

Georgia State University

ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University

---

Political Science Theses

Department of Political Science

---

5-1-2024

## On American Fascism: The Fascist Rhetoric of Donald Trump and The Right Wing-Media

Aaron S. Huff  
*Georgia State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/political\\_science\\_theses](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/political_science_theses)

---

### Recommended Citation

Huff, Aaron S., "On American Fascism: The Fascist Rhetoric of Donald Trump and The Right Wing-Media." Thesis, Georgia State University, 2024.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.57709/36970572>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Political Science at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Political Science Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@gsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@gsu.edu).

On American Fascism: The Fascist Rhetoric of Donald Trump and The Right Wing-Media

by

Aaron Huff

Under the Direction of Mario Feit, PhD

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2024

## ABSTRACT

In the wake of the election of Donald Trump, there has been an ever-increasing rise in openly right-wing authoritarian rhetoric: what I would label as fascism rhetoric. Fascist rhetorical devices are used to sensationalize and dramatize right-wing extremists into false notions of political and social reality and conspiratorial thinking. This way of communication ultimately leads to an increase in physical and aggressive attacks, through language and violence, against those deemed as an 'other' by a nationalized and mythicized 'us.' This being the case, the language reflects notions such as an ahistorical, mythical past of the nation's history, glorifying the "chosen people" with the nation and constantly degrading outside groups positioned as ailments on society. The fascist rhetoric in Donald Trump's rhetoric is the primary issue of this paper. Thus, this paper intends to map the fascist rhetorical elements of the two leading figures of the authoritarian right wing: Donald Trump and the Right-Wing Media. In doing so, I hope to shed some light on Trumpian rhetoric, showing how certain elements and particulars are indeed fascist.

INDEX WORDS INDEX WORDS: Trumpism, Fascism, Fascist Rhetoric, Rhetoric, Authoritarianism, Media, Right-Wing Media

Copyright by  
Aaron Stewart Huff  
2024

On American Fascism: The Fascist Rhetoric of Donald Trump and The Right Wing-Media

by

Aaron Huff

Committee Chair: Mario Feit

Committee: Peter M. Lindsay

Holloway Sparks

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Services

College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

May 2024

## **DEDICATION**

For my loving parents, who always pushed me to achieve more. For my amazing partner, who inspires me every day and who I am ever so grateful for. And finally, for myself, who I always believed in and knew could overcome any task that presented itself.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I want to express my gratitude to my committee members for their continued involvement throughout this thesis journey. I also want to express my gratitude to the head of the MA Program for the Political Science Department, Professor Louis-Alexandre Berg, for his support throughout my graduate career.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....		<b>V</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION: FASCISM IN AMERICA?</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>WHAT IS FASCIST RHETORIC</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<i>Cult of Personality Politics</i> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2</b>	<i>Fascism’s Imaginary Rhetoric: False Reality and False Narratives</i> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<i>The Politics of Inequality: In-Group, Out-Group, and Hierarchical Structure</i> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>TRUMP’S FASCIST RHETORIC: THE WORDS OF A CON MAN</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<i>Deity Donald</i> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<i>Distorting Reality Through Rhetoric</i> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<i>Hierarchical Language: The Voice of Victimhood and Loss</i> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>THE RIGHT-WING MEDIA: PROMOTING THE RHETORIC OF A FASCIST</b> 27	
<b>4.1</b>	<i>Repetition As Sensationalized Propaganda</i> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<i>Mimicry, Media, and Memes (?)</i> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	<b>41</b>



## 1 INTRODUCTION: FASCISM IN AMERICA?

Since his presidential campaign in 2016, throughout his presidency, and even now with him running again for a second term, Donald Trump has been an ever-growing concern for those who study democratic theory. Not only is his support base comprised of Qanon conspiratorial thinkers and practitioners, but it is also full of right-wing extremist groups such as the Proud Boys and the Three Percenters. We saw, and still see, the lasting effects of Trump and his supporting base's effects on the American political-social order – from aggressive attacks, both physically and symbolically, against those seen as opposing Trump and his ideas to maybe the most terrifying event to threaten American democracy in modern times: the January 6th riot and storming of the U.S. Capitol. There are a number, and too many to thoroughly go through, of instances and cases of Trump supporters acting and behaving in ill-mannered, undemocratic, and unruly ways that are threatening American democracy.

As such, it is important to label what we see for what it is: the Trumpian approach to politics is a case of right-wing extremism and sensationalism. It is a specific kind of authoritarian ideology that appeals to the nation as something akin to a deity that has somehow fallen from its graces because of some sort of boogeyman entering it. This ideology recalls a false history and relates it to a mythos of a “great nation” that a “chosen people” who feel they are owed the right to what they believe to be theirs and only theirs, that being the nation itself. As such, it positions the nation and the chosen as one and the same, creating a culture of superiority to those that fit its narrow definition, and means any group that does not fit the narrow framework of what it means to be chosen is classified as an ailment or a contagion on the nations, and therefore on its chosen peoples. This ideology creates a categorical “other” as the sole reason for the aforementioned fall of the nation which the “chosen” can pin as the scapegoats of any problems that exist and have

even yet to happen, creating an ‘us versus them’ dichotomy. The ideology takes the rights and liberties away from the villainized ‘them’ to only allow the glorified ‘us’ any semblance of political, social, or physical autonomy. I am referring to the notorious and frightening ideology that is fascism.

While there is a hesitancy to use the word “fascism” to describe Donald Trump, I believe it is an important task to analyze and look at aspects of Trumpism that we might call fascist. As such, the central point of this thesis is to put Trumpism under a microscope, identifying its elements to see what qualifies as fascist. As such a task could involve extensive analytical work of Trump and his followers’ actions, policies, and overall worldview, it is important to narrow down the aspects of Trumpism that can be associated with fascism. Therefore, I will focus on a singular phenomenon: Trump’s rhetoric. As such, I will look at Trump’s many rhetorical mannerisms, the way Trump presents himself and his followers in his speeches and during his rallies, the way Trump positions those who oppose him, the way Trump galvanizes his fan base not only through fear but also through mythic hope, the constant and ahistoric referencing of a “better time” in America’s past – “Make America Great Again” (MAGA), and the many instances of conspiratorial language that alters reality separating truth from fiction.

Therefore, the question I am seeking to answer is: how is Trump’s rhetoric fascist? However, Trumpism is not just a relationship between Trump and his followers; there is another political player that must be analyzed under the same microscope so that we can fully conceptualize the extent to which such rhetoric is indeed fascist. I am referring to the right-wing media – i.e., Fox News, Breitbart, and the Daily Wire, to name a few. The right-wing media not only mimics and adopts Trump’s rhetoric but also reinforces it through a constant stream of positive reinforcement over subjects that pertain to Trump, further signaling a sort of idolization

and glorification of Trump in the eyes of his supporters. In doing so, the right-wing media brings political legitimacy to the Trumpian-style rhetoric, it is seen as a permissible outlet that one can trust. In doing so, the minds, hearts, and beliefs of Trump supporters are constantly reinforced through the spread of Trump's inflammatory language, the constant barrage of verbal attacks against his opponents and enemies, the Qanon conspiracy talk of "draining the swamp," the mythical misrepresentation of America's past, all through the right-wing media's reiteration of Trump and praise of his rhetoric as not only "truth" but also as "good."

Together then, the question this paper seeks to answer is: How does Trump's rhetoric and its echoing by right-wing media exhibit signs and modes of fascist rhetoric and ideology? To answer this question, there must be a definition of 'fascist rhetoric.' Therefore, I will first go over and analyze the theory and historical accounts of what fascist rhetoric looks like. This will allow me to assess the extent to which Trump's rhetoric is fascist, as well as whether the right-wing media channels elements of fascist rhetoric.

## 2 WHAT IS FASCIST RHETORIC

Before diving into the specific elements of Trump's rhetoric that reflect fascist rhetoric, we must first explore, define, and show what this fascist rhetoric looks like in practice and theory. This task involves examining how such rhetoric operates, finding the ends and goals of those who espouse it, and dissecting the rhetorical elements of fascist rhetoric observed throughout history. In exposing this rhetoric, I seek to inform the claim made against Trump's and the Right-Wing Media's rhetoric as fascist. As such, Trump's and the Right-Wing Media's rhetoric falls into the category of far-right extremism that we should rightfully label holistically and accurately.

Trumpian rhetoric involves more than just momentary instances of categorical demeaning and inflammatory language: racism, sexism, xenophobia, classism, nationalist sentiment, white supremacy, pro-authoritarianism, etc. Such rhetoric involves more than a moment of singular particularity concerning any given subject – whatever that may be in the many talking points of Trumpian politics. Instead, this rhetoric has a purposeful and interconnected ideological way of communication that expresses a multiplicity of illiberal, or better yet anti-liberal, sentiments within its worldview.

### ***2.1 Cult of Personality Politics***

Authoritarian politics centers around an authoritarian ideology and the movement's authoritarian leader(s). These leaders are ideologues who follow extremist political and social movements, enticing in their charismatic modes of articulation that droves of people cannot help but listen and follow such leaders, idolizing them in the process and placing them on a pedestal of infallibility. In such an understanding of authoritarianism, fascism is no exception. In fascist

politics and rhetoric, glorification of its authoritarian leaders as the savior of the nation and people means not only can such a person do no wrong morally or legally, but also, that they are the sole most authoritative source of information and perceivable “correctness” in interpreting reality. They carry a seemingly omnipotent and esoteric sense of knowing that only they have access to.

