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# Negative Rhetoric in Donald Trump's Political Discourse and its Implications

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## **Abstract**

The present dissertation examines Donald Trump's political discourse that prevailed during his electoral campaign as well as during his four years in office, which was characterized by his verbal assaults that were mostly directed at racial, ethnic, and religious minorities, the news media, and prominent politicians. First, the present study examines the problem of rhetorical violence in American political discourse, and investigates key events in American history that have led to a current culture of aggressive political discourse. Next, the work analyses the acts of violence and hate crimes that targeted minorities during Trump's presidential campaign speeches and into his incumbency, and the ties found between Trump's rhetoric and hate crimes. Then, it investigates the main groups most affected by his negative and violent political rhetoric, and examines the impact of Trump's political rhetoric on racial minorities based on an analysis of racial, religious, or ethnic crime statistics. The study reveals how Trump's divisive political discourse, which coincided with the growth of far-right activism, affected the national stability of the United States society, government, politics, and culture. It concludes that the Trump's hateful, provocative, and aggressive rhetoric caused harm to the stability and security of the United States, and had damaging implications on US global affairs. It suggests that US policy makers had to regulate laws regarding political discourse particularly when running political campaigns.

## ملخص

تتناول هذه المذكرة الخطاب السياسي لدونالد ترامب، الذي برز خلال حملته الانتخابية وكذلك خلال عهده الرئاسية، والذي تميز باعتدائه اللفظية التي كانت موجهة في الغالب إلى الأقليات العرقية والإثنية والدينية، ووسائل الإعلام، والسياسيين البارزين. أولاً، تبحث هذه الدراسة في مشكلة العنف اللفظي في الخطاب السياسي الأمريكي، وتبحث في الأحداث الرئيسية في التاريخ الأمريكي التي أدت إلى ثقافة الخطاب السياسي السلبي الحالية. بعد ذلك، يدرس هذا البحث العنف اللفظي وجرائم الكراهية التي استهدفت الأقليات من خلال خطابات حملة ترامب الرئاسية و ثم كرئيس، والعلاقات الموجودة بين خطاب ترامب وجرائم الكراهية. ثم تتطرق المذكرة إلى الأقليات الأكثر تضرراً من خطاب ترامب السياسي السلبي والعنيف، وتدرس تأثيره على الأقليات العرقية بناء على تحليل إحصاءات الجرائم العرقية أو الدينية أو الإثنية. تبين هذه الدراسة كيف أثر خطاب ترامب السياسي المثير للانقسام، والذي تزامن مع نمو نشاط اليمين المتطرف، على الاستقرار الوطني للمجتمع الأمريكي وحكومته وسياسته وثقافته. ويخلص هذا البحث إلى أن خطاب ترامب الاستفزازي والعدواني تسبب في إلحاق الضرر باستقرار وأمن الولايات المتحدة، وكان له آثار ضارة على المكانة العالمية للولايات المتحدة. وتقترح هذه الدراسة أنه على الفاعلين في النظام السياسي في الولايات المتحدة تنظيم القوانين المتعلقة بالخطاب السياسي خاصة عند إدارة الحملات السياسية.



### **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

ADL	Anti-Defamation League
DACA	Deferred Child Arrival Action
EPA	Greenhouse Gas Pollution
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GOP	Grand Old Party: The Republican political party
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCAVP	National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs
NFL	National Football League
SAALT	South Asian Americans Leading Together
TCJA	Tax Cuts and Jobs Act

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## Introduction

Donald Trump used the catchphrase "Make America Great Again" as part of his 2016 presidential campaign. It attempted to express the notion of reviving the United States and reclaiming what was once thought to be its past splendor. This slogan summed up Trump's pledge to deal with issues including job loss, economic stagnation, immigration, and foreign affairs in order to restore America's prosperity and strength.

The phrase "Make America Great Again" can, however, be understood in a variety of ways depending on the person. Trump backers interpreted it as a call to reestablish traditional values, fortify national security, and put American interests first. They anticipated that Trump's measures would boost the economy, lower unemployment, and restore American supremacy in the international arena.

Critics, on the other hand, countered that the slogan implied a wish to return to a bygone past that privileged particular populations while ignoring the challenges and experiences of oppressed people, and that it had a sentimental and exclusionary undertone. Additionally, they underlined that the slogan put forward by Trump and his followers focused on a limited concept of greatness rather than acknowledging the advancements made in areas like social justice, gender equality, and civil rights.

Donald Trump adversaries have, in addition, argued that his rhetoric, at times, has been divisive, inflammatory, and potentially contributed to a charged political climate. They have accused him of using language that they believe has incited or condoned violence, particularly during political rallies or through his use of social media.

The complexity of the elements that contribute to political tensions or violent episodes must be taken into account in any understanding of the relationship between speech and violence. Violence can arise in any situation depending on a variety of aspects, including social, economic, and ideological ones. It is also worth mentioning that the impact of political

rhetoric on violence is a subject of on-going debate and study, and scholars and experts may have varying perspectives on the matter.

The core issue that guides the present dissertation is President Trump's use of negative rhetoric. He was known for his use of personal attacks and insults against political opponents, critics, and even members of his own administration. He used derogatory nicknames to humiliate and belittle individuals. He also engaged in verbal confrontations and provocation, often engaging in public long violent disputes with political adversaries, journalists, and celebrities. These confrontations were characterized by heated exchanges and derogatory language, which dominated media coverage and set the tone for public discourse. This style of communication contributed to an environment where insults and personal attacks became normalized, detracting from substantive policy debates and further polarizing the nation, and, creating a hostile and divisive atmosphere.

Trump's aggressive rhetoric drew criticism for its perceived racial connotations, such as his comments about Mexican immigrants and his suggestion of a Muslim ban. These statements fueled accusations of xenophobia and racism, deepening societal divisions and contributing to a climate of animosity towards marginalized communities. He also encouraged attendees to physically confront protesters, offering to pay their legal fees if they faced charges. These statements created an atmosphere of hostility and aggression, raising concerns about the potential for real-world violence.

Trump's use of rhetorical violence is motivated by a variety of factors. Some argue that he used this style of communication to appeal to his main supporters. His supporters saw his rhetoric as a departure from traditional political discourse, and they admired his willingness to question established norms and speak candidly. Others argued that Trump's use of rhetorical violence was a deliberate strategy to control the narrative, dominate media coverage, and divert attention away from substantive policy issues.

The significance of this research work lies in its attempt to shed light on the perceptions of rhetorical violence, which varied across individuals and political perspectives during Trump's presidency. Equally important, is the endeavor to provide a closer and clearer image on the division of opinions: Some saw his rhetoric as refreshing and authentic, while others saw it as harmful, contributing to a toxic political environment and exacerbating divisions within the party.

Donald Trump's political rhetoric, particularly on Twitter, had far-reaching consequences. His use of Twitter allowed him to communicate directly with his supporters while avoiding traditional media channels, allowing him to control his messaging. His tweets frequently fueled polarization and deepened divisions in the American society. They boosted his rhetoric, sparked debate, and were severely criticized for spreading misinformation. The impact of his Twitter use on political discourse, as well as the role of social media in shaping public opinion, are still being debated and analyzed.

To foreground the analysis of the use of violent discourse by President Trump, this study is drawn on many studies and research works that mainly deal with rhetorical violence in political discourse. Substantial primary sources are used, like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* and public opinion polls and surveys as Pew. In addition, the study relies on secondary source materials written by authors, academic scholars, journalists and media reporters.

In order to highlight the importance of this study, it is crucial to refer to some of the major scholarly works that have already dealt with and tackled this theme in relation to Donald Trump's political discourse. Many research works on political and presidential rhetoric were published before but few of them took into account the adverse impact of Trump's negative rhetoric on both the American society and government as a whole.



Hence, this work examines how the emergence of the US Presidency of Donald Trump has been accompanied by the appearance of a new aggressive political rhetoric, one that is most frequently observed on the social media platform Twitter. Although Twitter has been a feature of political campaigns and communication for several years now, the public has not been exposed to the exceptionally informal use demonstrated by Trump. The latter's rhetoric can be said in large part to be influenced by insults inclusive of nicknaming, and depicting himself as a winner and opponents as losers.

For instance, in the context of the American presidency, one major article that treated the connection between rhetoric and violence is that of Anna M. Rose: "The Evolution of American Political Discourse: From the Federalist Papers to Twitter". The author opined that despite the fact that political figures, including presidents, have the ability to influence public opinion by their words, it is crucial to understand that rhetoric does not inherently lead to violence. However, discourse that is inflammatory or divided can contribute to a tense political environment, which, in some situations, may raise the chance of bloodshed or encourage extreme behaviour.

Rose added that aggressive political speech, notably that employed by American presidents, has occasionally been criticized throughout history for perhaps inciting violence or fostering enmity. It is critical to understand that the precise words used, the context in which they are presented, and the general social and political environment can all affect how rhetoric is received.

Meanwhile, in her reliable portrait of Donald J. Trump and the family that made him, Mary L. Trump, a trained clinical psychologist and Donald's only niece, reveals the dark history of the Trumps family in her book, *Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World's Most Dangerous Man*, in order to explain how President Trump became the man who now threatened the world's health, economic security, and American social

fabric. She explains how particular events and general family patterns created the psychologically distorted man who occupied the White House.

Osborne Peter and Tom Roberts, on the other hand, in their book *How Trump Thinks: His Tweets and the Birth of a New Political Language*, reveal that the most unusual feature of Donald Trump's nationalist and populist campaign for the presidency of the USA was his obsessive use of Twitter. Like other social media, this form of communication has often been assumed to encourage the dissemination of liberal values and the circulation of facts. Trump's tweets, by contrast, formed a constant stream of provocations, insults, conspiracy theories, 'alternative facts' and outright lies. And they helped him win power. The authors analyze Trump's telling of lies and show how this fusion of entertainment and cunningly crafted propaganda has destabilized the world's most powerful democracy.

In his *American Carnage: On the Front Lines of the Republican Civil War and the Rise of President Trump*, Tim Alberta provides an insider's look at the making of the modern Republican Party—how a decade of cultural upheaval, populist outrage, and ideological warfare made the grand Old Party (GOP) vulnerable to a hostile takeover from the unlikeliest of insurgents: Donald J. Trump. *American Carnage* tells the story of a president's rise based on a country's evolution and a party's collapse. Only by viewing Trump as the final result of a decade-long conflict inside the Republican Party, that one may understand how he won the White House.

*Washington Post* national investigative reporter Carol Leonnig and White House bureau chief Philip Rucker, wrote *A Very Stable Genius: Donald J Trump's Testing of America*, a book in which they provided the definitive insider narrative of Donald Trump's unique presidency with shocking new reporting and insight into its implications. Promising to restore what he described as a fallen nation, it has been hard for him to see beyond the daily chaos of scandal, investigation, and constant arrogant speech as he has undertaken the actual work of

the commander in chief. This book reveals President Trump at his most straightforward posture and exposes how decision making in his administration has been driven by a logic of self-preservation and self-aggrandizement. This book shows how an unparalleled president has managed to survive and tested the strength of America's democracy.

Due to the complicated nature of the topic, this research work focuses primarily on answering these frequently asked questions: What were some specific instances of derogatory language or personal attacks used by Donald Trump during his presidency? How did Trump's negative rhetoric affect public discourse and the level of civility in political debates? Did Trump's use of inflammatory language and personal attacks hinder or facilitate bipartisan cooperation and compromise? How did Donald Trump's use of negative rhetoric impact political polarization in the United States?

Additional important questions include: What were the implications of Trump's negative rhetoric for public trust in political institutions and leaders? How did Trump's insulting and demeaning language and personal attacks affect public perception and the way his policies were received? Did Trump's negative rhetoric contribute to the rise of misinformation and the erosion of factual discourse? How did Trump's supporters respond to his use of negative rhetoric, and what impact did it have on his main supporters? Did Trump's negative rhetoric have long-term effects on political discourse in the United States, and if so, what are they? How did the media's coverage of Trump's negative rhetoric shape public opinion and political discourse during his presidency?

A mixed method is used to address the questions raised in this research work, namely the descriptive and historical research method. The historical method is employed to report events and/or conditions of rhetorical violence in American political discourse that happened in the past. This approach involves exploring, documenting, analyzing and clarifying events of the past. The descriptive research approach, however, is used to describe Trump's examples of

negative rhetoric and its impact on US minority groups and hate crimes. In short, the descriptive and historical research method is employed to establish facts in order to arrive at conclusions concerning the understanding of past events, understanding the present and anticipating future events.

This dissertation is divided into three main chapters each discussing a key element in the research. The first chapter is entitled “The History of Rhetorical Violence in American Political Discourse”. It aims to present key events in American history that have given rise to the culture of aggressive political discourse. The impact of such rhetoric on contemporary politics can be better understood by tracing its historical development. This background is necessary to address the issue of rhetorical violence in present American political discourse. Researchers acquired insights into the historical foundations of violent rhetoric and its manifestation in contemporary politics by researching these major events and their impact on American political speech. This analysis can help to shape attempts to develop a healthier and more productive political atmosphere, encouraging conversation and understanding while reducing the likelihood of violence and hatred.

The second chapter, under the title of “Trump's Negative Rhetoric towards Minority Groups and Hate Crimes”, depicts a sequence of campaign events and incidents that altered public perception of Donald Trump's speech and its possible impact on hate crimes on the path to his presidency. Critics claim that Trump's speech is linked to many acts of violence. Hence, an examination of racial, religious, or ethnic crime data is required to determine the impact of Trump's political rhetoric on racial minorities. Socioeconomic factors, pre-existing tensions, and the behavior of individuals or organizations committing hate crimes must all be evaluated. The influence of Trump's political language on racial minorities and hate crime statistics is still being studied by researchers and specialists in the area. Their study strives to give a thorough understanding of the complex relationships that exist between political

discourse, societal conflicts, and economic disparities, as well as violent attacks against vulnerable communities.

The last chapter, which is entitled “The Implications of Trump's Political Rhetoric on Government, Politics and Culture”, examines the impact of Trump's controversial rhetoric on American society, including stability, security, governance, politics, and culture. It reveals how new studies connect his administration to an increase in far-right terrorism, which exacerbated societal tensions, and Americans become hostile and polarized as a result of Trump’s divisive political speech. It also denotes how President Trump hurt US foreign policy by harming diplomatic connections, weakening trust, and lowering the country's worldwide position.

## Chapter One

### The History of Rhetorical Violence in American Political Discourse

In all political discourse, language usage plays an important role in shaping the political aims and actions of politicians. Accordingly, this chapter illustrates the close connection between rhetoric and violence in American political discourse and examines key events in American history that led to today's culture of aggressive political discourse.

#### 1.1. Rhetorical Violence: An Overview

According to Kølvråa and Madsen, rhetorical violence refers to "the use of language, either spoken or written, to harm or intimidate an individual or group" (75). This type of violence can take various forms, including hate speech, verbal threats, and derogatory language, that aim to marginalize, undermine, or attack the dignity, safety, or well-being of another person or group. The authors also note that rhetorical violence can have serious psychological and emotional effects on its victims and can contribute to the normalization and perpetuation of physical violence (75).

One of the main ways in which rhetoric violence causes harm is through the use of language to silence or dismiss opposing views. When individuals are subjected to rhetoric violence, they may feel afraid to speak up and share their opinions, as they fear being attacked or marginalized. This can limit the diversity of perspectives in a given community and restrict open and respectful discourse. In addition to silencing opposing views, rhetoric violence can also spread false information and contribute to the spread of hate and division.

