists believed that the death of George Tiller was justifiable and saw his death as a signal to all other abortion providers. Individuals have taken to the use of violence to protest abortions based on their personal and religious beliefs. In 2015, there was also a mass shooting at Planned Parenthood in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Robert Lewis Dear Jr, went to the Planned Parenthood in Colorado Springs to start a war over the clinic’s abortion services. He went in with six rifles, five handguns, a shotgun, five hundred rounds of ammo, and propane tanks: he entered a five-hour standoff where multiple law enforcement officials were hurt, and one was killed (Department of Justice , 2019).

In 2011, during a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day parade in Spokane, Washington, there was a bombing attempt perpetrated by Kevin Harpham. Harpham created a homemade bomb intending to detonate it during the parade. Law enforcement was able to bring in the bomb squad and prevent the explosive from detonating when the parade passed that part of the route (FBI, 2012). “Harpham was [transgressing] against what he termed multiculturalism, but his hatred was firmly rooted in violent white supremacy. This was a prototypical hate crime” (FBI, 2012). Investigators, in this case, found that Harpham was posting White Supremacist propaganda and views on the Internet, and he was affiliated with the neo-Nazi group National Alliance (FBI, 2012).

In 2012, Wade Michael Page walked into a Sikh temple in Wisconsin and open fire, killing six people, and injuring several more. Page is believed to have become radicalized while serving with the U.S Army. While in the Army, he surrounded himself with White Supremacist activities

and even listened to music from the white power music scene (Elias, 2012). It is also thought that Page believed he was targeting Muslims, not Sikhs, given that he showed a dislike and distrust of them after the radical Islamists' role in the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. Page was associated with a violent skinhead group, Hammerskin Nation (Elias, 2012). This is more antidotal proof that the rise of White Supremacist attacks started following the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. Allowing for individuals to become radicalized, outwardly racist, and xenophobic around Muslims, or, in this case, individuals they believe to be Muslim, presents the unfortunate reality of many Muslims' having their lives put at risk. White Supremacists willing to act out in retaliation, will stop at no means to do so.

Dylann Roof committed one of the more prevalent White Supremacist attacks in 2015 when he murdered parishioners during a study in Charleston, South Carolina. Roof was radicalized on the Council of Conservative Citizens website while searching for data on Black on White Crime following the death of Trayvon Martin (Hersher, 2016). Dylann Roof entered the Bible study at the Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, during their final prayer, where he shot and killed nine individuals (Zapotosky, 2017). "Every bit of motivation came from things he saw on the Internet. That's it ... He is simply regurgitating, in whole paragraphs, slogans, facts -bits and pieces of facts that he downloaded from the Internet directly into his brain" (Hersher, 2016). After becoming indoctrinated and radicalized via the Internet, Roof spent months planning this attack. His roommate states, "he was big into segregation and other stuff. He said he wanted to start a civil war. He was going to do something like that then kill himself" (Mosendz, 2015). Roof was arrested the day after his attack and taken into questioning with the FBI, where he admitted his guilt. At his trial, he was found guilty and given the death penalty (The Associated Press, 2021).

Attacks by White Supremacists continued after Dylann Roof's attack. In 2017, the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, demonstrated the growth of White Supremacy and the ever-rising support within the United States. And now, they were also taking direct action. During this event, a rallygoer intentionally drove his car into the crowd of counter-protestors and killed one, injuring many others. White Supremacists of all kinds filled the streets surrounding Emancipation Park in Charlottesville next to the University of Virginia to protest the removal of the Robert E. Lee statue (Heim, 2017). Known Far-Right Nationalist Richard Spencer was speaking at this Rally. Organizers led a crowd of over two hundred white males marching through the campus grounds chanting racist and anti-Semitic sayings. The rally continued the next day with both sides still present (Heim, 2017). The Virginia Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran commented, "The militia showed up with long rifles, and we were concerned to have that in the mix, they seemed like they weren't there to cause trouble, but it was a concern to have rifles in that kind of environment" (Heim, 2017). Soon after the protestors and counter-protestors interacted, violence quickly broke out. Bottles and glass were being thrown as well as balloons filled with ink. Police Officers were not initially advised to act but were now told to get their riot gear; they soon shut down the assembly altogether given the unrest (Heim, 2017). This is when the rally took a violent turn. James Alex Fields Jr, who was a rallygoer, plowed his car into the crowd of counter-protestors killing Heather Heyer and injuring nineteen other people in the process (Heim, 2017).

In 2018, the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, unfortunately, found itself as the focal point of another White Supremacist attack. Robert Bowers entered the synagogue armed with an AR-15-style weapon and three handguns. He shouted anti-Semitic slurs and killed eleven people and wounded two more and four responding Police Officers (Robertson, Mele, &

Tavernise, 2018). According to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), this attack on members of the Jewish faith falls into the data backed by their Annual Report, “the number of reported anti-Semitic incidents in the United States surged 57 percent in 2017, the largest rise in a single year since the A.D.L began tracking such crimes in 1979” (Robertson, Mele, & Tavernise, 2018). Bowers regularly posted anti-Jewish slurs and conspiracy theories on his social media before deleting them ahead of his attack. He also belonged to the social network site Gab<sup>10</sup>, which was a commonplace for White Supremacists and Alt-Right activists of all kinds. Before his attack, he posted about a Jewish nonprofit called HIAS, which was planning a Shabbat ceremony for refugees. His response to this was, “HIAS likes to bring invaders in that kill our people. I can’t sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I’m going in” (Robertson, Mele, & Tavernise, 2018).

In 2019, Patrick Crusius traveled to El Paso, Texas with the intent of killing Hispanic people at the local Walmart. He traveled over ten hours from his home in Dallas to go to this Walmart which is on the border of Mexico precisely because of its popularity with the tourists from Mexico. Before his shooting spree, he posted racist and anti-immigrant information to 8chan, a popular White Supremacist website referring to “the Hispanic invasion of Texas” (Romo, 2019) (Friedman, 2019). Crusius killed twenty-three individuals, injuring dozens more in this act of terror. After leaving the scene of the attack, he turned himself over to Police, advising them he was the shooter. In his manifesto posted before his attack, Crusius referenced an attack in New Zealand that happened earlier in 2019 on two mosques. The perpetrator of that attack also wrote a white supremacist manifesto (Friedman, 2019).

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<sup>10</sup> “Gab, an alternative social media network popular with conservatives, the Alt-Right and some extremists, is surging in popularity after conservative social network Parler was effectively taken off the Internet in the wake of the January 6 Capitol siege” (Goodwin, 2021).

There was substantial unrest in 2020, and it continued into 2021. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the rise of White Supremacy seems to have peaked. When the Capitol of the United States of America was attempted to be overthrown in a direct-action attack to stop the 2020 Electoral College vote certification that would conclude that Joe Biden was the rightful winner of the 2020 Presidential Election (Hymes, McDonald, & Watson , 2021). In this event more than five hundred rioters were arrested for trespassing in the Capitol Building, causing destruction to the building, and damage to the offices of multiple Congressman in the process. Dozens of individuals who partook in this incident were charged with assault and destruction on the misdemeanor and felony levels. While not all the individuals involved with the January 6<sup>th</sup> insurrection are White Supremacists, there were most definitely White Supremacists there taking part. Members of the group Oath Keepers have pleaded guilty to their involvement and agreed to help out the federal government to build their case of conspiracy against the group and others (Lucas, 2021).

### **The Physical Rise:**

Directly after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, the rise of White Supremacist attacks began to form the trend we see currently. This means that most terrorist attacks in the past twenty years have been perpetrated by White Supremacists, but the media and attention on terrorism would show otherwise choosing to focus on Islamic and Foreign terrorism instead. The trends we see can be shown picking up momentum surrounding periods of prominent political events in the United States. The first major political event analyzed in this paper is the September 11<sup>th</sup>, terrorist attacks. The aftermath of these attacks saw instances of Muslim Americans being targeted because of their religion, and in the case of Balbir Singh Sodhi, who was not Muslim, he was mistaken as Muslim and subsequently murdered because of that (Elias, 2012). David Neiwert who wrote *Alt America: The Rise of Radical Right in the Age of Trump*, writes about the evident rise of Militias



during this period as well - stating that despite the drop in the number of Militias between 2000 and 2007 (when there was a Republican President in power), you can see this particular rise of Militias during the age of President Obama and his first Presidential campaign.

In 2000 there were 194 known militias; in 2007, the number dropped down to 131. The number continuously rises from 512 in 2009 (the first year of the Obama Administration) to 824 in 2010 and 1,274 in 2010. In 2011, which is the last year there is data from Neiwert there were 1,360 Militias in the United States (Neiwert, 2018, p. 140). The number rose as individuals began to irrationally fear things like the Second Amendment being taken from them. This is prevalent in the characteristics of those who are drawn in to join militias. After President Obama's election in 2008, the type of people who joined Militias were young men, who were militant and paranoid and often had a military background (Neiwert, 2018, p. 142).

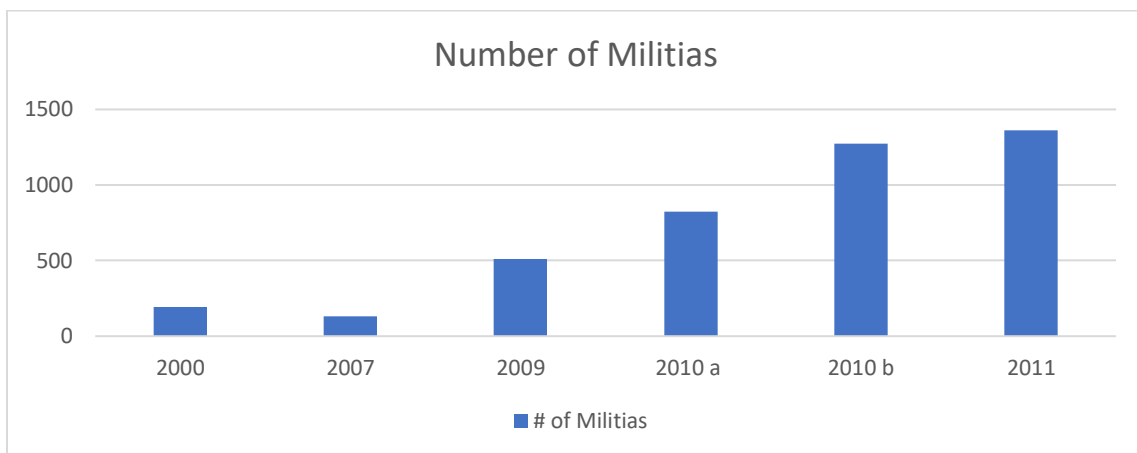


Figure 5. (Neiwert, 2018, p. 142).

There were one hundred and fourteen victims in White Supremacist Domestic terrorism attacks between 2001 and 2020. There was an even larger number of individuals were injured or witnessed these attacks. (Walters & Chang, 2021). The attacks are continuously happening on a larger scale. They can be seen gaining leverage surrounding certain significant political events.

Such as directly after September 11<sup>th</sup>, to the elections of President Obama and President Trump. From one individual being killed days after September 11th to an angry mob storming the U.S. Capitol in an attempted insurrection, and various attacks in between. The cumulation of the perfect storm appears to be the 2020 election and the belief that the election was stolen from President Trump. How these events directly affected the nation and the terrorist attacks that shook the country will be evaluated in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Timeline of White Nationalism and Militias Rising**

“The most ascendant risk are the Nazis next door” (Shubber, 2018).

Individuals who are a part of White Supremacist groups and have connections to Militias are not afraid to let everyone in on their affiliations. Charles Dyer, who is a member of the Oath Keepers, stated just this, “with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) blatantly calling Patriots and Veterans and Constitutionals a threat, all I have to say is – you’re damned right we are a threat!” (Neiwert, 2018, p. 147). There has been a significant rise in these groups and individuals associating with them in the last twenty years. These groups and their members and associates have been rising around certain political moments in the United States. This includes the aftermath of the September 11th, terrorist attacks, President Obama’s campaign, and election in 2008, President Trump’s 2016 Presidential campaign and election, and the lead-up and direct aftermath of the 2020 Presidential elections. The aftermath of the 2020 elections led to the insurrection on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The individuals perpetrating this event consisted of individuals associated with White Supremacists and the militia groups; several Oath Keepers were charged with their role in the insurrection (Lucas, 2021). There was also an instance where the Militia Wolverine Watchmen attempted to kidnap the Governor of Michigan (Witsil, 2020).

Data from *Alt-America* shows a drop in Militias between 2000 and 2007, then it spikes drastically in 2008 and continues to rise after that. During this time, the number of White Supremacist groups and the number of race-based attacks did not drop (Neiwert, 2018, p. 140). After September 11th, the attacks on Muslim individuals in America were by White Supremacists (Gabbatt, 2021). During the lead-up before President Obama’s 2008 election and after he was elected, there was an initial rise in hate crimes varying from cross-burning to hateful graffiti (Potok

& Ose, Obama Win Sparks Rise in Hate Crimes, Violence, 2008). During President Trump's 2016 election, it was the idea of White Supremacy and his bold support of it that helped fuel the rise. This time the targets were no longer the President and his supporters; they were now those opposing the President. Trump's refusal to disallow particular rhetoric allowed for those individuals to now feel empowered by him. As his campaign and election grew the White Supremacists and extremists took everything Trump was saying in stride and used that as a form of approval (Neiwert, 2018). After his election, there was an immediate increase in anti-Semitic hate crimes reported to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) within the first few months, and many other hate crimes and assaults on minorities took place in the name of Trump (Neiwert, 2018).

The summer of 2020 saw a lot of civil unrest. This occurred for varying reasons including police violence, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, and opinions of how these events happened and how they were handled. There was also the stress of the upcoming election and what that may look like for society. One event during this time that stood out was the attempted kidnapping of Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer by the Wolverine Watchmen militia (Knowles, 2020). The post-2020 election brought on more unrest from individuals connected to White Supremacist groups and Militias, as well as many more individuals who supported Trump during that election. These individuals gathered for a Trump rally and then breached the U.S. Capitol resulting in an insurrection (Mascaro, Tucker, Jalonick, & Taylor, 2021).