This formulaic, dogmatic, and demagogic mode of political interaction is what I would label “cult politics” or cult of personality politics. It exists in pure essence as a hierarchical relationship between the leader of the fascist politics and the people. In the leader’s definition and understanding of the hierarchy, the nation deems the latter “chosen.” The politics around a cult of personality then rests solely on the position of the leader himself relative to the country’s citizens. For example, the term “*Führer*,” used during World War II and throughout the Nazi campaign – and even today in neo-Nazi circles – was in a direct relationship between the leader of the Nazi movement, Hitler, and the chosen people of Germany, the *Volk*. Rhetorically, the term *Führer* represents the *Volk* itself, establishing that through the *Führer*, the *Volk* as a collective can see themselves individually as a part of the nation, creating a sense of “oneness” (Colasacco 2018, 35).<sup>1</sup>

The rhetorical relationship in a cult of personality politics looks as such: The fascist leader, the *Führer*, acts as the representative of the will of the “chosen people,” the *Volk*, to which all authority over the *Volk* belonging to him (Colasacco 2018, 36) and to which he labels and defines in the fascist ideology. In the case of Nazi Germany, the *Volk* was the Aryan race, which

---

<sup>1</sup> Instead of using “cult” to describe such a politics, the “Sacralization of Politics,” coined by Emilio Gentile, is another name. The state transforms the citizens entirely to believe in dogmatic politics akin to religion, with a “supreme entity,” the nation-state. (Colasacco 2018, 31).

purely belonged to the German people in the Nazi fascist ideology, proclaiming that Germany could only belong to the *Volk*. The *Volk* falls into a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy, where the fascist leaders, glorifying the *Volk*, captivate the *Volk* through their rhetoric. Those who fit the criteria of identification to what it means to be *Volkish*, as defined by the authoritative source – the *Führer* himself – fall into believing they are somehow different as a people from all others (Colasacco 2018, 41). The *Führer*, a member of the *Volk* and the first identifier of the *Volk* as a group, establishes that they alone are the voice of the *Volk* and the nation. The *Führer* can wholly communicate the needs and wants of the *Volk* and the nation at once (Colasacco 2018, 41), establishing himself as a demagogue or savior that the *Volk* idolizes and follows.

The cult-like politics of fascist rhetoric, then, operates inherently hierarchical in its communicatory abilities and effects, with the leader at the pinnacle to voice the beliefs of the followers. In this framework, we see that the rhetoric of the fascist leader appeals to the masses or the “common man.” The fascist leader, while reigning supreme – both physically as the head of the movement and symbolically in the hearts and minds of the chosen people – speaks as though their followers and themselves are one and the same. In this way, the fascist leader identifies with the “little man,” closing the perceived distance between the masses and the leader, allowing the former the feeling of assurance that the latter works on its behalf (Rensmann 2018, 38).<sup>2</sup> They orient themselves not as a categorical classification, such as a politician, but as a civilian who takes up the role of a politician for the people, the *Volk*. As William E. Connolly shows in the rhetoric of Hitler, “I (Hitler) gradually so transformed myself into a speaker for the mass meeting, that I became practiced in the pathos and the gestures which a great hall with its thousands of people demands” (Connolly 2017, 9). Essentially, the “common man” sees the

---

<sup>2</sup> Rensmann is referring to authoritarianism more generally, not just fascism.

leader as socially and politically positioned the same as himself, to the point where the common person sees themselves in the leader, establishing a false mutualistic interconnection between the two where anything the leader says represents what their followers are thinking and feeling (Rensmann 2018, 38).<sup>3</sup>

## **2.2 *Fascism's Imaginary Rhetoric: False Reality and False Narratives***

Fascist ideology rests on the idea that the nation and the people are to amalgamate into one being – the “oneness” – creating an idyllic form of nationalism where the people and the nation are realized through one another because they *are* the same being. It only follows then that the rhetorical language and devices the fascist use reflect the notion of nationalism, that the individual and nation-state are of the same body and mind. How does fascist rhetoric do this? Simply put, this happens through falsifying the nation's historical past, creating a false reality that its citizenry legitimately believes as true. Furthermore, the rhetoric of the fascist relies on the claims that they are “exposing” truths that an outside group or an “elite” hides from the masses. In this way, fascist rhetoric distorts existing narratives and simultaneously creates new narratives, establishing false narratives as “true” ones. All put together, through the falsification of reality and the establishment of a false narrative, what we can generally call the fascist imagination, the nation and its people become unified.

In creating a false reality, rhetorically, one must operate within the outside boundaries of reality. The fascist does just that, using mystical language and historical myths to falsify the past. Jason Stanley calls this concept “The Fascist Mythic past” – an ahistorical account of the

---

<sup>3</sup> Rensmann here is quoting from Keller 1989, 119.

nation's history that establishes some chosen people as members of the true idea of the nation, obscuring reality to create an intentional myth (Stanely 2018, 4-5).<sup>4</sup> The rhetoric of the fascist then not only recalls the past as better than the present but also mythologizes it beyond recognition. Making the past a fantasy instead of non-fiction. In fascist rhetoric, the past effectively becomes a tool to win political favor in changing the present (Stanley 2018, 6).

Such rhetoric relies heavily on nostalgia for the nation's past. The fascist leader calls back to times that the chosen people consider "better" and as "glorious" for the nation-state (Stanley 2018, 19). Again, however, this sense of nostalgia is a myth. In what Candice K. Travis labels as Nostalgic Nationalism – "a prosthetically constructed memory which inspires longing for a lost mythological past" (Travis 2023, 72). Travis sees that nostalgic rhetoric has problematic potential because of its malleability as a convention of the mind that allows for the shaping of narratives about the past (Travis 2023, 74-75). The fascist then can intentionally use such a rhetorical tool to manipulate the minds of their followers. This allows them to select particular "facts" about history in order to distort the memory of those listening, creating a false narrative of events (Travis 2023, 75-76).

The ahistorical, mythical, and nostalgic rhetoric of a nation's history is, in itself, not enough for fascism to firmly grasp its supporters. Enough information in the world exists to diminish support of fascist rhetoric through the instantiation of facts that exist in it. It is a daunting task to think that behind the scenes, there operates some sort of cabal where Jewish overlords effectively control the world, with the sheer amount of evidence proving that this is not

---

<sup>4</sup> Stanley provides a quote from Benito Mussolini: "We have created our myth. The myth is a faith, a passion. It is not necessary for it to be a reality.... *Our myth is the nation, our myth is the greatness of the nation!* And to this myth, this greatness, which we want to translate into a total reality, we subordinate everything."



the case.<sup>5</sup> However, thinking of the Jewish cabal as, in fact, real becomes ever more believable if you think the facts themselves are untrue and are also willingly told to you false by an elite group as true. Indeed, suppose fascist leaders want to thoroughly ensure that what they are saying is taken as truth. In that case, they must necessarily claim that the facts against them are untrue and, in doing so, must establish a new truth utterly devoid of any way to prove false, otherwise known as a conspiracy. Fascist leaders and anti-Semitic pundits throughout antiquity have used exactly the same example shown, known as the “Jewish Conspiracy,” as an unprovable and unfalsifiable claim that manipulates the facts about the world.<sup>6</sup> The “new fact” is that the Jews run the world and that the fascist leader, to stop the Jewish cabal, must have all political power.

Conspiratorial language is a crucial feature of fascist rhetoric. Similar to how nostalgia creates false narratives of the past and how a mythic past creates its own reality, conspiratorial rhetoric recreates knowledge itself. In describing conspiracy theories, Stanley says that they “do not function like ordinary information. Their function is to raise general suspicion about the

---

<sup>5</sup> Of course, there will be groups and individuals who will, regardless, believe whatever they want to believe.

However, I see such a group and person as being outliers to the norm of how people regard information and facts. Being outliers, these people, with their false ideas, can have no real effect on the world.