By spreading false or misleading information, individuals and groups can create narratives that are harmful to certain communities. This can lead to further division and hate, and can contribute to the spread of misinformation and propaganda. Besides, rhetoric violence is dehumanization, which involves reducing an individual or group to a lower status through language. Dehumanization can take many forms, including the use of derogatory slanders or

insults, and can be used to justify violence and discrimination against certain groups. By dehumanizing individuals or groups, individuals and communities can foster a hostile environment that is less conducive to respectful and open discourse (Nilsen and Nilsen).

It has been shown that rhetorical violence can have negative effects on mental health, self-esteem, and overall well-being. According to a study by the American Psychological Association, exposure to hate speech can lead to increased anxiety, depression, and feelings of hopelessness in marginalized groups. This can lead to a decreased sense of belonging and lower self-esteem, which can have long-term effects on mental health and well-being. In addition, rhetorical violence can also contribute to a culture of fear and intolerance, making it difficult for individuals to feel safe and respected in their communities.

Politicians use this violent, blunt and brutal rhetoric both for ideological purposes and to strategically consolidate their power. It includes many types such as insults and threats. Insults occur when a politician calls his opponents corrupt, traitors, liars, or thieves. In addition, it can involve the use of swear words and profanity, such as implying that they are assholes, bastards, jerks, etc. This includes dehumanizing language such as labeling opponent animals, parasites, worse or inferiors (Kellner and Share).

Threats, the other form of violent rhetoric, are less common. These include specific, but extremely rare, threats of violence, e.g. asking opponents to hit them, harass them online, or put them in jail. More subtle or disguised, there are also threats, such as warning the opponent to be very careful or fearful. Furthermore, implicit rhetorical violence occurs when politicians criticize, slander, insult, or characterize specific groups or individuals through frameworks, general structures, or metaphors. People's perception of these metaphors affects situations and how they are judged (Kellner and Share).

### **1.1.1 Effects of Violent Political Rhetoric**

According to Nathan Kalmoe, a professor of political science at Louisiana State University, violent political rhetoric, even when it is metaphorical such as when it is about political fights, and wars, can not only fuel political anger and polarization but also pave the way to real aggression and violence (547). This is because violent political rhetoric has become an all-too-common reality (548).

Only about 16 percent of Americans, according to studies from 2010, supported political violence in some circumstances. In 2020 and 2022, it reached a peak of 34 to 40 percent (Hawley and Holbrook 126), and by 2015, it had increased to 23 percent. Given this, it should come as no surprise when an angry crowd stormed the US Capitol in 2021, hunting for Pelosi and other political leaders while chanting "Hang Mike Pence!" (Chappell). This was a first in American history.

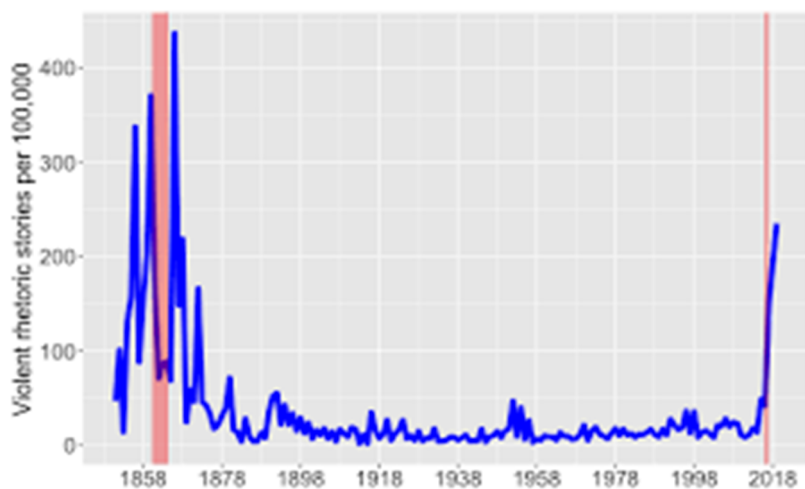
Most Americans think that political violent speech may escalate into real violence when it is forceful and angry. According to a Pew Research Center study, 78% of Americans think that such speech from political politicians increases the likelihood of violence against certain groups. 73% of respondents agreed that elected leaders should refrain from using strong language because it incites violence. Despite the fact that no leaders were named in the poll question, the overall focus of the ensuing study is on how the public feels about political rhetoric under Donald Trump (qtd. in Aratani 1).

### **1.1.2 Political Violent Rhetoric in the United States across Time**

Elections and times of war are the times when the rhetoric is at its most aggressive aspect. Politicians deploy more hateful policies at times of intensified political tension. In the US, the Civil War saw the most violent speech, with minor peaks during the McCarthy era in the 1950s and the Clinton impeachment (1998-1999). Then, there is a very big increase when Trump was elected president in 2016. One worry is that possibly *The New York Times'*

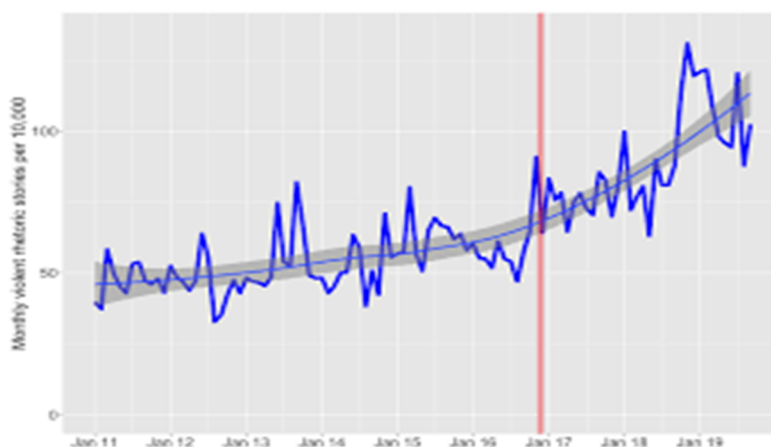


coverage of the Trump administration's aggressive rhetoric is really an exception when compared to other media (Zeitsoff).



**Fig. 1.** Violent Rhetoric across Time in the US (*NYTimes* 1851-2019). Red Shaded Regions Correspond to the US Civil War (1861-1865) and the Election of President Trump (2016). Source: [https://www.zeitsoff.com/uploads//zeitsoff\\_nastystyle\\_violentrhethoric\\_draft](https://www.zeitsoff.com/uploads//zeitsoff_nastystyle_violentrhethoric_draft).

The findings in Figure 2 show that the Civil War saw the most violent language, with smaller peaks during the McCarthy era in the 1950s and the Clinton impeachment (1998-1999). Then there is a very big increase when Trump was elected president in 2016.



**Fig. 2.** Violent Rhetoric across Time in the US (*Media Cloud* 2011-2019). Red Shaded Regions and the Election of President Trump (2016).

Source: [https://www.zeitsoff.com/uploads//zeitsoff\\_nastystyle\\_violentrhethoric\\_draft](https://www.zeitsoff.com/uploads//zeitsoff_nastystyle_violentrhethoric_draft).

A monthly indicator, of violent rhetorical incidents' outcomes per 10,000 stories, is displayed in figure 2. The data demonstrate a significant increase in reports regarding violent speech following Trump's election, more than tripling since 2011, even if the rise is not as severe as in Figure 1.

### **1.1.3 The First Amendment vs. Rhetorical Violence**

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution, which was adopted in 1791, safeguards a number of civil rights crucial to living as an American, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press. Additionally, it discusses the freedom to freely demonstrate and petition the government, and it stipulates that Congress may not pass any laws that restrict the free exercise of religion or that respect religious establishments (Temme 1).

The First Amendment states: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances”(US Constitution). Fundamentally, the First Amendment rights shield people's freedom of religion, of the press, and of expression against federal intrusion. The US Supreme Court has been entrusted with interpreting the First Amendment to establish the scope of these basic rights over more than two hundred years of legal disputes (McClenaghan).

Despite not being part of the United States Constitution's initial formulation, the First Amendment's protections were crucial to its passage. Because the new Constitution lacked a Bill of Rights after the Constitutional Convention, a number of states, including New York, refused to ratify it. The new structure for the federal government was only approved by the legislatures of these states if Congress promised to include safeguards for the freedom of the press, of speech, and of religion (Marzouki).

James Madison consented to write the First Amendment, the Second Amendment's right to bear arms, and the due process protections in this Bill of Rights. His proposal was based on his Virginia Declaration of Rights. The Senate and the House of Representatives rejected seven of the initial 19 amendments to the Bill of Rights (S. Jones 79).

### **1.1.3.1 The Foundations and Limits of the First Amendment: Freedom of Speech**

Many people consider freedom of speech to be the foundation of a democratic government. It permits the open discussion of ideas required for sound decision-making and safeguards the minority against total tyranny by the majority. Additionally, certain symbolic speech, or activities used to communicate a message, is protected. In addition, certain behaviors that are necessary for people to successfully express themselves are protected under the freedom of expression. It safeguards a person's right to associate with others in organizations that advocate causes, including political parties or advocacy groups. Additionally, it safeguards their right to exclude anybody whose presence could obstruct their ability to speak (Volkh 64-69).

There are limitations to the freedom of expression. For instance, speeches that support criminal action are not protected by the First Amendment. The tension between free speech and public safety, the extent to which speech is protected in schools for both instructors and children, and the protection afforded to obscene or pornographic speech, are all issues related to free speech (Volkh 64-69).

Conflicts between the social interest in free speech and other social interests were the new terminology used by the American law to describe First Amendment issues. Over the course of the 20th century, it became evident that such an interest-balancing strategy fell short of adequately protecting free expression, particularly during times of a national emergency. Freedom of expression is once again recognized by the American law as a basic right

throughout time. However, the values that could be threatened by speech have not been included in this resuscitation of rights in First Amendment law (Smolla 99).

These changes have led to a new understanding of the First Amendment issues as clashes between the right to free expression and other societal interests, a word that now includes other people's rights. When the problem is seen in this manner, citizens appear to be faced with a sad decision whereby they can only defend freedom of speech by sacrificing other rights, and when they can only secure those rights by sacrificing freedom of speech (S. Jones 82).

A rights-based understanding of the First Amendment is the only approach to get out of this pickle. Free expression is an essential right. However, such freedom is constrained by others' rights. Except in cases when the speech's worth is sufficient to outweigh the harms it creates, speech that violates certain rights may be subject to strict legal restrictions (J. Smith 252).

### **1.1.3.2 Is Hate Speech Protected by the First Amendment?**

The issue of hate speech, that radical groups have resort to in order to express their intense animosity toward some minorities to call for their subjecting to genocide, segregation, deportation, or other extreme forms of discrimination or oppression; has been greatly debated. Should the First Amendment provide protection for this kind of speech? For sure, in a democratic society, having the right to participate in political debate is a fundamental right, but this privilege is not unqualified (Starr 2).

According to the US Supreme Court rulings, political speech is not protected. For instance, when it constitutes a real danger of violence, when it encourages audience members to breach the law immediately, when it carelessly defames a public figure, or when it irresponsibly defames a private individual. For the sake of upholding others' rights, some speech categories may be prohibited. Is public hate speech, such as a Nazi or Ku Klux Klan

demonstrations, subject to the same restrictions? According to the rights-based perspective, one should first determine if the march will violate the rights of other people or the community before deciding whether it should still be protected due to its political nature (Starr 3-4).

## **1.2. Defining Political Discourse**

Political discourse is a complex and at times an ill-defined notion; therefore defining it is not an easy task. It might be a form of discourse that is political in nature, including both text and talk, or it could be "standard methods of communicating that build and sustain systems of ideology, sets of ideas about how the world works and what is natural" (Johnstone 29).

Numerous genres of this kind of political discourse are present in daily life, including speeches, debates, policy documents, and interviews. These are social genres that are intended for the general public and show the numerous ways that politicians prefer to present themselves, their work, and how they want to be regarded by different audiences.

On the other hand, the phrase might be used to describe any writing or speech that is either about politics or that has political motivations (Tufekci and Wilson 775). Political discourse may be defined as any lengthy speech or writing written by or on behalf of political actors, as well as conversations within the family concerning political concerns or events (Chilton et al. 492). Since nearly all language usage may be classified as "political discourse," some linguists even contend that all language is essentially political (494).

### **1.2.1 Rhetorical Violence in the American Political Discourse**

The definition of political discourse will be constrained to include contextualized language usage by specific language users in specific political contexts in order to alleviate the weight of the term's complexity. Therefore, political speeches made by American presidents at various official events are referred to as American political discourse.

A metaphorical framework can be used to comprehend American political discourse. According to Lakoff, it is not their ideological stances that distinguish Republicans from Democrats or conservatives from progressives as they are referred as in his writings. Instead, they have a unique perspective on politics that is founded on two separate family-centered moral systems. Also, morality is conceptualized via a small number of metaphors and is comprehended to a considerable part figuratively. The relationship between politics and family-based morality is what distinguishes American political discourse (127). This mode of thought views a country as a family, with the government acting as the parent and the people as the children.

As Skinner explains, numerous variables, such as shifts in the political and social climate of the nation, advancements in technology, and the impact of media and communication, have influenced the development of American political discourse. The formulation and organization of the new government, including the development of a federalist system and a Constitution, were major topics of discussion in the early years of the republic. Political debate became more and more focused on topics like industrialization, economic policy, and slavery as the nation expanded and evolved (696).

The political discourse in the United States was characterized by a widening gap between the two major parties, the Democrats and the Republicans, in the late 19th and early 20th century. Ideological differences were a major factor in this rift, with the Democrats often supporting progressive programs and the Republicans supporting more conservative ones. (McCarty et al. 107).

The political conversation in the US has been more politicized and confrontational over the past few decades. In addition to the growing polarization of the two major political parties, this has been exacerbated by the emergence of social media, the proliferation of news outlets with various political biases, and the expansion of social media in general

(Abramowitz). Due to this, American political discourse is frequently characterized by arguments full of anger and resentment and a lack of accommodation, which causes deadlock in Congress and other problems with the operation of the executive branch of government.

### **1.2.2 George W. Bush's Political Discourse**

From 2001 until 2009, George W. Bush presided as the 43rd president of the United States. Numerous key occurrences, including as the September 11 attacks, the War on Terror, the Iraq War, and Hurricane Katrina, shaped his presidency. George W. Bush's political rhetoric had a significant impact on public perception and policy choices throughout his entire term in office.

The employment of moral language in President George W. Bush's political speeches was one of its distinguishing features. In his remarks, he regularly referred to moral and religious principles, especially while talking about the War on Terror and the Iraq War. He claimed, for instance, that the globe was split between good and evil and that the United States was fighting terrorism in a moral war in his 2003 State of the Union speech. In addition, he described the invasion of Iraq as a "just war" that was required to uphold American ideals and objectives (Miller 336).

George W. Bush's focus on power and leadership in his political speech was another significant aspect. He regularly presented himself as a strong leader who was prepared to make a big decision in order to defend and advance the interests of the United States. After the September 11 attacks, he promised in a 2001 speech to Congress that "we will not tire, we will not waver, and we will not fail" (George W. Bush) in the battle against terrorism. He also maintained that the US should be prepared to defend itself and its allies with military action (Campbell and Huxman 288).

The political speech of President George W. Bush also demonstrated his dedication to conventional conservative beliefs. He regularly spoke about themes like smaller government,

fewer taxes, and personal accountability. He called on Congress to implement legislation that would restrict the expansion of government expenditure in his State of the Union speech from 2005, during which he also advocated a number of tax cuts. He argued that while "government may throw out money, it cannot create hope in our hearts or a sense of purpose in our lives," he also underlined the need of individual responsibility in tackling social problems (Watts 168).