For a long time, while the United States put all its focus on foreign terrorism, this allowed domestic terrorism, particularly White Supremacy, to rise and gain significant ground seemingly out of nowhere.

Even now, while our FBI is arresting anyone whose first name rhymes with Osama, groups like the Klan operate openly and legally in all 50 states. Next time you're in Tennessee [...] come visit Nathan Bedford Forrest Park, named after the founder of America's al-Qaeda, the KKK. Absurdly, we're supposed to breathe a sigh of relief now that we think the Anthrax was sent, not by Arabs, but by White supremacists ... Has U.S. Attorney General Josh Ashcroft detained 1,000 Christians without charge? Is everyone with links to Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh now under surveillance? And what terrorist harboring state will be bombed next? Alabama (Farley, 2002).

This quote by David Farley breaks down the reality of attention to White Supremacists directly after September 11th. The focus was now solely on the threat of foreign terrorists. As Farley says, "Absurdly, we're supposed to breathe a sigh of relief now that we think Anthrax was sent, not by Arabs, but by White Supremacists" (Farley, 2002). The media and U.S. government allowed attention to draw away from the dangers of White Supremacy while going all-in on foreign terrorism. The nation had two simultaneous threats happening, with one (White Supremacy) flying under the radar.

### **September 11<sup>th</sup> Terrorist Attacks:**

After September 11<sup>th</sup>, there was a fatal attack on Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh man. This attack was one of the first hate crimes directly after the September 11<sup>th</sup>, terrorist attacks. The attacker assumed Sodhi was a Muslim and was acting in retaliation for September 11th (NPR, 2018). Balbir Sing Sodhi, and his two brothers, immigrated to the United States from India. Sodhi's brother recounted that directly after September 11<sup>th</sup>, how they were immediately affected and targeted. "People saw only a turban and a beard; people yell to us using F-word and asking to 'go back to your country'" (NPR, 2018). While many individuals fell victims to harassment and discrimination at the hands of White Supremacists, the targeting arguably came with the systematic backing of the U.S. government. This occurred because the FBI was allowed to detain thousands of Muslims, some of which were not citizens of the U.S., to see if they had any connection to the

September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, none of them had any connections (Patel, 2021). New laws and departments were created to prevent attacks from occurring and prevent people of interest from acting. While they focused on Muslim Americans, these changes allowed for White Supremacists to fester and grow while no one was looking (Gabbatt, 2021).

Since 2002, in the United States, there have been one hundred and nine deaths caused by White Supremacists. While there have been one hundred and four caused by Jihadists, from 2016 to 2019 alone saw forty-three of those deaths in the U.S. (New America, 2019).

The September 11th, terrorist attacks established a transition for White Supremacy in America. While the number of groups may have dwindled, for the time being during the 1990s, September 11<sup>th</sup> brought back White Supremacy beliefs in full force. Entering the 2000s, continued uptick of White Supremacy that came from the 1990s. Data showed the results of the 2000 Census indicated that by the 2040s the White population would no longer hold the majority in the United States. Where White people would no longer be the majority of the population, “the last time that the United States had these levels of a foreign-born population was in the late 1910s, early 1920s, when we had the largest Klan ever” (Neiwert, 2018, p. 324). The realization of White people becoming a minority, started the path of alleged White Supremacist civilization’s destruction. Unfortunately, September 11th and the need for some individuals to hold others accountable helped rush the resurrection of White Supremacy. For example, Frank Roque killed Balbir Singh Sodhi and shot at other Middle Eastern individuals that same day (NPR, 2018). The next nineteen years show an increasing number of attacks and an increase of individuals joining White Supremacist groups and Militias, specifically nearing the time of significant events, such as Presidential Elections.

## **The George W. Bush Administration - 2000-2008 and Eliminationist Rhetoric:**

After September 11th, there was a great dispute among Americans. Many, especially Republicans, were fully backing the United States in sending troops to Afghanistan and in 2003 to Iraq. Others were opposed for a variety of reasons including conspiracies driven by individuals such as Alex Jones<sup>11</sup>, a Far-Right radio host known for his conspiracy theories. His theories on the September 11<sup>th</sup>, attacks are that the U.S. government played a significant role in the terrorist attacks, and they were the ones at fault for it (Neiwert, 2018, p. 75). Also, during this period, right-wing extremists took to expressing eliminationist rhetoric; this is “the belief or policy that a particular group of people should be expelled or eradicated” (Lexico, 2021). This is similar to Nazi Germany’s beliefs during World War II. After September 11th, though, some White Supremacists started expressing the Nazi’s beliefs to those who opposed them and their ideas. During the start of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, some individuals did not express the same opinion that the government was at fault for the terrorist attacks and did not fully support the wars. Those who opposed the war were viewed by Conservatives as being unpatriotic and hating the United States (Neiwert, 2018, p. 73). With so many people passionate about these extreme beliefs, hatred towards others was common and found to be acceptable.

Individuals’ beliefs did not stop with those who opposed or supported the wars and who believed in the conspiracy theories. Between 2000 and 2006, the United States saw a mass migration of Mexican and other South American immigrants via the southern border. By 2006, there were 9.7 million documented and undocumented Latinx immigrants in the U.S. (Neiwert, 2018, p. 75). These immigrants were the targets of the Eliminationist Rhetoric<sup>12</sup>. During the next

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<sup>11</sup> Alex Jones recently was subpoenaed by the U.S. House committee that is investigating the January 6<sup>th</sup> Insurrection. He is also facing a defamation lawsuit by ten of the families of victims of the Sandy Hook shooting in 2012, for the comments he made about the shooting (Beeferman, 2022).

<sup>12</sup> “The belief or policy that a particular group of people should be expelled or eradicated” (Lexico, 2022).

year, there was a dramatic increase of 3.6 million undocumented workers in the United States. White Supremacists continued to express their eliminationist beliefs and hatred. The nativist and anti-immigrant groups such as the Federation of American Immigration Reform (FAIR) began to spread falsities about the undocumented workers (Neiwert, 2018, p. 78). They were spreading myths such as, “immigrants bring crime to their communities, immigrants take jobs away from Americans, immigrants bring disease with them, [and that] they [do not] want to become Americans or learn to speak English” (Neiwert, 2018, pp. 78-79).

It expressed itself in the crude demonization of a targeted Other as vermin and excrement and disease fit only for elimination, ultimately creating tacit permission for people to excise them, violently or by any other means, in the name of ‘protecting society’ (Neiwert, 2018, p. 73).

During the Mexican Immigration surge, groups of Militia members thought it their responsibility to stop the undocumented people from coming through the southern border. This began the ‘border watch’ (Neiwert, 2018, p. 82). The border watch began when President Bush deployed six thousand troops to the U.S Mexico Border to put a stop to the crossings taking place (Henry, Malveaux, McIntyre, & Starr, 2006). At the same time U.S. troops were taking up residency at the border so were many Militia members. The Minuteman Project called for its nine hundred Minuteman militia members to travel to the U.S. Mexico border and protect the country from immigrants. Among those Militia members were White Supremacists (Neiwert, 2018, p. 83). The mass of white supremacist and ‘civilian armies’ roaming the southern border with automatic weapons waiting for threats gained significant media coverage (Neiwert, 2018, p. 83). When patrolling the two thousand miles of the U.S. Mexico border was no longer functional a group of Minutemen decided to head north to Washington State to protect the U.S. Canadian border. Both groups were taking action at the borders in order to, “save America from illegal immigrants” (Neiwert, 2018, p. 84).



During President Bush's Presidency, one thing to note is that the White Supremacists turned their focus slightly, and now they were targeting one another. "During the years of the Bush Administration, White Nationalists focused less on attacking liberalism and grew largely into an anti-mainstream conservative movement, directing their attacks to those republicans who they believed were failing to 'stand up for white interests'" (Neiwert, 2018, p. 229). This shift holds to the growth of the White Supremacists during the earlier 2000s. This varies from the beliefs they carried into 2008 though when they began to focus back on attacking liberalism, and the presence of a Black Democrat President in office as seen in the next section.

### **President Obama's 2008 Election, Presidency, and the Rise of Militias:**

Some viewed the election of President Obama, the first Black President, to have canceled racism in America (Panetta, 2020). Upon President Obama's election, Thomas Robb, a leader inside the Ku Klux Klan and a Christian Identity pastor preaching White Supremacist values, stated, "[a] race war between our people [KKK members], who I see as the rightful owners and leaders of this great country, and their people, the blacks" (Neiwert, 2018, p. 226). Robb's explanation of his values to David Neiwert showed that he believed how fellow White Supremacists truly felt about electing the country's first Black President; they were willing to start a civil war in response. The number of White Supremacists and groups, even the number of Militias, began to grow again after President Obama was elected, the presence of White Supremacists and their ideals showcased themselves well before the election even took place (Neiwert, 2018).

Before the people even chose President Obama as the 2008 Democrat candidate for the Presidency, he was already a target of White Supremacy on the national stage. Soon after announcing his candidacy for President, he began to receive an increased number of targeted death

threats. In 2007, as a Presidential Candidate, he received Secret Service protection after these death threats from White Supremacist (Zeleny, 2007). The Department of Homeland Security authorized Secret Service for then-Senator Obama a full year before the election in May of 2007. This assignment was the earliest for Secret Service to a Presidential candidate (Obama, 2020, p. 137).

An early threat came from a White Supremacist, Jerry Blanchard, who threatened to kidnap, harm, and kill Obama. Blanchard originally made threats while at a Waffle House then weeks later started telling multiple people of his plans. These individuals then informed the Secret Service (Rivenbark, 2008). In October of 2008, two men were arrested for plotting the assassination of Senator Obama and potentially planned to kill a hundred other people. Daniel Cowart and Paul Schlesselman, from Arkansas, were arrested in Tennessee for plotting the assassination of President Obama and plotting to murder over a hundred other individuals. The plan included killing eighty-eight by gunfire and fourteen African Americans by decapitation, saving the assassination of Obama as their final act. They planned to drive right at him open firing (Date, 2008). Both Schlesselman and Cowart had strong White Supremacist beliefs and considered themselves skinheads.<sup>13</sup> The significance of the number of people they were attempting to murder follows the eighty-eight and fourteen terminologies within the White Power movements (Date, 2008). Eighty-Eight represents Heil Hitler, the eighth letter of the alphabet is H, therefore HH twice is equivalent to 88 both equaling Heil Hitler. The meaning continues with the fourteen being a representation of the fourteen words within the saying, “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children” (Date, 2008).

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<sup>13</sup> Skinheads fall under the neo-Nazi subcategory, known mostly for their style of shaved heads, combat boots, Nazi, and White Power tattoos (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2012).

James Cummings, (mentioned earlier) was expressly very upset over President Obama's 2008 election and recently applied for membership with the National Socialist Movement<sup>14</sup> he even owned a hoard of Nazi paraphernalia in his house. Shortly after President Obama's election Cummings was killed by his wife in a domestic violence dispute and was found with a collection of both illegal and racist materials inside his house. Four one-gallon containers filled with chemicals and radioactive materials, all with the ability to form a dirty bomb, were among the findings within their house (Griffin, 2009). Cummings was a passionate enthusiast of Hitler (Griffin, 2009).

Among the threats targeted towards President Obama, 2008 now saw an increase of Militias that continuously grew. The number of Militias dropped in 2007 to 131 active groups but then continued to grow dramatically after President Obama's election during his years in office. In 2009 there were 512 operational groups, and in 2010 there were 824; in 2011 there were 1,360 active Militias in the United States (Neiwert, 2018, p. 140). A few things were happening to cause this drastic spike of militias. The first is the surgent of the Tea Party. The Tea Party is a political affiliation group that fell among Republicans and shared similar ideals to the Republicans. Still, the Tea Party considered itself more conservative fiscally than the larger group (Berman, 2010). The 'Tea Parties' and similar groups that have sprung up in recent months cannot reasonably be considered an extremist group, but they are shot through with rich veins of radical ideas, conspiracy theories, and racism (Neiwert, 2018, p. 140). During this same time, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) tracked similar patterns.

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<sup>14</sup> National Socialist Movement is a neo-Nazi group, that started in the 1960s, they worship Hitler and an all-white America denying citizenship and protection to non-whites, Jews, and LGBT people (Anti-Defamation League, 2021).

A general growth of antigovernment rage and associated conspiracy theories. Its most mainstream expression was the Tea Party<sup>15</sup> [...] but it has also manifested itself on the extremes by a resurgence of the militia movement, the sovereign citizen's movement, and other Patriot-type groups like the Oath Keepers (Neiwert, 2018, p. 140).

In the later 2000's, those joining the Militia and White Supremacist movement knew they were a transformed group. They were now younger, paranoid, and many had a legitimate military background (Neiwert, 2018, p. 142). A twenty-year-old Marine was arrested in December of 2008 for breaking and entering. When searching his possessions, they found White Supremacist material and a journal that consisted of his plan to assassinate President Obama (Neiwert, 2018, p. 142). In Oklahoma, Marine veteran Charles Dyer, an Oath Keeper, gave a speech to welcome all who wanted to join the Oath Keepers.

