COMBATING HATE

A FRAMEWORK FOR DIRECT ACTION

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A FRAMEWORK FOR DIRECT ACTION

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The Pennsylvania State University Press | University Park, Pennsylvania

For Bryan, my partner in all things

and

For Evan, my strongest motivation

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

all the academic Twitter cheerleaders; and so many wonderful friends, colleagues, and students whose names I couldn't fit in an entire book. Thank you for giving me amazing pep talks, listening patiently, making me laugh, letting me vent, and knowing when I needed your support and encouragement (and snacks!) before I even had to ask. You are part of a support system I could never thank adequately and never survive without.

To all the activists I have worked with over so many years or for just a few brief moments in the field: I am never more inspired or humbled as when I am in your collective presence. Your overwhelming dedication to fighting oppression and creating visions for more just, equal, and free communities reminds me why I do what I do. Even though I have completed this book—the culmination of so many years of work—there is much work left to be done. I will always be a part of our struggles for justice, using whatever privileges I possess to combat oppression in all its forms. I hope that this book can serve as a small contribution to that fight. I am forever grateful for what you do, what you risk, and what you have taught me about the world and my place in it.

All of my love goes to you, Evan, for reminding me what is most important in life. Thank you for making me laugh, for giving me your unending supply of hugs, and for telling me that I can do it! Always know that I do it for you so that one day you might live in a world free of hate and injustice.

And, finally, to my love, my soul, Bryan Crable: You once told me that the "word stuff" is not separable from the "brain stuff." I would amend that to say that the word stuff in this woefully inadequate acknowledgment is not separable from my "heart stuff." Quite simply, this book would not exist without you. Thank you for the brain stuff, like introducing me to new theories and ideas; and for the word stuff, including countless hours of talking and working through ideas, reading, rereading, and so much editing. But, most important, thank you for the heart stuff, for encouraging me every single step of the way, always believing in me and telling me that daily; for giving me the gift of time (both yours and mine); for comforting me when I wanted to give up; and for being excited when I had a breakthrough. I could go on and on, but you would just shrug and say, "partners." And that really does say it all—partners—always and in all ways.

INTRODUCTION

Our issues of hate are killing our country . . . still.

—Terri Lee Freeman

Combating hate is one of the most pressing problems we face in our democracy. Of course, as I type those words, that observation no longer appears particularly controversial; it has become almost commonplace now to assert that "America has a hate problem."[1] However, when I began the research for this book in 2014 and cited the urgent nature of this problem, I found that few people agreed with my assessment. Most people I spoke with dismissed hate as something existing on the fringes of society, as something that a small number of extremists were creating in their disturbed minds, or as something that internet trolls were trafficking in to goad a reaction out of people. Yet, even then, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) was reporting that 784 hate groups were active in the United States.[2] I would often quote that number in public presentations to shock audiences who believed that groups like the Ku Klux Klan or neo-Nazis no longer really existed, or at least not in such large numbers. In one sense their shock was understandable, because until 2014 the number of active hate groups had actually been declining.[3]

Similarly, when I began fieldwork for this project, at hate group rallies and the protests of them, I invariably found that the rallies were poorly attended; they would typically involve around ten to twenty attendees carrying an array of flags and signs with hateful messages such as "God Hates Fags" or "Diversity = White Genocide." The racist hate groups, usually wearing fascist or nationalist insignia, would wave their flags and signs from behind a line of police officers, shout some form of hate speech, and then leave the rally space, usually without

delivering any formal speeches or receiving any media attention.[4] At the time such poorly attended public events seemed to be more of a nuisance than a public spectacle worthy of concern or serious research. It was easy—then—to dismiss those 784 groups as fringe groups that did not pose a real threat to people or to our democracy.[5]

However, like any wound left untreated, hate began to fester. Each year, between 2015 and 2017, the SPLC reported that the number of active hate groups was steadily increasing; by 2018 the number jumped to 1,020, and that year's total included a 50 percent increase in white nationalist hate groups.[6] Beyond the sheer increase in hate group numbers, these figures testify that hate is not something that exists only at the fringes of our society. On the contrary, we have seen a surge in hate group organizing and not just in obscure online spaces but openly, even on college campuses.[7] In other words, "we've seen hate becoming mainstream."[8] Numerous investigative reports have even detailed the prominence of hate speech, as well as direct hate group membership, among law enforcement officers, military officers, the U.S. Border Patrol and Coast Guard, and firefighters.[9] In short, in direct contrast to the idea that hate groups and hate speech thrive only at the extremist edges, all available evidence indicates that hate is a widespread and all-pervasive problem, festering in even the most venerated corners of our society.

Not surprisingly, in addition to these increases in hate speech and hate group organizing, federal agencies have also reported increases in hate crimes and violence during this period, noting specific spikes over the course of the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[10] In fact, within one month of the election—an election punctuated by anti-immigrant, Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, nationalist, ableist, racist, and misogynist campaign rhetoric—more than one thousand bias-related incidents were reported across the United States.[11] Although connections between hate speech, like that in Donald Trump's campaign rhetoric, and physical violence are sometimes dismissed, a number of studies and reports in recent years have traced direct connections between the rise in hate crimes and Trump's hate-filled rhetoric.[12]

Moreover, although the FBI is quick to assure us that "hate itself is not a crime—and the FBI is mindful of protecting freedom of speech and other civil liberties," many high-profile hate crimes in recent years have been linked to online hate speech and its radicalizing effect on perpetrators.[13] For example, "white supremacist Wade Michael Page posted in online forums tied to hate before he went on to murder six people at a Sikh temple in Wisconsin in

2012. Prosecutors said Dylann Roof 'self-radicalized' online before he murdered nine people at a black church in South Carolina in 2015. Robert Bowers, accused of murdering 11 elderly worshipers at a Pennsylvania synagogue in October [2018], had been active on Gab, a Twitter-like site used by white supremacists."[14] The relationship between hate speech and violence—which I explore from a rhetorical perspective in chapter 1—is complex. However, it is clear from these examples, and others like them, that the fight against hate-motivated violence cannot easily be separated from the struggle to combat hate speech.

Hate speech can be defined in a number of ways, but for present purposes hate speech should be understood as speech that defames, denigrates, dehumanizes, or inspires violence against particular groups of people on the basis of their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, or other identity category.[15] Examples of such speech clearly abound in the host of supremacist, misogynist, racist, anti-LGBTQIA+, anti-Semitic, and Islamophobic speech that persistently permeates our online and off-line spaces. As I argue in chapter 3, however, hate speech works not just as a message but as a *tactic* that enables larger oppressive systems—including nationalism and fascism. Throughout this book I thus refrain from equating hate speech with those offensive insults that bigots spew in the presence of minoritized individuals—as, for example, when they use the N-word or intentionally misgender someone. These are, of course, important instances of hate that should be combated; however, that type of "hate speech" resides in the realm of interpersonal offensive speech. The focus of this book, instead, is on the hate speech that permeates our public, political discourse—the hate speech disseminated by power holders and organized hate groups that perpetuates violence and denies targeted people both access to the spaces of democratic deliberation and their constitutionally protected rights to life and security.