Politics under President George W. Bush was criticized as being too basic and polarizing. Some said that his emphasis on leadership and use of moral language were intended to mobilize support for his initiatives without critical discussion or consideration of competing viewpoints. Others countered that his emphasis on conventional conservative principles disregarded the need for more progressive legislation on matters like healthcare, the environment, and wealth inequality (Watts 172).

Despite these complaints, it is certain that President George W. Bush's political speech during his presidency had a substantial influence on the general public's perception and governmental actions. His focus on moral language and leadership contributed to the mobilization of support for the War on Terror and the Iraq War, and his dedication to traditional conservative ideals had an impact on laws like tax breaks and restrictions on government spending. As a result, President Bush's political speech reflects a significant period in the development of American political language.

### **1.2.3 Barack Obama's Political Rhetoric**

The 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, is renowned for his incisive and motivational political speeches. Obama has given speeches that have enthralled and inspired audiences all across the world during and after his administration. His use of language is one of its distinguishing characteristics of his political discourse. He is a talented communicator who can use words to make difficult concepts and feelings interesting and approachable.



Obama frequently uses rhetorical strategies to increase the impact and memorability of his statements, including repetition, parallelism, and metaphor. For instance, Obama used the phrase "Yes we can" several times in his 2008. "Yes We Can" address was employed to underline the notion that change is feasible if people band together and work towards a shared objective (Kumar 592).

Obama's emphasis on development and togetherness is another important feature of his political speech. He emphasizes the necessity for Americans to band together in order to build a brighter future on a regular basis. His 2008 campaign focused on the concept that "we are one people, and our moment for change has come" as one of its main themes. Obama persisted in advocating for group action throughout his administration, urging people to band together to tackle problems like healthcare, education, and climate change (Ladd and Lenz 1).

According to Charland, Obama's political rhetoric is distinguished by its emphasis on inclusion and social justice in addition to its focus on development and togetherness. He has fought to push policies that promote fairness and opportunity for all Americans and has been an outspoken advocate for racial justice, and women's rights. He frequently stresses the value of empathy and understanding in his lectures, pushing listeners to put themselves in others' situations and try to create a society that is more compassionate and just (371).

Obama's 2015 spoken tribute for the Charleston church massacre victims stands out as one of the most potent illustrations of his emphasis on inclusion and social justice. Obama joined the crowd in singing "Amazing Grace" as he addressed the need for gun control and racial harmony. He emphasized the value of empathy and compassion while pleading with Americans to work together to address the structural problems that contribute to tragedies like the one in Charleston (McKenna 451).

### **1.3. Violence in the American Political Discourse**

The reality is that, in times of significant social, economic, and political unrest, politicians themselves purposefully and quite ostensibly "season" their own political discourse with hate speech. This is contrary to the general expectation that politicians should be fully in control of their emotions and character and extremely cautious when making public statements.

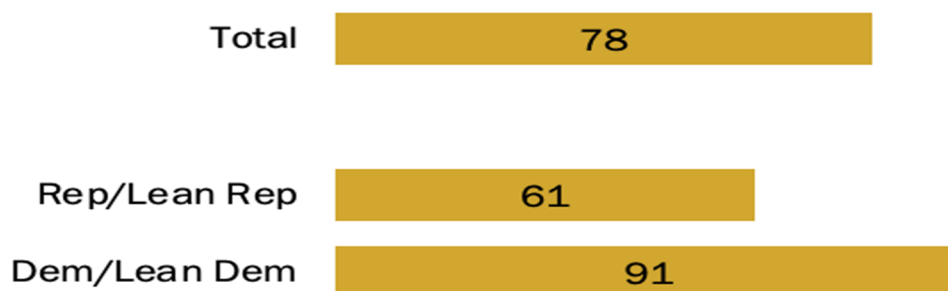
Most people agree that American political discourse has changed recently, becoming less courteous, fact-based, and substantial while also taking on a more hostile tone. Meanwhile, regular talks about politics and other touchy subjects are sometimes unpleasant and challenging. The majority claim that discussing politics with someone with whom they disagree with is stressful and upsetting. More individuals believe they would feel far more at ease discussing the weather, sports, and even religion than politics when interacting with somebody they do not know well. And those who are most at ease in interpersonal conflict, including arguments with others, are also the most inclined to engage in politics and talk about it regularly (Khlopotunov 22-23).

There is general consensus that political leaders should refrain from using "heated or hostile" language. A sizable majority (78%) believes that "heated or aggressive" rhetoric used by elected officials against certain individuals or groups increases the likelihood of violence against them. Democrats and independents who lean Democratic are more likely than Republican and independents who lean Republican to have this opinion (Pew Research Center).

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## Large majority says ‘heated’ rhetoric by politicians raises risk of violence

*% who say elected officials using heated or aggressive language to talk about certain people or groups makes violence against those groups more likely ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**

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**Fig. 3.** Citizen Statistics on the Ability to Convert Rhetorical Violence into Real Violence.

**Source:** Survey of US Adults Conducted April 29-May 13, 2019. Pew Research Center.

### 1.3.1 George W. Bush’s Violent Political Discourse

The use of aggressive language by George W. Bush has drawn criticism during his administration, which was not without controversy. President George W. Bush regularly employed violent and military rhetoric while in office, especially when talking about the War on Terror and the Iraq War. According to some detractors, this aggressive rhetoric contributed to the hostile political climate in America and created a risky precedent for presidents and lawmakers to follow (Campbell and Lash 61).

George W. Bush's use of the term "axis of evil" in his 2002 State of the Union speech is one of the most notable instances of his use of harsh language. He stated that Iran, Iraq, and North Korea posed a "grave and rising risk" to the United States and posed a challenge to the global order in this address. He also stated that these nations were a part of a bigger worldwide network of terrorist groups and referred to them as an "axis of evil" (Abramowitz).

A culture of fear and aggressiveness in American politics, according to critics of this terminology, was fostered by its needlessly harsh and confrontational vocabulary. They made the observation that the phrase "axis of evil" appeared to recall Cold War and World War II terminology, and they contended that this created the conditions for a more military foreign policy. Additionally, they contended that the use of such negative rhetoric made it more challenging to have productive diplomatic conversations with nations that the US perceived to be adversaries (Campbell and Lash 64).

When referring to Al Qaeda terrorists after the September 11 attacks, President George W. Bush used the term "smoke them out," which is another illustration of his use of aggressive language. He said that the United States will "identify those who perpetrated this to us" and that "we will smoke them out of their burrows" in an address to Congress on September 20, 2001. This rhetoric, according to critics, was excessively harsh and confrontational and led to the culture of vengeance and retaliation in American politics (Hutchinson 18-20).

The use of violence in speech by President George W. Bush extended beyond his foreign policies. When describing his domestic policy, particularly in relation to problems like crime and terrorism, he also employed combative rhetoric. For instance, he said that "the war on terror is a struggle for our entire way of life" in a speech given in 2002, and he implied that people who disagreed with his policies were not patriotic. Many people viewed this discourse as alienating and divisive, and it added to the public's sense of unease and suspicion in the United States (Jamieson and Waldman 36-39).

The strong rhetoric used by President George W. Bush was criticized as being reckless and harmful. They said that it led to a climate of hatred and violence in American politics and that it created a risky precedent for presidents and lawmakers in the future. Additionally, they claimed that it made it more challenging to have fruitful diplomatic and diplomatic

conversations with other nations and that it gave the impression that the United States was an aggressor rather than a protector of freedom and democracy (Campbell and Lash 65).

Despite these concerns, it is crucial to remember that President George W. Bush was not the first one to use harsh language. Throughout American history, a lot of leaders have employed military and violent rhetoric, especially in times of war or national emergency. However, it is certain that President George W. Bush's use of aggressive rhetoric had a huge influence on American politics and on how other nations across the world saw the United States. Therefore, it is important for future politicians and leaders to be aware of the influence of their words and to refrain from employing overly violent or offensive language (Bacevich).

### **1.3.2 Barack Obama in Face of Violent Political Discourse**

The 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, is renowned for his ability to excite and inspire audiences with his stirring speeches. But he also encountered violent rhetoric from his opponents while in office, which was unusual and quite worrying (Wilkinson). Obama's aggressive rhetoric was defined by a variety of actions, such as hate speech, threats of violence, and even actual acts of violence. Throughout his entire term as president, he was the focus of racialized discourse, including claims that he was a communist or a Muslim who wanted to overthrow the government. Some of his detractors mocked him with harsh words and images, such as portraying him as a monkey, a terrorist, or a Nazi (Pilkington).

Obama endured hate speech in addition to murder plans and threats to his life. During his administration, he reportedly received a record amount of threats, some of which were real, according to the Secret Service. For instance, a guy was detained in 2011 for planning to kill Obama with a homemade bomb, while another man was detained in 2014 for trying to stab his way into the White House (Wise).

Obama's abrasive speech had a tremendous effect on American politics. On the one hand, it demonstrated the tremendous division that existed in the nation, where some people were prepared to take drastic steps in order to express their political opinions. On the other side, it also had a chilling effect on public debate, where individuals became increasingly reluctant to voice their thoughts out of fear of being the subject of violence or hate speech (Wise).

Obama's aggressive speech also exposed a worrying trend in American politics, where individuals are no longer ready to argue civilly and instead turn to vilification, violence, and name-calling. Political leaders who use incendiary rhetoric to energize their base and social media, which allows users to voice their opinions anonymously and without repercussion, have both contributed to the escalation of this tendency (Rogin).

Concerns over Obama's harsh rhetoric also arise regarding the status of American democracy. An obvious breach of democratic norms and ideals, which place a premium on the peaceful transition of power and adherence to the law, is the use of violence and hate speech against a president who is currently in office. If this type of conduct is accepted as the standard, it might threaten democracy's core underpinnings and fuel political unrest and bloodshed.

### **1.3.3 US Public Opinion's Criticism of Aggressive Political Discourse**

When politicians or other public figures use strong or offensive vocabulary, the public frequently criticizes them for it. Because it may encourage animosity and anger and contribute to an environment of violence and division, this kind of language may be destructive. Political speech that is aggressive is criticized on the grounds that it might have harmful or even fatal repercussions (J. Smith). For instance, many individuals said that the harsh language of some politicians and media characters contributed to the violence after the attack on the US Capitol on January 6, 2021. In a similar vein, several pundits assigned the attack on

Representative Gabrielle Giffords in Arizona in 2011 to the tense political environment (Haberman).

Violent political speech, according to critics, may damage democracy by weakening public confidence in political institutions and motivating more individuals to use violence than engage in civil conversation and compromise. As people grow more entrenched in their opinions and less receptive to competing viewpoints, it can also lead to a feeling of division and polarization (R. Jones). According to Soroka and Wlezien, some activists have requested politicians and public personalities to tone down their language and concentrate on courteous, constructive conversation in order to address this problem. They contend that political leaders must set a good example and foster decency and respect in public dialogue and discourse (230).

Overall, popular condemnation of violent political rhetoric reflects a greater understanding of the influence that words may have on attitudes and actions. We may contribute to lessening polarization and division and fostering a more peaceful and democratic society by encouraging a more polite and courteous political culture.

#### **1.3.4 The Media and the American Negative Political Discourse**

New political media are communication tools that make it easier to create, share, and trade political material on networks and platforms that encourage cooperation and engagement. They have advanced quickly over the past three decades and are still evolving in fresh, perhaps unexpected ways. The impact of new media on democratic governance and political activities is extensive. They have fundamentally changed how political leaders and governmental institutions interact. They have changed the structure of the political media and altered the function of journalists. They have changed how people participate in politics and how elections are contested (Owen).

In recent years, there has been a lot of discussion on how the media contributes to the violent rhetoric in America. Some claim that through encouraging sensationalism, division, and violent speech, media sources, particularly cable news networks, have contributed to the poisonous political environment. Others argue that it is incorrect to blame the media for violence because it is only reflecting societal tensions and political differences (Kuypers 27).

The way the media covers political figures and events has been one manner in which it has contributed to the violent discourse in America. Particularly cable news networks are renowned for their 24-hour coverage of political events, frequently focusing on the most dramatic and divisive parts of a story. As a result, journalists and pundits may adopt a "feeding frenzy" mindset in which they vie for readers' attention and push their own agendas. This may lead to a climate of partisanship that demonizes and denigrates opponents and encourages screaming matches in place of civil conversation (Kuypers 32).

The media's coverage of mass shootings and other violent crimes is another manner in which it has been connected to violent speech. Some detractors contend that the sensationalistic coverage of these incidents in the media might encourage copycat behavior, in which other people are motivated to carry out similar actions in order to get attention and infamy. Further pain and injury might result from the media's tendency to ignore the victims and their families in favor of the violent offender (Carr).

Not all experts, though, concur that the media is exclusively to blame for the violent rhetoric in America. Some contend that blaming the media for violence is foolish since it is only reflecting the political tensions and differences in society. Additionally, some professionals contend that the media may contribute to the promotion of civil conversation and the reduction of division. For instance, rather of concentrating solely on conflict and division, news organizations might opt to promote examples of collaboration and compromise among lawmakers (Entman165-66).



Some experts have asked for more media literacy and critical thinking abilities among the populace in order to address concerns about the influence of media in the violent discourse in America. They contend that individuals may more effectively comprehend and assess the messages they are exposed to by being more aware of the media's biases and objectives. Furthermore, several professionals have urged media outlets to adhere to higher journalistic standards, with an emphasis on accuracy, balance, and context (Carr).

The media's influence in the violent discourse in America is nuanced and diversified overall. While some critics claim that the media is to blame for the poisonous political atmosphere because it encourages sensationalism and polarization, others assert that the media is just reflecting societal tensions and political differences. It may be required to develop improved media literacy and critical thinking abilities as well as media sources to embrace higher standards of journalism in order to overcome the problem of negative and sometimes violent speech. By doing this, a more courteous and peaceful political culture may be encouraged and the likelihood of societal violence will be lessened.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Trump's Negative Rhetoric towards Minority Groups and Hate Crimes**

In the United States, there has been a significant surge in hate crimes against minority communities in recent years. Many experts attribute this rise to the Trump administration's divisive rhetoric and policies, which targeted groups such as immigrants, Muslims, and people of color. President Trump's rhetoric and actions, such as his travel ban on numerous Muslim-majority nations, his proposed border wall with Mexico, and comments about immigrants being criminals, have been heavily criticized for instilling hatred and intolerance in minority populations.

#### **2.1. Donald Trump: A Short Overview**

Donald Trump's road to the White House was a unique and unconventional one. He announced his candidacy for president in June 2015, entering a crowded Republican field that included many established politicians and public figures. At the time, few people took his candidacy seriously, viewing it as little more than a publicity stunt (M. Smith). However, Trump's campaign quickly gained momentum, fueled in large part by his brash personality and willingness to speak his mind. He frequently made controversial statements and used social media to bypass traditional media outlets and connect directly with his supporters (Grynbaum). Trump's campaign platform centered on his promise to "Make America Great Again," which he argued would involve a range of policies, including cracking down on illegal immigration, renegotiating trade deals, and reducing taxes and regulations on businesses.

Despite facing opposition from within his own party, Trump won a number of key primary contests and secured the Republican nomination for president in July 2016 (M. Smith). He faced off against Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton in the general election, which was marked by intense polarization and controversy. Trump's victory in the election

was a surprise to many political observers, as he had trailed in the polls for much of the campaign (Grynbaum). However, he was able to secure victories in a number of key swing states, including Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, which helped to propel him to victory.