#### **Department of Homeland Security Threat Assessments:**

In 2008, the FBI released its assessment 'White Supremacist Recruitment of Military personnel since September 11th,' (Neiwert, 2018, p. 123). This assessment notes that neo-Nazis and other White Supremacists were joining the U.S. military. At that time, there were only two hundred known White Supremacists amongst them. But, it was noted that White Supremacist groups were now seeking out the recruitment of military members (Neiwert, 2018, p. 123). The specific recruitment of any military personnel was intentional to help aid the groups in future fights claiming the groups sought out "their knowledge of firearms, explosives, and tactical skills and their access to weapons and intelligence in preparation for an anticipated war against the federal government, Jews, and people of color" (Neiwert, 2018, p. 123). Recruiting individuals of this

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<sup>15</sup> Tea Party is a fiscally conservative political party supported by Ron Paul during his 2008 presidential run. They focus on the opposition to excessive taxes and immigration reform. The name comes from the events of the Boston Tea Party during the Revolutionary War (Ray, n.d.).

desired skillset within their groups allows for a new level of lethality to be at risk for attacks that they are planning out.

In April of 2009, the DHS warned law enforcement, “Right-wing extremists will attempt to recruit and radicalize returning veterans to exploit their skills and knowledge derived from military training and combat” (Murphy, Carless, Kwiatkowski, & Nadolny, 2021). At this time, the DHS was unable to identify any direct threat or attack from the extremists but noted that there was a case for that to form due to the unemployment numbers, real estate market, inability to get credit during the recession, and financial struggles during that time (Department of Homeland Security, 2009). Their assessment of said threats even covered President Obama being the first African American President as a partial reason for the resurgence of Right-Wing Extremism during this period. Along with the political issue of Immigration driving the number of active White Supremacists up, other issues such as potential gun control legislation have assisted the rise (Department of Homeland Security, 2009). Another political issue helping the rise of White Supremacy is the threat from other countries.

Fear of Communist regimes and related conspiracy theories characterizing the U.S. Government’s role as either complicit in a foreign invasion or acquiescing as part of a ‘One World Government’ plan inspired by extremist members of the militia movement to target government and military facilities in past years (Department of Homeland Security, 2009).

## President Obama’s 2012 Re-Election:

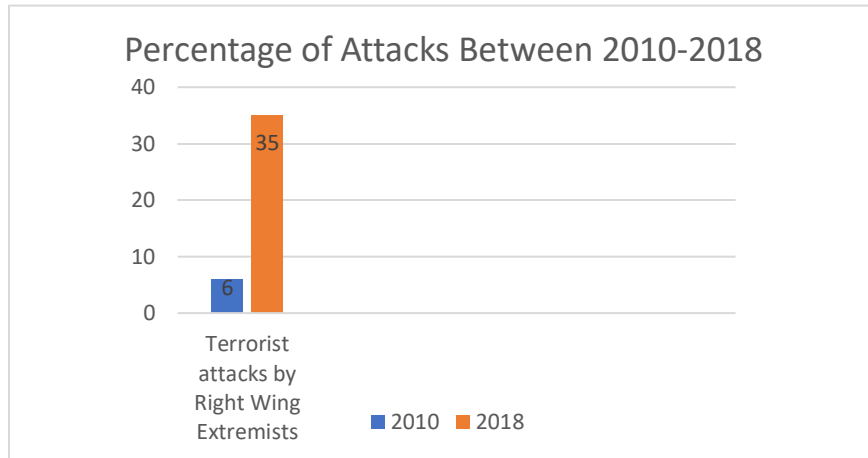


Figure 6. (Shubber, 2018).

Figure six shows the percentage of domestic terrorist attacks in both 2010 and 2018 to show the growth of attacks by Right Wing Extremists. President Obama’s reelection in 2012 continued to fuel the growth of White Supremacists and Militias in the United States. “Since 2010, the proportion of terror attacks in the U.S. perpetrated by rightwing extremists has risen from six percent to thirty-five percent” (Shubber, 2018). The ADL stated that between 2007 and 2016, seventy-five percent of murders that had an ideological motive attributed to them were perpetrated by White Supremacists (Shubber, 2018).

In 2015, we saw the rise of the Alt-Right movement. A subcategory within White Supremacy began to grow in popularity outside of the traditional White Supremacy realm. This growth was due to its presence on the Internet. The Alt-Right is known for the outspoken representatives of Richard Spencer, Steve Bannon, and Alex Jones (Center on Extremism, n.d.). Anthropologist Jonathan Marks said, “I was working on the assumption that these guys were a lunatic fringe. If you told me twenty years ago that they would be part of a political mainstream wave, I would have said you are absolutely crazy” (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 136). Alt-Right and

White Supremacists continued to rise during the lead-up to and after the 2016 Presidential election. Miller-Idriss said this is partially due to Political figures expressing like-minded rhetoric and White Supremacists feeling that they were represented by these figures (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 136).

### **The 2016 and 2020 Elections and Everything Between:**

President Trump won the 2016 Presidential election and almost immediately; there was a significant rise in the race or ethnicity-based attacks. Those involved in these attacks stated their attacks were provoked by the speeches the new President gave during his 2016 campaign (Cineas, 2021). These individuals felt it necessary to ‘take action into their own hands’. When two brothers assaulted a homeless man in Boston in August of 2015, they told the police, “Trump was right. All of these illegals need to be deported” (Cineas, 2021). Candidate Trump initially claimed that he has passionate supporters before stating, “I would never condone violence,” a few days later (Cineas, 2021). He also stated how he could not understand how or why his followers who identified with White Supremacy and the Alt-Right movement took to supporting him (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016).

After the 2016 election saw an increase of White Supremacist groups once again, Heidi Beirich, the Director of the Intelligence Project at the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), stated about this rise of White Supremacy, “This has been a year that has seen increasing divisiveness and bigotry, particularly in the mainstream of American life ... There has been a substantial emboldening of the radical right, and that is largely due to the actions of President Trump, who has tweeted out hate materials and made light of the threat to our society posed by hate groups” (Begley, 2018). From 2016 to 2017, hate groups in total grew four percent, increasing the total number to 954 groups. Neo-Nazi groups, in general, grew from ninety-nine groups to one-hundred and twenty-one, anti-Muslim groups from one-hundred one to one-hundred and fourteen groups,

while anti-immigrant groups from fourteen to twenty-two total between 2016 and 2017 (Begley, 2018).

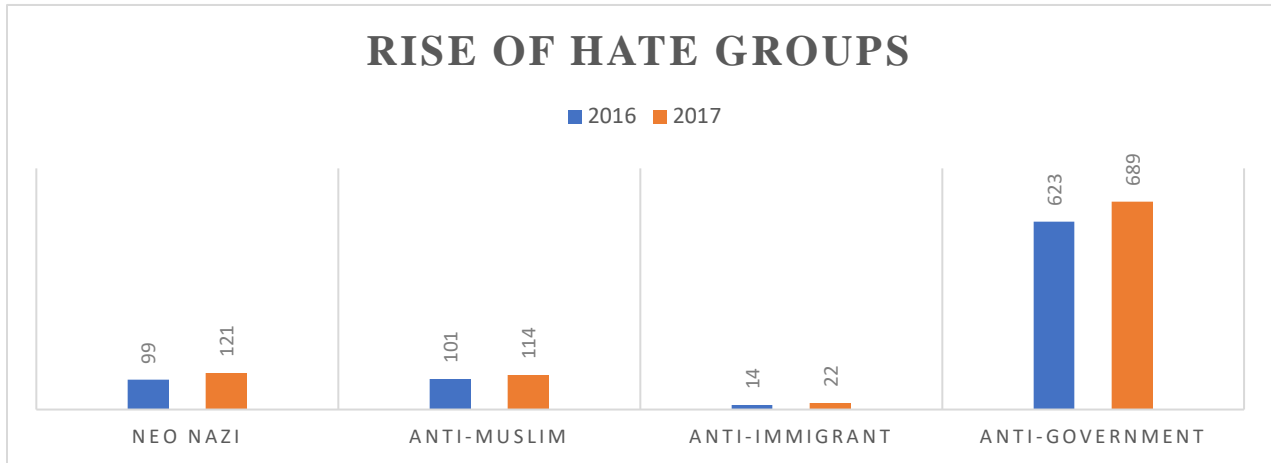


Figure 7. (Begley, 2018).

While the overall number of White Supremacists rose during the first year of President Trump’s Presidency, the number of Ku Klux Klan groups fell from one hundred and thirty groups before 2016 to seventy-two groups in 2017. The change can be associated with the newer look of White Supremacists, which no longer fit the mold of the old-school style of the KKK. While White Supremacists do not have a particular look, they are more common to be young, militant, and clean cut. Heidi Beirich commented on this, saying, “the younger generation is trying to change that image. They are trying to change it into this more clean-cut look. And I think that is really hurting the Klan’s recruitment” (Begley, 2018).





Image 1: Depicts an example of the new clean-cut look of the KKK, from individuals at the Unite the Right March, in Charlottesville (Hockstein, 2017).

Between President Trump’s election and 2018, the number of anti-Semitic attacks in the United States rose fifty-seven percent in the year and a half. This is the most significant rise in attacks since the Anti-Defamation League has kept tracking incidents since 1979 (Shubber, 2018). In 2017 alone there were over one thousand nine hundred anti-Semitic attacks, more than six hundred more than in 2016 which saw over one thousand and two hundred attacks that year (Anti-Defamation League, 2018). Jonathan Greenblatt, the ADL’s national director, stated the reasoning behind this particular rise was “A confluence of events in 2017 led to a surge in attacks on our community – from bomb threats, cemetery desecration, white supremacists marching in Charlottesville, and children harassing children at school” (Holmes, 2018).

In 2017, President Trump took several controversial steps in his Presidency. The first was his travel ban from Muslim countries, and the second was his choice of words after a deadly White Supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. The first of his major controversial steps was

Executive Order 13769<sup>16</sup> which barred entry into the United States from certain Muslim countries. This Executive Order also put a hold on admitting any refugees into the U.S. for a total of four months, except for those from Syria where section Five-C notes the disallowance of entry from Syrian Refugees indefinitely (National Immigration Law Center, 2017). Executive Order 13780<sup>17</sup> was a revision of the Travel Ban Order and included more countries, including North Korea, Venezuela, and Chad. The new Executive Order widened the restrictions from being just Muslim countries affected, making the ban seem less about the religion and more about protection (BBC, 2017). The President then again revised Executive Order 13780 in 2020, it now included Nigeria, Myanmar, Eritrea, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan, and Tanzania (Panduranga, 2020). This was controversial on the stance that it disallowed refugees into the country and prohibited entry from almost exclusively Muslim nations. This policy targets immigrants directly and unjustly without vetting the legitimate standards of the National Security risk regarding individuals traveling from these countries. The Trump Administration said it took the DHS standards for nationals traveling abroad to properly apply restrictions. “The proclamation states that the President then applied the DHS baseline to every country and banned all those- and only those-that fail its criteria. This never happened” (Bier, 2017). This shows how the policy was created with little accreditation and shows direct bias against particular countries. President Trump’s advisor Stephen Miller was a role player in the creation and execution of this policy and has been known to have White Supremacist viewpoints and has promoted White Nationalist literature in the past (Panduranga, 2020).

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<sup>16</sup> Executive Order 13769- Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States. This EO contains eleven different sections all regarding the entry into the United States of Foreign Nationals. This order put strict restrictions on the entrance depending on the country the individual is traveling from including new VISA protocols and waiting periods to prevent potential terrorist attacks (Trump, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Executive Order 13780- Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States. EO 12780 is an amended order of the original thus revoking EO 12769. This EO barred entrance from all refugees if they did not have the proper VISA and documents with them (Trump, 2017).

“The lingering effects of Trump’s candidacy enabled the Alt-Right to emerge from its origins in cyberspace and step into the real-world consequences in places like Charlottesville” (Center on Extremism, n.d.). The Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, happened on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, to protest the city taking down the statue of Confederate Robert E. Lee (Lind, 2017). White Supremacist Jason Kessler was an organizer of the rally and is associated with the Alt-Right (Lind, 2017). There were also many other individuals associated with White Nationalists, neo-Nazis, and the Ku Klux Klan at the rally (Lind, 2017). Money from its presence on the Internet, the Alt-Right gathered in Virginia to protest the statue’s removal (van der Vegt, Mozes, Gill, & Kleinberg, 2021, p. 334). The night before the rally officially started, a torchlit march fell into chaos and violence after colliding with protestors at their rally (Lind, 2017). The day of the official rally ended in a quick dispersal of the rally by the police after, once again, there was a conflict with counter-protestors (Lind, 2017). The City of Charlottesville initially opposed the Unite the Right rally from even taking place because they feared the outcome that seemingly was inevitable. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) fought for the right of Kessler and associates to hold their rally on First Amendment, grounds specifically, the right of the people to peaceably assemble (Klika, 2019, p. 40). The fighting between protestors and counter-protestors led to the death of one woman the nineteen others were injured after a man drove his car into a street full of counter-protestors (Lopez, 2017).

President Trump’s reaction to this incident drew skepticism and attention to his relationship with White Supremacy. President Trump’s initial response to this event was “you also had people that were very fine people, on both sides” (Holan, 2019). His response drew criticism for stating that there were good people on the side of the White Supremacists. During a speech in New Jersey, he said, “in the strongest possible terms this display of hatred, bigotry, and violence on many sides”

(Scherer, 2017). Michael Scherer, a writer for Time Magazine, breaks down the wording of President Trump's speech that day.

The reference [to] 'many sides' – which he repeated, repeated for emphasis moments later – appeared to many observers to equate the White Nationalist protesters with the counter-protesters. The words 'many sides' soon trended on social media (Scherer, 2017).

Rhetoric can mean everything, especially when addressing a deadly event at the hands of White Supremacists. In 2019, then Vice President Biden commented during his Presidential candidacy announcement that President Trump's wording had failed him. "With those words, the President of the United States assigned a moral equivalence between those spreading hate and those with the courage to stand against it" (Biden, 2019). President Trump's statements that day allowed White Supremacists to feel encouraged by their actions. "The central White Supremacist tenets that emboldened Far-Right advocates to march through Charlottesville continue to motivate the movement, and anti-racist activists must understand and fight those ideas in both the real and virtual worlds" (Atkinson, 2018). The Unite the Right rally, put the likes of Alt-Right and White Supremacy back on society's radar, identifying the threat they pose.