The specific, complex phenomena discussed throughout this introduction, including the increases in hate speech and hate crimes and nationalist and supremacist discourses, merit their own detailed analyses. However, they will never be shorn of their ambiguity and contingency. While I fully acknowledge that terms like *nationalism* and *hate* should not always be equated or conflated, in what follows I place them in conversation with our ongoing debates about free speech, hate speech, and democracy. By treating them as interconnected, I am able to focus on moving past the conceptual disputes that can, at times, hinder our ability to effectively deliberate about how to best combat hate.

Hate Speech, Nationalism, and the Alt-Right

Although initially dismissed in the years since I began this project, hate speech has become more widely recognized as a serious, contemporary problem. As this section details, many would now likely agree that rising occurrences of hate speech have manifested not only in increases in hate group recruitment and hate-motivated violence but also in the mainstreaming of supremacist, fascist, and nationalist rhetorics. In the United States, for example, hate speech has been central to the highly publicized rise of the "alt-right."[16] Although some have argued that the alt-right is a group engaged in "nonviolent dialogue" that simply advocates for the preservation of white identity, the alt-right has been characterized by both the Anti-Defamation League and the SPLC as a "new" form of violent white supremacy.[17] Other experts concur, treating the alt-right as an umbrella term useful for organizing a host of far-right, nationalist, white supremacist, anti-immigrant, and misogynist groups: "The alt-right is often described as a movement or an ideology. It is better understood as a political bloc that seeks to unify the activities of several different extremist movements or ideologies."[18]

Some of the extremist groups affiliated with the alt-right include the Proud Boys, neo-Confederate groups, the American Identity Movement (formerly Identity Evropa), the Nationalist Front (formerly the Aryan Nationalist Alliance, which was founded by neo-Nazis), and various Klan chapters, among others.[19] There are common threads that link these seemingly disparate groups, including opposition to Muslims or immigrants, adherence to conspiracy theories, and support for Trump. This connection to Trump, "more than anything else, was the glue that held the alt-right social network together."[20] Part of the mainstreaming effect of the alt-right and its associated hate speech is due to its explicit connection to Trump. These hate groups, especially the Proud Boys, became more publicly active and received unprecedented mainstream media coverage during and after the 2016 election cycle, culminating in the violent attack on the U.S. Capitol in January 2021 that left five people dead and embroiled Trump in a second impeachment trial.[21]

As has become clear, the nationalist and white supremacist ideologies of the alt-right have found a platform through some of the Trump administration's most notable power holders. As Rosie Gray describes it, "Leaders of an emboldened white nationalism have burst into the forefront of national politics and coalesced around a so-called alt-right subculture as they have endeavored to make their ideology part of the mainstream. Recent developments

have shed light on previously unknown connections between white-nationalist activists and the Trump administration."[22] Note, for example, that both the former White House chief strategist Steve Bannon and former deputy assistant to the president Sebastian Gorka have ties to the alt-right and white nationalists.[23] In addition to these well-known advisors, other administration officials, including a member of the State Department and a Homeland Security official, reportedly had direct connections to the alt-right's white nationalist elements.[24]

Although these advisors eventually succumbed to public pressure to leave the administration, Trump's senior advisor for policy, Stephen Miller, who has also been linked to white nationalism, remained in his position through the end of Trump's term in office.[25] Adam Serwer writes, "A cache of Miller's emails . . . draws a straight line between the Trump administration's immigration policies and previous, explicitly racist immigration laws. The emails show Miller praising racist immigration restrictions from a century ago, while bitterly lamenting the law that repealed them."[26] Unlike Bannon and Gorka, Miller remained a key figure in the administration and was a key architect of its nationalist policies. These connections to Trump provided "the [alt-right] movement with an impact and a reach well in excess of what traditional white supremacy can now accomplish, even as it empowers the implementation of nationalist political policies."[27] This is perhaps the most distressing realization about the connections between the alt-right's hate-filled nationalism and the Trump administration—the fact that not only did such connections allow for the mainstreaming of extremist ideologies but these ideologies then guided national(ist) policies.

Unfortunately, this phenomenon has not been limited to the United States. Investigative media reports, as well as academic research, clearly point to the connections among nationalism, hate speech, and violence, both in and outside of the United States.[28] In places as diverse as Sri Lanka, India, Myanmar, New Zealand, and Germany (as well as the United States), Zachary Laub has cataloged a rise in hate-motivated violence, arguing that these incidents have much in common. "A mounting number of attacks on immigrants and other minorities has raised new concerns about the connection between inflammatory speech online and violent acts, as well as the role of corporations and the State in policing speech," Laub writes. "Analysts say trends in hate crimes around the world echo changes in the political climate, and that social media can magnify discord. At their most extreme, rumors and invective disseminated online have contributed to

violence ranging from lynchings to ethnic cleansing."[29] As these cases suggest, the problem of hate is one that draws together nationalism, supremacism, and speech in a complex interrelationship—one that, I would argue, we are struggling to effectively combat.

In an open letter released in late 2019, United Nations experts called attention to the connections among hate speech, nationalist political discourse, and violence, stating that "hate speech, both online and offline, has 'exacerbated societal and racial tensions, inciting attacks with deadly consequences around the world.'"[30] Echoing this concern, António Guterres, secretary-general of the UN, stated that "hate speech may have gained a foothold, but it is now on notice. . . . In both liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes, some political leaders are bringing the hate-fueled ideas and language of these groups into the mainstream, normalizing them, coarsening the public discourse and weakening the social fabric."[31] He then announced that the UN had launched a Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech, to work directly with traditional and social media platforms to prevent hate speech from escalating further. This program, as well as the work of activist groups around the world, works to pressure private tech companies to address the hate speech and hate-motivated violence that their platforms enable.

Facebook and Instagram, for example, expanded their definition of hate speech to include white nationalism, arguing that "white nationalism and separatism cannot be meaningfully separated from white supremacy and organized hate groups." Although some might argue that nationalism should not be understood as a form of white supremacy, "the idea that white supremacism is different than white nationalism or white separatism a misguided distinction without a difference."[32] Facebook and Instagram's decision, which will presumably lead to more hate speech being prohibited on their sites, has been well received by many advocacy groups as they struggle against increases in violent white supremacy.

Although the regulation of hate speech by private media companies is a step in the right direction, it is by no means the only—or at times the most effective—way to address this growing problem. As a result, rather than approaching the problem of hate through the actions of corporations or NGO's, this book details ways that we, as concerned publics, can also work to combat hate. The problem of hate speech, both online and in public spaces, is a distinctly rhetorical problem and—regardless of how we operationalize or define it—a social justice issue. It is my hope, then, that this book will both contribute to our public deliberations regarding hate in the current moment and serve as an intervention in the ongoing fight against it.