Trump's presidency was marked by controversy and polarization, with his policies and statements frequently drawing criticism from both Democrats and Republicans. Throughout his presidency, Trump remained a polarizing figure, with his supporters lauding him for his efforts to boost the economy and strengthen America's position on the global stage, while his adversaries criticized him for his handling of issues such as immigration, climate change, and healthcare. Despite facing numerous legal challenges and controversies during his presidency, Trump remained a popular figure among his Republican Party base (Liptak, "Analysis..."). His road to the White House was a unique one, and his presidency will likely continue to be the subject of debate and discussion for years to come.

In January 2021, Trump left office after losing the 2020 presidential election to Joe Biden. His presidency was marked by a number of historic accomplishments, as well as numerous controversies and challenges. Regardless of one's opinion of his politics, there is no doubt that Donald Trump has left an indelible mark on American politics and society (The White House, "Energy ...").

During his presidency, Trump implemented a number of policies that were seen as favorable to business, such as the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), which lowered corporate, and individual income tax rates, and the repeal of the individual mandate of the Affordable Care Act. He also pursued an "America First" policy on trade, renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement and implementing tariffs on imports from countries such as China (Collinson).

In any case, Trump's presidency has highlighted the unique challenges and considerations that come with having a businessman president (Collinson). The experience and skills that are valuable in the business world may not always translate seamlessly to the Oval Office and a president's background in business can both help and hinder their ability to lead the country.

## **2.2 The Effects of Trump's Election Campaign Speeches**

Donald Trump's 2016 presidential election was marked by controversial rhetoric and divisive messages that stirred deep emotions and polarized the American electorate. While many rejoiced at the prospect of a new leader and the prospect of change, others were deeply concerned about the potential impact of Trump's policies and attitudes towards marginalized communities. Unfortunately, these concerns do not appear to have been unfounded, as research has shown that the election of President Trump had a measurable impact on hate crime rates in the United States.

According to data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting program, hate crimes in the United States increased from 5,479 in 2014 to 7,175 in 2017, a 31% increase over that period (Burrell and Gable). Additionally, in the weeks following Trump's election in November 2016, the number of reported hate crimes saw a significant increase, particularly in minority-dense areas (Levin and McDevitt). These findings are corroborated by a survey by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, which found that hate crimes increased in 26 of the top 30 US cities in the months following Trump's election (Levin et al.).

Trump's campaign rhetoric was often aimed at marginalized groups, including Muslims, immigrants and people of color, and used language that many found offensive and inflammatory (Carter and Rosner). Reports of racially motivated violence and harassment abounded during the election, with many perpetrators citing Trump's message as justification for their actions (Green et al.). A report by the Southern Poverty Law Center found that the

Trump campaign had incited the far right and encouraged hate groups to be vocal and more active in promoting their ideology (Beirich and Potok).

The reason for this increase is not difficult to discern. Trump's campaign rhetoric frequently targeted marginalized groups, including Muslims, immigrants, and people of color, using language that many found offensive and incendiary (Beirich and Potok). During the election, there were numerous reports of racially motivated violence and harassment, with many perpetrators citing Trump's message as justification for their actions (Levin and McDevitt). This climate of fear and division persisted even after Trump was elected, with some interpreting his victory as a validation of their hateful beliefs and behaviors (Gabbatt).

The impact of Trump's election on hate crimes is not just a matter of anecdotal evidence. A report by the Southern Poverty Law Center found that Trump's campaign had energized the radical right and emboldened hate groups to be more vocal and active in promoting their ideology (Beirich and Potok). While not all hate crimes can be directly attributed to the president or his campaign, it is clear that the Trump administration's policies and rhetoric have contributed to an environment in which hate crimes have become more prevalent and accepted (Levin et al.).

### **2.3 President Trump's Racial Rhetoric**

Trump's presidential rhetoric was marked by a combative and often divisive style, which frequently drew criticism from both political opponents and members of the media. His electoral campaign speeches and tweets were characterized by a focus on issues such as immigration, trade, and national security, with a particular emphasis on putting "America first" (D. Smith). Besides, Trump's use of racially charged rhetoric was a particularly controversial aspect of his presidential communication. Throughout his campaign and presidency, he frequently made comments that were perceived as offensive or insensitive towards minority groups, including African Americans, Hispanics, Muslims, and immigrants (J. Jones).

For example, during his campaign, Trump referred to Mexican immigrants as "rapists" and "criminals," and called for a ban on Muslims entering the United States (*CNN*; *The New York Times*). He also made comments that were perceived as insensitive towards African Americans, including a controversial tweet in which he criticized National Football League (NFL) players for kneeling during the national anthem to protest police brutality (*The New York Times*).

According to Davis, Trump's rhetoric on race and ethnicity continued to be a major focus throughout his presidency. He was criticized for his response to the white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017, in which he initially blamed "both sides" for the violence that occurred. Trump's critics argued that his rhetoric and policies on issues such as immigration and criminal justice contributed to a climate of fear and mistrust among minority groups, and exacerbated existing racial tensions in the United States.

Despite this criticism, Trump continued to defend his policies and rhetoric, arguing that he was simply speaking the truth and fighting for the interests of American citizens. His supporters also rallied behind him, arguing that his blunt, straightforward communication style was a refreshing change from the more measured, diplomatic language of previous presidents (Davis).

### **2.3.1 Examples of Trump's Racial Rhetoric**

Trump's presidential racial rhetoric was a deeply divisive issue that played a significant role in shaping public opinion of his presidency. While some supporters praised his outspokenness and willingness to tackle tough issues head-on, many critics argued that his rhetoric was hurtful and harmful to minority groups, and contributed to a more polarized and divided society.

### **2.3.1.1 Immigration**

Donald Trump's rhetoric on immigration was often racially charged and controversial. During his 2016 presidential campaign, he frequently made controversial statements about immigrants from Mexico, referring to them as "rapists" and "criminals." He also called for a ban on Muslims entering the United States, a policy that was widely criticized as discriminatory and unconstitutional. Trump's rhetoric on immigration was seen by many as an attack on minority groups, and contributed to a climate of fear and mistrust towards immigrants and refugees. His policies, including the separation of families at the US-Mexico border and the implementation of a travel ban on several predominantly Muslim countries, were widely criticized as inhumane and unjust.

Critics argued that Trump's rhetoric on immigration was driven by racial hostility and a desire to appeal to his base, rather than a genuine concern for national security or immigration policy. Supporters, on the other hand, praised his tough stance on immigration and his efforts to secure the border. Overall, Trump's rhetoric on immigration was a controversial and divisive stand during his presidency, reflecting deep divisions in American society over issues of race, identity, and national security.

### **2.3.1.2 Disrespect for other Countries**

In January 2018, during a meeting with lawmakers about immigration policy, President Trump reportedly referred to Haiti, El Salvador, and African countries as "shithole countries," which drew widespread condemnation. Trump's comments were widely criticized as racist and offensive, with many arguing that they reflected a broader pattern of prejudice and xenophobia in his administration. Critics also pointed out that Trump's comments were inconsistent with American values of diversity, inclusion, and respect for other cultures.

Supporters of Trump, on the other hand, argued that his comments were taken out of context and that he was simply expressing frustration with the high levels of poverty, crime,

and political instability in some countries. Regardless of the intent behind Trump's comments, they were widely seen as an example of presidential and racial rhetoric that perpetuates negative stereotypes and contributes to a climate of fear and mistrust towards immigrant communities.

## **2.4 Donald Trump's Rhetorical Strategies**

While President, Donald Trump employed unique rhetorical strategies that have intrigued and polarized people around the world. Trump's rhetorical style is characterized by direct, unfiltered, and often controversial language. In what follows, some of Donald Trump's rhetorical strategies will be examined and examples of how he used them during his presidency will be provided.

### **2.4.1 Ethos**

Trump often used ethos to establish himself as a credible and trustworthy leader. He frequently referred to his experience as a successful businessman and his ability to get things done as evidence of his competence. Trump also used ethos to appeal to his base by emphasizing his commitment to "America First" policies and his willingness to take bold action on issues such as immigration and trade. For example, in his 2016 Republican National Convention speech, Trump used ethos to appeal to voters by saying, "Nobody knows the system better than me, which is why I alone can fix it." This statement positioned him as a competent and trustworthy leader who could solve the country's problems

### **2. 4.2 Logos**

Trump often used logos to make logical arguments and persuade people with facts and evidence. He frequently used statistics and data to support his policies and ideas. For example, in his 2020 State of the Union Address, Trump used logos to support his claim that his administration had created a strong economy. He said, "Since my election, we have created 7 million new jobs, 5 million more than government experts projected during the



previous administration" (Trump). This statement used facts and data to support his argument that his policies had led to economic growth.

### **2.4.3 Pathos**

Pathos refers to an appeal to emotions, and throughout his campaign and presidency, Donald Trump used emotional appeals to connect with his supporters and convey his message. One example of this is Trump's frequent use of fear-mongering and alarmist language to create a sense of urgency around issues such as immigration and terrorism. For instance, in a speech announcing his candidacy in 2015, Trump said, "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best...They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people" (*CNN*, 2015). This statement evokes fear and anger towards immigrants, painting them as criminals and threats to American safety.

Throughout his presidency, Trump continued to use emotionally charged language to mobilize his base and rally support for his policies. In a tweet from 2018, he referred to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as "Little Rocket Man," playing into fears of nuclear war and heightening tensions between the two nations (*The New York Times*, 2018).

### **2.4.4 Exaggerated Language**

Trump frequently used exaggerated language and made grandiose claims, often to emphasize his accomplishments or to belittle his opponents (Vazquez). One notable example of Trump's use of hyperbole was his claim that the United States was "the envy of the world" and that other countries were "begging" for his administration's leadership (*BBC News*, 2018). These claims were often met with skepticism and criticism from both the media and the public. Some argued that they were baseless and lacked evidence, while others saw them as an attempt to bolster Trump's image and accomplishments (Goldberg).

Despite this, Trump continued to use exaggerated language throughout his presidency, often in his speeches and tweets. In general, Trump's use of hyperbole was a key part of his

rhetoric strategy, often used to emphasize his accomplishments and to paint a grandiose picture of his presidency (Garrett). However, it also drew criticism and skepticism, with many questioning the accuracy and validity of his claims.

## **2.5 Trump's Use of Twitter**

Trump was known for his prolific use of Twitter. He used this platform to communicate directly with his followers and bypass traditional media outlets in an attempt to control the narrative and shape public opinion in real-time (Eadicicco). During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Trump used Twitter to downplay the severity of the crisis and promote unproven treatments, while criticizing governors who implemented lockdowns and other measures to slow the spread of the virus (Grajales). For example, he suggested that injecting disinfectants or using ultraviolet light could treat COVID-19, despite the lack of scientific evidence to support these claims.

During the 2020 election cycle, Trump used Twitter to make baseless claims of widespread voter fraud and to attack the integrity of the election, such as tweeting "STOP THE STEAL!" (Bump, "The President's New ..."). These tweets ultimately led to the January 6, 2021, insurrection at the US Capitol, where supporters of Trump stormed the building in an attempt to overturn the election results (Baker et al.). Trump was later impeached by the House of Representatives for incitement of insurrection, with his use of Twitter cited as a key piece of evidence in the impeachment trial (C. Cohen).

### **2.5.1 Trump's Use of False and Misleading Statements**

Trump's use of falsehoods and misleading statements has been well-documented. In 2017, he claimed that his inauguration crowd size was the largest in history, despite photographic evidence to the contrary (Kessler, "Spicer Earns ..."). Trump also falsely claimed that he won the popular vote in the 2016 election if "illegal" votes were excluded, a claim that has been thoroughly debunked (Qiu).

In 2018, Trump incorrectly maintained that there were riots in California over sanctuary cities, despite no evidence to support this (Kessler, “Spicer Earns ...”). Trump repeatedly claimed that there was widespread voter fraud in the 2020 election, despite no evidence to support this claim. Trump also claimed that he had won the 2020 election, despite losing to Joe Biden by a significant margin in both the popular vote and the Electoral College (Liptak and Cohen).

## **2.6 The Rise of Rhetorical Violence in the Trump Era**

The rise in rhetoric violence during the Trump era has been extensively studied and analyzed. According to a report by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, hate crimes increased by 12.5% in 2017 in major U.S. cities, coinciding with Trump's election and inauguration (Hall). The Southern Poverty Law Center also reported a significant increase in hate groups and hate incidents during the Trump era, with many citing the former president's rhetoric as a justification for their actions.

Furthermore, Trump's use of derogatory and inflammatory language towards minority groups has been well documented in the media. According to Adam Serwer in *The Atlantic*, Trump frequently employed terms like "rapists," "criminals," and "terrorists" to describe immigrants and Muslims, contributing to a climate of fear and hostility towards these groups. The same article also cites numerous examples of Trump's praise for violent behavior, including his comments at a 2016 rally where he encouraged his supporters to physically assault protesters.

### **2.6.1 Donald Trump's Negative Rhetoric towards US Minority Groups**

During his presidency, Donald Trump was criticized for his negative rhetoric towards minority groups in the United States. Trump's rhetoric was often seen as divisive and discriminatory, with some arguing that it contributed to an increase in hate crimes and racial tensions in the country (Kuznia et al.). One of the groups that Trump frequently targeted with

his negative rhetoric was immigrants. He often used dehumanizing language to describe immigrants, referring to them as "criminals," "rapists," and "animals" (Kopan, "Donald Trump Tweets ..."). Trump also implemented controversial policies, such as the travel ban on many Muslim-majority countries and the separation of families at the US southern borders, which were widely criticized as discriminatory and inhumane (Kanno-Youngs and Nixon).

Trump's negative rhetoric was not limited to immigrants. He also made derogatory comments about other minority groups in the US, including African Americans, women, Latinos, Jews, and Native Americans. For example, in a 2017 speech to law enforcement officers, Trump referred to gang members as "animals" and suggested that police officers should not be "too nice" when arresting suspects (Kopan, "Trump Encourages ..."). Trump's comments on African Americans were also controversial. In 2017, he was criticized for his response to the violent white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in which he appeared to equate the actions of white supremacists with those of anti-racism protesters (Bump, "Trump's False ...").

#### **2.6.1.1 Native Americans**

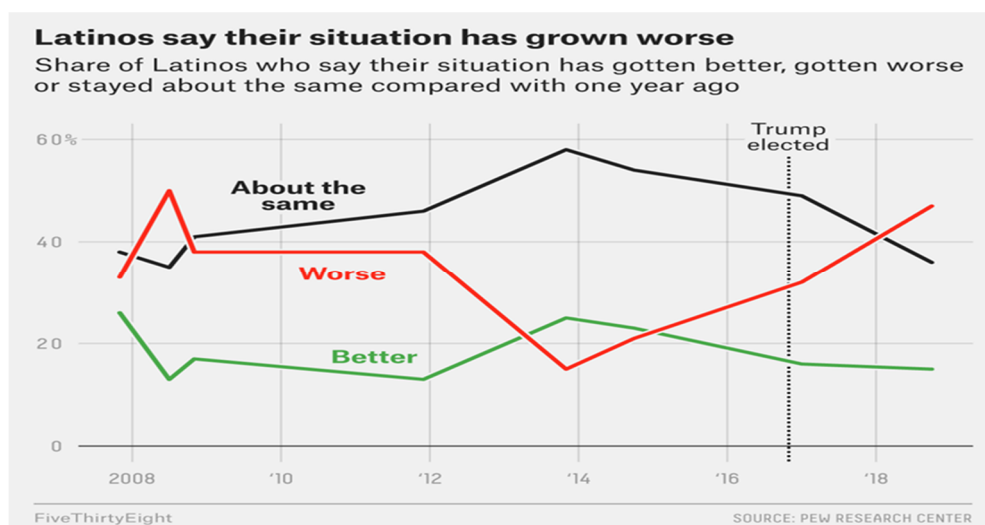
According to a report by *NBC News* in 2016, "Trump frequently used the nickname 'Pocahontas' when referring to Senator Elizabeth Warren, who has claimed Native American ancestry. Critics argued that this was an insensitive and racially charged nickname" (*NBC News*, 2016). Senator Warren had claimed Native American ancestry, which had been a point of controversy during her political career (Gardner). Trump seized on this controversy during the 2016 presidential campaign and continued to use the "Pocahontas" nickname throughout his presidency (Brian and Johnson).