<sup>6</sup> Travis outlines a glimpse of such rhetoric used throughout human history, connecting the past rhetoric to the rhetoric of the present. Travis says: “First deployed in the 12th century, blood libel has a history of justifying Jewish pogroms, of leading to mob violence against Jewish people, and of underpinning claims of vast Jewish conspiracies. The blood libel fueled Nazi propaganda, as did The Protocols of the Elders of Zion – a work of paranoid fiction which describes the alleged plans for Jewish world domination. Blending these two anti-Semitic annals together, QAnon exists on the assumption that a cabal of corrupt elites – also called the ‘deep state’ –, harvest adrenochrome from trafficked children to prolong their own lives and thus prolong their world domination” (Travis 2023, 176-177).

credibility and the decency of their targets” (Stanley 2018, 58). Furthermore, conspiracy theories use rhetoric that feeds off society's paranoia (Stanley 2018, 63) and purely exist out of irrationality, so much so that it does not matter, even if such rhetoric is quantifiably false (Stanley 2018, 65). Fascist rhetoric thus claims everything as a conspiracy against them and, through proxy, against their supporters. In this way, facts become lies, and lies become facts, which the fascist leader adopts in his rhetoric to control what knowledge is and is not, what Connolly calls “the Big Lie Scenario.”<sup>7</sup>

Take the example from above of the “Jewish Conspiracy;” any argument against the fascist or any argument not attacking or criticizing the Jewish Conspiracy now falls under the label “Jewish” and thus categorized as false. In Nazi Germany, instances of fascist political leaders, such as Hitler, labeled the media as the “Jewish press” for not mentioning “the international Jewish Conspiracy” (Stanley 2018, 60). The Jewish Conspiracy, then, for the Nazi campaign, functioned as the Nazi’s reality. As Hannah Arendt puts it,

“The point was that the Nazis acted as though the world were dominated by the Jews and needed a counterconspiracy to defend itself. Racism for them was no longer a debatable theory of dubious scientific value, but was being realized every day in the functioning hierarchy of a political organization in whose framework it would have been very “unrealistic” to question it. (Arendt 1973, 362).

The Nazi fascist ideology, and therefore its rhetoric, insisted that Jews really did hold some notion of ambiguous political power over the world. As such, the new truth – or rather new reality – became unquestionable, and if one were to question it, one would fall prey to the hierarchical labeling and denounced as a Jew or behaving “Jew-ish.” The lie of the Jewish

---

<sup>7</sup> See Part: Distorting Reality Through Rhetoric for more on the Big Lie Scenario

Conspiracy now replaces the facts that once denied it, and the facts are now replaced with the lie they once repudiated. In other words: the lie becomes a fact, and the fact becomes a lie.

### ***2.3 The Politics of Inequality: In-Group, Out-Group, and Hierarchical Structure***

As mentioned, fascism operates inherently hierarchically concerning its leader-follower relationship. However, this element of the hierarchical structure extends beyond those within its ideological framework. Indeed, fascism primarily revolves around the politics of Us vs. Them. It creates an in-group and out-group distinction where the former views itself as quintessentially, in all regards, better than the latter (Stanely 2018, 79). Establishing a politics of inequality between groups, formulating a notion of the ‘other’ that diametrically opposes to the idea of the ‘I’ or ‘we.’ ‘We’ think this way about something, so they, the ‘others,’ *must necessarily* think differently about said something.

This in-group-out-group dynamic creates an ethical relationship. Rhetorically, the in-group, positioned as the “chosen people,” can do no wrong, and therefore, the out-group can only do wrong. Here, the language of the fascist creates morality, ascribing negative assertions and connotations, such as “lazy” or “underserving” to the out-group, and positive rhetoric, such as “hardworking” or “deserving” to the in-group (Stanley 2018, 83). Such rhetoric also acts ostensibly as a declaration of political power, establishing the roles of dominance and subordination through the dualism of antonyms clashing against each other. For every archetypical hero, there must be an archetypical villain. As such, any destabilization of the hierarchical structure through social mobility of the out-group – the ‘other,’ the perceived villain – causes concern for the pre-established power that the in-group – the ‘we,’ the perceived hero –

holds, causing the latter to feel a sense of loss and forming a sort of victimhood about the loss of their status (Stanley 2018, 89-90).

The fascist then rhetorically divides the categories of the ‘us’ and the ‘them’ into abstract concepts just as good or bad, as divine or evil, as the just and the unjust, as the hero and the villain. The actions of one group become untethered from any real meaning that it bears upon the world, only existing as a talking point for the fascist to grab ahold of and spin in his favor. The illusionary and imaginary victimhood of the in-group is real, while the actual and legitimate victimhood of the out-group is fake. This reversal relationship can be observed when looking at American history.

Fascist elements fill American history: slavery, The Jim Crow era, and the rise of the KKK are all moments in American history where fascism – even if it was not called such – was present.<sup>8</sup> In these times, we can see where the imaginary victimhood of the dominant, along with the repression of the victimhood of the oppressed have existed in America. The KKK, for example, would make claims of impurity regarding anyone who did not meet their description of “white,” building a “solidarity” around their feelings of loss for the Aryan race (Gordon 2023, 160). The loss, or feelings of victimization, here is the purity of white blood mixing with impure races and groups. White people, situated as the in-group, created their own self-victimization, completely suppressing and nullifying the legitimate victimhood of those situated as the out-

---

<sup>8</sup> In his Book *Hitler American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law*, James Q. Whitman outlines and provide empirical evidence where Hitler and the Nazi campaign gained inspiration for their race law and policies looking towards America as an example. Whitman shows how American policies such as legalized slavery through the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment, Jim Crow laws, and segregation laws all inspired the many racist policies and anti-Semitic laws in Nazi Germany.

group: people of color, Jews, communists, socialists, etc. (Gordon 2023, 160). The fascist rhetorician captures the feelings of victimization felt in the in-group and redirects it at the out-group, reversing the roles of the two groups.

### 3 TRUMP'S FASCIST RHETORIC: THE WORDS OF A CON MAN

Fascist rhetoric, as described in the above section, is meticulous in intention and how it operates. Indeed, the rhetorical idealization of a political prophet and the hierarchical organization in its language between the leader and his followers allows it to function efficiently and smoothly. This hierarchical structure exists within the rhetoric of the Us vs. Them identity politics that fascists appeal to. The fascist imagination, situated around the historical context at any given time, must work in those moments of reality to diminish facts and to create fiction, making myth out of a “nostalgic” past and speaking of a completely delusionary, nonsensical falsification of reality through conspiratorial language. Adjudicating the rhetoric of former president Donald Trump will show how his language and mannerisms map onto definitively as fascist rhetoric that I have thus far shown

#### 3.1 *Deity Donald*

Trump lacks any form of humility associated with the norm of a democratic politician. Trump's exceptionally egotistical, manipulative personality concerning himself and his abilities exceeds all reasonableness required in democratic politics to function properly. However, Donald Trump's massive ego and over-zealous sense of self are the biggest appeals to his fan base. That he “tells it like (or how) it is” without capitulating to the norms of commonplace political rhetoric. From this we see that, as a centrality to how he operates his politics, Trump encapsulates an image of aggression that can be associated with “tough,” “strong,” “leader,” “dominant,” and any other colloquial term used to describe someone as, in some manner, superior to everyone else (Gounari 2018, 211), including the very people that describe him as such. In this way, Trump exhibits a “manipulative type” of the authoritarian personality. He

views everyone around him as “lesser beings” that only exist for the sake of manipulation and as tools or objects for his own personal discretion, regardless of their feelings (Connolly 2017, 60).<sup>9</sup> In a similar manner to how the rhetoric of the fascist uses language to create a hierarchical relationship between their selves and their follower, with the former being positioned above the latter. So, too, does the rhetoric of Trump, with his instantiation of superiority in all relationships associated with political power. Rhetorically, Trump positions himself as a deity of sorts, hierarchically above his followers, where what he says functions as just “how it is” *a priori*.

Trump’s self-deification happens through his constant affirmation that he alone can solve America’s issues, regardless of how grandiose or impossible the task may be; he asserts himself as the “sole source of solutions, ideas, and actions” (Gounari 2018, 217-218). Trump’s rhetoric reflects this everywhere in his past tweets. For example, when referring to a supposed increase in crime and increase in taxes, Trump declared that “people are fleeing” the states of New York, California, and Illinois; Trump stated that “I will turn it around, and FAST” (Twitter/X October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020).<sup>10</sup> Recall that, rhetorically, the fascist leader circumvents “correctness” and information, making themselves the sole source of authority over any given topic. Trump does the very same. In the above statement, Trump presents a problem as if it were real, dismissing or completely ignoring any information proving him wrong, effectively declaring himself correct and, therefore, the “problem” as real. After stating a perceived “problem,” Trump asserts *himself* as capable of solving or fixing it, alone. (Gounari 2018, 218). Trump asserts *himself* as the sole

---

<sup>9</sup> Connolly here connects this kind of personality to the Nazi leader and chief instructor of the Holocaust, Heinrich Himmler (Connolly 2017, 60).

<sup>10</sup> I am pulling Tweets such as these from an internet database called [thetrumparchive.com](http://thetrumparchive.com), which has collected and stored every Tweet that Donald Trump has ever Tweeted until his account removal from the platform.

arbiter and problem solver who can bring about change; that he is the only that can “clean up the mess (Connolly 2017, 11)

However, for Trump and the fascist leader to assert themselves as the sole authority, their supporters, be it the *Volk* or the “real” Americans, must relinquish their own political authority and autonomy to the leader.<sup>11</sup> How does Trump accomplish this rhetorically? The same way that the fascist leader does it. He draws on the anxieties of his target audience, referring to a time when the target audience was once “great,” identifying himself as the one who can alleviate their feelings of fear. Trump's rhetoric draws upon his audiences’ political and social insecurities, using this “energy” and transforming it into anger (Connolly 2017, 12). He speaks of a past where his audience – the majority of whom are white – had some sort of prestige, some sort of glory (Connolly 2017, 13). In this moment of fear and insecurities, Trump establishes himself as a spiritual vessel in which his audiences’ woes are reimagined into anger – the “speaker for the mass meeting” in which the “pathos” materializes from the demand of “thousands of people.”<sup>12</sup>

In relating Trumpian politics to Machiavellian Politics, Gladden J. Pappin sees that a categorical person called “the great” can make a play for political power through a direct appeal to the people that they cannot resist, giving him all authority and deeming him prince (Pappin 2018, 144-145). Through this process, Trump effectively becomes the “voice” of his supporters. Much like how the fascist rhetorician maneuvers themselves socially and politically the same as the “common man,” speaking as though both the leader and the follower are the same. Similarly, Trump becomes known as an “outside insider” in the same fashion (Gounari 2018, 222). In speaking as the people’s voice, his supporters view Trump as a part of the masses and, therefore,

---

<sup>11</sup> “real Americans” is a term that Trump and his supporters often refer to themselves as.