Hate Speech and the Counterspeech System

As the foregoing discussion indicates, hate speech has been normalized in our public discourse, both on- and off-line. Ideologies once considered extremist have manifested in violence, attacks on democratic institutions, and consequential policies, such as the Muslim ban and border wall in the United States or the law threatening Muslims' citizenship in India.[33] Therefore, if we can agree that hate is a problem, then what remains is an exploration of the tactics and strategies available for combating it. The original impetus for this research was my decision to embark on precisely such an exploration, specifically in public spaces of protest, where people work to combat hate when it appears in their communities. However, as I discuss in chapter 1, part of what makes these efforts so complex—and so important— is that hate speech is considered protected political speech in the United States; thus it is not combated through government regulation.

Although hate speech is regulated in many other democratic nations, in the United States, such governmental regulations of hate speech have been consistently deemed unconstitutional.[34] The most common and compelling reason given for this nonregulatory position is the belief that "hate speech regulations constitute a grave danger to first amendment liberties."[35] Some people are surprised to learn that the United States stands virtually alone in its lack of hate speech regulation, but decades of First Amendment jurisprudence have prevented the regulation of such speech in the name of protecting free speech rights. The United States' unique position on hate speech regulation has also been reinforced through centuries of liberal political philosophy on the subject of free speech and democracy, resulting in a dominant (and constraining) discourse about hate speech and how to deal with it—a dominant discourse that I call the *counterspeech system*. In chapter 1, I explore the intricacies of the counterspeech system through a critical review of discourses on free speech, hate speech, democracy, and equality as they appear in legal and philosophical circles, communication and rhetorical studies, and the popular imagination. However, for the purposes of this introduction, it is important to understand that the counterspeech system places the entirety of the burden for combating hate speech on the public—in the form of "more speech."

The idea of combating hate speech with more speech, or what is sometimes referred to as counterspeech, comes from the words of Justice Louis Brandeis in *Whitney v. California* (1927), in which he stated that, to avoid the evil effects of certain speech, "the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence."[36] Similarly, in the Supreme Court's ruling in *Snyder v.*

Phelps (2011), which protected Westboro Baptist Church's right to disseminate hate speech at funerals, Chief Justice John Roberts stated that "as a Nation we have chosen . . . to protect even hurtful speech on public issues to ensure that we do not stifle public debate."[37] Such decisions are important components of our First Amendment jurisprudence, as they work to ensure that the state does not censor the free speech needed to engage in democratic deliberation. However, the consequence of these decisions is that they prevent any state regulation of hate speech, placing all responsibility on the public to combat it.

Our counterspeech system adheres to and reinforces a vision of democracy as a series of public deliberations among equally legitimate ideas—as an arena where all speech, including hate speech, must receive equal consideration to fulfill the ends of democracy. We thus envision more speech as the presentation of reasonable, persuasive arguments against hate speech, which the public must then consider equally—alongside hate speech—to determine the winning side. In other words, the counterspeech system assumes that all speech is equally valid and beneficial to democracy, simply by virtue of being speech. Our faith in this deliberative contest leads us to believe that more speech has the ability to overcome hate speech and its insidious effects simply through its expression in the public sphere.

Within this system the state plays the role of a neutral arbiter that must disregard power contexts and maintain a neutral stance with regard to any and all speech content. Such a stance, as Justice Roberts noted, ensures that the state does not stifle public debate or controversial ideas. Although the argument that we must be careful not to regulate merely controversial speech is completely meritorious, hate speech is not simply controversial speech that transmits undesirable ideas. On the contrary, hate speech is a form of action—action against minoritized communities—and there are antidemocratic consequences that follow from allowing it to thrive in a nonregulatory system.

Some of these consequences, particularly of the *Snyder v. Phelps* decision, were predicted by First Amendment scholars in the field of communication. In his analysis of *Snyder v. Phelps*, for example, Craig Smith argued that "unless this decision is overturned, one can expect an escalation of hostile, invasive and hateful communication in our society."[38] Similarly, M. Lane Bruner and Susan Balter-Reitz predicted that the decision would provide "legal encouragement for the creation of media spectacles on the part of hate groups," like those created by Westboro Baptist Church.[39] Despite most people's (including many First Amendment scholars') continued commitment to more speech

as the only method available for combating hate speech, there is no ignoring what this commitment has made possible: the escalation of public hate speech rallies across the United States, including the alt-right's spectacular display of hate and violence in Charlottesville in 2017.[40] I argue, then, that the counterspeech system, while valuable in some ways, has worked to constrain our ability to respond to this escalation by creating and reinforcing the idea that more speech, enacted by the public, is the *only* means through which we can effectively combat hate.

Throughout this book I challenge some of the logics of the counterspeech system. In this effort I draw on the work of communication theorist Anthony Wilden.[41] Although he is perhaps known best as an early and influential translator of Jacques Lacan's works, I believe that Wilden's writings on tactics and strategy in communicative systems constitute an important resource for rhetorical scholars interested in public struggles over dominant meaning systems, as well as those interested in how various publics can be effective in social movement organizing more broadly. For Wilden all communicative systems, such as the counterspeech system, are composed of both a *strategy*, or a dominant system of meanings, and a set of *tactics* for enacting that strategy.[42] Thus communicative systems can be analyzed as semidependent hierarchies, in which a strategy has the power to both enable and constrain the tactics under its purview. Using context theory to analyze communicative systems sheds light not only on that system's inner workings but also on its limits—thereby pointing to possible avenues for disrupting or replacing it.

I utilize Wilden's context theory in three ways: (1) to explore the nuances of the counterspeech system, including the rhetorical and deliberative choices the system both enables and constrains; (2) to explore how different publics work at both tactical and strategic levels to combat hate; and (3) to theorize how we might disrupt or replace the counterspeech system with something more effective and democratic. Specifically, I argue that a *more-speech strategy* enables particular kinds of *more-speech tactics*, while also constraining our ability to use (or even perceive) alternative, perhaps more effective, tactics for combating hate. Thus, taken as a whole, the arguments forwarded here provide a foundational understanding of the counterspeech system and also work to move us past the defeatist and ultimately unproductive view that the only response to hate speech is more speech.

Following my analysis of the counterspeech system, in chapter 2 I move to an analysis of the more-speech tactics enacted by many NGOs, as well as those I have observed through my fieldwork. Then, in chapters 3 and 4, I explore what I call the combative and allied tactics I have also encountered in

the field, which have the ability to transform the counterspeech system. The conclusions in these chapters reflect the specific practices and sites of engagement that have characterized my methodological approach—an approach that combines rhetorical field methods with my experiences as a scholar-activist. I sketch these methodological practices here to situate my overall argument.

Practices and Sites of Engagement

In communication and rhetorical studies, a number of works analyze hate speech, focusing on understanding how hate speech permeates everyday discourses and contexts, the social and political functions of hate, and the rhetorical considerations inherent in debates over free speech and hate speech regulation.[43] In reviewing this literature I was surprised to find that, although there was much literature defending the validity of a more-speech approach to combating hate, there was very little research that delved into what more speech actually looks like as a mode of democratic deliberation. A few works in communication and other fields detail ways to combat hate but focus mostly on public education programs or legal regulations of hate speech.[44] Although these works provide some suggestions for how to combat hate, they do not focus on the public spaces of protest, where tensions between hate speech and more speech are most visible and material.