The rising number of supporters was not appropriately addressed by the government. Dog whistling<sup>18</sup> continued to happen, and the number of individuals now associating themselves with White Supremacy grew. During President Trump's last two years in office, there were more attacks, including the shooting in an El Paso, Texas Walmart, and the shooting at a synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (previously mentioned). The shooters focused on the 'great replacement theory,' which is, that white culture will soon disappear and cause white people to become an oppressed population (Darby, 2019). Alexandra Minna Stern, a professor, and author stated, "the

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<sup>18</sup> "A message only someone can hear" in this sense, it is an undertone or particular wording of phrases to allow those looking to benefit from the wording are able to (Merriam-Webster, 2017).

way I describe it is that President Trump really set up a baseline for bigotry in political discourse in the United States that has helped create the terrain where this is more possible” (Darby, 2019). In February 2019, a Department of Justice official wrote an op-ed (opposition to the editor) in the New York Times stating, “White Supremacy and far-right extremism are among the greatest domestic-security threats facing the United States” (116th Congress, 2019).

Many things can be said to be the reason for the continued growth of White Supremacy during President Trump’s term. One thing that has a definite effect on the rise is the refusal to reject White Supremacy by the Trump Administration. As well as, the continuous statements, similar to during the first 2020 Presidential debate, when President Trump was asked to denounce White Supremacy publicly and instead informed his followers to stand back and stand by (Cineas, 2021). This statement implies that those followers and Proud Boys he was talking to should take preparation in case they need to act upon something. Trump later admitted that he did not know who the Proud Boys were when asked about his statement afterward. During the debate, he also said “somebody’s got to do something about Antifa and the left because this is not a right-wing problem” (BBC, 2020). The damage was done by that point though, ‘stand back and stand by’ is precisely what the Proud Boys and other affiliated White Supremacists did in preparation for the 2020 elections and the months afterward.

### **Summer of 2020 and Kidnapping attempt of Michigan Governor:**

The Summer of 2020 saw a great deal of political civil unrest. Still, it was an eye-opener for White Supremacists, aided by the divisive upcoming Presidential election. Many people, saw it as the first time in a long time that White Supremacy was openly touted as if it was a completely normal thing. In 2020 there was a new record set with the amount of White Supremacist propaganda.

The barrage of propaganda, which overwhelmingly features veiled white supremacist language with a patriotic slant, is an effort to normalize white supremacists' message and bolster recruitment efforts while targeting minority groups including Jews, Blacks, Muslims, non-white immigrants, and the LGBTQ community (Singh, 2021).

There were documented cases of White Supremacist propaganda showing up in forty-nine of fifty states, and only Hawaii has no reported cases. Overall, there were over five thousand cases in 2020, which increased by almost fifty percent from 2019, with two thousand seven hundred (Singh, 2021). This particular summer saw a rise in political protests surrounding the murders of George Floyd<sup>19</sup> and Breonna Taylor<sup>20</sup> by police officers.

Gretchen Whitmer is the current Governor of Michigan, and she has been serving as the Governor since 2019. During the height of the Covid -19 Pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement, the Michigan Governor was being targeted by White Supremacists and other conservatives. In April, while Whitmer implemented a stay-at-home order to help combat the pandemic, President Trump advocated for states to fully open back up. Due to the contradicting opinions but the state's ultimate decision to stay in lockdown, two Michigan groups planned a demonstration at the State Capitol (Macklin, 2021, p. 3). The Michigan Freedom Fund and the Michigan Conservative Coalition were the demonstration organizers. On April 15, 2020, the groups showed up with supporters in tow, ready to stand there and protest until their state was reopened. Individuals there held stating, "Trump, lock up the Nazi woman from Michigan" (Macklin, 2021). The gathering to some seemed like half a protest and half a Trump rally. President Trump's response was to tweet, "LIBERATE MICHIGAN!" (Macklin, 2021).

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<sup>19</sup> George Floyd died in Minneapolis on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, after being handcuffed and pinned to the ground with Officer Derek Chauvin's knee on his neck (The New York Times, 2021).

<sup>20</sup> Breonna Taylor was killed in her apartment on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020, while in bed during a 'no knock' warrant raid after it was suspected her house was used in relation to drug dealing (Oppel Jr., Taylor, & Bogel-Burroughs, 2021).

The protests did not stop there, on April 29, 2020, three women with the Michigan United for Liberty group entered the Michigan House of Representatives gallery and repeatedly chanted “Open Michigan Now” (Macklin, 2021, p. 3). Then the next day, April 30, 2020, there was another protest in front of the State Capitol. However, this event took a different turn than the others, seeing multiple protestors who were armed enter the Capitol building, attempting to enter the Senate floor. Instead of condemning the forced entrance. President Trump tweeted out, “The Governor of Michigan should give a little, and put out the fire,” and the next day he tweeted, “these are very good people, but they are angry. They want their lives back again, safely. See them, talk to them make a deal” (Macklin, 2021, p. 3). Among these individuals who forced entry into the Capitol were members of the Wolverine Watchmen militia, Joseph Morrison, Pete Musico, and Paul Bellar attempted this rally to recruit individuals to the Wolverine Watchmen (Macklin, 2021, p. 4).

Adam Fox was the driving force behind the plot to kidnap Whitmer. He first got involved with Militias when he joined the Michigan Home Guard, the largest Militia in the state. But he was kicked out after his probation due to anger issues (Macklin, 2021, p. 4). It is unknown whether he was officially a member of the Wolverine Watchmen, another militia involved with the plot. He is known to be a leader of the Michigan Patriot Three Percenters, which is considered more of a movement than a formal Militia (Macklin, 2021, p. 5). Barry Croft Jr was also heavily involved in the kidnapping attempt. The two of them, along with thirteen other people from different Militias, met in Dublin, Ohio. Here the militiamen allegedly discussed different ways of murdering the ‘tyrants.’ The tyrants included Governor Whitmer and Virginia Governor, Ralph Northam (Macklin, 2021, p. 5). Fox made a phone call to an FBI informant where he stated, “he wanted 200 men to storm the Capitol building and to take hostages, including the Governor. Fox said she would be put on trial for ‘treason’ at some point before the November 3, 2020, elections” (Macklin, 2021,

p. 5). While in preparation for their kidnapping plan, talk began to shift to murdering Whitmer instead of kidnapping. During this time, Militia members were surveying the private home and a vacation home of Governor Whitmer to find out which would be the most convenient one at which to ambush her. The week of September 12<sup>th</sup>, the members met for a training exercise to practice for their kidnapping attempt (Macklin, 2021, p. 7). There were multiple tests done for explosives, and on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, Adam Fox even bought an 800,000-volt taser for the night of the kidnapping. On October 7<sup>th</sup>, the group of men met up with who they presumed to be an explosives dealer, who in reality was an FBI Agent. At this point, they were arrested while carrying seventy firearms, components for bombs, and ball bearings as armament components (Macklin, 2021, p. 8).

The actions taken by the Wolverine Watchmen had additional motives of creating a civil war that would cause American societies to collapse. They wanted to take action into their own hands, feeling that other Militias did not do enough for a ‘boogaloo’ to happen (Knowles, 2020). Their anti-government persona meant they would take any action necessary against people they felt to be oppressive to them.

Watchmen members were told to get access to the home addresses of local police officers to target along with other politicians other than Governor Whitmer (Knowles, 2020). The Wolverine Watchmen and associates storming the Michigan Capitol building demanding an open state would be replicated a few months later. This time at the United States Capitol building, demanding that what the offenders believed to be an unjust election be blocked.

Adam Fox, Brandon Caserta, Barry Croft Jr, and Daniel Harris were charged in the attempted kidnapping of Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer in October 2020. A witness in the federal case admitted that the larger scheme was to also disrupt the 2020 Presidential Elections. Government witness Ty Garbin stated, “They were actually targeting the Presidential Election in



hopes of causing such social disruption that it would prevent Biden from ever getting into office” (Goudie, Markoff, Tressel, & Weidner, 2022). Ty Garbin along with Kaleb Franks was among the original six individuals arrested for the actions of the Watchmen, both pleaded guilty and are now government witnesses in the case against the Wolverine Watchmen (Helmores, 2022).

All four men were charged with conspiracy to kidnap, while the other three also faced conspiracy to use explosives (Flesher & White, 2022). Daniel Harris was acquitted on all charges and Brandon Caserta was acquitted on his charge of conspiracy to kidnap. Due to these acquittals, neither man will serve a sentence. As for Adam Fox and Barry Croft Jr, they received a mistrial due to a hung jury and the U.S. Attorney’s office will retry them (Baldas & Lobo, 2022). When asked to comment on the outcome of the trial, Governor Whitmer stated, “There must be accountability and consequences for those [who] commit heinous crimes. Without accountability extremists will be emboldened” (Baldas & Lobo, 2022).

### **January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021:**

January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 was a horrific day in history where the basic understanding of the nation’s democracy was blatantly ignored. After twenty years with little recognition of the rising number of White Supremacists, militias, and their associated groups, there was now consequences to the actions. It became increasingly apparent that the actions and beliefs were no longer acceptable. What became an insurrection attempt and a riot inside the U.S. Capitol Building saw over eight hundred individuals arrested and facing prosecution for their role in storming the Capitol (Hall, et al., 2021).

A direct causal link to the Capitol riot can be made to President Trump. Earlier in the day, Trump held a rally for his supporters over his disapproval of the 2020 Presidential Election results. Telling the crowd, “We will never give up. We will never concede. It does not happen ... you do

not concede when there is theft involved. Our country has had enough. We are not going to take it anymore” (Hall, 2021). Rally goes soon turned into protesters when they walked over to the Capitol Building where Congress was in a joint session, counting electoral votes to confirm President Bidens win. While telling his supporters to walk to the Capitol Building to cheer them on, he also stated, “we are probably not going to be cheering so much for some of them. Because you will never take back our country with weakness. You have to show strength and you have to be strong” (Hall, 2021). He also initially told his supporters that he would join them at the Capitol but never appeared.

Instead, what happened led to hundreds of arrests and multiple deaths, including a woman shot by a Capitol Police Officer while trying to breach doors inside the building (Hall, 2021). One Capitol Police Officer was beaten that day and later died; four other officers have since taken their own lives. In congressional testimony, officers stated, that they were “beaten, threatened, taunted with racial insults, and thought they might die” (Wolfe, 2021).

Some rioters who gained access to the Capitol Building stopped after entering. Many though caused millions of dollars in destruction breaking windows and doors attempting to access other parts of the Capitol, and Congress members congressional Staff’s offices. There were also several instances where media members were attacked in the process of reporting the events of the day (Gerstein & Cheney, 2021). Videos of the events include instances of individuals defacing U.S. Government property, sitting at Congress members’ desks, and even stealing mail and pieces of furniture (Gerstein & Cheney, 2021). The goal of the protesters was to disrupt the Electoral College process, to cause physical destruction to property within and surrounding the Capital thereby, halting the Congressional task of counting the Electoral vote to confirm the Presidential vote to be Joe Biden.

There was hatred on the scene on January 6<sup>th</sup>, as rioters tried to prevent President Biden from assuming his rightful position as President-elect after a free and fair election. White Supremacists at the Capitol that day include members of groups such as the Oath Keepers, and many were arrested for their involvement in, and organization of the riot (Lucas, 2021). Several Neo-Nazis among attendees wore shirts reading, ‘Camp Auschwitz’ across the front, touting their anti-Semitism and, spreading hate and the White Supremacist message (Cheney, 2021).

Social media played a prominent role in the organization of this event. Former leader of the Proud Boys leader, Enrique Tarrío, posted on the social media site Parler, “the Proud Boys will turn out in record numbers on Jan 6<sup>th</sup> but this time with a twist ... we will not be wearing our traditional Black and Yellow. We will be incognito, and we will spread across Downtown DC in smaller teams” (Tarrío, 2020). This allows those groups to mix unconnected rally-goers before, during, and after the height of events when moving to present on the scene or leaving the Capitol Building. Mark Grods, a member of the Oath Keepers, plead guilty to conspiracy and obstruction of an official proceeding in his role on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Not only did he plead guilty to his acts, but he also admitted to bringing guns into Washington D.C. and keeping them at his hotel in Virginia to prepare for that day (Lucas, 2021). Grods recollection of that day is this.

He rode in a golf cart with others through the city before parking a few blocks away from the Capitol and walking the rest of the way. He then linked up with other alleged Oath Keepers, who forged their way through the crowd up the steps of the Capitol in a military style ‘stack’ formation and into the building itself (Lucas, 2021).

Quick reaction forces were waiting on standby on January 6<sup>th</sup> to take action and aid in the Insurrection at a moment’s notice. These groups of Trump supporters were waiting with stashes of weaponry (Hsu & Weiner, 2021). One example of a response force was, Kenneth Harrelson who was arrested for conspiracy. He is connected to the Oath Keepers and was seen at the Comfort

Inn in Arlington, Virginia, with at least one rifle (Hsu & Weiner, 2021). Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffery Nestler stated, “people affiliated with this group [Oath Keepers] were in Ballston, monitoring what was happening at the Capitol and prepared to come into D.C. and ferry these weapons into the ground team that Kenneth Harrelson was running at a moment’s notice” (Hsu & Weiner, 2021). There was more preparation for the Insurrection than just quick reaction teams, there was also an individual who planted pipe bombs in proximity to the Capitol, next to the Democratic and Republican Party Headquarters (Shortell, 2021). The presence of the quick response teams and the pipe bombs deliberately placed the night before, shows that the violent actions taken on the day of the Insurrection were the true intentions of the Oath Keepers and other attendees.

