

HEP Symposium Script Hate Speech or Free Speech?

Slide 1 -Introductions

- Good evening, my name is Olivia Uchman.
- Good evening, my name is Brianna Sanchez, and this is our project, “Free Speech or Hate Speech?”

Slide 2-Why did we create this project? (about the class and project)

- Olivia- Our project is coming out of the Us and Them class with Dr. Moret where we explore a possible response to a controversial issue and address it within the framework of Haidt’s scholarship. With this topic we have created a presentation directed at conservative Americans to make them more aware of the dangers associated with hate speech. We specifically focused on the actions of alternative right groups. Using Haidt’s Moral Foundations Theory, we are able to appeal to this audience while delivering a TedTalk with a call to action to end hate speech.

Slide 3- Who/What is the Alt-right?

- Olivia- The “alt-right” stands for the alternative right. They are a largely online contemporary movement of those on the extreme right who reject mainstream conservatism in favor of conservatism that embraces overt racism, pro-white ideologies, and far right politics. The alt-right knows that white nationalism isn’t a popular ideology in America, so they attempt to construct rhetorical distance from blatant white supremacy by branding themselves as an alternate political identity. In reality, they are just thinly veiled modern-day Nazis. The alt-right infects society with implicit racism that enables persisting racial inequalities while insisting the US is a post racial society.

Slide 4- Introducing you to Richard Spencer

- Bri- Now we want to introduce you all to a man named Richard Spencer. He is a neo-Nazi, antisemitic conspiracy theorist, who is a leader and core founder of the alt-right movement. As an atheist, he claims to praise Christianity for its following and binding nature that religion can bring. In 2016, we see Donald Trump adopt these same ideas during his campaign. He adopts these alt-right themes, and Richard Spencer catches on and supports this. Now also during this time in 2016, Spencer began to coin a phrase saying “Hail Trump, Hail our people, Hail Victory” while doing a Nazi salute. Spencer then continues with this rhetoric as he idolizes the structure of the terrorist organization, ISIS, for their ability to mobilize. He says, “They are an identity movement with many ideas,

they are a grassroots movement and have built themselves up from nothing.” With Richard Spencer adopting this hate rhetoric and idolizing terrorist organizations, we see a true threat build against American people, and these ideas that Richard Spencer is spreading are turning into action taken by his followers, which we will show later on.

Slide 5- White Supremacists Openly in Support of Trump

- Bri- We want to show you the influence Trump has actually had on these white supremacist groups. Here, we have Patrick Casey and James Edwards: two extremely influential people in these movements, and they can be seen in these tweets bashing these Congresswomen for their diversity. James Edwards tweets, “Send them back.” alluding to “send them back to where they came from” rhetoric. And Patrick Casey is proud of the administration for escalating attacks against these women. Now we see these two dangerous people supporting Donald Trump. So what does that say to us as Americans? It says that they are threatening the exact system we want to be representing and protecting us.

Slide 6- Words/Actions used by the “Alt-right”

- Olivia- The alt-right attempts to mimic Nazism from the 1930s and 40s. They say Nazi slogans such as “Seig Heil” and use the Nazi salute. They believe the world is a multicultural mess, saying that the interbreeding of races is actually destroying diversity. They believe in anti-racism and think that white people will be exterminated from society. They believe any media is good even if that media is violent and shows the deaths of innocent people as we saw in the Capitol on January 6th. They believe in a concept called “The Jewish Question:” the idea that there are somehow problems with the Jewish race. They reject negative terms like White Supremacist or Neo-Nazi and instead say neutral terms like Proud Boys. They are different words for the same pro-white ideology. They deny that white people have ever historically exploited other groups. This race-evasive rhetoric enables persisting racial inequalities to be reconstructed as products of cultural problems in communities of color and accusations of racism to be reframed as playing “the race card:” a trope deployed to deflect accusations of racism and shut down direct discourse on race.

Slide 7- Unite the Right Rally- The Fear and Damage

- Bri- On August 11th and 12th of 2017, we have the “Unite the Right” rally occur, as you can see in these photos and text. A car plowed through a group of

counter protestors, killing one and leaving dozens injured. The fact that we have reduced ourselves to violence to get out a political message is frightening. We see all of the hate come to the forefront as a result of this movement. We even see a MAGA hat, showing how Donald Trump has the support of these people who are acting out in harmful ways against others. How can we continue to allow a group to take action into their own hands?