Therefore, my decision to enter the field to explore what more speech looks like in practice was quite deliberate. In their edited volume detailing the importance of field methods to contemporary rhetorical studies, Sara McKinnon, Robert Asen, Karma Chávez, and Robert Glenn Howard argue that making such a decision is an important first step for critics, stating that "in bridging rhetorical studies with field methods, we must first ask whether our research goals and questions necessitate a move to the field." Such methods invite "rhetoricians to attend to the way discourse moves, articulates, and shapes the material realties of people's lives in the everyday, in the public, and in their communities. It also allows scholars to attend to the often-unseen ways that individuals and groups respond, resist, and try to revise these instantiations."[45] The public spaces of the counterspeech system, I argue, are home to these "often-unseen" practices that publics use to combat hate—such practices are clearly worthy of analysis, but they have often been inaccessible outside of the field due to a lack of media and scholarly attention.

Thus, it is through field methods that "rhetorical scholars can engage otherwise inaccessible texts, like local, marginal, and/or vernacular discourses

that have not been collected and catalogued in archives and databases."[46] Rhetorical field methods provide me with the opportunity to "study public discourse that is not yet recorded, a situation in which [traditional] textual analysis is impossible."[47] Because most, if not all, of the work on hate speech and responses to it neglects the public spaces where these "deliberations" occur, I chose to engage in field methods to attend to the ways discourses about free speech and hate speech are articulated and embodied, as well as how these discourses constitute our democracy. As Michael Middleton, Samantha Senda-Cook, and Danielle Endres note, "Rhetorical field methods focus on the processual forms of rhetorical action that are accessible only through participatory methods."[48] Many participatory methods are available to rhetorical critics, including interviews, focus groups, observation, personal narrative, ethnography, autoethnography, oral history interviews, and performance, among others.[49] Of these I have most often utilized participant observation, personal narrative, and interviews, specifically unstructured field interviews that often occur organically in public spaces of protest. I would not characterize my method as ethnographic, as public spaces of protest do not lend themselves to the immersive cultural experience ethnography requires. Protests, particularly protests against hate groups, are ephemeral and thus are best approached through participant observation and field interviews. Therefore, as a rhetorical scholar utilizing field methods in counterspeech spaces, I critically observed the rhetorical elements present in that field—including interactions among various participants, police, media practitioners, and members of the general public and how those interactions worked with and in the parameters of the physical space.

The people and practices I encountered in the field clearly do rhetorical work to move social consciousness; however, they do not fit neatly into how we think about a "social movement" as a discreet category.[50] Although the publics I have worked with may temporarily share a common cause of combating a hate group, these diverse publics often frame that cause and their motivations differently, and they rarely, if ever, constitute a social movement in the sense of shared demographics, tactics, resource mobilization, rhetorical targets, or organizational structure. In fact, there are not really any social movements exclusively dedicated to combating hate. There are NGOs that work to combat hate, such as Not in Our Town or Life After Hate, but I would not characterize these as a coherent social movement.[51] The reason for this lack of a social movement against hate is due to the dominance of the counterspeech system that precludes a sustained movement in any traditional sense. What we have instead are ephemeral moments of various publics and

individuals working to combat hate in their communities when it appears. And thus in this book I focus on those moments and the rhetorical work constituted through them. Despite the uniqueness of anti-hate organizing, the research detailed in this book remains particularly useful to those interested in social movement rhetoric, particularly in terms of a practical approach to understanding protest tactics, the enabling and constraining nature of dominant strategies on social movement organizing, and the coalition building necessary for any attempts to instantiate social change.

Although I have attended a number of protests in response to hate speech, in this book I draw most extensively on seven specific field sites that serve as exemplars for understanding what more speech looks like in our contemporary moment. First, in June 2015 I participated in a Human Wall action in Charleston, South Carolina. This action was staged by local residents during memorial services for victims of the racially motivated shooting at Emanuel AME Church.[52] This action was organized in response to Westboro Baptist Church, whose members had threatened to picket the funerals of the victims. The church was founded by Fred Phelps in 1955, in Topeka, Kansas, and its membership includes mostly members of the extended Phelps family.[53] Westboro is most widely known for its anti-LGBTQIA+ hate speech, as exemplified in their various websites and through a number of social media accounts across multiple platforms. The group has been categorized by the SPLC as an anti-LGBTQIA+–based hate group, and it is also monitored by the Anti-Defamation League for its anti-Semitic speech.[54] Westboro members have been banned from entering both the United Kingdom and Canada because of their hate speech.[55]

Westboro first gained attention in the 1990s for its picketing of LGBTQIA+ individuals' funerals and later for their anti-Catholic and anti-American rhetoric.[56] Their hate-filled spectacles gained increased notoriety when they added picketing at military personnel's funerals to their repertoire.[57] According to Daniel Brouwer and Aaron Hess, "The Phelps protesters argue that the nation's deceased military personnel serve as stunning, corporeal evidence that God is punishing this nation for its tolerance of homosexuality and other vices."[58] In recent years Westboro has extended their picketing to include the memorial services of celebrities, mass-shooting victims (as with Emanuel AME), and the victims of natural disasters.[59]

In response to Westboro's threatened picketing at the memorials for the Emanuel Nine, local community members organized a Human Wall action via Facebook, planning to use their bodies to create a barrier between Westboro's hate speech and the mourners attending the memorials and funerals.

The action spanned two days of official, public memorials, including a service for all the victims, attended by the then president Barack Obama and other political figures, as well as the private funerals of two of the victims. Although we never directly confronted Westboro picketers, approximately thirty to forty people participated in the action over the course of the two days and remained along the funeral routes and outside of the church for the duration of the services. Interestingly, Westboro posted doctored photographs on their website and Twitter feeds during those two days that made it appear as if they were, in fact, picketing in Charleston. However, based on my own and other participants' constant presence in various spaces throughout the city and along funeral procession routes, the Westboro picketers were not present—or at the very least they were not making their presence known in any visible way.[60] Despite Westboro's absence, the Human Wall participants took their threats seriously and remained prepared to shield mourners should the group appear.