One of the main perpetrators of the Capitol Riots and one of the most photographed individuals that day was Jacob Chansley, or as he is also known, the QAnon Shaman. On November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, he was sentenced to forty-one months in prison for his role (Aljazeera, 2021). Chansley was notably visible that day wearing a horned headdress. He displayed his allegiance to QAnon, with a sign saying, “Q Sent Me!” (Aljazeera, 2021). Both of which emphasize the role that social media played in the outcome of January 6<sup>th</sup>, and the organization of the rally turned riot. Since the QAnon belief path is White Supremacy and conspiracy theories via the Internet. Connecting the Capitol riots, as White Supremacy and President Trump’s Presidency is demonstrated through evidence that Capitol rioters were also in attendance at Unite the Right in Charlottesville in 2017. These include Nick Fuentes, who has an alternative view talk show, and who just before the allegedly suggested to his followers that they kill members of Congress to prevent Biden’s electoral victory. He said, “What can you and I do to a state legislator – besides kill him? We should not do that. I’m not advising that, but I mean, what else can you do, right?”

(Thompson & Fischer, 2021). Tim Gionet, who appears online as Baked Alaska, was at both the Capitol riots and Charlottesville. He live-streamed riots on the platform DLive<sup>21</sup> and was even seen sitting at the desk of Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi after forcing his way into her office (Thompson & Fischer, 2021).

There were many more known White Supremacists there that day, the evidence implies coordination and prior knowledge of - inciting violence and attempting to cause destruction to the U.S.'s political system. As a result of the role that known White Supremacists and their affiliated groups played, there is no thinking about January 6<sup>th</sup> without thinking of White Supremacy in America. The last twenty-one years have seen a rise in White Supremacy in the United States. From immediately after the September 11th, terrorist attacks until the cumulation of events and the Capitol riots on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Many things have played a role in the rise, and these explicitly include the political events I have identified. Social media, our general outlook on politics, and how it is viewed through the Overton window, will be discussed further in the next chapter.

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<sup>21</sup> DLive is a streaming service that can be found on the Dark web. It is primarily used by Right-Wing extremists (Hayden, 2021).

## **Chapter 6**

### **Moving Forward Looking Back**

The story of how the far right has created, cultivated, and weaponized the Internet is much more complex, relying on a strategic combination of online and off-line activities that enables the far right to maximize the circulation, communication, and effectiveness of far-right ideologies (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 138).

There have been a significant number of documented events that have aided in the rise of White Supremacy in the Twenty-First century. Included in this is the role that social media has played. White Supremacy is spread around the world, and the Internet plays a significant role in radicalizing individuals. They both play a key role in connecting individuals within groups and allowing them to communicate amongst the networks. Another consideration is the Overton window<sup>22</sup> and how that plays how the United States views politics. The Overton window is a potential answer to how society has allowed the rise of White Supremacy to happen in the first place. When like-minded people spend large amounts of time together, the views that they hold will only strengthen the extremeness (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 141). This has allowed individuals going to the Internet, such as Dylann Roof, to end up down rabbit holes and find communities that support them and allow their radicalization (Sanburn, 2015).

In normal circumstances, finding people and communities who share similar interests is not a bad thing, having a support system is good. But, when it comes to White Supremacy, having communities that can aid in hate and belittlement of minorities is problematic. To look forward to what is to come with White Supremacy, you must first look back at what has occurred. All of these role players must be broken down to understand why they have allowed for this space, the White Supremacy culture to blossom. How has the Internet and social media directly aided in attacks?

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<sup>22</sup> The Overton window is a model of how ideas specifically on politics and policies, are changed through time due to the influence of politics on society (Mackinac Center, n.d.).

Were these individuals brought up with White Supremacist beliefs? How were they radicalized? These factors must be discussed so society knows what to avoid in the future to prevent a further rise and to stop White Supremacists in their tracks.

### **Social Media and the Internet:**

Social media has allowed our society to take refuge behind a keyboard and then face few consequences for what is said from keystrokes on the Internet. This can be seen in all social aspects of life, not just within the White Supremacy realm. The creation of social media sites such as Parler, 4Chan, 8Chan, and many others has given White Supremacists the room to grow and spread their hateful views. This made them popular venues for hate speech. At the same time sites such as the more popular Facebook/META or Twitter have taken accountability for their users by utilizing their Terms of Service Agreements to prevent the spread of hate speech. Facebook/META and Twitter have begun cracking down on White Supremacists and their propaganda is accessible, barred individuals from their sites due to their hate speech and otherwise (Devich-Cyril, 2021). White Supremacists have long been utilizing the Internet to their benefit. They have been able to exploit the usability of websites to recruit to their cause, as well as spread their propaganda (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 139).

The use of social media has allowed White Supremacy to grow in two different ways. First, online spaces broaden exposure to and amplify extreme content and far-right ideas. Second, they help those on the far right communicate with one another, broadening networks; building resources that support activism, violence, and movement growth; and bridging online connections with offline engagements and networks (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 145).

The way the Internet has aided White Supremacy is particularly controversial due to the direct correlation between online and offline hate. “More violence occurs where a large amount of hatred is disseminated on social media” (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 147). Jason Stanley, a Philosophy

professor at Yale University, stated that “the violent language gets you used to the idea of violent action” (Smith, 2021). Individuals surrounding and immersing themselves on the Internet and White Supremacy websites, forums, chatrooms, and social media sites have helped these individuals to act out physically because they assimilate to this violent lifestyle.

Political events and the Internet continue to aid in the growth of the Alt-Right. The Internet is the perfect place to post and view what White Supremacists see as humorous memes. One meme the Alt-Right took uses is the “Pepe the Frog”. This meme originated from the cartoon character Pepe the Frog from the comic *Boy’s Life* by Matt Furie (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 152). In 2015, the Alt-Right made it their own and rebranded Pepe. They then posted new memes, with Pepe in a Nazi uniform expressing White Supremacist views. The memes were next changed adding KKK robes and hoods, and other various White Supremacist identifiers. These were posted across the Internet, primarily via Reddit and 4Chan (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 152). The Pepe the Frog memes with White Supremacist undertones became so popular that in 2016, President Trump’s campaign even retweeted a markup showing Donald Trump as Pepe (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 153).

The radicalization aspect of the Internet can be a relatively simple process thanks to how the Internet operates. You can search for a subject, and then you will immediately start only seeing posts and website suggestions related to that topic. And, suddenly, your social media is only about that topic, and the websites you go to also are about that one topic. As mentioned briefly earlier, this is precisely what happened to Dylann Roof before he committed his attack in 2015. Roof initially searched for ‘black on white crime’ immediately following the death of Trayvon Martin<sup>23</sup> in 2012 (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 148). This led him to the Council of Conservative Citizens website,

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<sup>23</sup> Trayvon Martin was an unarmed Black teenager shot by George Zimmerman in 2012, who was later acquitted for Trayvon’s death (CNN Editorial Research, 2021).



allowing him to become radicalized through their postings. By searching that topic, one time in 2012, his whole life changed. Going forward as he stated in his manifesto, “I have never been the same since that day” (Hersher, 2016).

At the same time, these Internet sites are doing exactly what they are meant to do by delivering similar material to what you initially searched for on the Internet. They can be problematic in the long run, too, allowing for specific wording to direct you in the complete opposite direction than you intended. Cynthia Miller-Idriss gives a great example of this in her book, *Hate in the Homeland*. Someone approached her after a talk and said they were looking for tips on prepping food in Tupperware and instead this person was redirected to doomsday and apocalyptic preppers (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 148). As a direct result of these types of occurrences. Google and YouTube have recently taken action to change their algorithms to reduce the amount of “conspiracy theories and partisan content” available to everyone through a quick indirect search (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 149).

With the use of social media as an asset by White Supremacists and their groups, there is now a discussion about what social media sites can or should limit. Some people argue that their Freedom of Speech extends into the depths of the Internet. Therefore, they can post/should be able to post what they please despite that sometimes the posts can have implications for physical or emotional harm. Facebook/Meta always limited the support of White Supremacy content on their site, however, initially did little to separate it from White Nationalism and Separatism. This may have been due to their inability to properly differentiate and define the wording of Nationalism and Separatism and its relationship to White Supremacy content. They have since backtracked on that, saying that they “determined White Nationalism and Separatism cannot be separated from White Supremacy and other hate groups” (Thomas, 2019). On top of removing hate speech from

their site in total, they have plans to reroute those who are searching for hate terms and groups to the organization, Life After Hate which assists in the deradicalization process for individuals a part of White Supremacist and other hate groups (Thomas, 2019).

Twitter has taken a slightly different approach than Facebook. They have been holding back on changing their algorithms the way Facebook, Google, and YouTube have done. They are concerned about the ramifications it can have on some Republican politicians<sup>24</sup> (Panetta, Larry Kudlow argues systemic racism doesn't exist, 2020). Their stance on this did change slightly after the January 6<sup>th</sup> Insurrection, where all major social media sites banned President Trump's accounts for his apparent role in the events of that day (Devich-Cyril, 2021). Also, an employee's comment on this problem is "that such a sweeping and wide-ranging algorithm could result in some innocent accounts being flagged by accident, which may not be an acceptable trade-off" (Panetta, 2019).

With the banning of the former President on multiple social media sites, the conversation regarding Freedom of Speech versus private companies' rights is reignited. Many people, including former President Trump, were upset over him being barred from these sites. He claimed that his First Amendment rights should protect him from what he is posting online. Social media companies are private companies; therefore, they have the right to block, ban, or censor any user if they feel their company's Terms of Service Agreements have been violated (Hudson Jr., 2019). It is only considered a violation of Freedom of Speech if the government is the one taking away someone's ability to use social media.<sup>25</sup> This was supported by, *Knight First Amendment Institute for Columbia University v. Trump*. The case was decided by Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald of the

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<sup>24</sup> In March 2021 Republican lawmakers attempted to limit the censorship that social media sites could enforce. This law would allow lawsuits against the social sites for doing such (Izaguirre, 2021).

<sup>25</sup> Due to social media sites being private entities there are limits to Freedom of Speech when it comes to what is allowed on their sites. If a site deems the post inappropriate and it breaks their Terms of Service Agreements, then they have the right to take the post down and limit what the user can say and do. "Current legal precedent conclusively establishes that social media users do not have a right to free speech on private social media platforms" (Pinkus, 2021).

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York where she ruled in favor of Knight (Hudson Jr., 2019). The individual's Freedom of Speech was taken away when his Twitter account was blocked by the President's Twitter account-claiming "Trump and his staffer exercised government control over the content of the tweets by blocking users who criticized the President in the interactive space on Twitter" (Hudson Jr., 2019). Due to restrictions and crackdowns on White Supremacy tones across social media sites, White Supremacists have utilized other sites that have fewer regulations towards what can be said and posted on their sites. These sites are 4Chan, 8Chan, Gab, and Parler. The website Reddit, while not inherently racist by any means, does allow White Supremacists to hold a platform on their site.

#### **4Chan:**

4Chan initially was created by a fifteen-year-old as a forum so anyone could talk about Japanese movies and comic books. It turned into a social site to share memes and other funny videos. True to itself, though, it always remained a site where anyone could post whatever they wanted and soon became the main stopping point for White Supremacists (Neiwert, 2018, p. 232). The site consists of multiple forums that users can utilize to share their views and have conversations with like-minded people. At the height of its use, the site had over twenty-two million users, not all White Supremacists. The draw to the site was its anonymity, users never had to input any personal information, and it did not require a username (Dewey, 2014).

#### **8Chan:**

8Chan, like 4Chan, was also a forum-based website. The difference is that 8Chan was created by individuals who felt that 4Chan was too censorious for their liking (Neiwert, 2018, p. 233). So, 8Chan was even more of a free form than 4Chan. The site came under fire in 2019 after it became the site of the manifestos for three mass shooters in 2019 alone and was soon taken

offline (Gonzalez, 2019). The site had gone offline to make two adjustments to get back up and running. The first is changing its name to 8kun and then changing its domain after the site was again removed from the Internet for breaking its service agreements. It then moved to a new name 8kun.top (Gonzalez, 2019). 8Chan or 8kun is the home of QAnon and the majority of the nation's white wing conspiracies theories (Zadrozny & Collins, 2018)

### **Parler:**

Parler gained popularity as a free speech site, meaning the site did not regulate the posts in the same way mainstream sites do. It was formed in 2018 and considered itself an unbiased site where people could “speak freely and express yourself openly without fear of being ‘de-platformed’ for your views” (Yurieff, Fung, & O'Sullivan, 2021). Parler was the go-to social media site for White Supremacists, Militiamen, and QAnon followers. After the January 6<sup>th</sup> Capitol riots, Parler got taken down from its domain home Amazon Web Services. It was also removed from Apple, Google, and Amazon's platform after the Insurrection in January 2021 (Heilweil, 2021).

### **Gab:**

Gab is the latest White Supremacist-supported social media in the arena. It became more popular after Parler was taken down. In January 2021 alone, it gained 2.3 million new users in one week. Gab was visited fifty-five million times, and its users looked at over one hundred million of the site's pages (Goodwin, 2021). Like some of the other social media sites, Gab is used by White Supremacists and is a space for posting free of censorship. The platform states, “we believe that users of social networks should be able to control their social media experience on their terms, rather than the terms set down by Big Tech” (Goodwin, 2021).

**Reddit:**

Reddit has long been the home of forums and posts about anything and everything from all corners of the Internet. Individual forums called ‘subreddits’ can be created by any user and can be on any topic of their choice (Widman, 2021). There are no rules regarding who and what can post to Reddit, this allows for White Supremacists to use the site with little interference or backlash regarding their beliefs. The CEO of Reddit, Steve Huffman, admitted in 2018 that the racism that can be seen across the website did not break any of Reddit’s Terms of Service Agreements (Tiffany, 2020). After the Black Lives Matter protests, the company changed its view on racism, stating that, as a company, we, “do not tolerate hate, racism, and violence” (Tiffany, 2020). Their statement regarding the protests comes off as contradictory when considering the little action taken against White Supremacists on their site.