Critics argued that the nickname was an example of Trump's racially charged rhetoric and his tendency to mock and belittle his political opponents (Brian and Johnson). They also pointed out that the nickname was culturally insensitive and disrespectful to Native American

people and their history (Gardner). Supporters of Trump, on the other hand, argued that the nickname was a legitimate criticism of Warren's claims of Native American ancestry and that it was not intended as a racial slur (Brian and Johnson).

### 2.6.1.2 Hispanic/American Latinos

According to the ensuing Pew poll, more than half of Latinos agree that being Hispanic living in the United States has become more difficult in recent years. And overall, a higher proportion of Latinos say the Trump administration's policies have hurt Hispanics than the policies of the Barack Obama or George W. Bush administrations. The rise in rhetoric violence during the Trump era had a particularly significant impact on Hispanic/American Latinos. According to a report by the FBI, hate crimes against Latinos increased by 13% in 2017, coinciding with Trump's election and inauguration (Kanno-Youngs and Goldman).



**Fig. 4.** “Latinos Say their Situation has Grown Worse”.

Source: Pew Research Center

Furthermore, Trump's policy of separating families at the border and the detention of children in cages sparked outrage and protests across the country. Many saw this policy as an attack on the Hispanic/American Latino community, leading to increased fear and anxiety. According to a report by the Pew Research Center, more than half of Hispanic/Latino adults in the US reported experiencing discrimination or being treated unfairly because of their race

or ethnicity (Lopez). As a result, the rise in rhetoric violence during the Trump era had a profound impact on the Hispanic/American Latino community, contributing to increased fear, anxiety, and discrimination.

### **2.6.1.3 Asian Americans**

The rise in rhetorical violence during the Trump era had a significant impact on Asian American communities. Trump has often used derogatory language towards Asian Americans and perpetuated harmful stereotypes about the community. His rhetoric created a climate of fear and hostility that led to an increase in hate crimes against Asian Americans (Schneider). This has led to an increase in hate crimes against the community and negatively impacted the lives of many Asian Americans.

An example of Trump's pejorative language towards Asian Americans was his use of the term "Chinese virus" or "kung flu" in relation to COVID-19. Not only has this language perpetuated offensive stereotypes of Asians as disease vectors, but it has also contributed to a rise in hate crimes against Asian Americans. According to a report by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, hate crimes against Asian Americans in the 16 largest U.S. cities increased 149 percent in 2020 (Hall).

Additionally, Trump's anti-China rhetoric has also influenced Asian Americans. Trump's trade war with China and allegations of Chinese espionage has led to a rise in anti-Asian sentiment, with many misattributing the Chinese government's actions to all Asian Americans. This has led to an increase in hate crimes against Asian Americans and helped create a climate of fear in the community.

In addition to increasing hate crimes, the Trump administration's policies have also negatively impacted Asian Americans. The government has attempted to ban travel from predominantly Muslim countries, including several Asian countries, contributing to a climate of fear and xenophobia towards Asian Americans. The government also tried to end Deferred

Child Arrival Action (DACA), a policy that protects undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as children. Many Asian Americans are recipients of DACA, and the Trump administration's attempts to end the policy have sparked fear and uncertainty among many in the community (Hall and Flores 17).

#### **2.6.1.4 Anti-Muslim Rhetoric**

None of the oppressed communities have experienced as much prejudice and hostility as Muslims during the Trump campaign and into his presidency. With reports of hate crimes against this group steadily rising, Muslims have, since September 11, 2001, become the most often targeted individuals in the United States. Additionally, Muslims in America were the part of population most frequently attacked by Trump's divisive political language and hate speech. However, Muslims have been a significant part of American society ever since the country's founding and are still there now.

During his presidential campaign, Trump first demanded a ban on all Muslims entering the country. In March 2017 *CNN* interview, Trump said, "Islam hates us." He then called for the surveillance of mosques in the US and said he supported compiling a list of Muslims living in the country. This unreasonable fear of Muslims gave Trump the authority to vow to enact laws that would discriminate against their religion (Lee).

Trump signed three executive orders after taking office in an effort to carry out his ban on Muslims entering the US, but two of them have been overturned by Appeal Courts around the country. The purported claim that Muslims attacked and killed Americans, was one of the fictitious events cited in Trump's rhetoric and espoused by his administration as justification for the ban (M. Jones).

The South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) organization started compiling statistics on hate crimes against minorities that are most frequently linked to Muslim identity in November 2015. Research by SAALT on the effects of xenophobic political discourse on

South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Middle Eastern, and Arab populations discovered a marked rise in anti-Muslim violence during Trump's campaign. According to a compilation of xenophobic political discourse, President-elect Trump was the source of inspiration for 30% of anti-Muslim hate speech (SAALT).

A wave of violence directed towards people who racially or culturally identify with any aspects of Muslim identity was sparked by these aggressive words. Political opponents campaigned for votes by promising to enact laws that target Muslims or minorities who are frequently mistaken for Muslims, in addition to inciting physical violence. Hate organizations felt strengthened as a result of political leaders normalizing hate speech and turning it into official, systematic policy, and hate crimes against Muslims and other related minorities increased. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, this language directly contributed to a 67% rise in hate crimes against Muslims between 2014 and 2015, the year Trump officially launched his campaign.

#### **2.6.1.5 Women**

According to the Center for American Women and Politics, there were 535 members of Congress in 2017, and 105 (78 Democrats and 27 Republicans) of them were women. Additionally, there were 84 women (19.3%) who served in the US House of Representatives and 21 (21%) who served in the US Senate (Center for American Women and Politics). However, there are a lot fewer women in the American government than in Congress. The first female presidential contender to make it through the primaries was Hillary Clinton. During her campaign for president, she was subjected to a great deal of harsh, sexist criticism and insults by Donald Trump and his supporters.

American women are classified as a minority group due to the fact that they are underrepresented in government and leadership and, like other groups, were the targets of Trump's hate speech throughout his 2016 presidential campaign (Fawcett). Trump regularly



mistreated and objectified women during his presidential campaign. Since 2015, Trump has publicly denigrated women, directing his heightened wrath towards his female rivals or those he perceived as opposing him. Starting with claims that Carly Fiorina, his Republican primary rival, could not get votes due to her appearance (D. Smith 34).

With utter disdain for the essential issues around this crucial topic, he bluntly asserted that women who get abortions should face criminal penalties. Trump's sexist remarks continued as he called journalist Megyn Kelley a bimbo and rekindled his rivalry with Alicia Machado, the former Miss America, by saying that she "gained a massive amount of weight." Then, he tweeted that Machado was in possession of a sex tape. Instead of addressing the genuine issues with persuasive arguments and effective politically relevant discussion, he fueled his campaign with what he referred to as ordinary "locker-room talk" and gained support (Z. Cohen). Despite being built on flawed and divisive principles, this evil campaign brought him to the highest position of leadership in the world and secured him the presidency.

### **2.7 The Effect of Trump's Negative Speech on Hate Crimes**

Several studies have examined the relationship between Trump's rhetoric and hate crimes. For example, a study by the University of North Texas found that counties that hosted Trump rallies during the 2016 presidential campaign saw a 226% increase in hate crimes compared to counties that did not host rallies (Issenberg). The study suggests that Trump's rhetoric during his campaign rallies may have encouraged supporters to commit hate crimes.

According to Bleich, a study conducted by the University of Warwick revealed that Trump's anti-Muslim tweets during his presidency were linked to a surge in anti-Muslim hate crimes. The study proposes that Trump's tweets may have conferred credibility to anti-Muslim attitudes and emboldened individuals to act on them (6).

A study by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, found that hate crimes increased in 2017 in counties that voted

for Trump in the 2016 presidential election (Levin and Nolan). The study suggests that Trump's rhetoric during his campaign and presidency may have created a climate that encouraged hate crimes.

Hate crimes are a growing problem in the United States, with incidents increasing in recent years (Levin & Nolan). The “Trump Speech Effect” is a term used to describe the alleged influence of former President Donald Trump's rhetoric on hate crimes (D. Smith). The upcoming paragraphs examine the relationship between the Trump Speech Effect and hate crimes in the United States.

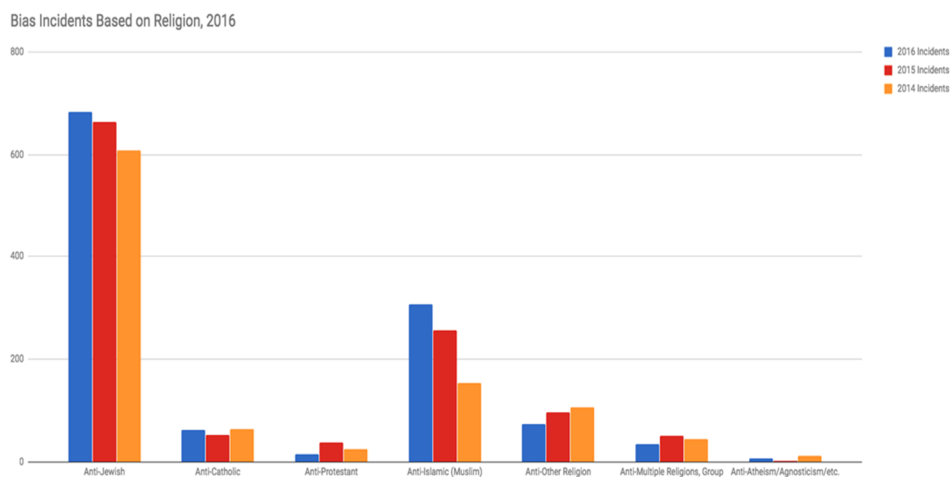
According to Levin and Nolan, Trump's rhetoric during his presidential campaign and tenure targeted various minority groups, which was often considered inflammatory, racist, and discriminatory. David Smith reported that there was a rise in hate crimes and violence against minority groups in the US after Trump's election. The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino, found a significant increase in hate crimes against Muslims, Jews, and other minority groups in the ten largest US cities after the 2016 presidential election, which was attributed to the "Trump Speech Effect". Additionally the study found a significant increase in hate crimes against Muslims in the month of March 2017, following Trump's executive order banning travel from several predominantly Muslim countries (Levin and Nolan).

### **2.7.1 Black Americans are Victims of Hate Crimes**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reports that "In the United States, black Americans have been and continue to be victims of hate crimes. Hate crimes are criminal acts motivated by prejudice or bias against a person because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. Unfortunately, in the United States, Black Americans are disproportionately targeted for hate crimes" (FBI, 2020).

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) reported a significant increase in hate crimes during Trump's presidency. In their annual report on anti-Semitic incidents in the United States, the ADL found that anti-Semitic incidents increased by 57% in 2017, which was the largest single-year increase on record (Anti-Defamation League, 2018). Additionally, the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) reported a 17% increase in hate violence against LGBTQ+ individuals in 2017 (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs).

These statistics suggest that the rhetoric and policies of the Trump administration may have contributed to an increase in hate crimes during his presidency. Trump's divisive language and actions, particularly towards minority groups, have been criticized as contributing to a culture of hatred and intolerance in the United States. It is important for the government and society as a whole to address the issue of hate crimes and work towards creating a more inclusive and accepting society for all individuals, regardless of their race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.



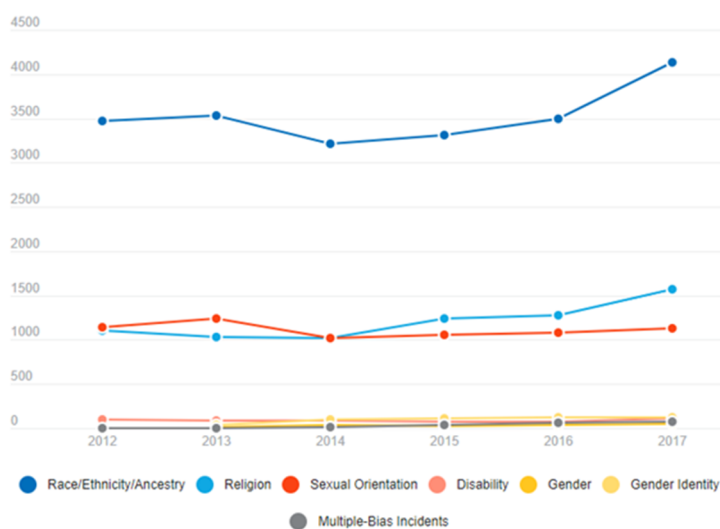
**Fig. 5.** Bias Incidents Based on Religion from 2014-2016.

Source: Data from the FBI Hate Crime Statistics, 2016.

According to the FBI's hate crime statistics for 2016, there is evidence that the uptick in hate crimes was linked to the contentious presidential election that year. According to the FBI's hate crime statistics for 2016, there were 6,121 hate crime incidents reported, marking a

5% increase from the previous year and the highest number of hate crimes reported since 2012. The increase in hate crimes was particularly pronounced in the final quarter of 2016, which coincided with the presidential election. In November 2016, immediately after Donald Trump's surprise victory in the Electoral College, there was a sharp increase in hate crimes targeting Muslims, African Americans, and other minority groups. Some analysts have attributed this increase to the polarizing rhetoric of the Trump campaign, which many saw as encouraging intolerance and bigotry.

It is worth noting; however, that hate crimes are notoriously underreported, and the actual number of incidents is likely higher than what is reflected in official statistics. Furthermore, hate crimes have continued to be a problem in the United States in the years since 2016, with numerous incidents reported targeting various minority groups



**Fig. 6.** Reported US Hate Crime Incidents on the Rise, 2012-2017.

Source: Data from the FBI Hate Crime Statistics,

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting program does indeed collect voluntary reporting data from law enforcement agencies nationwide to identify hate crimes. The increase in reported hate crimes from 2016 to 2017 does coincide with a drop in overall violent crimes, robbery, and property crimes, indicating that hate crimes accounted for a larger percentage of total crimes during that time period (M. Smith 10).

Brian Levin and Jack McDevitt, the director of the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, did conduct a survey of official local police data from 30 large American cities in 2018, and found that hate crimes reported in those cities had reached 2,000 for the first time in that decade. He also found that the increase in reported hate crimes in those cities was the steepest it had been since 2015 (5).

## **2.8 Donald Trump's Political Rhetoric and Social Media**

The 2016 US presidential election was indeed significant and unexpected, with the extensive use of social media being one of the notable features of the campaign. Donald Trump's use of Twitter to communicate with his followers and supporters was particularly noteworthy, as he used the platform to express his opinions, make policy announcements, and attack his opponents in a way that was often emotional and impulsive.