Although Westboro members are most infamous for their hate-filled demonstrations at funerals, they also picket at political events. In July 2016, for example, I participated in an action against Westboro at the Mazzoni Center in Philadelphia during the Democratic National Convention. The Mazzoni Center was chosen as a target by Westboro for its mission "to provide quality comprehensive health and wellness services in an LGBTQ-focused environment, while preserving the dignity and improving the quality of life of the individuals [they] serve."[61] During the convention Westboro secured a permit to demonstrate in front of the Mazzoni Center and picketed for about thirty minutes with their signature hate-filled signs and messages. They were met by hundreds of activists filling the streets and sidewalks around the center, engaging in a type of street party that included celebrations of diverse LGBTQIA+ identities and community.[62]

My fieldwork at protests of Westboro have proved invaluable for understanding the apolitical and celebratory more-speech tactics analyzed in chapter 2. However, the majority of the hate speech rallies where I have protested and conducted fieldwork were organized by racist, fascist, or white supremacist hate groups. The SPLC categorizes hate groups according to a number of designations, but those I have encountered most often fall under the Ku Klux Klan, Neo-Nazi, White Nationalist, Racist Skinhead, Neo-Confederate, Anti-immigrant, and Anti-Muslim designations.[63] Other groups I have encountered, such as the alt-right affiliated Proud Boys, fall under the SPLC's General Hate ideology category.[64] Although some groups (or rally participants who are not directly affiliated with any group) do not always fit precisely into these

categories, all the rallies I have attended included individuals and groups who would typically be characterized as espousing hate speech.

In July 2015 I conducted fieldwork at and participated in a protest against a white supremacist rally organized by the Loyal Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi–affiliated groups at the statehouse in Columbia, South Carolina. Following the shooting at Emanuel AME Church, the South Carolina General Assembly voted to remove the Confederate flag from the statehouse grounds.[65] White supremacists subsequently organized a rally there in opposition to this decision and were met by a counterrally staged by members of Black Educators for Justice.[66] The rallies were organized by what some media sources described as "dueling" hate groups—because some protesters were affiliated with the New Black Panther Party.[67] However, the majority of the two thousand protesters in attendance were not affiliated with the party but were instead composed of a diverse group of anarchist and antifascist affinity groups, Black activists from a number of antiracist groups, and unaffiliated people from the local community.

Similarly, in April 2016 I participated in a counterspeech action in Stone Mountain, Georgia, organized by the antifascist coalition All Out Atlanta and other antiracist groups.[68] White supremacist groups have a history of applying for rally permits at Stone Mountain because of its connection to both Klan and Confederate history—specifically its mountain-side carving of Confederate generals Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Stonewall Jackson that serves as the largest bas-relief in the world.[69] In 2016, as in many previous years, Klan and neo-Nazi affiliated groups were granted a permit for their rally, which they called Rock Stone Mountain. In addition to the antifascist groups that protested the rally, a number of other antiracist organizations such as the Tallahassee Students for a Democratic Society, different religious groups, the Bastards Motorcycle Club, and a Black Lives Matter contingent were in attendance.[70]

In 2017, after the violent Unite the Right rally in "defense" of a Confederate memorial in Charlottesville, hate speech rallies across the United States took on a decidedly different quality. As local and federal governments increased funding and police presence around Confederate memorials, southern towns became increasingly concerned about becoming the "next Charlottesville."[71] As I argue in chapter 3, these fears also led to an increase in militarized police forces in counterspeech spaces, which was especially obvious at a protest I attended eight months after the violence in Charlottesville. In celebration of the anniversary of Hitler's birthday, about two dozen members of the Nationalist Socialist Movement staged a rally at the Greenville Street Park in Newnan, Georgia.[72] The NSM, one of the largest and most well-known neo-Nazi hate

groups in the United States, was met in Newnan by a much larger contingent of diverse antiracist and antifascist protesters, as well as unaffiliated protesters from throughout the metro-Atlanta area. Although there was (thankfully) little to compare to Charlottesville that day, there was an especially excessive show of force by police—not, as one might expect, against the NSM but against those attempting to engage in more speech.

Despite a widespread aversion to even the possibility of "another Charlottesville," on the one-year anniversary of that Unite the Right rally, its original organizer, Jason Kessler, secured permits for Unite the Right 2 (UTR2) in Washington, D.C.[73] Although UTR2 was deemed a failure for the alt-right, the counterspeech action I participated in that day was successful in bringing together a number of diverse groups to combat hate, as discussed in chapter 4. Those counterspeech events were primarily organized by two groups, the ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) Coalition and D.C. United Against Hate.[74] These groups secured permits for four separate counterspeech spaces across the city, including the north side of Lafayette Park (where UTR2 was permitted to hold its rally), McPherson Square, Farragut Square, and Freedom Plaza. Interestingly, the counterevents and subsequent march to Lafayette Park were the most well-attended counterspeech protests I participated in over the course of this research; dozens of groups and thousands of unaffiliated community members participated in the day's events and deserve a great deal of credit for preventing the "next Charlottesville."

The final fieldwork site I draw on in my analyses occurred in November 2018 in Philadelphia, when individuals affiliated with the alt-right were granted a permit to hold a We the People rally at the Independence Visitor Center.[75] Although purporting to be a pro–law enforcement and pro-Trump event, the rally included anti-immigrant hate speech. In advance of the rally, many believed it would attract members of hate groups such as Keystone United, the Proud Boys, and the Three Percenters.[76] Though attendance at the rally was quite small, local community members again organized a protest of the rally, specifically through the PushBack Campaign, a coalition of a number of groups, including the One People's Project, antifascists, and other leftist groups.[77]

The fieldwork conducted at these seven sites serves as the primary source of the rhetoric analyzed throughout this book. However, this fieldwork does not constitute the entirety of my constructed rhetorical artifact, or "text." When "using field methods, the critic typically creates a set of diverse but complexly interrelated 'texts,'" and it is these interrelated texts that actually constitute the "field" for the rhetorical critic. "We define the *field* as the nexus where rhetoric is produced, where it is enacted, where it circulates, and

consequently, where it is audienced," McKinnon and her colleagues argue. "This definition situates people, places, events, material culture, and the digital milieu as potential fields that may be relevant to our investigations."[78] For my purposes this inclusion of where rhetoric is audienced, especially via digital milieus, has been important to the construction of my field. In addition to my observations in the physical spaces of the counterspeech system, I also include artifacts from numerous interactions on digital media platforms before, during, and after my actual time in a physical counterspeech space.

For example, I have spent a great deal of time reviewing media accounts, from both mainstream and independent media; watching videos taken by other participants at the actions I attended; and engaging in online interactions on social media with participants (usually via Twitter). When conducting fieldwork, one cannot possibly witness or record all things; therefore, supplementing my field notes with these interactions and accounts, as well as my reflections on them, has allowed for the construction of more complete artifacts than either media accounts or field observations alone could provide. Such reflective practices enabled me to check the perceptions I had in the heat of the moment at a protest and review elements of the actions that I may have missed. Debriefing with participants (whether in person or online) and reviewing media accounts (when they existed) served as important components of my methodology, enabling detailed and rich observations and more nuanced conclusions.

Finally, I have complemented the rhetorical artifacts analyzed here with media accounts of counterspeech actions that I was unable to attend. For example, in chapters 3 and 4 I draw on accounts from the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, although I was unable to attend that specific counterspeech action. Similarly, in chapter 2 my analysis of more-speech tactics is drawn from artifacts compiled from my own participation in the Human Wall action in Charleston but also includes examples from mainstream media accounts of Angel Actions across the country—as well as from promotional videos and web materials created by the publics engaging in those counterspeech spaces. As a consequence, the artifacts compiled and presented in this book were constructed from my fieldwork, various types of media, or a combination of both. As I discuss in chapter 4, there is much to be gained by seeking out diverse perspectives both in and outside of a fieldwork space.