**QANON’s Presence on the Internet:**

QAnon, the extremely online conspiracy theory that has cast its shadow over the Internet, relies exclusively on information visualization to communicate its message and is symptomatic of our inability to combat misinformation that mimics the methods of data analysis and information literacy (Hannah, 2021).

QAnon is anonymous, hence the name, so it is unknown if it is one person or multiple people behind the posts. QAnon is also the name used for the group of conspiracy theories that its followers promote. The ambiguous posts can be found across the Internet on social media such as 4Chan, 8Chan, and even YouTube, Twitter, and Reddit. QAnon, began showing up online in 2017 and has not posted since December 2020, but continues to have an alarming number of followers (Hannah, 2021, p. 1). QAnon believes that everything is a piece of government information and has a secondary meaning and is a part of larger and more significant information that the government does not want to be revealed. “Every contradiction can be explained away; no form

of argument can prevail against it” (LaFrance, 2020). QAnon believes in the ‘Deep State.’ QAnon believes the Deep State is the leading cause for most of the current problems our society has happening. The Deep State believes that Covid-19 is not real and was fabricated by the ‘Deep State’ to control people (LaFrance, 2020). These conspiracies have been circulated so much that The New York Times estimated President Trump retweeted QAnon conspiracies one hundred and forty-five times in the two years of 2017 to 2019 (LaFrance, 2020).

QAnon thrives on how gullible Americans are, especially White Supremacists and Far-Right extremists who will look for any way to prove their points are correct and to push back opposing sides. This is how people joined the January 6<sup>th</sup> insurrection crowd. Many January 6<sup>th</sup> attendees indicated that ‘Q’ was the one that sent them to Washington D.C. to fight (Aljazeera, 2021). QAnon informs its followers not to believe anything coming from mainstream media. They posted, “your ability to spread information across the digital battlefield and bypass their control is what they fear ... Keep charging, Midnight Riders!” (Hannah, 2021). In 2019, the FBI identified QANON as a domestic terrorist threat. This is the first time that they have identified a group of conspiracy theorists (Winter, 2019).

The main conspiracy of concern for Q and its followers is the supposed existence of a secretive (but nonexistent) group of elite politicians and powerful Hollywood people running a crime and pedophile ring (Zadrozny & Collins, 2018). This was the background that caused Pizzagate.<sup>26</sup> In 2016, QAnon’s reach, and the forums grew by connecting more real-life events to the conspiracy theory (LaFrance, 2020). In December 2020, NPR and Ipsos created a poll to measure who believed the Internet’s truth/lies. The findings showed that seventeen percent, (17%)

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<sup>26</sup> Pizzagate was coined after Edgar Welch had walked into Comet Ping Pong, a pizza restaurant in Washington D.C., with an AR-15, revolver, and shotgun. He was looking to uncover a secret pedophile ring in the basement of the restaurant, which did not even exist due to conspiracies aided by Alex Jones, stating that the ‘Pizza’ and ‘Pasta’ references in Hilary Clinton’s emails had been code for children who are trafficked (LaFrance, 2020).

of all Americans believed the core QAnon conspiracy, “that a group of Satan-worshipping elites who run a child sex ring is trying to control our politics and media” (Roose, 2021). QAnon also promotes that President Trump was recruited to run for President in 2016 by military generals to break up the ‘Satan-worshipping group of elites.’ When not spreading conspiracy theories on the Internet, Q’s believers and followers have become more violent in the real world. The FBI declared QAnon a domestic extremist group and a terrorist threat to the Nation following kidnappings, attempted assassinations, and a Mafia boss from New York killed in 2019, all allegedly by QAnon supporters (Roose, 2021).

While the posting of conspiracy theories itself may not be problematic, it is a fact that people reading these postings believe them and are acting out in the name of QAnon. The fact that the Far-Right Extremists and White Supremacists are the ones following QAnon is the underlying problem. “We all have an innate need to believe in good things that are extremely unlikely to take place. It is the essence of hope. And a life without hope ... hopeless” (Rothschild, 2021). When individuals’ views are being opposed, they naturally will look for things that support their views. So, the White Supremacists and QAnon supporters, find themselves searching for comfort within these conspiracies and the forums on which they hear information. These theories make the most sense to Q’s and White Supremacists and their views on society and the American Government. It is also important to note that individuals who believe in the QAnon conspiracies also likely have been following a path of conspiracy theories for some time (Rothschild, 2021). When it comes to QAnon, the conspiracies become more personal for the individual believers “that nebulous feeling that they are all out to get me becomes they are all out to get me, and I am [going to] get them first” (Rothschild, 2021). Therefore, they often take action and become violent. Their belief in this set of conspiracies gives them the confidence to act against those who are opposing their

conspiracy and other views. They showed up to the Capitol riots stating Q sent them, including permission to act out and participate in the illegal actions of that day.

The Internet in its entirety has grown drastically in the past twenty-one years. It has positioned itself as the home for most, if not all forms of communication for some individuals. QAnon, the various White Supremacist forums, and multiple websites have helped aid in the rise of White Supremacy. This coincides with the major political events that have played their role in the rise in terror in the Twenty-First century. The Senior Vice President of Policy at ADL, Eileen Hershenov, stated, “fringe social media platforms are enabling terrorism in a way that would have been unimaginable even five or ten years ago ... In essence these platforms serve as round-the-clock White Supremacist rallies, amplifying and fulfilling their vitriolic fantasies” (Anti-Defamation League, 2019).

### **The Overton Window:**

To understand how society has allowed White Supremacy to rise you have to understand how our society views politics and why that matters. This is where the Overton Window (Mackinac Center, n.d.) comes into play. The Overton Window is a theory that allows Politicians, Political Scientists, and Academics to see within which realm society is viewing politics. The Overton Window allows politicians to know which policies they should support based on where it is within the window (Mackinac Center, n.d.). “Politicians will not support whatever policy they choose whenever they choose; rather, they will only espouse policies that they believe do not hurt their electoral chances” (Mackinac Center, n.d.). The main goal of Politicians is to always get elected and to stay in office if possible. Therefore, when a policy or general idea is significantly supported by the politician’s main block of voters, the politician will likely support that policy, even if they, do not personally support it.



“The essence of the Overton window is that only a portion of this policy spectrum is within the realm of politically [possibilities] at any time” (Russel, 2006). This statement best explains the acceptance allowance; what we deem personally acceptable may not be the popular values that the majority of society deems acceptable. Policies and politically supported values generally would air on the side of the masses. So, as more and more people viewed White Supremacy as subtle overtures as appropriate expressions/popular and acceptable. Republican politicians who see those individuals as their voter base will lean toward supporting policies that favor these individuals’ values.

A focus on space and place opens up pathways to better understand the normalization and mainstreaming of Far-Right extremist narratives that help shift the Overton window of acceptable political discourse and public policy (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 164).

The focus on space and place offers up the idea that where people are and who they surround themselves with play a great deal into what is deemed socially acceptable to them. White Supremacy has been able to this century partially due to the Overton window’s logic.

The Overton Window’s shift can explicitly be seen in President Trump’s campaign as well as in his Presidential term. Since most voters fit into the Republican extreme on the right side of the Overton Window or the Democrat extreme on the left side. Stephen Ranzini CEO of University Bank and Contributor to The Hill discusses President Trump utilizing the Overton Window. He also discusses how Senator Bernie Sanders benefits from the Overton Window the same way Trump does but on the opposite political spectrum (Ranzini, 2016). In 2016, this was a breeding ground for Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders popularity growth (Ranzini, 2016). The shifting or widening of the Overton Window, and the allowance of what is deemed acceptable by society. “By creating content that pushes the boundaries of what is considered ‘extreme’ or ‘fringe,’

[Andrew] Anglin [founder of the Daily Stormer] hopes that ideas and language that were previously seen as ‘extreme’ or ‘fringe’ will move closer to mainstream in the public eye” (Ladenburg, 2018).

Conventional wisdom determined that hardline anti-immigration rhetoric and radically redistributive economic policy were non-starters with the American public, but given the opportunity to vote for Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, the American public happily proved conventional wisdom about the Overton Window on those issues to be wrong (Robertson D. , 2018).

The shift of the Overton Window is not inherently a bad thing, even if it has allowed for mainstream ideas that can be problematic. For example, when it comes to topics and policies on items such as Climate Change, where a good amount of society has already made their strong stance on it shown, it can help shift the Overton window one way again (Lancet Planetary Health, 2021). The benefits of the Overton shift can help society drastically. In this particular instance, the mainstreaming of White Supremacy is not benefiting society and is causing more damage than ever. “White Nationalists of the Alt-Right are [part] suing the ‘race less’<sup>27</sup> approach of platforms and technological innovation of algorithms to push the Overton window” (Daniels, 2018). News outlets and other mainstream media sources air on the side of caution when it comes to White Supremacists and the acceptance of them through media, and how it is approached for the informative viewing of society.

When discussing elected official fundamental beliefs, you have to consider, “politicians have the flexibility to make up their minds, but negative consequences await the elected officeholder who strays [too] far” (Robertson D. , 2018) beyond the parameters of the acceptable Overton shift. The elected officials will continuously side with those who will be voting for them.

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<sup>27</sup> The term ‘Race Less’ dates back to 1997 when a telecom company tried to claim the Internet was a space where one’s race was not a thing, a “place where we can communicate mind-to-mind, where there is no race, no gender, no infirmities ... only minds” (Daniels, 2018).

This reinforces their job security. Because the masses support the Far-Right or the Far-Left within the window, it becomes a cycle. where individuals believe in or accept borderline White Supremacist values, politicians will be allowed to support policies that align with their constituents. This demonstrates to the individuals that their elected officials have the same belief structures. This emboldens some to shout out to the world all their beliefs even if they are not always politically correct, or fully support the Overton Window's shift.

The Internet, its algorithms, the prominence of White Supremacist websites, and racist and obscure conspiracy theorists are aiding and abetting the White Supremacist message spread. I believe the evidence supports that these circumstances have helped push forward the rise of White Supremacy. On the Internet, not only do these individuals all have the same general beliefs, but they have found themselves a home to attend to at any given time if they wish. They have been joined by Politicians who willingly aided the cause to gain political constituent support. They created a literal Internet of otherwise storm clouds of hate, not solely in the United States but across global society.

### **Around the World:**

While White Supremacy is a current problem within the United States and rising continuously, the United States is not an isolated arena for White Supremacy; White Supremacy has been rising around the world. To know what the future of the United States looks like, regarding White Supremacy, look at it around the world, and pay attention. "There can be no question that White Supremacist extremism and Far-Right movements are decidedly global in nature. Addressing the evolving nature of hate and terror requires a steady pipeline of future experts who are well versed in global issues, not only local ones" (Miller-Idriss, 2020, p. 171).

White Supremacist ideals can be seen everywhere, emanating from everyday citizens, and politicians across the globe. In Italy, Matteo Salvini, who is the Secretary of the Italian Northern League Party and at one point, the Deputy Prime Minister, stated that he wanted to close the Italian borders to prevent immigrants from entering the country. At the same time, Victor Orban from Hungary has the tag line “Keep Hungary as Hungary” and was aiming to build fences to prevent immigration and simultaneously persecute Hungary’s Roma population (Clark, 2020). In November of 2017, Poland, saw approximately sixty thousand people marching in the street waving signs calling for a ‘White Europe’ and ‘Clean blood’ (Golinkin, 2017). This mirrored Charlottesville VA, Unite the Right Rally. White Supremacists in the U.S. or Europe who see that these actions like the marches are seen as acceptable, these actions and people not being condemned show other White Supremacists that they can be active and outspoken with little to no consequences.

White Supremacist rhetoric around the world has aided in the radicalization of terrorists in countries such as Brenton Tarrant in New Zealand and Anders Breivik from Norway. Anders Breivik is a Far-Right extremist responsible for the most significant attack on Norway since World War II. In a bombing and gun attack, he killed seventy-seven people, the majority of whom were teenagers (Smith-Spark, 2021). Breivik wrote a fifteen hundred paged manifesto that documented his White Supremacist views, including how he was able to acquire his weaponry. This manifesto was also written in the hopes to influence other White Supremacists to take action, following in his path, which did just that (Smith-Spark, 2021). He committed his atrocities after taking a van into Oslo filled with a homemade bomb made with fertilizer; after parking it outside of a government office, it exploded, killing eight people. After this, he drove to Utoya Island, home to a Labor Party children’s summer camp (Smith-Spark, 2021). Breivik was able to get to the island

by pretending to be a police officer checking on the camp directly following the Oslo bombings; here, he went on a spree killing sixty-nine kids. The main reasoning behind his attacks was to prevent multiculturalism within Norway and to keep out ‘Islamization,’ which he contributed to the center-left Labor Party that was currently in power in the Norwegian government (Smith-Spark, 2021).

In 2019 New Zealand saw its deadliest attack and first mass shooting since 1997 (Fattal, 2019). Brenton Tarrant went on a shooting spree in two mosques that resulted in the death of fifty-one Muslims during a Friday prayer service. Tarrant, live-streamed his attack on Facebook. He is from New South Wales, originally and planned out this attack for years with the goal of “[inflicting] as many fatalities as possible” (BBC, 2020). In his seventy-four-page manifesto, Tarrant depicted his obsession with White Supremacy culture. He singled out Nazi doctrines and the ‘Great Replacement’ theory from 2011 in his manifesto, along with the Unite the Right Rally that happened in Virginia in 2017 (Levin, 2019). In his manifesto, Tarrant had also mentioned other attacks, such as Anders Breivik’s Norwegian massacre. The most controversial part of the manifesto was his praise of President Trump, saying he was “a symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose” (Aljazeera, 2019).

Times of change, fear, and conflict offer extremists and conspiracists a chance to present themselves as an alternative to increasingly distrusted traditional mainstream choices. White Nationalism has reflected a coarsening of mainstream politics, where debates on national security and immigration have become rabbit holes for the exploitation of fear and bigotry (Levin, 2019).