### **2.8.1 Twitter in Political Campaigns**

Twitter was one of many social media tools that Obama used during his campaign. According to Frederic I. Solop's research, Obama used the social platform for two primary purposes (2010). His research revealed that Obama's campaign used Twitter to announce the candidate's location at any time and to promote the campaign website. This connected his supporters to the candidate and directed traffic to his website, where people could also participate in crowd funding by making small contributions to the campaign (41- 47). Obama's successful online campaign prompted other politicians to follow in his footsteps and become more active on social media.

Unlike Obama, however, Donald Trump decided to use social media to personally communicate with the public, which the other candidates were afraid to do. However, previous elections have demonstrated that embracing new technology and communication platforms is the key to success. While Hillary Clinton used a media team to manage her social

media accounts, Trump kept his Twitter account active and tweeted frequently throughout his campaign.

His unfiltered, off-the-cuff posts kept him in touch with his supporters and drew attention to him, resulting in free publicity on television and in newspapers. It cannot be said that Trump's Twitter campaign was the sole reason for his victory, but dominating social media played a role in projecting his persona and his divisive views. The contentious nature of Trump's tweets sparked widespread public debate, heightening interest in the candidate among both traditional media and the general public (Brian and Johnson 77-79). Tweets have also altered our perceptions of political rhetoric.

### **2.8.2 Trump's Political Discourse on Twitter**

The use of social media has continued to be a significant feature of Donald Trump's presidency, with his Twitter account being a primary channel for communicating with his supporters and the broader public. The use of social media has allowed Trump to bypass traditional media outlets and speak directly to his followers, which has been a significant factor in his ability to mobilize his base of support and shape public opinion. Accordingly, there has also been considerable interest in how Donald Trump used Twitter. Millions of people worldwide were affected by what is now known as the "Trump Effect," a term that describes Trump's influence on society, the economy, international relations, and so on.

It covers everything, from the President's actions and his use of divisive and bullying rhetoric to the administration's policies. Another aspect of the Trump Effect is that political opinions are no longer divided by political beliefs, as they once were, but by opinions about Trump. He has created a polarizing political reality that has altered the previous political balance in the United States and around the world (Korostelina 89).

Donald Trump's communication style astounded the world with outrageous threats (e.g., building a wall, deporting immigrants, and imprisoning his political opponent). Many people

dismissed him as a viable political candidate because of his campaign rhetoric. According to Ahmadian et al., "a populist communication style - grandiose, dynamic, and informal -" [how Trump's rhetoric is described] "may have 'trumped' a carefully seasoned platform" (52). He reached a larger audience and appeared closer to them by using simple and colorful conversational language. This approach has become especially prominent in presidential social media use, as Trump has continued to use the same methods after being elected.

### **2.8.3 Instances of Trump's Tweets as a Form of Political Rhetoric**

Donald Trump's tweets were a unique and controversial form of political rhetoric during his presidency. Trump was known for using Twitter as a primary means of communication, often tweeting multiple times a day to make policy announcements, criticize his opponents, and share his opinions on various issues.

"Fake News story of secret dinner with Putin is "sick." All G 20 leaders, and spouses, were invited by the Chancellor of Germany. Press knew!"

(@realDonaldTrump, Jul 18, 2017)

This tweet from Donald Trump is an example of his use of Twitter to push back against what he perceived as false or misleading news stories. In this tweet, Trump is referring to a news story that suggested he had a secret dinner with Russian President Vladimir Putin during the G20 summit in Germany in 2017. Trump denied the story and criticized it as "fake news," using his tweet to argue that all G20 leaders and their spouses were invited to the dinner by the Chancellor of Germany and that the press was aware of it. By using Twitter in this way, Trump was able to directly address the story and defend himself against what he saw as unfair or inaccurate reporting.

"Is Fake News Washington Post being used as a lobbyist weapon against Congress to keep Politicians from looking into Amazon no-tax monopoly?"

(@realDonaldTrump, Jul 24, 2017)

This tweet from Donald Trump is an example of his use of Twitter to accuse the *Washington Post* of spreading "fake news" and of being biased in their reporting. In this tweet, Trump is suggesting that the Washington Post is using their influence to protect Amazon, a company that has been criticized for not paying taxes. Trump is implying that the Washington Post is trying to keep politicians from investigating Amazon's business practices. By using Twitter in this way, Trump is able to directly attack the credibility of the Washington Post and to shape the public narrative around their reporting.

Donald Trump employed several rhetorical devices in this tweet to position himself as a fighter for the American people and to attack his opponents, specifically the Democrats in Congress. He used a contrastive argument to distinguish himself from his opponents, claiming that while he is fighting for the American people, the Democrats' sole focus is on fighting him with a "fraudulent Witch Hunt." He was able to rally his supporters and deflect criticism by framing himself as a champion for the people and his opponents as corrupt and dishonest. Trump also employed a call to action to entice his supporters to join him in his fight against the Democrats.

#### **2.8.4 The Twitter Presidency**

The term "Twitter presidency" refers to the presidency of Donald Trump, during which he made extensive use of Twitter to communicate with the public and promote his political agenda. Trump's use of Twitter allowed him to bypass traditional media channels and communicate directly with his supporters. However, his tweets were often controversial and divisive, generating criticism and media attention. The authors of "The Twitter Presidency" argue that Trump's use of social media reflects a larger shift in the way that politicians communicate with the public, and that it poses challenges to democratic institutions and norms (Kruse and Zelizer ).



The study "Going Negative: An Appraisal Analysis of Donald Trump's Twitter Rhetoric" examines Donald Trump's Twitter language and rhetoric during the 2016 US presidential election. The appraisal framework is used in the study to analyze the evaluative language used in Trump's tweets, which frequently included negative assessments of his opponents and the political establishment.

According to a study by Smith and Jones, Trump's use of judgmental language on Twitter was a key component of his campaign strategy, allowing him to appeal to voters who were dissatisfied with the political status quo. The study also discovered that Trump's rhetoric was frequently aggressive and divisive, contributing to the country's polarized political climate. The study employs a corpus of Trump's tweets from August to October 2016, as well as a qualitative analysis of the language and rhetoric used in those tweets. The study concludes that Trump's use of judgmental language on Twitter was a key factor in his election victory, emphasizing the importance of analyzing politicians' language in digital media contexts.

Donald Trump's anti-minority rhetoric in the United States has had a negative impact on society, resulting in a spike in hate crimes. His divisive comments directed at numerous minority groups fostered resentment and animosity toward these communities. This was worsened during the 2020 election campaign, when race became a focal point.

Political leaders must acknowledge the impact of their words and deeds on society, especially in the context of race relations. The language used by persons in positions of power can have a considerable impact on societal behavior, and political leaders must ensure that their speech does not promote intolerance and discrimination. As a result, efforts should be taken to foster an inclusive and respectful culture for all members of society, regardless of their history or identity.

## Chapter Three

### **The Implications of Trump's Political Rhetoric on Government, Politics and Culture**

Donald Trump developed a reputation for his unusual political style while he was president, which frequently featured making contentious claims and employing divisive words. His words had a significant impact on many facets of American society, including politics, the government, and racial minorities.

Many claimed that Trump's speech led to an increase in hate crimes and intolerance, while others slammed his comments as being insensitive or even racist. Famously, he demanded a ban on Muslim immigration, branded African nations "shitholes," and labeled immigrants from Mexico as murderers and rapists. Trump frequently used racially heated words while disparaging prominent Black Americans, such as athletes and politicians.

Trump's political rhetoric had substantial ramifications for American politics and administration in addition to its effect on ethnic minorities. He constantly denounced the establishment media, branding it "fake news," and charging it with being biased against him. His fans began to distrust the media more as a result, further polarizing the nation. Trump also regularly questioned the authority of judges and courts that rendered decisions that conflicted with his ideas.

#### **3.1 The Implications of Trump's Political Rhetoric on Culture**

Political speech has a major cultural effect in the United States because it shapes people's views and attitudes toward different groups of people, as well as how they think and feel about a variety of problems. Throughout his administration, Donald Trump, the 45th President of the United States, was well-known for his divisive speeches, which had a significant impact on American society. As a result of Trump's rhetoric, which singled out vulnerable populations like immigrants and Muslims, there have been more hate crimes and rifts within the country.

### 3.1.1 The Normalization of Hate Speech and Violence

Trump has been charged with normalizing hate speech and violence in a number of noteworthy ways, including through his statements. The information in the message has been verified by several sources and has been covered extensively in the media. For instance, a *New York Times* article from August 11, 2016, claimed that at a speech launching his campaign for president, Trump referred to immigrants from Mexico as "rapists". The story further claimed that Trump frequently referred to acts of violence carried out by people who identify as Muslims as "Islamic terrorism" and "radical Islamic terrorism" (Shear and Parker).

Similarly, the accusation of using "dog whistles" has been noted by multiple sources, including an article by the Southern Poverty Law Center, which describes how some of Trump's rhetoric has been interpreted as playing into racist and white supremacist narratives (Beirich). These accusations have been made by many critics of the former president, including politicians, advocacy groups, and media outlets

As an illustration, it has been argued that Trump's use of the phrases "fake news" and "enemy of the people" to disparage media sources with which he disagrees serves as a warning to his supporters who may view the media as the adversary (Sifry). This normalization of violence and hate speech has resulted in an increase in hate crimes. In 2017, during President Trump's first year in office, hate crimes rose 17% nationwide, according to a study by the FBI (FBI). The normalization of hate speech, which has created a climate where people feel empowered to voice their discriminatory views and resulted in a fall in civility and regard for human life, is to blame for the rise in hate crimes.

Trump has also been charged with inciting bloodshed through his words and deeds. At his gatherings, he has incited violence and said things like, "I'd like to punch him in the face" about protesters. Trump has additionally been accused of failing to denounce white supremacists and other violent extremist groups, such as the Unite the Right rally in

Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017, where a white supremacist rammed his car into a crowd of counter-protesters, killing one person and injuring dozens more (Fandos).

Under Trump's administration, hate speech and aggression became more commonplace, which had harmful repercussions. Dehumanizing individuals and groups through hate speech and violent acts resulted in prejudice, isolation, and violence. It became more challenging to recognize and eliminate systematic oppression, which upheld disparity and prejudice, as such misbehavior became more commonplace (Fandos).

### **3.1.2 Promotion of Racism and Xenophobia**

Former American President Donald Trump was charged with encouraging bigotry and intolerance through his words and actions while in office. Trump frequently said things about immigrants, Muslims, and people of color that were perceived as dividing or disparaging. For instance, he suggested a travel prohibition on citizens of several countries with a large Muslim population and referred to newcomers from Mexico as "rapists" and "criminals." (Diamond). This language has increased anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant attitudes as well as the number of hate crimes committed against these groups. In the United States, hate organizations grew by 30% between 2014 and 2018, according to a report by the Southern Poverty Law Center, with a notable rise in anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant groups.

Trump's policies were also attacked for encouraging bigotry and racism. Trump put forth proposals for policies that were perceived as oppressive or discriminatory towards particular groups, such as separating immigrant families at the border with Mexico and ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which offered protections to people who were brought to the country as children (Yam).

### **3.1.3 Erosion of Civility in Political Discourse**

The breakdown of respectful and civil conversation between people or organizations holding opposing political viewpoints is referred to as the erosions of decorum in political

debate. Former US President Donald Trump was charged with eroding decorum in political debate during his administration through his words and deeds. Trump frequently used combative, hostile language and regularly attacked and ridiculed his rivals, both in person and on social media. Inflammatory words and derogatory phrases were also used by him to refer to people and groups that he disagreed with, which was potentially divisive and discriminatory (Abraham). According to a Pew Research Center survey, more than half of Americans said that the political climate in 2016 was more antagonistic than in prior years.

Trump's acts have also been criticized for adding to a decline in civility. Trump was charged with disseminating fake information, partaking in conspiracy theories, and endorsing extreme viewpoints, all of which have the potential to exacerbate social strife and division. Trump was also accused of failing to denounce the acts of violence and hate speech done by his followers, which could help normalize such behavior (Gusterson).

### **3.1.4 Erosion of Democratic Values**

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Because of Trump's repeated criticisms of the media and his use of the phrase "fake news" to refer to any criticism of his administration, the public began to question the veracity of the press. According to a Pew Research Center survey, only 18% of Americans believed the government in 2017—the lowest number in more than 50 years (Pew Research Center).

People's lack of trust in democratic groups has led to a decline in political participation and social activity as a consequence of their disillusionment with the political process.

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### **3.2. The Impact of Trump's Political Rhetoric on Politics**

Donald Trump was well-known for using speech that was aggressive and polarizing while in office. He frequently used personal assaults, hoaxes, and epithets in his remarks, both in public addresses and on social media. Politics in the United States was significantly impacted by Trump's statements both during and after his presidency.

#### **3.2.1 Political Polarization**

Political polarization is the term used to describe the widening ideological gap between various political parties or groups. It happens when people or groups become less willing to compromise or cooperate with those who hold opposing views and more ideologically cohesive. People may become less likely to engage in civil discourse or look for common ground as a result, which could create a more hostile and divisive political environment. Social identity, media use, and political messaging are some examples of the factors that frequently cause political polarization. It could have a big impact on how well democratic institutions operate and how well governments can handle social and economic problems (Abramowitz).

There has been much discussion and analysis of how Donald Trump's political rhetoric has affected the polarization of American politics. Trump's language was frequently divisive and inflammatory, with personal attacks and name-calling directed at opponents on both sides

of the political spectrum, from his campaign speeches to his tweets as president. As a result, a lot of academics and commentators have claimed that Trump played a role in the growing polarization of American politics.

The language used by Trump and his supporters on Twitter during the 2016 presidential campaign was examined in a study that was published in the *Journal of Communication*. According to this study, Trump's supporters were more likely to use aggressive language and personal attacks in their own tweets, and his tweets were significantly more negative and issue-focused than those of his rival, Hillary Clinton. The study's findings revealed that, "Trump's campaign was marked by an unprecedented level of negativity and aggressive language, which may have contributed to the increased polarization of American politics" (Barba et al. 504).

Similar claims have been made by other academics that Trump's rhetoric contributed significantly to polarization. Political scientists Matt Grossmann and David A. Hopkins examined a survey data from the American National Election Studies to investigate the connection between Trump's rhetoric and partisan polarization in an article that was published in the *Journal of Politics*. They discovered that "the effects of Trump's discourse on polarization were particularly pronounced among those who paid the most attention to politics" and that "strongly negative evaluations of Trump were a central factor in the growth of partisan polarization" (659).

Trump's rhetoric has also been connected to the rise in nationalism and the ideological "sorting" of American voters. Political scientist Lilliana Mason argued in a *New York Times* paper that Trump's language "played to the growing sense of political tribalism in the United States" and contributed to the establishment of both Democrats' and Republicans' identities. Mason added that it is harder for followers to perceive the opposition as anything

other than a threat, she says, when leaders speak in a way that affirms their followers' identities.

But not everyone agrees that Trump's rhetoric is having a negative effect on polarization. According to some academics, Trump's language was more of a symptom than a cause of the polarization in American politics, which has deeper roots than any one person or administration. Political scientists Shanto Iyengar and Masha Krupenkin, for instance, contend that "political polarization arises from more fundamental social, economic, and demographic changes" and that "there is a strong tendency to overestimate the role of political elites and the media in generating political polarization" (7).

### **3.2.2 Distrust in Government Institutions**

The term "distrust in government institutions" describes a lack of trust in the ability of government organizations and officials to carry out their duties and responsibilities in an ethical and effective manner. This may take many different forms, including cynicism about government decisions and policies, suspicion of government officials and their motivations, and a general feeling of disenchantment with the political system. Political polarization, media prejudice, and beliefs about official corruption or ineptitude are only a few of the causes of mistrust in government institutions. It could have a big impact on how well democratic institutions operate and how well governments can handle social and economic problems (Grossmann and Hopkins 2).