As a final point on engagement and method, it is important to note that the rhetorical field methods I engaged have been combined with a scholar-activist approach in the field. Many of the methodological innovations in rhetoric over the past forty years, including rhetorical field methods, have

"enabled a direct critique of the power structures that shape how rhetors and their words enter the public. *Politically engaged scholarship* grew even more prominent with the critical turn in the field; interpretive methods expanded scholarly goals from description, explanation, and cultural interpretation to include critiques of power."[79] As a rhetorical critic whose education was steeped in these turns toward critical and engaged scholarship, this project reflects how I have combined rhetorical field methods with politically engaged scholarship, or what I term a scholar-activist approach.

Thus a review of how scholar activism has informed my methodology is presented here in an attempt to engage "an ethic of reflexivity [which] calls us to ask . . . What motivates me to do this research?"[80] For me not only was the move to the field about my intellectual curiosity about what more speech looks like in practice; it was also motivated by an ethical commitment to combating hate. In their work on engaged scholarship and rhetorical theory, James Hikins and Richard Cherwitz argue for the value of such a combination of reflection and action as a way for scholars to "leverage knowledge for social good."[81] My research, then, has been motivated by both my reflections as a rhetorical scholar and my actions as an activist to use the knowledge gained to work for social justice.

Although a scholar-activist approach represents a unique approach to the study of more speech, such an approach is quite in keeping with recent developments in rhetoric and communication studies. As early as 1996, Lawrence R. Frey and his colleagues argued for the importance of research that engaged with and advocated for those struggling for social justice. They contended that "such an approach is particularly valuable, for it has the potential to do good in society while expanding and transforming the theories, methods, and pedagogical practices of those who theorize, research, and teach about it."[82] More specifically, Frey and Kevin M. Carragee coined the term *communication activism scholarship* as that which is "grounded in communication scholars immersing themselves in the stream of human life, taking direct vigorous action in support of or opposition to a controversial issue for the purpose of promoting social change and justice."[83] As scholar-activist work has grown, it has been recognized for its contributions to communication and rhetorical scholarship and communities outside the academy.[84]

As a rhetorical scholar, my research has always focused on the *critique* of unjust practices and discourses, and in this project I have continued that focus by rhetorically analyzing the dominance of the counterspeech system and its ability to impede our progress in combating hate. However, "the critique of unjust practices is not sufficient in and of itself; such criticism must

be accompanied by concrete interventions on the part of communication scholars that are directed at changing unjust practices."[85] Similarly, a combination of rhetorical critique and scholar activism follows Seth Kahn and JongHwa Lee's argument that *rhetorical activism* can be "the key lens through which we understand politics, democracy and social change. . . . [And it is] time for the field to find new ways of construing relations between rhetoric and democratic practice."[86] It is my hope that the methodology detailed here, and the conclusions I draw from it, do just that—reveal new ways of discerning how we might use a diverse array of rhetorical and activist practices to better combat hate and open up possibilities for ensuring a more just democracy.

My efforts to link rhetorical field methods to activist interventions have thus been organic to the development of this project, as increases in public hate group activity and public responses to it led me to join a variety of protests at different hate speech rallies. Critique "should lead naturally to the need to intervene."[87] As a result, my immersion as a fully engaged rhetorical scholar-activist seeks to fulfill the promise of engaged scholarship by serving both as a way to produce knowledge and as a social justice intervention.

From More Speech to Allied Tactics

By drawing together theory and the practices and sites of engagement, in what follows I develop a rich account of what more speech looks like in our current moment—its outlines as well as its limits. The theoretical foundation for my arguments, as noted earlier, is presented in chapter 1, which seeks to explore the nuances of the counterspeech system in terms of Wilden's context theory. I use Wilden's discussion of strategic ignorance to suggest not only the dominance of the system but also its tendency to foster a stubborn inability to imagine alternatives to that system. Subsequently, in chapter 2, drawing on my fieldwork as well as media accounts, I survey the tactics that reflect, and are constrained by, this counterspeech system. In that chapter I develop a typology of more-speech tactics used to combat hate. These more-speech tactics fall into two broad categories: persuasive-dialogic and confrontational. These two categories are differentiated according to how they engage specific audiences, messages, and communicative punctuations of actions. Although I separate these tactics and their constitutive elements for clarity, publics often use a number of different tactics and choose different approaches based on the context within which they encounter hate speech. For example, persuasive-dialogic tactics involve interpersonal dialogue, public dialogue, and public dissemination.

Confrontational tactics make up the second category of the typology, but, in contrast to persuasive-dialogic tactics, they reject dialogue and persuasion with hate groups and instead focus on combating hate through direct action and a definitive no to hate groups in the public spaces of the counterspeech system. Depending on the context, these confrontational tactics can include apolitical, celebratory, and oppositional approaches to combating hate. After an extensive analysis of these unique more-speech tactics, I conclude chapter 2 by assessing their effectiveness and limitations.

These first two chapters provide a detailed account of what more-speech tactics look like in our contemporary moment. But, as my research has grown and evolved—and as I connected it to Wilden's insights into the struggle over dominant communicative systems—I began to recognize that combating hate requires greater attention to *strategy* and not just to tactics. I increasingly saw that, although the tactics of various publics in counterspeech spaces expressed the more-speech strategy, there were others—primarily, although not exclusively, the practices of antifascist activists—that were radically different. These tactics, which I term *combative tactics*, represent an attempt to combat hate at the level of strategy, not at the level of tactics. Thus, in chapter 3 I move to a focus on these combative tactics.

Combative tactics are deployed in the public spaces of the counterspeech system, but, unlike more-speech tactics, they are not constrained by the more-speech strategy. Because they do not operate within the logics of the more-speech strategy, they are *not* more-speech tactics. Instead, combative tactics are characterized by a commitment to community self-defense, as opposed to the state's singular commitment to the defense of hate speech as free speech. This commitment includes two interrelated approaches: deplatforming and community protection. In the public spaces of the counterspeech system, deplatforming can involve physically blocking access to a rally site or property destruction. Community protection, relatedly, involves ensuring a physical presence in or a patrolling of public spaces and, in some cases, physical violence against specifically defined "enemies." I argue that because combative tactics are not constrained by the more-speech strategy, they combat hate at the level of strategy. These tactics constitute what Wilden calls a "strategic innovation" because they challenge fascist strategy, reveal alternative ways to combat hate, and ultimately work to envelop the more-speech strategy.[88] Because the more-speech strategy often limits our ability to understand or enact alternative modes of combating hate, I argue that combative tactics—and my analysis of them—provide a unique contribution to the study of deliberations over free speech and hate speech.