Around the world, White Supremacy is growing. More and more attacks are happening with White Supremacy as the cause is popping up in increasing frequency. The future of the United States includes the White population becoming the minority by 2045. This is another of aggression for White Supremacists (Blake, 2021). While White individuals will be the minority population in

the United States by 2045, they will still reap the benefits of being White in society. This allows White Supremacists to feel that they hold power amongst the population. Whether they hold actual power will be irrelevant, White Supremacists feeling as if they do would mean them still taking violent actions against the rest of the population keeping them oppressed. “But if we do not dismantle the racial hierarchy that gives status and power to Whiteness, this new version of America will not really be new” (Blake, 2021).

In 2019, the FBI determined the main threat from White Supremacists is “decentralized and primarily characterized by lone actors. These actors tend to be radicalized online and target minorities and soft targets using easily accessible weapons” (McGarrity & Shivers , 2019). This statement also mentioned what the FBI was actively doing to combat White Supremacy. This included having a counterterrorism team at every FBI Office, and a section of agents and analysts dedicated to counterterrorism. This includes intelligence units that provide the necessary data to support these individuals (McGarrity & Shivers , 2019). The FBI also created a National Domestic Terrorism and Hate Crimes Fusion Cell to aid in stopping domestic terrorist attacks and threats, including White Supremacists and other potential Hate Crime threats. These particular agents and officials have a greater understanding of local communities and use that to their investigative advantage (McGarrity & Shivers , 2019).

The Center for American Progress and the McCain Institute for International Leadership released a blueprint for a policy to combat White Supremacy. This policy has five interconnected sections to address White Supremacy.

1. Leverage executive branch actions and responsibilities.
2. Improve data collection, research, and reporting.
3. Protect communities and prosecute crimes.
4. Counter recruiting and infiltration in law enforcement, military, and veteran communities.
5. Employ Financial and technological tools and authorities that [disrupt, defend, destroy, and dismantle] White Supremacy (Steele, Clark, Hunkler, & Padmanabhan, 2021) (Hecht, 2014).

In their article *Resources to Hold White Nationalists Accountable and Combat White Supremacy*, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights proposed different responses to combat White Supremacy and prevent its further expansion. One of these proposals is to “Demand that Congress Ensure that White nationalist Insurrectionists are Held Accountable Now and Oppose the Creation of a New Charge that Would Target Our [minority] Communities” (The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, 2021). This proposal emphasizes the need for action to be taken against White Supremacists and Militias. “The failure to confront and hold accountable white nationalist violence is not a question of not having appropriate tools to employ, but a failure to use those on hand” (The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, 2021). This proposition also goes into the systematic racism within the United States allowing Black people, Muslims, Arabs, and other minorities to be continuously targeted and yet has also allowed little prosecution of White Supremacists (The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, 2021).

The racist system that has allowed minorities to be targeted and not White Supremacists is why it is essential to set a standard by charging crimes for participation in the January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Insurrection. A standard must be established where Nations are not allowed White Supremacists to get away with their unlawful actions. To combat White Supremacy, action needs to be taken upon the base of the problem, which is the systemic racism in America that has allowed White

Supremacy to thrive. By failing to do so, White Supremacy will continue to rise. And it will rise in more significant numbers as White Americans become a minority in the United States by 2045.



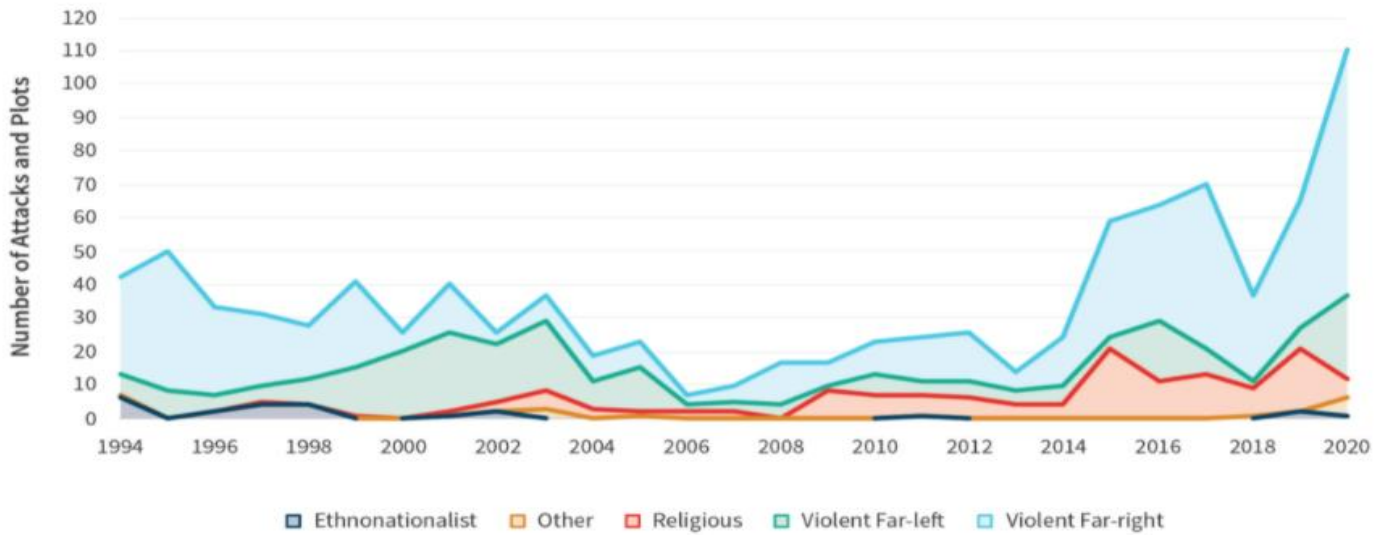
## **Chapter 7**

### **White Supremacy in Numbers**

#### **Attacks from 2000-2021:**

In April 2021, the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS) report, *The Military, Police, and the Rise of Terrorism in the United States*, gives an interpretation of how the number of attacks and the type of attacks that happened, mattered to the United States intelligence community. This report covers all types of attacks and perpetrators of these attacks, from January 1, 1994, to January 31, 2021, (Jones, Doxsee, Hwang, & Thompson, 2021). This report explains that 2020 had the highest number of domestic terrorist attacks since the Center started recording data in 1994. There had been 110 attacks in 2020, and in 2019 there were 65 attacks, and in 2017 there were 70 attacks. Previous to 2020, the 70 attacks in 2017 had been the most since recorded data in 1994 (Jones, Doxsee, Hwang, & Thompson, 2021). In 2020, White Supremacists were the cause of 66% of attacks the center accounted for, which is approximately the amount in the previous years. Their data for January of 2021 indicates a similar pattern as the past years for the type of attacks. In the chart in Figure 8, the CSIS tracks the number of attacks each year from 1994-2020. It includes who the perpetrators were, and their ideologies (Jones, Doxsee, Hwang, & Thompson, 2021).

**Figure 5: Number of U.S. Terrorist Attacks and Plots by Perpetrator Orientation, 1994–2020**



Source: Data compiled by CSIS Transnational Threats Project.

CSIS | TRANSNATIONAL THREATS PROJECT

Figure 8. Labeled figure 5 from the source (Jones, Doxsee, Hwang, & Thompson, 2021).

### Hate Groups:

In 2008, over nine hundred hate groups were active in the United States. These groups are a rise of four percent since 2007 when there were 888 active groups, and there is an impressive increase of fifty percent since 2000 when there were over six hundred groups total (Holthouse, 2009). Among these groups, there was a sharp rise of Extreme Right groups, including Sovereign Citizens, who had been fairly prominent in the 1990s. The groups that were most dangerous during this time were the KKK, neo-Nazis, and Skinheads (Holthouse, 2009). The chart below consists of data provided by David Holthouse in the Spring 2009 issue of Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) *Intelligence Report*. In the 2012 Spring Issue of *Intelligence Report*, Mark Potok, a former Fellow at the SPLC, added Hate group data to his report. This is filling the gap where Holthouse's report stopped. Potok's report aids in the consensus that Hate Group numbers continuously rose throughout the 2000s until 2011.

In 2001, there were 676 Hate groups reported, and in 2002 there were 708. In 2003, there were 751 and then saw a slow but still a rise of groups with 762 groups in 2004. There was another increase in 2005 and 2006 which grew to 803 and 844. There was another slight increase in Hate groups between 2006 and 2007 to 888, then in 2008 to 926. There was an even smaller rise in 2009 to 932. Then in 2010 and 2011, there was an immediate increase but then a minor increase after that. In 2010 there were 1,002 groups, and in 2011 which 1,018 (Potok, 2012).

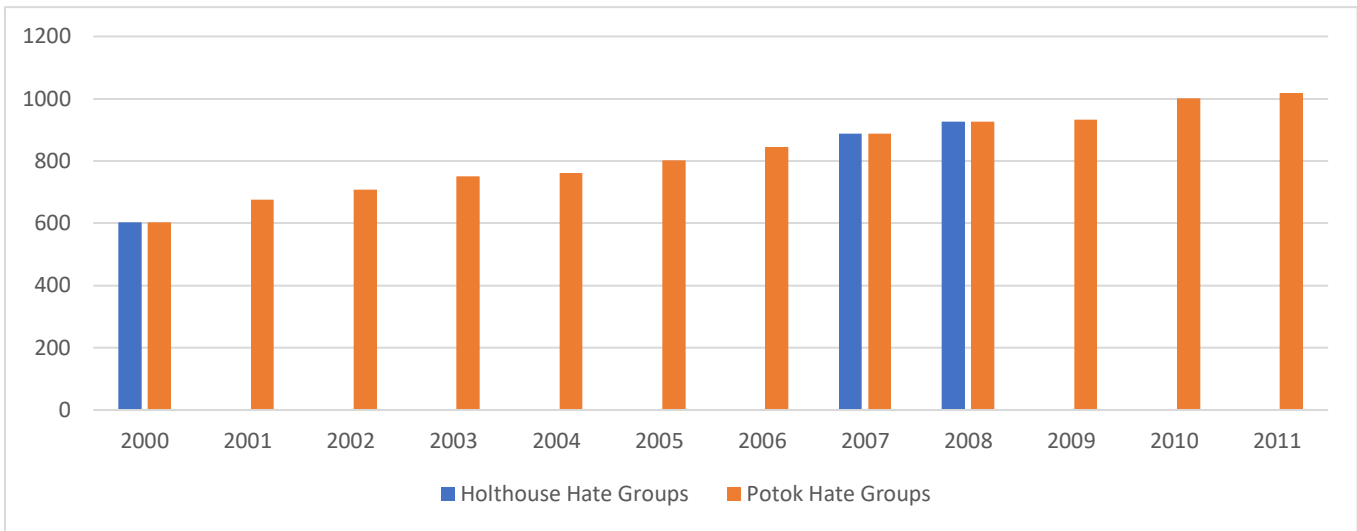


Figure 9. (Holthouse, 2009) (Potok & Ose, 2008).

### Militias:

David Neiwert in *Alt-America*<sup>28</sup> provides data on the number of militias throughout different years in the Twenty-First century. These numbers were low in the first few years, but in 2009 after President Obama was elected, the numbers drastically rose. This data set gives the number of Militias in 1996 before the years studied in this thesis, as a starting point to compare against the other years. In 1996, there were 868 Militia groups across the country; in 2000, there were 194 groups, in 2007 there were 131 (Neiwert, 2018, p. 140). After this decrease, the numbers

<sup>28</sup> David Neiwert author of *Alt-America*, is a freelance journalist and contributor to the Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Projects (Neiwert, 2018) (Neiwert, 2022).

immediately began to rise in correlation to President Obama's 2008 election. The number increased to 512 in 2009, and by the beginning of 2010 it was 824, and by the end of 2010 1,274. This shows the drastic increase in groups, especially between the beginning of 2010 and the end of the year. In 2011, there were 1,360 groups, and the rise is associated with the height of the Tea Party on Capitol Hill (Neiwert, 2018, p. 140).

Additional data was provided by the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2012 in their *Intelligence Report*. Includes tracking both Militias and the Patriot Movement. The Patriot Movement is a subgroup of the more extensive definition of Militia and is primarily an 'anti-government' group (Potok, 2012). The numbers gathered in this report combine the Patriot and the Militia groups. In 2001 there was a cumulation of 158 groups. It dropped in 2002 to 143. In 2003, there was a brief rise of 171 groups, but that soon continued to drop to 152 in 2004 and again dropped to 132 groups in 2005. These numbers continued to fluctuate between 2006 with 147 groups, 2007 with 131 groups, and 149 groups in 2008 (Potok, 2012). In 2009, there was a drastic increase in Militia groups associated with the Election of President Obama, and Militias feared that they would have their Second Amendment rights taken away. There were 512 groups in 2009 and 824 groups in 2010, and then 1,274 groups in 2011 (Potok, 2012).