<sup>12</sup> Refer back to the Hitler quote on page 3.



as an “authentic” source of the public will (Gounari 2018, 222). He is not labeled as a politician or businessperson but as a “regular American” standing up against corrupted career politicians and a corrupted system for the sake of the people and nation, fighting against the “elite.” In this way, Trump situates himself as a Jesus-like political prophet, one with the people and, at the same time, above them: both man and God. We saw such a sentimental relationship during Trump’s 2016 acceptance speech for the GOP presidential nomination. In his speech, Trump shouted and asserted, “I AM YOUR VOICE,” after declaring himself as representing the “neglected, ignored, and abandoned” and the “forgotten men and women” (Kelly 2020, 5).

### ***3.2 Distorting Reality Through Rhetoric***

Trump’s language possesses a myriad of rhetorical devices that entail a mythical and false narrative of nationalist feelings of nostalgia. Trump’s very campaign slogan establishes a message of nationalism and nostalgic sentiment in “Make America Great Again,” with the “again” recalling a time when American politics was more one-dimensional and not the kind of pluralistic or multiplicity we see in the modern era (Connolly 2017, 11); recalling a time that America has, in some manner or fashion, fallen from grace. America has somehow lessened, and to fix this problem, we must return to a time in America’s past that one can call or – in the case of Trump’s supporters – imagine as “greatness”: to become “Great *Again*.” Such rhetoric, I believe, follows nationalist, nostalgic sentiments, like that of racism and xenophobia, that fascist movements hold onto to galvanize their base of support.

Trump's rhetoric relies upon the notion of traditionalism and “classical American values” that work in Trump's favor in crafting the “homogenized common America imaginary” that exists in the context of the American racist past (Gounari 2018, 211). Trump does not call on the

historically accurate parts of America's past but instead, an idealized version of it – a myth – that can, through the collective fascist imagination, believe at one time such a history as “real.” The time or era becomes irrelevant because Trump dismisses historical facts for a historical, non-reality that turns the events of what actually occurred into false narratives and fictional accounts. Trump does this in the same way as the fascist politician, through a constant attack and a complete disregard for information coming from “liberal universities,” rejecting the expertise of intellectuals to “degrade and debase the language of politics,” creating mythic narratives (Stanley 2018, 43;52). As we saw throughout his campaign, Trump would label left-wing media outlets and the liberal, left-leaning professoriate class as “fake news” and an “enemy of the people” to denounce their legitimacy (Connolly 2017, 27).

For example, Critical Race Theory (CRT), a legal theory taught in universities across the nation that exposes America's past of systemic racism, tells a very real version of America that many Americans did not know or were never formally taught. During Trump's presidency, he attacked CRT, saying that the theory was a “Marxist doctrine holding that America is a wicked and racist nation, that even young children are complicit in oppression” (Rupar 18 Sept. 2020).<sup>13</sup> Trump also called CRT “un-American” for presenting the United States as “inherently racist or evil” (Cineas 24 Sept. 2020). These statements make an appeal to a mythical, nostalgic narrative of America's past. Namely, the myth that America was *not* once racist. The argument now shifts, Trump's rhetoric now reconfigures America's past through a mythical retelling based on ahistorical feelings of nostalgia versus an account based on objective, factual information

---

<sup>13</sup> Stanely points out that in fascist politics there exists the notion of a political “boogeyman:” the Marxist. Schools, universities, and the professorate class – in the beliefs of the fascists - are teaching children the “Marxist doctrine” (Stanely 2018, 42-43).

supported on historical grounds. Trump clings to the nostalgic feelings of McCarthyism in referring to CRT as Marxist; he mythologizes America's past in countering CRT's historic claims of systematic racism as un-American. Taken together, like the rhetoric of the fascist, Trump's rhetoric forgoes legitimate accounts of history and expertise for false notions of a fake past, capitalizing on delusional feelings of resentment.

In addition, Trump's rhetorical abilities to manipulate narratives and beliefs do not simply apply to the past but also to the present. Indeed, in what William Connolly calls "The Big Lie Scenario," he states:

A Big Lie, such as the birther charge against Obama, the first African America president; the assertion to have seen "thousands of Muslims" on TV celebrate 9/11 when there was no such celebrations; the campaign charge that the 2016 election was rigged; the false repetition that he won by a landslide; the constat refrain that the media always lies about him; the persistent denial of deflection of Putin election hacking; the promise that Mexico will pay for the Wall; the claim that climate change is a Chinese hoax; the eventual take back of the birther charge after several years of insistence matched by the assertion that the Hillary Clinton campaign had started it; the charge that Obama had wiretapped Trump Tower; the assertion that his first hundred days in office have been the most productive ever – are all designed to provide his aggravated constituency with acceptable pegs upon which to hang the sources of their real grievances and resentments as they also deny the urgent need of America to adjust to its new positions in the world and its vulnerable relation to a series of large planetary forces (Connolly 2017, 19).

These Big Lies distort what one can know or knows versus what one can never know. Take, for example, how Trump claims climate change is a "hoax" that the Chinese government both made

up and invented. Such rhetoric, such a lie, exists only in absurdity – a categorical false notion detached entirely from reality, suspended in a realm of pure belief. The belief that China could somehow control the weather, let alone the entire climate, only exists in the realm of make-believe. In this way, Big Lies are akin to the conspiratorial rhetoric of the fascist, untethered from any material substance in the world. Trump’s rhetoric through the use of Big Lies functions as a way to, as Connolly says, “undermine evidence-based claims, create false equivalencies, sow confusion, divert attention, promote acceptance of authoritarian rule, and legitimize a shock wave politics of rapid shifts.” (Connolly 2017, 21)

Of course, Donald Trump still utilizes conspiratorial rhetoric to reorient knowledge and truth to his advantage. Indeed, the conspiracy theory that Democrats are allowing migrants to cross the border illegally, known as the “Caravan Invasion,” was one of the many conspiratorial rhetorical theories that Trump used to lie about matters of truth. Trump would exclaim that “illegal immigrants” are “flooding” America at the southern border, tweeting out videos that likened refugees to “cop-murderers” and asking, “Who else would the Democrats let in?” (Béland 2019, 2023). This rhetoric, conflating non-truths as truths, works to confuse his supporters and audience on what they know and do not know as true, situating Trump in a position where he becomes the sole authoritative source of said truths. In the mind of the Trump supporter, migrants are illegally coming across the US-Mexico border, hoping in caravans, seeking refuge in American cities and towns, and killing cops, all under the direction and control of the Democratic party.

Fact-checking and questioning Trump's statements have no regard in the minds of Trump supporters. Connolly identifies that Donald Trump’s Big Lies are so effective because they are constantly propagated through repetition to his constituents, who *a priori* assume such

repetitions as facts and treat them as such (Connolly 2017, 19). Rhetorically, repetition works so well for Trump because it affects both the content and the meaning of his lies, calling into question what is the “truth.” An epistemological problem of what is real through factual evidence relating to Trump's claims and what is presented as real through the repetition of the same claims. The constant repetition of such lies draws upon the listener's emotional and sentimental attachments to the propositions – the content – of the lies rather than the truth values one can conclude from the falsehoods of such faulty propositions (Connolly 2017, 20). It does not matter if such statements as “illegals are coming across the border more than ever” are factually true; it only matters through emotional appeal that “illegals *are* coming” as enough for Trump supporters to express a negative and, at times, visceral reactions, and emotions such as fearful or expressing resentment through anger. These emotions expand and enlarge through the act of repetition of sentimental values underlying the statements, regardless of whether they are true or false.