This realization not only provided different insights into combative tactics but also enabled me to begin envisioning the possibility of something new: the possibility of generating *allied tactics* in the field. It is in chapter 4, then, where I move beyond the previous chapters' *critiques* of the dominant counterspeech system to detail the value of *action* inherent in a scholar-activist approach. Specifically, I detail the scholar-activist interventions I have participated in when combating hate, arguing that such interventions, when systematically cultivated and deliberately deployed, can work to transform more-speech tactics and combative tactics into allied tactics. Contributing to our understandings of the value of coalitional moments in social movement organizing, I detail how allied tactics can foster more effective organizing among those publics who are committed, not necessarily to the same tactics, but to the same goal of combating hate.

Although allied tactics are detailed in chapter 4, I conclude this introduction with a brief anecdote from my field notes at the Columbia action that captures the promise of an allied tactics approach:

> Before the white supremacist rally began, I saw a man wearing a sandwich-board sign with a red target painted on it, along with a caption that read, "unarmed black man, don't miss." I was absolutely terrified for him; he was walking around alone, and there were easily recognizable racist skinheads already walking around the grounds, not to mention heavily armed police. I couldn't bear to see him walking alone like that—a literal target—so I stood with him for a while and told him how scared I was for his safety. He put his hand on my shoulder, looked me straight in the eyes, and said with heartfelt sincerity, "I have to do what I have to do. We all have to do what we have to do."[89]

Through that brief interaction I learned a lot about what it truly means to put your body on the line for social justice and about what an *allied* approach to combating hate could really look like. Over the course of this research, I have learned a lot about hate speech and free speech, about tactics and strategies. But it was this interaction, accessible to me only through rhetorical field methods and a scholar-activist approach, that revealed the potential of allied tactics—how we can and *must* be allied in our fight against hate so *we all* can do what we have to do.

I

CONTEXT THEORY AND THE COUNTERSPEECH SYSTEM

The system we live in is at war with itself.

—Anthony Wilden

At its most basic, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech." The foundation of this deceptively simple statement is the assumption that in order to promote and preserve democracy, political speech (including hate speech) must be protected from state regulation, since such regulations are believed to threaten deliberative democracy. Since the creation of that foundational U.S. document, many hate speech regulations, challenges to them, and Supreme Court decisions have collectively generated a nonregulatory system for dealing with hate speech. This system is commonly referred to as the counterspeech system. The counterspeech system holds that the best (and perhaps only) way to combat hate speech is through "more speech." In other words, if state regulation of hate speech is something to avoid, then more speech is the only available means for combating hate speech. In this system more speech must come from the public, not from the state.

Despite more than two centuries of First Amendment jurisprudence, we continue to argue about how to maintain free speech while combating hate speech. Various publics deliberate in op-eds, the internet, the legal system, and academia about what types of speech should be regulated (if any) and about how we should deal with the harms that some speech has on people and on our democracy. These deliberations never seem to reach a conclusion, and thus the counterspeech system remains at war with itself, perhaps no more obviously than in our current political climate, characterized

by increases in multiple forms of hate speech. Despite a number of cogent arguments and well-documented evidence regarding the importance of hate speech regulations in other democratic nations, the United States continues to resist efforts to curb hate speech at a governmental level. Instead, within the counterspeech system, we imagine a pristine space of democratic deliberation—one in which various publics present persuasive arguments against hate speech that "win" because of their inherent reasonableness and, by extension, nullify the harms of hate speech in the public sphere. Although this is a wonderful vision of democracy in action, I argue that this vision of how the counterspeech system works is based in a transmission model of communication that ignores the constitutive nature of communication and the material consequences of unequal power relations.

In what follows, then, I use Anthony Wilden's context theory to argue for a more complex understanding of how the counterspeech system actually works in practice, focusing on the communicative choices that the system enables and constrains. Wilden is most widely known for introducing Jacques Lacan's work to the English-speaking academy. However, a pioneer in semiotics and communication theory in his own right, Wilden is considered by some to have had a great deal of influence on the study of communication, despite his relative obscurity.[1] Rhetorical scholars have historically not paid much attention to Wilden's theories; however, I find context theory particularly insightful for thinking about how rhetoric works to constitute dominant systems of meaning, while also accounting for how we might work to revolutionize or overcome these systems. Rhetoric of social movement scholars, in particular, could benefit from attention to Wilden's ideas. For example, exploring how dominant systems of meaning work to constrain what would otherwise be an effective social movement tactic (as I do in chapters 3 and 4) seems of particular use to social movement scholars. Similarly, activists working to implement innovative tactics and strategies may also find context theory helpful as they work to challenge dominant meaning systems and enact social change.

To explore the elements of context theory most useful for those interested in rhetoric, democratic deliberation, and social movement, I review the basic premises of the theory, including Wilden's focus on the metaphors of war, to understand the strategies and tactics present in all communicative systems. Then I apply this theory to the contours of the counterspeech system, delineating its "grand strategy" through a critical exploration of the deliberations over free speech, hate speech, democracy, and equality as they appear in legal studies, philosophy, communication studies, and critical race theory.[2] Following

this, I detail the more-speech strategy, which sets up chapter 2's exploration of the more-speech tactics I have encountered in the field. Finally, I conclude the chapter by reviewing the common arguments advanced in free speech–hate speech debates, exploring how the counterspeech system has worked to neutralize arguments for regulation, creating a cycle of defeatism that prevents us from effectively discerning alternative options for combating hate.

Context Theory

In *The Rules Are No Game*, Wilden outlines what he calls "context theory" through an exploration of a set of interrelated changes in the twentieth century in "linguistics, information theory, cybernetics, structuralism, systems theory, psychoanalysis, antipsychiatry, anthropology, literature, ecology, Marxism and communication theory (or semiotics)." He argues that cultural changes, as well as changes in philosophies of science and communication, have led to a "context explosion" and a "revolt against simplicity." In context theory, as with any constitutive understanding of communication, "information is a relationship, not a thing."[3] Information, as a communicative relationship, is not simply the transmission of ideas from sender to receiver but instead constitutes a complex set of patterns, social realities, and relations of power. Understanding communicative systems in this way is what allows for more complex and effective interventions, particularly in the interests of social movement.

Thus, context theory provides a vital framework for understanding how any system of communication enables, constrains, and even prohibits particular ways of being and particular social realities within its scope. It provides a powerful conceptual framework for engaging the focus of this book, the counterspeech system, and alternatives to it. Instead of understanding hate speech as speech that transmits hateful information that can then simply be combated by transmitting more speech, context theory allows us to understand the counterspeech system as a system that constitutes a particular social reality wherein particular ways of combating hate are enabled, while others are eclipsed. The counterspeech system, understood more constitutively, constructs a complex set of power relationships that affects not only our ability to combat hate but our ability to see the existence of the system itself or its possible alternatives—alternatives that might better combat hate *and* preserve democracy.

In what follows, then, I argue that an investment in the counterspeech system obscures our ability to see how such a system limits our choices.