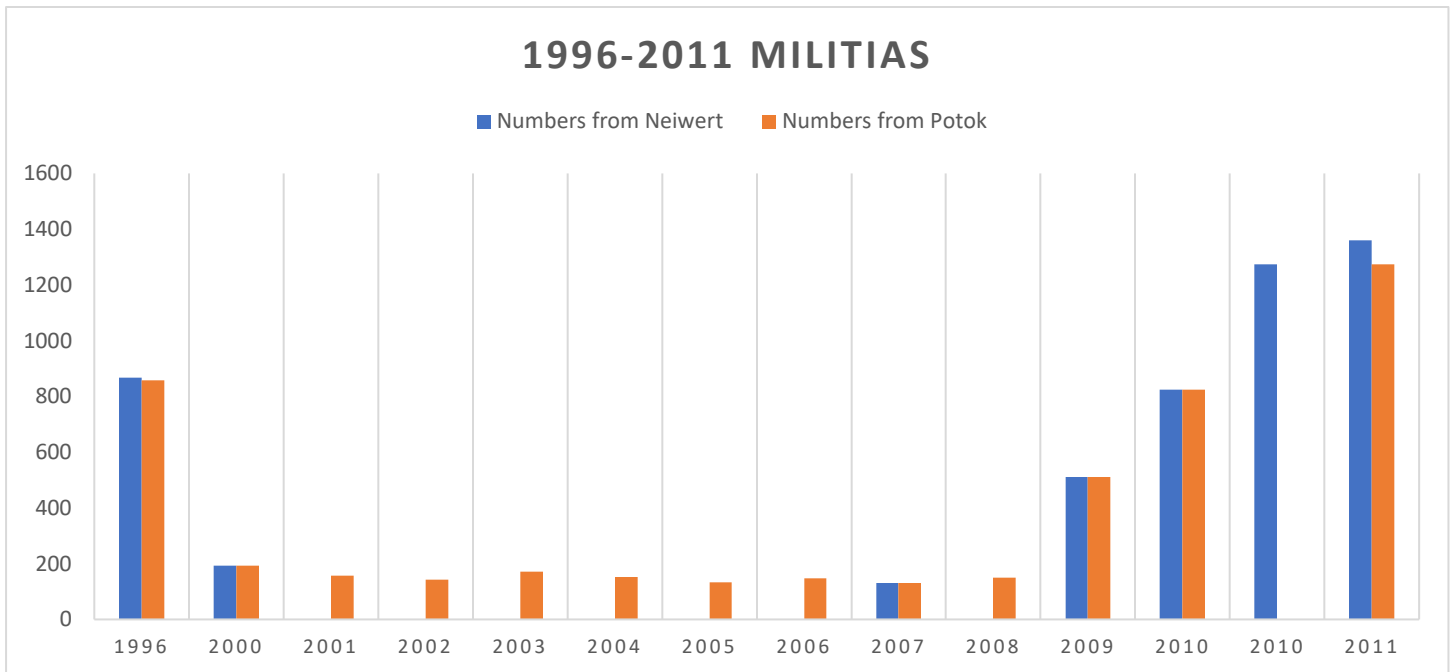


Figure 10. (Neiwert, 2018) (Potok & Ose, 2008).

### January 6<sup>th</sup> Study:

Dr. Robert A. Pape, along with Chicago Project on Security and Threats, presented a data set named *Understanding American Domestic Terrorism – Mobilization Potential and Risk Factors of a New Threat Trajectory*. This data set examines the demographic data of those who participated in the January 6<sup>th</sup> Insurrection. This data set was created because they believed that “we need a fine-grained understanding of who stormed the Capitol of January 6, who currently believes the 2020 election was stolen, and [who] would participate in a violent protest.” This is necessary to understand “who we are dealing with and create viable solutions for the future” (Pape, 2021). This overview separates three different studies that help determine who participated in the insurrection, their identifying features, and why that is important.

In the study it categorizes the data this way:

**Study 1:** Who are the Insurrectionists and where did they come from.

**Study 2:** Estimating the drivers and potential size of the Insurrectionist movement: a nationally representative survey.

**Study 3:** Explaining support for Insurrection: online a survey of American conservatives (Pape, 2021).

### **Study 1: Age and Demographics**

The first Study's findings were that 'the Insurrectionists' demographic profile is different compared to past right-wing extremists" (Pape, 2021). This keyword is **Different** because it shows diversity within the right-wing extremists that are not consistent with the demographics of extremists after attacks at other points in time. In arrests made in January 2021, 67% of arrests were older than 34 years old. Between 2015-2020, 61% of arrests were people younger than 35 years old (Pape, 2021). This study also found that "the vast majority have no connection to existing Far-Right militias or groups." The study found the reason for participation in the 2021 Insurrection and "storming the U.S. Capitol was an act of collective political violence, inspired by a leader, President Trump, and not merely vandalism or trespassing for other purposes" (Pape, 2021).

### **Study 2: Drivers**

The second study on one's drivers for action determined a significant potential for actors and the potential recurrence of an insurrection. The study found that there was a "large mobilization potential, well over 360,000 up to 3.6 million [people]" potentially willing to act (Pape, 2021). 360,000 to 3.6 million people are the large representation of individuals who all share the same beliefs on the Insurrection and would be willing to act on another one if they feel the need. In a sample of 1,000 people, 4% believe that the election was stolen, which is equivalent to *ten million people* in the United States. When comparing the drivers to other beliefs held by

White Supremacists and those who were at the Insurrection such as, the Replacement Theory and QAnon conspiracy theories, Pape and the Chicago Project were able to determine the number of individuals who would or did participate in the Insurrection. The potential scenarios that these individuals may participate in are: “1. Rise of lone-wolf terrorism vs. minorities, 2. Replay of ‘stolen election’ violence during 2022 primaries and midterms” (Pape, 2021).

### **Study 3: Support for the Insurrection**

The third study discovered the overall reasoning for supporting and attending the insurrection. This found that the majority of people who supported the insurrection are also in support of the ‘Great Replacement’ theory. The number of Insurrectionists who come from counties where there is a decrease in non-Hispanic white people is four times higher than in counties with no decrease (Pape, 2021). Pape’s study found that Americans who actively believe Black and Hispanic people are attempting to control the majority White population are more than three times as likely to be involved in the Insurrection Movement (Pape, 2021). The final section of the third study found that conservative Americans who fear, Blacks and Hispanics will have more rights than they currently do, doubling the likeliness of them becoming Insurrectionists (Pape, 2021).

## **Chapter 8**

### **In Conclusion**

This paper discusses the rise of White Supremacy in the United States. Specifically, the Rise of White Supremacy in the United States in the Twenty-First Century (2000-2021) surrounding major political events and how the rise has allowed the country to get into the position it is in today. Included in the analysis is a look at the events that have caused this rise, and that strong influence when addressing White Supremacy in the U.S. The period where information was drawn from was within the Twenty-First century, 2000 to 2021. It discusses the breakdown of political events that have aided in the rise of White Supremacy including the terrorist attacks that took place during this period. The paper also breaks down different groups and identities that are prominent with the current rise. To discuss and understand the rise of White supremacy in the United States, the other influences and events had to be discussed and broken down to get to see the full extent of their role in the Rise of White Supremacy.

The primary thesis question is, “whether or not the rise of White Supremacy and radicalization of new White Supremacists correlates with major political events in the United States during the Twenty-First century.” The secondary question is, “whether or not the rise of White Supremacy is directly associated with the rise of Domestic Terrorist attacks within the United States.” The questions at hand help aid the understanding of White Supremacy in the United States. They have also allowed for the research into more causes of the rise of White Supremacy and the factors that come along with the rise.

Is the rise of White Supremacy in the Twenty-First century caused by major political events in the United States since 2000? Yes, but this is not the final answer. While White Supremacy has risen along with the correlation of political events in the United States, many other factors had a



role. The main factors are the Internet and its role in radicalization. The role of social media sites in how the Internet works through algorithms, and platforms that have become breeding grounds for wild conspiracy theories. The Internet is a vast realm that has become a global nest. Unfortunately, White Supremacists around the country and the world have taken up space on the Internet and utilized its presence to grow. The conspiracy theories QAnon have also taken up space on the Internet and have allowed its followers to take up arms and perpetrate attacks such as those individuals at the Capitol on January 6<sup>th</sup>, claiming ‘Q’ sent them (Aljazeera, 2021).

Another factor playing a role in White Supremacy’s rise is the Overton Window. This has not directly aided in the rise of White Supremacy but has helped allow it to assume a shifting presence in our society. The Overton Window, whether viewed as shifted or expanded, now includes White Supremacist values that Republican Politicians increasingly support. The election of Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Green showed that despite her apparent acceptance and support of QAnon conspiracies and Extremist values, she was able to get elected because she had support from constituents who followed these shifting beliefs (Tully-McManus, 2020). What was once deemed unacceptable for a Politician to support is slowly becoming an acceptable norm. When individuals with these extremist views see that Politicians also support their values, they are more likely to act upon their beliefs. This was also seen in the rise of White Supremacist events and attacks that have taken place around the world. White Supremacy fueled attacks in New Zealand by Brenton Tarrant showed this connection by directly praising President Trump and White Supremacist values in his Manifesto (BBC, 2020). This can turn into a domino effect if not dealt with popularly. The more people see others with their ideologies take action and not have repercussions, increases the likeliness they will take action themselves.

Political events are still a large player in the rise of White Supremacy. Notably, this was shown during President Obama's election. Before his election in 2007, he received Secret Service protection earlier than any other Presidential candidate due to death threats (Zeleny, 2007). You can also see this directly with the rise of Hate Groups and militias corresponding to his election. In 2007, there were 888 Hate Groups, and when Obama was elected in 2008, there was an increase to 932 (Holthouse, 2009). The same rise can be seen initially after the election and a corresponding rise in Militia numbers. In 2009, there were 512 Militia Groups in the United States, and then within the first few years of President Obama's first term, there was a drastic increase in Militias. By 2011, the number of Militia Groups grew to 1,274 (Neiwert, 2018, p. 140). Another major political event that saw similar results within the White Supremacy culture after President Trump's election in 2016. President Trump's candidacy and election made space for White Supremacists to find their footing in society. During the first year, there was a direct rise in these groups. There were 954 groups in 2016-2017, with 121 Neo-Nazi groups alone and 114 anti-Muslim groups (Begley, 2018). While other things played into the rise of White Supremacy, political events, especially Presidential elections, are a significant cause.

There are many common characteristics within White Supremacy culture and White Supremacists. I was unable to cover all concepts of White Supremacy due to the mass of information available and the need to focus specifically on the Rise of White Supremacy and the Political Events that surround the Rise. These characteristics consist of psychological reasonings for becoming radicalized into White Supremacy. A prominent characteristic of White Supremacy is Masculinity, and how White Supremacists view women, and their actions that are caused by toxic masculinity (Gilson, 2018). "These men, most of them white, fear that their cultural, political, and economic supremacy is being undercut by women and people of color – even in a country in

which the faces of the most powerful are still overwhelmingly white and male” (Futrelle, 2019). How people interact with one another is greatly affected by who they are as a person, characteristics such as this often play a huge role in White Supremacy.

Is the rise of Domestic Terrorist attacks correlated to the rise of White Supremacy? Yes. According to the CSIS, 2020 saw the most Domestic Terrorism cases since they started keeping records in 1994. That year also saw the most White Supremacist attacks (Jones, Doxsee, Hwang, & Thompson, 2021). Immediately after President Trump’s 2016 election, the country saw an increase in race-based attacks on minorities. Between 2016 and 2018, there was an increase of seventy-five percent in anti-Semitic attacks (Shubber, 2018). Attacks, while not always consistent in numbers, when they should be lowering in numbers, instead have been rising. In 2020, there were 110 attacks the most recorded by CSIS; in 2017, there were seventy attacks, the previous record of attacks (Jones, Doxsee, Hwang, & Thompson, 2021).

Before January 2021, there were eight major attacks perpetrated by White Supremacists, after President Obama’s election. The rise of White Supremacy and the attacks can be seen here. Following the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks the first attacks were of retaliation by individuals who needed to react. The rise we currently see today can be seen taking off in 2008 in correlation with President Obama’s election. In 2008, Jim Adkisson went into Knoxville’s Unitarian Universalist church, to shoot liberals including members of the LGBT community (Dewan, 2008). In 2018, Robert Bowers entered the Tree of Life Synagogue and shot seventeen people, killing eleven. Some of those injured in the attack were Holocaust survivors, solidifying anti-Semitic attacks in the new decade (Robertson, Mele, & Tavernise, 2018).

These attacks are good examples of the varied rationale behind seemingly different attacks. One thing that has remained consistent is that all the attackers have shown White Supremacist

beliefs. As stated, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, can be seen as our current cumulation of attacks since 2000. The Insurrection on the Nation's Capital saw hundreds of White Supremacists from around the country gathering to put a halt to the free and fair election process. One of the overarching beliefs of those who partook in actions on January 6<sup>th</sup> is the 'Great Replacement' theory. They believed that they had the right to take action because of the decline in the population of White people across the country. They fear the results of Whites becoming the minority in the 2040s (Pape, 2021).

There was the rise of White Supremacy immediately after President Obama's election in 2008 and then again after President Trump's election in 2016. Four years later in 2020, and 2021, you start to see the number of Militias and Hate Groups dwindle. Data released from the Southern Poverty Law Center shows that the hate group numbers were 567 in 2020, and 488 in 2021. The Militia numbers in 2020 were 838 groups and in 2021, the numbers are down to 733 groups (Yancey-Bragg, 2022). After the January 6<sup>th</sup> Capitol Insurrection, it has become increasingly apparent that society's view on White Supremacy was no longer outwardly supportive. The number of groups and organizations has dwindled, but this does not equate to the number of White Supremacists dwindling. "Leaders in the white-power movement encouraged their members to maintain anonymity and avoid joining public-facing groups" (Yancey-Bragg, 2022). I believe this to indicate that the rise is problematic to society, despite the numbers of groups falling. This may be due to what society now views as acceptable versus what was viewed as acceptable four or more years ago. The Overton Window is continuously shifting, and has shown that society may no longer see White Supremacy as publicly acceptable as it seemingly was in the late 2010's.

As the DHS stated in their October 2020 Threat Assessment Report, White Supremacists are currently the most significant threat in the United States (Department of Homeland Security ,

2020). White Supremacy is a clear risk and has grown without means of resistance, allowing them to thrive. Political events have aided this growth in the United States. The rise of White Supremacy has also added to the rise of Domestic Terrorism in the U.S. To combat Domestic Terrorism, the U.S. Government has to take direct action to combat White Supremacy. Allowing both issues to grow in their own spaces has aided in the division and political unrest of the Nation. White Supremacists, and White Supremacy will only cease to exist once these individuals are no longer able to reach their desired outcomes. A 'pure' society. Until then, White Supremacy will grow and so will Domestic Terrorism.

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