Big Lies and conspiratorial rhetoric allow Trump to have some semblance of control regarding the knowledge of his supporters, controlling and manipulating their perceived reality. As Cole and Shulman put it, “Trump *purposefully* disregards the truth — because it is irrelevant in a world of simulation, because it limits his assertion of sovereignty over reality...” (Cole and Shulman 2019, 352).<sup>14</sup> Trump’s rhetoric reflects as much when he proclaims “fake news” against

---

<sup>14</sup> Cole and Shulman say we are “within the spectacle of reality television.” Calling to how Trump acts as though he were still on his show, *The Apprentice*. Firing those around him, ready to call anyone names and negative adjectives as if they were merely contestants to him, a constant reiteration of his “rating” on media interviews and polls, a continuous claim of “huge numbers” when referring to his audience showing, and his ability to commercialize his campaign (Cole and Shulman 2018, 353).

any and all attacks against him or any claims that he makes. Like like how fascist rhetoric labeled facts as “Jew-ish” to denounce attacks against them, in proclaiming “fake news,” Trump seeks to do the same thing. Trump seeks to “trap the media in a bind,” forcing them to go through and present an arduous amount of time-consuming, evidence-based claims that, once provided, become irrelevant as Trump has now created and spouted a new lie (Connolly 28, 2017). Trump’s rhetorical strategy of denying facts and simply waving them away as if they have no real connection to material reality creates a temporal delay between the time that a fact becomes known as such – as a fact – and the time in which it remains simply a question. In this way, what a fact *is* – the reality of it – becomes distorted causing the fact to become “fake,” and this “fakeness” now becomes the “new truth.” Through the rhetoric of “fake news”, Trump’s constituents now view what Trump says, his “new truth,” as “common sense,” labeling any opposition to said truth as “out-of-touch” and a farce from the elite (Crehan 2018, 282).

### ***3.3 Hierarchical Language: The Voice of Victimhood and Loss***

Trump has an affinity – a terrifying one – to get his followers to despise those he designates as the enemy or the outside ‘other.’ Indeed, Trump has an acute rhetorical ability to capture the woes of his constituency and aim those woes onto targeted groups outside – or at least positioned as outsiders – the confines of what his supporters understand as “real Americans.” One might ask, what is, or does it mean to be a “real American?” A “real American” matches the general demographic his rhetoric appeals to: white, cis, heterosexual Christians who have right-leaning (conservative) values on economics and social movements.

These identifiers are not only used to distinguish who is and who is not in their understanding of what it means to be an “American” but are also the targets of Trump’s rhetoric

that he can capture through feelings of loss and gain in the political and social arena. In allowing the demonized ‘other’ into the world of the ‘us,’ his supporters – the target of his rhetoric – feel threatened, as their historical hierarchy of power, one of white supremacist rule with ethno-Christian values, fades. Trump’s rhetoric draws upon the aggravated feelings of fading: grievance, resentment, and loss, reassuring his target audience that these feelings of vulnerability are valid (Connolly 2017, 19). Reinforcing the narrative and insinuating that their once innate position of power has fallen to the wayside and forcibly stripped from them. Indeed, looking at Juliet Hooker, we can see how this rhetoric of perceived loss works in fearmongering the ‘other’ and creating victimhood of the dominant. The idea of the American citizen becomes centered around the historical reality of white dominance and supremacy in American politics; the ‘other’ then represents anything that operates outside this understanding, and anything the ‘other’ gains, politically or socially, functions as a loss for the ‘us’ which is therefore “unacceptable” in their eyes (Hooker 2017, 486-488). White Americans grieve their perceived losses in political and social status, resenting those – any given X minority – who they believe took it from them, creating a false sense of victimization that they “mobilize” to resist (Hooker 2017, 498).<sup>15</sup>

Trump’s rhetoric embodies the resentment, victimhood, and fear of the ‘us’ that Hooker describes directly through his constant language of damning the ‘other.’ There are a plethora of

---

<sup>15</sup> In a different essay titled *Black Lives Matter and the Paradoxes of U.S. Black Politics: From Democratic Sacrifice to Democratic Repair*, Hooker examines the Black Lives Matter movement specifically. Shows how white people in general, both conservative and democrat, control the way that politics operates in America, with minorities having to acquiesce to the peaceful and non-violent politics deemed acceptable by white hegemony (Hooker 2016, 456-458). Hooker sees that any resistance that does not meet the ideal of white American politics is inherently negative under white, democratic politics. Black Lives Matter protests become “riots” (Hooker 2016, 463-464), and the protesters themselves are “thugs” (Hooker 2016, 465).

instances where Trump associates negative connotations with whole groups of people and democratic institutions, including from the media, minority groups, college professors, and anyone who dares defy him. In such instances, Trump recalls the collective fear of the ‘us.’ In calling immigrants “criminal aliens,” Trump fearmongers the idea that ill-intentioned individuals are crossing the border to harm Americans; for, of course, if a criminal exists, a victim must also exist for a crime to occur (Stanley 2018, 113). In his rallies, Trump features stories of undocumented immigrants committing crimes, referring to migrants coming to America as “MS-13 gang members, rapists, and (again) criminals” (Beltrán 2020, 105).

As such, Trump’s rhetoric, like the rhetoric of the fascist, creates an out-group that he positions against the in-group. Trump switches the feelings of victimization and loss, denying the actual victimhood of the out-group while uplifting the imaginary victimhood. In a series of Tweets on his campaign trail against current president Joe Biden, Trump points to how if you support the Democratic party, you are in support of:

The open borders lobbyists that killed our fellow citizens with illegal drugs, gangs & crime; The far-left Democrats that ruined our public schools, depleted our inner cities, defunded our police, & demeaned your sacred faith & values; The Anti-American radicals defaming our noble history, heritage & heroes; and ANTIFA, the rioters, looters, Marxists, & left-wing extremists” (Twitter/X November 2nd, 2020).

Trump's rhetoric appeals to the perceived loss of the in-group – the ‘us’ – feeding off their resentments to create anger.

Just as the fascist leaders of the Nazi campaign demonized and blamed the Jews, the communists, the homosexuals, the Social Democrats, and anyone else not considered Aryan, categorizing them as the ‘other,’ for the perceived downfall of the *Volk* (Connolly 2017, 81). The



“real” Americans demonize and express their feelings of anger and loss to their negative counterpart through Trump’s rhetoric. Instead of Jews, all migrants crossing the border fall under negative categorical labels such as illegal criminals, rapists, and gang members who are trafficking drugs and killing innocent Americans.<sup>16</sup> Instead of communists, anyone to the left of the American political spectrum successfully becomes equivocal to an “anti-American” categorical: an Antifa agent, far-left Marxist, and left-wing extremist. Instead of the Social Democrats, the left-wing media and liberal education system are now the ones under attack for having goals of brainwashing the American child with their liberal ideology and uprooting the true American values of Christianity and white-dominated history. Protesters are “rioters and looters” who only steal from businesses, homes, and the community of “good, hardworking” Americans.<sup>17</sup> The language of Trump, and its ability to both attack and defend, takes negative assertions and places them onto the “internal enemy ‘others’” (Crehan 2018, 282).

Trump’s rhetorical use of the vilified ‘other’ also works to create a heroic archetype that can beat the negatives he prescribes on his targets. Indeed, the negative adjectives that Trump labels the targets of his supporters’ anger are also, therefore, antithetical to the supporters

---

<sup>16</sup> In an interesting analysis, Daniel Béland explains that Mexican migrants are often time framed in certain parts of right-wing discourse as ‘folk devils’ that are threatening the American people, giving justification for their treatment and abuse (Béland 2019, 168-169). Relationally, *Volk* and folk are linguistical cousins, with the former being the first cousin of the latter. In this light, rhetorically, ‘folk devils’ functions as ‘evil folk.’ This suggests that in calling Mexicans – and through proxy refugees – ‘folk devils’ they are categorizing them as a negative version of the *Volk*: the anti-*Volk*.

<sup>17</sup> During the Goerge Floyd protests, Trump tweeted out that “rioters” were “harming the businesses (especially African American small businesses), homes, and the community of good, hardworking Minneapolis residents who want peace, equality, and to provide for their families” (Twitter/X May 30th, 2020).

themselves. Trump supporters now understand themselves as masculine and the ‘other’ as feminine; themselves as strong and the ‘other’ ‘as weak; themselves as reasonable and the ‘other’ as unreasonable; themselves as smart and the ‘other’ as dumb (Connolly 2017, 28). In the Obama “birtherism” lie, we can observe how this positive-negative positioning works so well for Trump. The theory took the first Black President and claimed that he was a secret Muslim from a foreign nation. In one sentence, Obama became everything that the Trump supporters were not. Instead of white, he was black; instead of Christian, he was Muslim; and instead of American, he was Kenyan (Cole and Shulman 2018, 343). In being black, he becomes a criminal; in claiming him a Muslim, he is also a terrorist; in positioning him as Kenyan, he cannot, therefore, exist under the definition of a “real American.”

#### **4 THE RIGHT-WING MEDIA: PROMOTING THE RHETORIC OF A FASCIST**

The same things said in the previous section about Donald Trump's fascist rhetoric are also true of the right-wing media (RWM). Indeed, RWM outlets such as Fox News and The Daily Wire present Trump as a prophet to the American right who will save them from the "evil" left; they promote the same Big Lies and conspiratorial rhetoric, such as the birther claim against Obama made by Trump; and the RWM is the utmost example of driving the Us vs. Them conceptual framework of losing political and social power into the minds of their listeners. Since this is the case, what can one say about the RWM that has not already fallen under scrutiny in the examination of Trump?