Slide 8- Questions to ask yourself

- Bri- Now I ask you to feel the gravity of what these extremist groups have done. To sit here for a moment and ask yourself. What if that happened to your family? Would you want these actions to continue? If the people who are dead and injured are comprised of your family members, would you feel differently? Would you fear this group more? And would you want our government to support this message of violence and danger?

Slide 9- They are a Threat to the American Way of Life

- Bri- Throughout this presentation, we have been saying that extremist groups are a serious threat to the American way of life. But you may be wondering, "What else is there?" These groups explicitly call for crime and murder. They demand a dictatorship, they demand inequality, and their agenda directly works against the constitution. They have been participants in many mass shootings, including the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting. That specific shooter screamed that all Jewish people deserved to die, and it is confirmed that he had ties to these extremist groups. They run underground websites that are made to target our youth. With all of these things, you can see how much this group can damage so quickly, especially through the media platforms that they have access to.

Slide 10- The Truth Behind this Group

- Olivia- We can never forget that the alt-right stems from Nazism. In America, our history classes often only teach us that Pearl Harbor happened, the Americans joined the Allies, and we eventually won the war against Hitler. We are only taught about the 6 million Jews that died in the gas chambers. We often forget that 75 to 85 million people died because of World War II. That's almost 3% of the world's population at the time. The Holocaust showed us that Nazis kill anyone who disagrees with them or isn't them. This means the intellectuals, the disabled, the religious, the asocial, aristocrats, gypsies, LGBTQ+, and normal citizens, wealthy and poor. The majority of the non-Jewish didn't die in the chambers. Instead, they died as slaves, worked to death

building rockets and weapons of mass destruction for the Nazi War Machine. On a more personal note, both my parents are Polish immigrants. The majority of my family was wiped out during World War II. We aren't Jewish. The majority of them were intellectuals or members of the Polish Army. They were murdered in the fields and ghettos of Poland for simply opposing the Nazi regime. My grandma was forced into a concentration camp at 16 in the middle of the war. She stayed in that camp for 3 years. It's a miracle she survived. It's a miracle that I'm here talking to you today. We can never forget that the alt-right are Nazis. They're a menace to all Americans, not just the minorities. Even with all the evidence, the alt-right denies the Holocaust even happened. Why do they do this? Because it represents the closest example to their ethnic cleansing agenda. They don't want to accept the horrors it would take to have a homogenous society. They don't want to accept what would really have to be done. Instead, they deny Hitler was ever dangerous. Instead, they admire him.

Slide 11- Elonis v. United States-

- Bri- With all of this talk surrounding first amendment rights and the allowance of hate speech, it is important to look at the legal sphere that surrounds us. So here is an online threat case taken up by the Supreme Court called *Elonis v. United States*. At Mr. Elonis' first trial, he is sentenced to 44 months because his words were deemed as a threat to injure another, specifically for making tweets about rap lyrics that were said to be threatening his wife. But this case was then appealed and accepted by the supreme court, where the majority ruled differently, stating that the "state of mind matters." But, one judge disagreed, stating that the line of determination is blurry. There is no true legal line of knowing the state of mind of the defendant or even saying that true threats are not protected under first amendment rights. But the boundaries of threats have not been made clear. There is no clear-cut answer on how to determine protection of harmful speech.

Slide 12- How could a ban be implemented?

- Olivia- What would it look like if there was a ban on speech that advocates for death, destruction, and violence? Since the end of World War II, Germany has had a ban on anything Nazi related, Holocaust denial, and hate speech, stating "one should hinder this kind of speech in a society committed to principles of democratic coexistence and peace." Germany uses a tactic called defensive democracy. This is the idea that a democracy can sometimes need illiberal policies limiting free speech or the displaying of imagery to keep the population

at whole free and safe. Not only does Germany have bans in place, it has also implemented mandatory in-depth education of the country's past horrors. This is so future generations reconcile with what their ancestors did and know to stop such atrocities from happening again. If you ever go to Germany, the only Nazi paraphernalia you will ever see is in a museum dedicated to educating the public on World War II and the Holocaust.

Slide 13- Quote-

- Olivia- This is a quote from an article on free speech by Greg Lukianoff, the CEO for the Foundation for Individual Rights and Education:

“What does history suggest as the best course of action to win the benefits of an open society while stemming the tide of authoritarians of any stripe? It tells us to have a high tolerance for differing opinions, and no tolerance for political violence. What distinguishes liberal societies from illiberal ones is that liberal societies use words, not violence or censorship to settle disputes.”

Slide 14 and 15- References

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Slide 16 – Thank You

Thank you, guys, for listening to our presentation.