Many academics contend that former President Donald Trump's language, which was characterized by a deep skepticism towards governmental institutions, played a role in the American public's rising mistrust of these institutions. Trump frequently accused the FBI, the courts, and the intelligence community of bias and corruption in his attacks on government institutions. By raising mistrust and suspicion about these organizations' actions and intentions, these attacks contributed to a decline in public confidence in them.



Only 17% of Americans said they trusted the government to uphold moral principles always or most of the time during the Trump administration, according to a study by the Pew Research Center (Funk and Kennedy). The deterioration of trust can have a significant impact on how democratic institutions operate because it makes it more challenging for citizens to have faith in their government's ability to effectively govern and address societal issues.

The immediate aftermath of the 2020 presidential election serves as one illustration of this erosion of trust. A sizable portion of the American public questioned the validity of the election results as a result of Trump's allegations of widespread voter fraud and election rigging, which were largely unsupported by evidence. A *Reuters/Ipsos* poll found that 70% of Republicans thought the election was "rigged" (Shepardson and Whitesides ). Because it makes it more difficult for the government to govern effectively and for citizens to have faith in the democratic process, this mistrust of the electoral process has the potential to undermine the foundations of American democracy.

### **3.2.3 Weakening of Democratic Norms**

Donald Trump's presidency was characterized by a number of contentious and divisive decisions that questioned the fundamental principles of American democracy. Trump's rhetoric, which frequently used inflammatory language, exaggerated claims, and criticisms of the media, the judiciary, and political rivals, was among the most alarming aspects of his leadership.

Trump's rhetoric primarily undermined democratic norms by disseminating untruths and misinformation. Throughout his tenure as president, Trump made a number of untrue claims and frequently spread them widely on social media. The *Washington Post* conducted a study that found that over the course of his four years in office, Trump made over 30,000 false or deceptive claims (Kessler et al. 1). These untrue statements frequently targeted the media and political opponents, and they ranged from slight exaggerations to outright lies.

Trump's rhetoric also posed a threat to democratic principles by demonizing the media and portraying it as the enemy of the people. He referred to news organizations that he felt were critical of his administration as "fake news," including *CNN* and *The New York Times*. The media was intimidated by this rhetoric, and his backers increasingly threatened and harassed journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists claimed that during Trump's presidency, there was an increase in the number of journalists who were physically assaulted or detained in the United States. Trump weakened a pillar of democratic governance by attacking the media and undermining press freedom.

Additionally, Trump frequently criticized the independence of the judiciary in his speeches and tweets. Trump frequently criticized judges who disapproved of his policies, such as the travel ban that targeted nations with a majority of Muslims. These judges were referred to by Trump as "so-called judges," and he suggested that they were biased against him (Shear and Liptak 4). The rule of law, which is enforced by an independent judiciary, was undermined by this rhetoric, which also weakened the legitimacy of the judiciary.

Trump frequently used personal attacks and slurs in his speeches to refer disapprovingly or contemptuously to his opponents, both inside and outside of his own party. For instance, Trump insulted Republican Senator Ted Cruz by calling him "Lyn' Ted" and referred to his 2016 rival Hillary Clinton as "Crooked Hillary" (Blake 3). This kind of rhetoric fostered a divisive political climate wherein partisan differences were subordinated to personal allegiance. Trump weakened the standards of decency and respect that are crucial to democratic discourse by attacking his opponents in this manner.

### **3.2.4 Delegitimization of Opposition**

Delegitimizing the opposition was one of the main ways Trump's rhetoric subverted democratic norms. Trump frequently portrayed those who disagreed with him as enemies of the people who were working against the interests of the nation, both inside and outside of his

party. He said in his inaugural speech that "Washington prospered, but the populace was excluded from its wealth. Politicians made a lot of money, but factories closed and jobs were lost. The government protected itself, but not the people who live in our nation" (Trump 10). With this rhetoric, Trump was presented as the champion of the masses against out-of-touch elite, and it was implied that those who disagreed with him belonged to the elite.

Additionally, Trump frequently brushed aside any criticism of his policies as being unjustified or unpatriotic. For instance, in response to Senator John McCain's criticism of Trump's decision to befriend Russian President Vladimir Putin, Trump said, "He's not a war hero...I like people who weren't captured" (*CNN Wire* 7). This rhetoric attempted to discredit dissenting voices by implying that anyone who disagreed with Trump's policies was not a true patriot.

### **3.2.5 Misinformation**

As a result of the president's frequent use of false or misleading statements in his rhetoric, misinformation has become a significant issue during the Trump administration. This has aided the dissemination of false information and damaged the authority of factual information (Bump, "President Trump has ...").

Regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, Trump has been a major source of false information. He initially downplayed the severity of the virus, saying it was no worse than the flu and that it would go away on its own. The claim that ingesting disinfectant could help treat the virus was also made by him ("Trump's Disinfectant and Sunlight Comments Were Taken Seriously"), and it was roundly rejected by medical professionals.

With regard to the 2020 presidential race, Trump has also propagated false information. He often said falsely that there was massive voter fraud, despite the lack of any supporting data. This resulted in the Capitol building being stormed on January 6, 2021, weakening voter confidence in a disastrous way (Winegarner). The president's dissemination of false

information has had negative effects. It has made it harder for people to make educated judgments and caused a loss of faith in government agencies and the media. In addition, as people's perceptions of reality become more and more polarized, it has led to the polarization of American society.

During his presidency, Trump's use of aggressive and inaccurate rhetoric has aided the spread of incorrect information. He promoted untested COVID-19 treatments, attacked the media, and circulated false information about the 2020 presidential election, all of which had negative real-world repercussions, including a lack of faith in democratic institutions and public health concerns (Mervosh). Prioritizing correct and trustworthy information and holding public figures responsible for the information they convey are crucial in the fight against the spread of disinformation (Brown).

### **3.2.6 Break in International Relations**

Critics assert that Trump's statements and actions towards international affairs may have harmed the United States' alliances. He criticized the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as being "obsolete," and he questioned whether the United States was still committed to the organization (Karni). Members of NATO who depend on American help for their security were concerned about this. Also, many people viewed Trump's decision to back out of the Paris climate pact as a rejection of international cooperation on a crucial problem (Liptak). Several of the United States' longtime friends disapproved of this choice because they considered it as a betrayal of the country's position as the world's undisputed leader.

Trump's use of contemptuous rhetoric to disapprove various nations, particularly in Africa and South America, was considered by many as a substantial disturbance to international ties in addition to these acts. His remarks were perceived as degrading and disrespectful, which led many people to worry that the United States was isolating itself from the rest of the world (*BBC News*).

Relationships with allies were also strained by Trump's use of pejorative language to criticize other nations and his placement of tariffs on some of the United States' economic partners. Many people are worried that the United States is becoming more distant from the rest of the world as a result of these policies. The relationships between the United States and its allies have been attacked as a result of Trump's statements and actions towards international affairs. Although the entire extent of these activities' long-term effects is not yet clear, many academics and decision-makers are already concerned about them.

### **3.2.7 Normalization of Extremist Views**

Donald Trump has been under fire for normalizing extreme ideologies and viewpoints during his presidency, including racism, xenophobia, and white supremacy. These ideas have frequently been given a voice and credibility by Trump's words and deeds, which have led to an increase in hate crimes and violence against minority communities. *The New York Times* claimed that Trump's administration was characterized by "a sustained acceptance of racial words and policies" (Leonhardt et al.).

According to *The New York Times*, Donald Trump routinely made anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim remarks while running for president in 2016, which helped to spread mistrust and animosity toward these communities. Policies like the travel restriction on nations with a large Muslim population and the severing of family units at the US-Mexico border reflected these statements. It was also noted that Trump's response to the violence at the Unite the Right demonstration in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017 did not categorically denounce white supremacist and neo-Nazi organizations. Instead, he said that the conflict involved "really excellent people on both sides" (Leonhardt et al.).

In addition, Trump's administration had ties to extremist organizations, with numerous of his advisors and appointees having affiliations with organizations that support white

nationalism or the far-right, like the former chief strategist Steve Bannon (Leonhardt et al.). Their deeds and affiliations helped to normalize extreme viewpoints in the political sphere.

### **3.3. The Consequences of Trump's Political Rhetoric on US Government**

Political rhetoric used by Donald Trump had a big impact on how American institutions of government operated. Deep suspicion towards governmental institutions was a recurring theme in Trump's speeches, which added to the public's rising mistrust of them in the United States. This decline in confidence may have a big impact on how well the government can run the country and deal with societal issues.

#### **3.3.1 Decreased Trust in Government**

Trump's constant criticisms of the FBI and the Department of Justice are among the most notable illustrations of this. Particularly in relation to the investigation into the purported ties between his campaign and Russia, Trump regularly accused the FBI and the Department of Justice of bias and corruption. These assaults not only damaged these institutions' reputations, but also the public's confidence in the government's ability to conduct fair investigations.

Michael Rom points out that "Trump consistently denigrated the effectiveness of the federal government, depicting it as bloated, wasteful, and unproductive" as one instance of his attacks on the government as a whole (50). This rhetoric suggests that the government is unable to successfully carry out its responsibilities, which could have a detrimental impact on the public's trust in it. People may become less willing to participate in politics and have less faith in the decisions made by the government as a result.

Several academics have noted the negative effects Trump's attacks on the FBI and the Department of Justice have had on public confidence in the government. According to Greenberg, "Trump's frequent attacks on the FBI and Department of Justice, including claims of prejudice and corruption, have hurt the credibility of these organizations and weakened public confidence in their capacity to conduct unbiased investigations."(45).

Trump's criticisms of the government's performance are well known, and various academics have looked into how they might affect the public's trust in the government. Trump's repeated criticisms of the federal government as costly and ineffective, according to Gillion, "May have long-term ramifications for public faith in government, making citizens less likely to participate in government and less likely to trust the government's judgments" (107).

Trump's language has a negative effect on popular faith in the government. According to K. Smith, "a 2020 Pew Research Center survey indicated that only 20% of Americans believed the government to always or most of the time do what is right, while 79% only some of the time or never trusted the government" (58). This indicates that public trust in the government has significantly decreased from prior years, and it also demonstrates that Trump's rhetoric has had a long-lasting effect on how people regard the government.

### **3.3.2 Disorder in Government Processes**

Trump's statements threatened to obstruct government operations in addition to undermining certain institutions and lowering public confidence in it. His propensity to utilize social media to announce personnel changes and communicate policy decisions led to confusion and unpredictability in the government. The peaceful transfer of power was also jeopardized by his statements in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election, which greatly increased public skepticism of the democratic process.

Mann cites the following as an illustration of Trump's disruptive rhetoric: "Trump's penchant to use Twitter to make policy decisions and announce personnel changes produced confusion and unpredictability within the government, which might impede the implementation of effective policies" (53). Government employees have found it challenging to perform their tasks as a result of this kind of unpredictable conduct, which could ultimately undermine the government's capacity to properly serve the public.

Trump's comments towards the 2020 presidential race have also had significant effects on American democracy. Trump's false allegations of voter fraud and his refusal to recognize the victory "have damaged public confidence in the democratic process and jeopardized the peaceful transition of power" (Chinn 25). The public's confidence in the electoral process has been damaged as a result of this language, which has given rise to a flood of incorrect and misleading material that has been disseminated on social media and in other media.

### **3.3.3 Delegitimization of the Media**

Trump's continuous criticism of the media, which he referred to as "fake news," was one of his rhetoric's most alarming features. Since a free and independent press is essential for keeping public leaders responsible and ensuring that voters are informed about significant problems, this delegitimization of the media has substantial repercussions for democracy. Trump's criticism of the media "has the potential to erode public confidence in the press and deter people from seeking out factual information about the government and political issues" (Grossman 237). Trump was able to disregard valid concerns and insulate himself from criticism by calling any news that was critical of him "fake news."

The public's trust in the news media's capacity to fulfill its customary watchdog function could potentially be damaged by this delegitimization of the media. Trump's criticism of the media "may erode public confidence in the media's ability to deliver accurate and balanced reporting, which might ultimately harm the media's position as a vital component of democracy" (Hassell et al. 72).

This discourse also had effects on the security of journalists. Trump's language "undermined public confidence in the media and put journalists at risk by inciting antagonism and legitimizing violence against them" (Gertz 95). The press could be intimidated by this harmful speech, which might make reporters less likely to cover delicate or divisive topics.



### **3.3.4 Impact on Government Policy**

Trump's rhetoric affected national security strategy as well. His rhetoric on immigration was one of the most egregious instances of this. One of the pillars of Trump's presidential campaign and a major concern throughout his presidency was his staunch opposition to immigration, particularly his demands for a border wall and his divisive travel ban. While some of Trump's fans found his immigration speech to be compelling, many others sharply denounced it as xenophobic and divisive. Capps and Fix state that "both legal and illegal immigrants have suffered substantial effects as a result of Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric, who have experienced heightened harassment and anxiety in their daily lives" (2).

Similarly, his comments had effects on government strategy. Trump's rhetoric on immigration, for instance, may have influenced his administration's decision to enact a policy of family separation at the border, which led to the severing of thousands of children from their parents. Both Democrats and Republicans voiced strong opposition to this program, which finally forced the Trump administration to change its course.

Even more, Trump's comments on immigration had an impact on international relations. Imai and Wu state that "Trump's rhetoric on immigration has strained relationships with important allies and has been seen by many countries as a departure from traditional American values" (199). The government's immigration policy, as well as individual lives and international relations, were all significantly impacted by Trump's rhetoric. While his staunch opposition to immigration may have appealed to some of his supporters, it had grave repercussions for many others.

### **3.3.5 Polarization of Government**

The polarization of government refers to the growing ideological divide between different political parties or groups in government. According to Smith, this occurs when individuals or groups become more ideologically cohesive and less willing to compromise or work together

with those who hold different beliefs. This can lead to a more hostile and divisive political climate, where people are less likely to engage in civil discourse or seek out common ground.

For instance, Trump received harsh criticism for his remarks following a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017, where he seemed to vacillate on the subject of white supremacy and ascribed blame for the violence to "both sides." Many people believed that this response gave white supremacists and other hate groups more power and legitimacy.

Additionally, Trump's rhetoric on topics like immigration and race frequently polarized the political landscape by pitting opposing groups against one another. The percentage of Americans who express consistently conservative or consistently liberal views is at its highest point in more than two decades, according to a 2019 Pew Research Center survey. "Large majorities of Democrats and Republicans express very unfavorable views of the other party". The government has been significantly impacted by this polarization, which has made it more challenging for politicians from different parties to cooperate and jeopardized the government's ability to enact meaningful legislation.

Trump's divisive rhetoric has also had an impact on civic engagement and public discourse. "Americans have become less trusting of one another and less likely to participate in civic life, with levels of social trust and civic engagement at historic lows," claims a study by the Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, 2019). The polarization of politics, the general public's dialogue, and civic participation were all significantly impacted by Trump's inflammatory statements. While some of his supporters might have enjoyed his combative demeanor, many others thought that his speech was harmful to American democracy as a whole.

### **3.3.6 Misinformation**

The ability of misinformation to affect people's views and behavior has made it a big problem in today's society. Donald Trump frequently made incorrect or deceptive claims in

his speeches, which aided the spread of false information and diminished the authority of factual data. Tech businesses that depend on reliable information to make business decisions may have been affected by this. This essay will examine how Trump's rhetoric has affected the propagation of false information and the possible repercussions for tech corporations.