As we see in the examples, it is the inworking of how RWM outlets function in promoting Trump's fascist rhetoric. Namely, it is in their repetition and mimicry of the fascist rhetoric of Trump in their constant spin-cycle of covering Trump. In this way, these RMW outlets operate as a form of propaganda for the fascist politician, constantly reinforcing his rhetoric and sentiments by repeating and regurgitating every instance of fascist language. This repetition and mimetic function of the RWM thus operate as propaganda for the fascist so that his followers hear his sentiments and, therefore, bolster his ideas to them. For Trump supporters the RWM acts ostensibly as a form of validation and legitimation, establishing Trump's fascist rhetoric as permissible and within the realm of reason. Mimicry, in particular, as will be shown, allows individuals to validate each other in the form of a constant reinforcement of their own personal ideas and biases. Mimicry creates an echo chamber for Trump's rhetoric, allowing his audience to propagate his language.

#### **4.1 *Repetition As Sensationalized Propaganda***

Only the mob and the elite can be attracted by the momentum of totalitarianism itself; the masses have to be won by propaganda.

– Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1973)

In the previous section, Connolly showed us just how effective Donald Trump’s use of Big Lies and conspiratorial rhetoric are in manipulating knowledge – a common tactic of the fascist. Indeed, his lies worked so well through their constant repetition and regurgitation into the political ether, confusing his audience and calling into question reality. Furthermore, with the sheer amount of Big Lies, and again through their constant repetition, Trump can deny any fact thrown at him. He can create a new lie that repudiates facts as “fake,” allowing Trump was able to completely forgo the lie because it lost its way out of the conscience of his audience.

Identically, the RWM uses repetition in the same exact way and moreover, uses repetition of Trump’s rhetoric itself, operating as a form of propaganda for Trump. The RWM “adopts” the rhetorical styles of Trump, acting as “cheerleaders” that work in tandem with Trump to promote agitation in their audience (Connolly 2017, 68). The RWM captures the emotional language of Trump’s rhetoric, endlessly reiterating and repeating the affective elements to their audience (Connolly 2017, 71). An endless barrage of classifications through affective rhetoric with positive affirmations of the in-group and negative assertions against an out-group.

The rhetoric of emotionally charged language and constant referral of negative assertions, working through repetition, is a staple in RWM outlets. As we saw with the increasing support of Donald Trump in the Republican primary, the eventual 2016 election declaring him as the 45th president of the United States, after his presidency, and even now as he prepares to run for a second term, the RWM grasped onto every word and sentiment that Donald Trump expressed in

his speeches and rambling because much of their target audience was, in fact, Trump supporters themselves. Indeed, whether intentional or not, RWM outlets became a tool for the Trump campaign and administration. Trump's campaign promoted himself and damned his opponents through the intermediary element that is the RWM, with the medium functionally operating as propaganda through the repetition of his affective language, racist sentiments, and lack of proving false any odd claims he would make.

We saw this at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic when Donald Trump called the virus the "Chinese Virus" (Santis 2020, 563).<sup>18</sup> Fox News commentators repeated this racist narrative and negative sentiment on multiple occasions and continued to do so through the pandemic, calling the virus the "Chinese virus" and making claims that "China Has blood on its hands" (Chiu Mar 19. 2020).<sup>19</sup> Additionally, in calling COVID-19 these inherently racist and negative names, right-wing commentators on the program, seduce their audience with feelings of fear found in the "one-dimensional truths" of Trump (Tarnopolsky 2020, 471). RWM outlets, as we see in the example of Fox News, in their ways of repeating the fascist rhetoric of Trump, operate as propaganda. They reverb and reiterate Trump's rhetoric in the same manner that he espouses it, using repetition to the full meaning of the word without regard for critical examination of such rhetoric.

---

<sup>18</sup> Other names for the COVID-19 virus that express similar if not identical sentiments include: the "Chinese Flu," the "Chinese Coronavirus," the "Wuhan Coronavirus," and "Kung Flu" (Scott Mar 18. 2020).

<sup>19</sup> Top Fox News political pundits and commentators were responsible for aiding in the spread of such rhetoric. Sean Hannity, Tucker Carlson, and Laura Ingraham, to name a few, actively and repeatedly used Trump's rhetoric in their own rhetoric, using terms such as "Chinese Virus" daily.

Repetition as fascist propaganda then operates similarly to typical fascist political propaganda in so much as it functions the same. It blurs the lines between what is being said and what is understood as being said by the fascist politician's rhetoric, working to "unite people behind otherwise objectionable ends (Stanely 2018, 24). It confuses the individual through its language and constant regurgitation, warping their ability to think critically about what is explicitly put in front of them, drawing upon what they feel implicitly. (Stanely 2018, 24-25).<sup>20</sup> Where repetition as propaganda and political propaganda differ is that the former attacks the reason/common sense of the target audience to appeal purely on an affective basis – disregarding *logos* and a focus on *pathos*. Through the propaganda of repetition, the logic and reasoning in the target audience dwindles over time, convincing them of any falsehoods they might hear through the proxy of it constantly repeated (Arendt 1973, 151). As such, the emotional aspects of the target audiences are the only things that are expressed and understood.

In a similar analysis, in her book *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies: Communicative Capitalism and Left Politics*, Jodi Dean (2009) offers a theory of communicative capitalism and posits that the rhetoric of the media, under neoliberalism, operates purely affectively. The RWM appeals to the aesthetics and emotions of what is said rather than the material of the rhetoric offered.<sup>21</sup> If this is the case, and, as mentioned, propaganda through the

---

<sup>20</sup> Stanely offers an example of Richard Nixon using phrases like "law and order" and "tough on crime" to conceal his underlying racist intentions behind the War on Drugs campaign. This example shows that what is said explicitly is not what is being understood implicitly (Stanely 2018, 25).

<sup>21</sup> Dean uses the term "Neoliberal" which would encompass all media, both the right-wing and left-wing. While such a term has merit in that all media outlets under neoliberalism play a role in advancing fascism, my focus is solely on the RWM.

use of repetition feeds on and creates the affective sentimental elements of its target audience, it stands to reason that RWM – as opposed to ALL media under neoliberalism – uses its ability to capture these affective elements and presents them in a way that exceeds the normal conventions of other media. This sensationalism of events to draw out the emotions of their audience is one of the most effective rhetorical tools of RWM.

As it relates to fascist rhetoric, the RWM sensationalized orientation of politics operates not only through repetition of Trump’s rhetoric but also through a general referral to him and his politics in a way that overly dramatizes and further incites the negative emotions of his audience. Indeed, one does not need to look hard to find numerous articles and videos that present Trump or his politics or his supporters as “victims” in some odd instances of damnification by an opposed entity/enemy,<sup>22</sup> drawing on their audiences’ negative emotional reactions: loss/grievance, femininity, fear, etc. The content of the news does not matter as long as the underlying message of the content resonates with the negative emotions of the audience; what matters is that the effective parts of the presented news are expressed so that more and more people see it and react to it (Dean 2017, 39). This process creates an effect where one sees the news, repeats it, and spreads it to more people. Those people then spread it to even more people, and so on, until that news has become sensationalized in an echo chamber of support.

Furthermore, the sensationalized news presented by the RWM also rhetorically works reversely. Trump and his supporters are presented as heroes or “winners” through the implicit

---

<sup>22</sup> A quick look at the Right-Wing Media outlet, *The Daily Wire*, and one will find article titles such as “Trump Supporters Clean Up West Baltimore And The Liberal Media Are Irritated,” “WATCH: Gym Owner Bars Army Vet From Wearing ‘Racist’ ‘Trump For President T-Shirt,’ and “The Unabashed Demonization Of Poor White Americans.”

elements of constantly consuming RWM that depict their host – often a man who is aggressive and “strong” to which the audience can view themselves as – attacking the “liberal-left” and progressives who, through being constantly shouted over and interpreted while making their points, submits to the arguments of the host (Campi 2021, 472). Again, since the affective elements found in the rhetoric of the RWM matter more than the content, the RWM host can be demonstrably wrong with absolute impunity. The sensationalizing of the argument appeals to the positive side of their audiences’ affective sensibilities: aggression, masculinity, dominance, etc.

We see how the dual functions of negative and positive affective rhetoric of the RWM play out during the COVID-19 pandemic. RWM outlets, such as FOX News, proliferated and propagandized, and sensationalized the fascist rhetoric of Trump to the average middle-class American. One example of this was during the Black Lives Matter protest of 2020, where hundreds of thousands protested the death of George Floyd and the seemingly legalized killings of brown bodies. During these protests, Trump would constantly tweet out negative assertions against the protesters. In one tweet, Trump called the protesters “thugs,” that they were harassing and scaring the elderly, labeling them as “not peaceful protesters,” and that they were “anarchists.” (Twitter/X September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020). RWM pundits expressed the same sentiments in their shows and on their programs, deeming the BLM protests “lawless” and acts of pure “chaos” (Campi 2021, 469).

In another example, when the RWM adopted Trump’s fascist rhetoric that the “liberal elites” were taking advantage of the “real Americans” through the enforcement of mask mandates and the shutting down of businesses, thus presenting their audience – Trump supporters – as “victims” of wrongdoing (Campi 2021, 475). Inversely, when covering anti-vax and anti-shut down protesters, many of whom were wearing MAGA hats and shirts, the media



presented them as “heroic” for standing up against their government and for their rights (Campi 2021, 475). In these examples, we see that the RWM repeats the affective rhetoric of Trump. Negative labels of “thugs,” “anarchists,” and “liberal elites,” seen in the language of Trump are akin to the identical negative language of “lawlessness,” “chaos,” and any other derogatory adjective. On the other side of the equation, when Trump supporters – the in-group, the “real Americans” – participate in similar manners of political expresses, instead of being labeled negatively, they are portrayed positively. They are “heroes” who fight for a justice cause, or they are “victims” of the ‘other.’

#### ***4.2 Mimicry, Media, and Memes (?)***

The repetition of the fascist rhetoric of Donald Trump that we observe in the RWM through sensationalism and working as propaganda is also a form of mimicry of sorts. Meaning that the RWM mimicked Donald Trump's rhetorical style, language, and elements. As such, Trump supporters are doing the same thing – mimicking the RWM, which mimics Trump, so the average Trump supporter also mimics Trump implicitly, saying and copying him explicitly because they hear his rhetoric propagated from a “legitimate” authoritative source such as the news. This way of political operation functions, as Byod sees it, as a way for individuals to be both, at once, the actor and the spectator (Byod 2004, 526-527) – the *mīmus* and the *spectāre* at the same time. In this way, through repetition, mimicry becomes both observing and acting in a certain way in the same instance. The Trump supporter observes how Donald Trump acts – in this case, his fascist rhetoric – through the lens of the RWM to then act, or repeat, what they have observed. The RWM mimics and repeats the fascist rhetoric of Trump, for example, Trump

saying that protesters are “thugs.” This rhetoric then finds its way to the Trump supporters, who find themselves inclined to act and mimic his fascist rhetoric, also calling protesters “thugs.”

In the same way electrical conductors aid in the transfer and flow of electrical energy to a given object or area. The RWM operates as a conductor itself, transferring and guiding the flow of Trump’s fascist rhetoric to the Trump supporter through mimicry. This process happened in the events of January 6th, when hundreds of Trump supporters stormed and attacked the United States capital. First, Donald Trump uses false claims, lies, and conspiratorial rhetoric that the 2020 election was “stolen” from him and that the election was “rigged;” Second, the RWM legitimized Trump's rhetoric, mimicking his rhetoric and calling it an “election fraud” so that it is a valid cause for concern; Third, upon hearing both Trump’s rhetoric and such language reinforced and legitimized in the RWM by way of mimicry, Trump supporters feel as if they are answering a call to act, storming the Capital and fighting for what they feel is a just cause.<sup>23</sup> In the process, the RWM functions as an intermediary for Trump supporters. Propping up the fascist rhetoric of Donald Trump by mimicking him, to then make legitimate such rhetoric to the Trump supporter, who – both the actor and spectator – mimic what they hear and turn it into action.

---

<sup>23</sup> This full process is a summarized version of Nidesh Lawtoo’s description of events, where he lays out that this process has been brewing and building since Trump first started campaigning, pointing to how Trump, from the very beginning, pushed Big Lies and conspiracies. Positioning that the ‘liberal elites’ were the enemy, pushing the narrative of white supremacy in the minds of his followers, and galvanizing their grievances to make them feel as if they had something to fight for. As time went on, all such things culminated in the events of January 6th, where Trump incited a riot on the Capital (Lawtoo 2023, 14-18). I am only adding the element of the right-wing media as an additional factor.

Additionally, mimicry is not only a tool used by the mainstream RWM but also by the broader RWM spectrum. Indeed, the alt-right uses social media platforms such as Facebook, iFunny, 4Chan, 8Chan, Twitter (X), and the like as RWM outlets that let them express their ideological views through mass mimicry of text, graphics, and memes. Much like how repetition worked to create sensationalism through the dramatization of events, the alt-right uses social media networks to create an echo chamber based around the politics of events, an “eventocracy” where likes, shares, retweets, thumbs ups, etc. become a new measurement of political support of an idea (Kalyan 2020, 6).<sup>24</sup> Take, for example, the conspiracy theory of Pizza Gate. Its origination came from alt-right media social media websites, namely 4chan, 8chan, and the right-leaning side of Twitter, becoming popular and gaining traction through the many shares, upvotes, and retweets. The alt-right here started to mimic each other, causing a proliferation of the conspiracy through the sheer amount of attention it was creating and building. These RWM outlets worked to captivate and capture an audience of similar beliefs to deny “truth” over the theory or the event that might be real (Kalyan 2020, 20).

Additionally, in Trumpian politics, alt-right social media would use the power of mimicry to parade anything that Trump did or said. On the messaging board 4Chan, once Trump started to make his appeal to the alt-right, a whole section dedicated to him appeared on /pol/.<sup>25</sup> This message board was added too daily throughout Trump’s campaigns and his presidency, posting a

---

<sup>24</sup> Kalyan quotes the definition of an eventocracy as: “a new form of democracy where there is nothing greater than the event... The politician as policy announcer appears on a stage, like a divine being. The stage itself resembles calendar art, with heavenly rays shining behind a great soul’s head. When the event becomes the norm of democracy, fact is replaced by fiction and implementation by intention—these become vital” (Kalyan 2020, 6).

<sup>25</sup> /pol/ is short for ‘political’ and is the site's messaging board for anything that involves politics.

picture or video every day featuring the “accomplishments” of Donald Trump. They repeated the language and sentiments Trump expressed in the comments under the post, pushing the post to the top of the board (Topinka 2022, 411-412). The same is true for Twitter, with the “trending” feature nearly always having a Trump-related thread promoted by the sheer amount of retweets and reposts his posts would receive.

## 5 CONCLUSION

Through the examination of works by political theorists such as John Stanely, William E. Connolly, and others, the features of how a fascist uses rhetoric become clear. Indeed, fascist rhetoric uses language to align its leader in a position of authority over its subjects in a cult-like manner, establishing the leader as an infallible being who knows all compared to the subjects. This relationship creates a hierarchical relationship of glorification between said leader and their followers where the former resides over the latter, and the latter sees themselves as a part of, or representative of, the former. The “common man” then understands the leader as an equal to themselves – the *Führer* and the *Volk* are no different from one another in the latter’s eyes. They are both viewed as citizens of the nation with the same interest in mind, not one viewed as a politician and the other a subject, but as fellow *Volk*. The *Führer* represents the *Volk* by “telling it like it is,” just as Trump does with his supporters.

Trump, like the fascist leader, appeals to his follower's common ills and woes to equalize himself with them. However, like the rhetoric of the fascist, Trump’s rhetoric, in actuality, creates a hierarchy where Trump sits at the pinnacle as a deity of all things related to his supporters. Trump’s declarations and assertions about problems that only he has the solutions situate him as the ultimate authoritative source on how to “fix” the problem, the only one that can amend the feelings of fear and anxiety of the audience. Thus, placing himself as “the voice” of his audience, instantiating himself as hierarchically above them, where their thoughts and feelings can only manifest through him; anything he says represents their feelings/opinions. In this way, just as fascist rhetoric, Trump’s rhetoric operates cult-like. Trump deifies himself relative to his followers inasmuch as his followers idolize every move he makes and every word he speaks because everything he does reflects them in their eyes. Therefore, Trump can do no

wrong as he is incapable of such, placing him on the pedestal of infallibility like the fascist leader – he becomes a political prophet of sorts.

Additionally, fascist rhetoric takes advantage of the malleable imagination of its followers to create nationalistic sentiments about the nation's history and its people's past. False representations of reality through myth and nostalgia and false narratives through conspiracy – or Big Lies – are then the rhetorical devices that the fascists deploy in changing and shaping the minds of their followers. In this way, the fascist secures entitlement over the bounds of perceivable knowledge. Effectively controlling the *what is* and the *what is not* around any given context, distorting the lines between facts and fiction. The latter supersedes the former for the benefit of the fascist leader and at the expense of their supporter's knowable reality.

Trump's rhetoric, of course, as shown, encapsulates every notion and aspect of the fascist's imaginary rhetoric. His campaign slogan of "Make America Great Again," with the "again" referring to a mythological notion of America's past that was, at one time or another, once "great," calling on feelings of nostalgia. His constant reiteration of Big Lies and conspiracy theories, making false claims and assertions about known reality to create new realities to gain political power. In this way, like the rhetoric of the fascist leader, Trump's rhetoric distorts the reality of his constituents. Trump manipulates the minds and imagination of his followers, ignoring any and all ideas of truths and facts to proclaim "new truths" and "new facts" that are non-existent.

The overlap between fascist rhetoric and the rhetoric of Trump does not end there. We see that both forms of rhetoric constitute an in-group and out-group relationship regarding society's political and social hierarchy. The in-group, be it the *Volk* or the "real Americans," situated as the dominant class and the "chosen people," feel as though they are losing political and social

status and, thus, the victims. The out-group falls under the role of subordination, categorized as the ‘other,’ vilified to no end as the problem of the mentioned feelings of loss. We see that both Trump and the fascists use an ‘us versus them’ dichotomy to sow division between peoples and groups. Rhetorically, two separate and opposing categories emerge: the “chosen people” and the ‘other.’ The former falls under the definition of the hero, the good, the civilized citizen, the blessed, the holy, and any other positive connotation one can ascribe. The latter, inversely, falls under the opposite definitions: the villain, the bad, the uncivilized alien, the damned, the cursed, and any other negative connotation that is the opposite of the former.