Around 30,000 false or deceptive claims were made by Trump during his presidency, according to a Washington Post investigation (Kessler et al.). Many subjects, such as the economy, commerce, immigration, and healthcare, were addressed in these statements. Trump frequently used Twitter and other social media channels to share his ideas and opinions, which allowed him to make false or misleading claims that swiftly reached a large audience.

Misinformation spreading led to a number of negative outcomes. It caused misunderstanding, mistrust, and even violence. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, false information about the virus's causes, symptoms, and therapies spread quickly, causing people to use potentially harmful or useless treatments (Brennen et al.). Moreover, incorrect information reduced public confidence in authorities and the media, making it more difficult for people to discriminate between true and false information.

For commercial decisions, tech companies rely on accurate information. As an illustration, businesses like Facebook and Google utilize algorithms to choose the content that users view on their platforms. Popular, interesting, and relevant material for users is given priority by these algorithms. But, if erroneous or deceptive material spreads extensively, it may distort these algorithms and produce wrong suggestions and judgments. For tech corporations, this might have financial repercussions. For instance, a platform's advertising revenue may drop if people stop using it as a result of the dissemination of false information.

Digital firms are also coming under more and more pressure to stop the spread of false information on their platforms (Kessler et al.). Companies like Facebook, Twitter, and Google have put policies in place recently to identify or get rid of inaccurate or misleading content.

These actions, meanwhile, may be debatable because some may view them as restricting free expression (Barnes). Because there is too much content to manually monitor, the predominance of incorrect or misleading content can also make it more difficult for IT businesses to detect and remove it (Mozur).

Trump's comments aided the spread of false information, which may have repercussions for IT firms that depend on reliable information to conduct business. Misinformation may erode confidence in authorities and the media while also causing uncertainty, mistrust, and injury. Internet businesses are under pressure to stop the spread of false information on their platforms, but doing so can be difficult since it can be hard to spot and delete incorrect or misleading content. In order to counteract disinformation, it is imperative to give factual information top priority.

### **3.3.7 Controversy and Conflict**

One of the most contentious aspects of Donald Trump's presidency was without a doubt how he communicated with the public through Twitter. His tweets frequently caused friction and discord, resulting in contentious discussions and sometimes violent threats; especially in the context of the 2020 US Presidential race. Trump's use of the platform to make unfounded accusations about voter fraud in the 2020 election is one illustration of the controversy surrounding his tweets. Even when various courts and election officials rejected these claims as unfounded, Trump continued to tweet about purported abnormalities in the electoral process (*The New York Times*). These comments finally sparked a mob of Trump backers who thought the election had been stolen from him to assault the US Capitol on January 6, 2021.

Trump's tweets have generated a lot of discussion over how they may affect the 2020 election and its aftermath. Some claim that his tweets significantly contributed to escalating tensions and inciting his supporters to commit violent crimes (Gallagher). Others contend that

his tweets were only a reflection of the attitudes and beliefs that his fans already held (Drezner).

Trump's use of Twitter was not unprecedented, despite the debate and strife that followed them. This must be understood. Social media has become a popular platform for politicians and other public figures to interact with their fans directly while eschewing traditional media outlets (Bimber). Trump's use of the platform, however, was unparalleled in terms of its scope and intensity, and the political and social climate in the US were significantly impacted by his tweets.

Trump's controversial tweets serve as a reminder that social media platforms require more oversight and regulation. Although these platforms have numerous advantages, such as better communication opportunities and expanded access to information, they also carry the risk of abuse and injury. It is crucial to create efficient plans for regulating these platforms and making sure they are utilized properly as people continue to debate the effects of social media on society and politics.

Conflict and controversy surrounded Donald Trump's use of Twitter as a platform for communication when he was president. His tweets sparked contentious discussions and even violence threats, especially in the context of the 2020 US Presidential race. Although his use of the platform was not unique, his tweets' scope and intensity were unheard of, and they had a big impact on the political and social climate in the United States.

According to some observers, Trump's political influence has decreased as a result of his exclusion from social media platforms. According to a research by the Center for Media Engagement at the University of Texas, the amount of news about Trump drastically decreased when Twitter permanently disabled his account (Brenan). Additionally, Trump's inability to interact directly with his supporters and the general public has been hampered by his absence from the main social media sites.

As a result of his alleged involvement in instigating violence at the Capitol Hill uprising, Trump was banned from the majority of social media platforms. In response to the ban, Trump established his own social media network, Truth Social, which has not yet gone live. Trump's political power and his capacity to interact directly with his supporters and the general public have declined as a result of the restriction. In order to stop the spread of hate speech and violent provocation, social media companies need to be more strictly regulated and held accountable.

### **3.4. The Consequences of Trump's Political Discourse on the World**

During his tenure in government, Donald Trump was well-known for his contentious political statements. His words and actions had a profound effect on not only the United States but also the rest of the globe. Trump's political rhetoric on the globe, including his views on global standards and ideals, foreign policy, and climate change had negative effects.

#### **3.4.1 Climate Change**

In order to reduce the impacts of climate change, there must be a global endeavor. The world is quickly moving toward a point of no return, where the effects of climate change will be irreversible, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Trump has repeatedly downplayed the seriousness of the problem despite this, even reversing policies that were meant to lower greenhouse gas pollution (IPCC).

Trump's choice to have the US leave the Paris Climate Agreement was one of his most important actions. 196 nations ratified the historic Paris Agreement in 2015 with the intention of keeping global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Under the Obama administration, the United States was one of the major donors to the global endeavor to fight climate change and played a critical role in the agreement's negotiation (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).

Leaders from around the globe, conservation groups, and the scientific community all criticized Trump's choice to leave the Paris Agreement. The action undermined international efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change and revealed a lack of dedication on the part of the United States to deal with this pressing problem. The United States is one of the main causes of climate change, contributing 15% of the world's Greenhouse Gas Pollution (EPA). Its decision to leave the Paris Agreement was viewed as a serious defeat in the battle against climate change and a blow to global collaboration on the subject (Environmental Protection Agency).

Trump's views on climate change also significantly influenced local environmental policies. The Clean Power Plan, which sought to lower greenhouse gas pollution from power stations, was one of the many environmental laws that he repealed. Additionally, he relaxed the requirements for vehicle fuel economy and allowed oil and gas drilling in a sizable portion of the country's land and seas. As a result of these policy shifts, the use of fossil fuels, which are a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions, has shifted away from renewable energy and back toward it (The White House).

### **3.4.2 Foreign Policy**

The globe was significantly impacted by Trump's foreign strategy. He was well-known for his "America First" approach, which put the interests of the United States before those of other nations. Relationships with longtime friends like Canada, Mexico, and the European Union nations became strained as a result of this position. Trump and China also had tense ties, which had a big effect on the world economy. The United States and China's trade conflict resulted in a slowdown in global economic development and a rise in international unpredictability (Shear et al.).

Trump's foreign policy also had effects on international security. He pulled from the Iran nuclear agreement, which the Obama administration had arranged in an effort to stop Iran

from creating nuclear weapons. Other nations harshly condemned Trump's withdrawal from the agreement because it threatened regional security and stoked new tensions. The possibility of a nuclear war was also raised by his approach to North Korea, which was characterized by unpredictable and antagonistic behavior (Azam et al.).

Trump's foreign policy also had effects on democracy and human rights all over the globe. He frequently lauded autocratic leaders like North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian President Vladimir Putin while criticizing democratic leaders like German Chancellor Angela Merkel. This rhetorical change implied that the United States was no longer dedicated to advancing human rights and democracy worldwide (Ferris, Sarah, and Behsudi).

### **3.4.3 Impact on Global Norms and Values**

Trump's words also significantly affected how the United States was viewed on the international scene. His statements and deeds had weight and impact because he was the head of the most powerful country in the world. His anti-immigrant rhetoric ran counter to the country's long-standing ideals as an immigrant nation that had traditionally accepted people from all over the globe. The United States no longer served as a beacon of opportunity and optimism, but rather as a nation that was turning inward and rejecting variety, as evidenced by this change in language and policy toward immigrants (Kuschner).

Additionally, Trump's comments and actions regarding women had an impact on international standards and ideals. His sexist remarks, which included the notorious Access Hollywood video, helped to normalize misogyny and gender inequality. This kind of conduct reinforces the systemic disparities between men and women by sending the message that it is okay to handle women disrespectfully. This normalization of sexism undercuts the advancements made in gender equity and conveys the idea that such conduct is okay (*BBC News*).



Trump's actions also affected international collaboration and diplomatic standards that are part of global norms. He frequently spoke in a hostile and combative manner toward other countries, even friends like Canada and the European Union. This kind of conduct is contrary to the principles of negotiation and the amicable settlement of disputes, which are necessary for preserving stable and cordial international relations. He also had an impact on international standards relating to international law and the function of international organizations like the United Nations by rejecting multilateralism and favoring independent action (de la Baume and Barigazzi).

Donald Trump's political speech has wide-ranging and intricate effects on racial minorities, the government, politics, and culture. His rhetoric had an effect on the administration in that it weakened the checks and balances system and eroded public confidence in democratic institutions. Racial minorities were singled out and disadvantaged, which encouraged prejudice and racial tensions. Furthermore, it altered the political environment, having an impact on other elected officials and promoting a divisive and antagonistic atmosphere. His divisive comments on racial, gender, and social problems influenced public opinion and values and spurred debates about the proper parameters of political speech and conventional social mores. The lingering consequences of his discourse on American culture continue to influence it and serve as a reminder of the significance of political language.

The suggestion asks that political rhetoric be regulated in order to protect democratic norms and avoid hate speech and violence during election campaigns. In a democratic society, balancing free expression with the prevention of destructive rhetoric is critical for healthy political dialogue. According to the report, Trump's political rhetoric, along with an upsurge in far-right terrorism, has undermined the US's stability and worldwide reputation. To

overcome this, regulations for a more positive and inclusive political atmosphere may be required.

It is imperative that political rhetoric be regulated in the United States in order to protect democratic norms and avoid hate speech and violence during election campaigns. In a democratic society, balancing free expression with the prevention of destructive rhetoric is critical for healthy political dialogue. Trump's political rhetoric, along with an upsurge in far-right terrorism, has undermined the US domestic stability and worldwide reputation. To overcome this, regulations for a more positive and inclusive political atmosphere are more than required.

## Conclusion

The United States faces a unique dilemma when addressing the issue of violent political rhetoric in political setting. The American Founding Fathers wisely put the first amendment to the US Constitution, mandating strict separation of violent rhetoric and freedom of speech to ensure freedom and peace for all individuals. However, the influence of violent speech in politics is evident throughout the US history.

The erosion of correctness in political discourse harms individuals and society as a whole. It increases the polarization, division, and hostility between individuals or groups that adhere to different political views. Conspiracy theories and inaccurate information can spread, weakening public trust in institutions and democracy.

Politicians and public personalities must be aware of the influence of their words and take responsibility for fostering harmony and inclusion rather than hostility and division. In order to prevent the normalization of hate speech and violence, it is also crucial to encourage knowledge, hold people accountable for their actions, and promote respect for oppressed groups. This can be achieved by imposing legal sanctions for hate speech and violent actions in addition to social sanctions like public shaming and condemnation. It takes a diverse approach to comprehend the nuances of human conduct, especially when it comes to those in positions of authority.

In the case of Donald Trump, it is crucial to understand how a range of personal, societal, and political events have impacted his path and the elements that have created his worldview. It is important to note that intelligence and professional expertise alone do not prevent people from falling into what some perceive as a trap of hatred. Despite the fact that Donald Trump's background, as a financier and businessman, gave him extensive experience in international trade and commercial relations, it did not soften his political language.

Donald Trump's use of harsh language in his political discourse has a significant impact. His speech encouraged racism and prejudice, and this can have detrimental effects on politics, individuals and society as a whole. It resulted in a rise in hate crimes and violent crimes, a decline in confidence and societal cohesion, and greater prejudice and discrimination. Additionally, it caused some groups to be marginalized and excluded from governmental and economic possibilities. His polarizing language worsened already-existing differences, fueled polarization, and prevented productive conversation.

By disseminating lies, Trump damaged public confidence in democratic institutions like the media and the electoral process. His speech fostered an "us versus them" attitude, further dividing society, by singling out people and groups based on their race, religion, or political membership. In addition, his continued use of insulting language and personal assaults damaged the public's faith in democratic institutions and the political system. As confidence in the fairness and integrity of the system decreased, it had a significant impact on how well democracy worked.

Additionally, Trump's violent rhetoric has frequently eclipsed serious policy debates, emphasizing spectacle and sensationalism over smart policy research. This change in the way the public was talking affected Americans' capacity to make wise decisions and effectively handle urgent societal concerns.

Furthermore, Trump's rhetoric had effects outside of the United States because it changed how the world saw American leadership and principles. Trump's hostile language deviated from the established rules of political speech by prioritizing personal assaults above thoughtful discussion and civil dissent. As the effects of Trump's rhetoric continue to be felt, it is critical to consider its effects and work toward a more inclusive and positive political language that encourages cooperation, understanding, and the pursuit of shared objectives.

A diverse strategy is needed to address Donald Trump's combative tone. First and foremost, it is crucial for American officials, including politicians, the media, and citizens, to encourage courteous and productive dialogue. Aggressive rhetoric can be lessened by promoting an atmosphere where many viewpoints are heard and appreciated. Additionally, it is essential to check political claims and hold them responsible. Independent checking of groups is essential in exposing errors and supplying the public with truthful information. In order to help voters make decisions based on accurate information, media organizations should place a priority on impartial reporting.

Equally crucial is promoting appropriateness in political campaigns. Candidates should steer clear of personal assaults and concentrate on policy issues. Voters may support this by rewarding candidates who have thoughtful discussions and punishing those who use aggressive language. Furthermore, it is crucial to develop citizens' critical thinking abilities. Society can stop the spread of false information and manipulation by developing media literacy and encouraging people to seek out a variety of information sources. The development of media literacy and critical thinking may be significantly aided by educational institutions and neighborhood groups.

The promotion of sensitivity and empathy for oppressed groups, education on the harmful effects of violence and hate speech, how to spot it, and how to foster a more inclusive and respectful community, are equally essential issues. Educative and informative campaigns, as well as the inclusion of many points of view in the media and popular culture, can all be used to achieve this. In order to resist the encouragement of racism and xenophobia, it is essential to develop and preserve equality and human rights. This may be done through encouraging diversity and inclusiveness through education and awareness campaigns. Equally crucial are laws that uphold everyone's rights and respect, regardless of their history, and holding people and organizations accountable for their deeds.

Ultimately, countering aggressive rhetoric requires a collective effort. It demands the active participation of politicians, media organizations, and engaged citizens. By promoting respectful dialogue, emphasizing accurate information, and encouraging civil political campaigns, society can work towards minimizing the impact of aggressive political rhetoric.

Former President Donald Trump left several open questions about his aggressive speeches, which have repercussions behind the scene. Donald's speeches left questions on the table that raised widespread controversy, especially with the announcement of his candidacy for the upcoming elections and his aggressive statements, as usual, that he has confidence in winning the elections, and that all the issues that try to change the course of events are mere policies against his intention to win and make America great again.

It will take a time and effort to address rhetorical violence in political discourse in the United States. A more constructive and inclusive political atmosphere can be created by encouraging respectful dialogue, prioritizing policy discussions above personal attacks, and holding politicians accountable for their rhetoric. In addition, promoting a culture of empathy and understanding, critical thinking, and media literacy can all improve political debate.

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