For its part, the RWM’s rhetoric exhibits fascist rhetoric in the same ways as Donald Trump’s rhetoric. The RWM treats Trump as a political deity in their language; these media outlets rely on conspiratorial rhetoric and feelings of nostalgia through myth and use false narratives to misconstrue the knowledge of their audiences; RWM outlets also use the same negative-positive dichotomy between an in-group against an out-group. However, RWM outlets have distinct but equally effective particularities in their rhetoric that also meet the qualification of fascist rhetoric. Namely, the RWM uses repetition to sensationalize Trump’s rhetoric and appeal to their audience's affective emotions, ignoring all sense of reasonability. Similar but different, the RWM also uses mimicry to regurgitate what Trump says to his and their audience, operating as a “legitimate source” for Trump’s rhetoric in the eyes of his followers. Mimicry also facilitates information that only exists in a vacuum. Through mimicry, the alt-right can spread – on a mass scale and at a rapid pace – Trump’s fascist and conspiratorial rhetoric, creating an ‘event-based politics’ proliferated through memes and upvotes in an echo chamber of support.

Suppose Trumpian-era politics do not meet the qualifications of what it means as fascist. In that case, we must use rigorous amounts of tough scrutiny and analysis to determine what parts

meet or fall under such an ideological framework. For my part, I have only looked at one specific element of Trumpian politics: the particularities of Donald Trump's and the right-wing media's use of linguistic and rhetorical devices. I took both fascist rhetoric and Trumpian-style rhetoric and overlapped them, as it were, showing how the the rhetoric of Donald Trump and the right-wing media relates too and maps onto the rhetoric of a fascist. While this, in itself, does not qualify Trump or the right-wing media as fascist – or even as acting fascistically – it does, however, show a distinct fragment of Trumpian politics operating as – or at the very least being similarly to – fascist. Trumpian rhetoric and fascist rhetoric have one-to-one comparisons that we should take seriously, even if we cannot, or do not, call it fascist outright.



## 6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism. New Ed. with Added Prefaces*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973.
- Béland, Daniel. "Right-Wing Populism and the Politics of Insecurity: How President Trump Frames Migrants as Collective Threats." *Political Studies Review* 18, no. 2 (July 26, 2019): 162–77. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929919865131>.
- Beltrán, Cristina. *Cruelty as Citizenship: How Migrant Suffering Sustains White Democracy*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2020.
- Boyd, Richard. 2004. "Pity's Pathologies Portrayed: Rousseau and the Limits of Democratic Compassion." *Political Theory* 32 (4): 519–46.
- Campi, Ashleigh. "Cultivating Authoritarian Submission: Race and Gender in Conservative Media." *Theory & Event* 24, no. 2 (2021): 456-482. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tae.2021.0022>.
- Chiu, Allyson. 2020. "'China Has Blood on Its Hands': Fox News Hosts Join Trump in Blame-shifting." *Washington Post*, March 19, 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/03/19/coronavirus-fox-news-china/>.
- Colasacco, Brett. "Before Trump: On Comparing Fascism and Trumpism." *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 12, no. 1 (2018): 27–53. <https://doi.org/10.14321/jstudradi.12.1.0027>.
- Connolly, William E. *Aspirational Fascism: The Struggle for Multifaceted Democracy Under Trumpism*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.
- Connolly, William E. "Trump, the Working Class, and Fascist Rhetoric." *Theory & Event* 20, no. 1 (2017): 23-37. [muse.jhu.edu/article/650860](http://muse.jhu.edu/article/650860).
- Cole, Alyson, and George Shulman. "Donald Trump, the TV Show: Michael Rogin Redux." *Theory & Event* 21, no. 2 (April 2018): 336–57. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tae.2018.0016>.
- Crehan, Kate. "The Common Sense of Donald J. Trump: A Gramscian Reading of Twenty-First Century Populist Rhetoric." Essay. In *Trump and Political Philosophy: Leadership, Statesmanship, and Tyranny*, 275–91. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.
- Dean, Jodi. *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies: Communicative Capitalism and Left Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009.
- Dean, Jodi. "Not Him, Us (and we aren't populists)." *Theory & Event* 20, no. 1 (2017): 38-44. [muse.jhu.edu/article/650861](http://muse.jhu.edu/article/650861)

Donald Trump (@realDonaldTrump), “BLM Protesters horribly harass elderly Pittsburgh diners, scaring them with loud taunts while taking their food right off their plate. These Anarchists, not protesters, are Biden voters, but he has no control and nothing to say. Disgraceful. Never seen anything like it. Thugs!” Twitter, September 8, 2020. <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1303292111136190465>

Donald Trump (@realDonaldTrump), “Every corrupt force in American life that betrayed you and hurt your are supporting Joe Biden: The failed establishment that started the disastrous foreign wars; The career politicians that offshored your industries & decimated your factories; The open borders lobbyists ...that killed our fellow citizens with illegal drugs, gangs & crime; The far-left Democrats that ruined our public schools, depleted our inner cities, defunded our police, & demeaned your sacred faith & values; The Anti American radicals defaming ...our noble history, heritage & heroes; and ANTIFA, the rioters, looters, Marxists, & left-wing extremists. THEY ALL SUPPORT JOE BIDEN!” Twitter, November 2, 2020. <https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump/status/1323330597813735425>

Donald Trump (@realDonaldTrump), “New York, California, Illinois. People are FLEEING, Taxes and Crime are going through the roof. VOTE TRUMP, I will turn it around, and FAST!” Twitter, October 26, 2020. <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1320693376782663682>

“Donald Trump: ‘I Am Your Voice.’” CBS News, July 21, 2016. <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/donald-trump-speech-rnc/>.

Gordon, Linda. “The American Fascists.” Chapter 4, 141–69, n.d. In: Rosenfeld, Gavriel D., and Janet Ward, eds. *Fascism in America: Past and Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023.

Hooker, Juliet. 2016. “Black Lives Matter and the Paradoxes of U.S. Black Politics: From Democratic Sacrifice to Democratic Repair.” *Political Theory* 44 (4): 448–69. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0090591716640314>.

Hooker, Juliet. 2017. “Black Protest / White Grievance: On the Problem of White Political Imaginations Not Shaped by Loss.” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116 (3): 483–504. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-3961450>.

Kelly, Casey Ryan. 2020. “Donald J. Trump and the Rhetoric of Ressentiment.” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 106 (1): 2–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00335630.2019.1698756>.

Kalyan, Rohan. “Eventocracy: Media and Politics in Times of Aspirational Fascism.” *Theory & Event* 23, no. 1 (January 2020): 4–28. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tae.2020.0001>.

Lawtoo, Nidesh. “The Insurrection Moment: Intoxication, Conspiracy, Assault.” *Theory & Event* 26, no. 1 (January 2023): 5–30. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tae.2023.0001>.

- Pappin, Gladden J. "Machiavellian Politics, Modern Management and the Rise of Donald Trump." *Trump and Political Philosophy*, 2018, 131–48. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74445-2\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-74445-2_8).
- Rensmann, L. 2018. The Persistence of the Authoritarian Appeal: On Critical Theory as a Framework for Studying Populist Actors in European Democracies. In: Morelock, J. (ed.) *Critical Theory and Authoritarian Populism*. Pp. 29–47. London: University of Westminster Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16997/book30.c>
- Rupar, Aaron. "Trump's Dark National Archives Speech Was White Resentment Run Amok." *Vox*, September 18, 2020. [https://www.vox.com/2020/9/18/21445579/trump-national-archives-speech-critical-race-theory?\\_c=1](https://www.vox.com/2020/9/18/21445579/trump-national-archives-speech-critical-race-theory?_c=1).
- Stanley, John. *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*. New York: Random House, 2018.
- Santis, Esteban Leonardo. "From the Leader's Lips, to the Public's Ears: The State of Exception, Administrative Evil, and the Enemy in President Trump's Rhetoric during COVID-19." *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 42, no. 4 (2020): 558–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10841806.2020.1798693>
- Scott, Dylan. 2020. "Trump calling the Covid-19 coronavirus the 'Chinese virus' is dangerous." *Vox*, March 18, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/2020/3/18/21185478/coronavirus-usa-trump-chinese-virus>.
- Tarnopolsky, Christina. "Noble Lying and Democratic Rhetoric in Sophocles' *Philoctetes* and Plato's *Republic*." *Theory & Event* 25, no. 2 (2022): 470–492. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tae.2022.0020>.
- Topinka, Robert. "The Politics of Anti-Discourse: Copy-paste, the Alt-Right, and the Rhetoric of Form." *Theory & Event* 25, no. 2 (April 2022): 392–418. <https://doi.org/10.1353/tae.2022.0017>.
- Travis, Candice K., "The Violence of Nostalgia: Conspiracy Theorism, White Nationalism, and Restoring American Exceptionalism" (2023). Doctoral Dissertations. 2783. <https://doi.org/10.7275/33143069>
- Whitman, James Q. *Hitler's American Model the United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017.