Power contexts, such as those implicated in racist, sexist, anti-LGBTQIA+, and other hierarchies, are deflected by the counterspeech system because such a system presumes that all speech is simply the transmission of information and therefore equally valid in the public sphere. In a transmission model of communication, speech, by its very existence and regardless of its content, is worthy of democratic deliberation. However, context theory allows us to see the limits of the counterspeech system, which in practice promotes some speech over others, hinders our ability to effectively combat hate, and weakens democracy.

Within his writings on context theory, Wilden draws on metaphors of war—strategies, tactics, guerilla warfare—to demonstrate that dominant systems are ultimately *communicative* in nature because "war is not a language, but it is a system of communication." It is only by approaching hierarchies of power as systems of communication, he explains, that we are able to move beyond them. "Strategy is the study of communication," he writes, and "without command of that ever-dominant strategy, . . . [we] can neither defeat it, control it, nor go beyond it."[4] As this indicates, Wilden frames his theory within the metaphors of war to draw our attention to how we might command dominant systems of meaning in order to defeat them, as one might defeat an enemy's strategy in war. Put simply, winning a war is never about a single battle; it is about understanding an enemy's strategy and then developing alternative strategies to challenge it. Such a strategy would necessarily be composed of many interdependent (battle) tactics designed to go beyond and ultimately defeat the enemy's strategy.

Applied to a system of communication, "winning" a battle over meaning, similarly, is never about a single message; instead, winning requires understanding a system of meaning and then developing an alternative strategy or system of meaning that goes beyond it. As I argue in chapters 3 and 4, such a strategy would necessarily be composed of many interdependent messages, codes, communicative actions, and theories designed to go beyond a dominant (and often oppressive) meaning system—in this case the counterspeech system. As Wilden observes, "Strategy and tactics are characteristic of all goal-seeking, adaptive, open systems."[5] Thus, Wilden's approach to strategy and tactics in terms of communication is particularly useful for understanding the counterspeech system because it is a dominant system of meaning constantly struggled over and within—it is a system at war with itself.

Winning the war against hate speech, therefore, requires understanding and analyzing the four levels of strategy and tactics that structure the counterspeech system and prevent its replacement by an alternative system.

This structure is centered in distinctions and interrelationships among what Wilden calls "grand strategy," "strategy," "grand tactics," and "tactics." These levels are "implicit in every kind of communication, organization, and action. The hierarchy is also the basic model of the relation between theory and practice. One can create a theory without a practice, but one cannot act in practice (tactics) without a corresponding theory (strategy)."[6] For example, within the context of the counterspeech system, more-speech tactics are incoherent without the corresponding strategy that enables them.

For Wilden, then, the point of context theory is to focus on the *relationship* between a strategy and the tactics it enables. This relationship represents a semidependent hierarchy, meaning that "under normal circumstances each higher level constrains the levels below it, and the lower levels depend on the higher levels. . . . The precise definition of the four levels depends on the context."[7] Although he argues that this semidependent hierarchy offers possibilities for tactics to influence strategy (a point that is explored in chapter 3), in this chapter and the next I focus solely on how the counterspeech system's strategy influences the tactics falling within its purview. To do this I first focus on the grand strategy level of the counterspeech system.

Grand Strategy

Grand strategy refers to the "level of overall national policy, . . . combining political, social, and economic objectives."[8] A grand strategy influences all tactics within a communicative system's hierarchy; it is the overarching code that shapes all messages, the accepted theory that shapes all practices. This means that the key is not simply to understand messages (as in a transmission model) but to understand the relationships between codes and messages or, to use Wilden's terms, the relationships between strategies and tactics. Within the counterspeech system the grand strategy that dominates understandings of how to combat hate includes two interrelated premises: (1) free speech is essential to democracy, and (2) political speech must not be regulated by the state. I have discerned these premises through a review of First Amendment jurisprudence and scholarly literature from legal philosophy, communication studies, and other fields that focuses on the relationship between free speech and democracy. I suggest that these premises form the dominant rhetorics of free speech and hate speech evident in public discourse and, as Wilden suggests, include political, social, and economic objectives.

In reviewing, and in part critiquing, the premises that make up the counterspeech's grand strategy, I am in no way suggesting that free speech is *not* essential to democracy or that the state should be given a free reign to regulate speech as it sees fit. Free speech is most assuredly vital for ensuring self-actualization, creating informed publics capable of serving as checks on state power, and fulfilling the promises of democracy. Moreover, because some speech serves as a check on state power, any proposed regulation of it must be subjected to intense and continuous public scrutiny. In short, I am not suggesting that free speech is unimportant or that it should be regulated extensively by the state. Instead, I seek to outline the complexities of the counterspeech system via context theory to see how our communicative tactics are shaped by this grand strategy's normative commitments. Such an exploration can open up possibilities for better combating hate and, in fact, better ensuring free speech and democracy. With that in mind I now turn to a consideration of each premise of the grand strategy.

Premise 1: Free Speech Is Essential to Democracy

The connection between free speech and democracy is one that is widely accepted across many fields and in the public imagination—marking it as a foundational premise of the counterspeech system's grand strategy. As Ivan Hare and James Weinstein put it, "Free speech and democracy have had a long and ambivalent relationship. From the dawn of modern democracy, it was recognized that the right of the people to criticize government, laws, and social conditions was inherent in the very concept of rule by the people."[9] This premise has been developed and reinforced through centuries of scholarly study, dating back to democracy's earliest foundations, moving through the liberal philosophical tradition, and finding its modern manifestations in First Amendment jurisprudence.[10]

Indeed, this premise is so well established in scholarly literature and public discourse that it likely appears self-evident to most people. However, John Durham Peters offers a compelling critique of the liberal philosophical tradition that has shaped our view of the essential connection between free speech, democracy, and tolerance of hate speech. In Peters's review of Western thinkers such as John Locke, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Louis Brandeis, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, among others, he reviews our "free speech story" and summarizes it: "These heroes (so the story goes) formed a 'marketplace of ideas' where any notion, good, bad, or ugly, could be evaluated on its own merits and whose prices would be set by nothing but free and open competition. This

marketplace is supposed to be the motor of democratic life and the place where the public blossoming of the logos so central to democracy can occur." As the free speech story has become more entrenched, these historical heroes have been joined by "investigative journalists, members of the American Civil Liberties Union, librarians, radical reformers, and renegade lawyers."[11] The free speech story, as with any grand strategy, combines the political (e.g., the ACLU and radical reformers); the social (e.g., journalists, librarians, and lawyers); and the economic (i.e., the marketplace of ideas) into an overall national policy.

Premise 1 of the grand strategy remains remarkably seductive as a mode of organizing our normative commitments to democratic governance. It posits an inherent connection between free speech and democracy that appeals to our vision of ourselves as an informed citizenry capable of engaging in public governance and remaining free of state interference, and rightly so. Freely communicating about issues of public importance and making decisions that mediate state power is accepted as a normative ideal in scholarly theorizing across many fields. Perhaps most famously, within the fields of communication and social theory, Jürgen Habermas's conception of the public sphere, together with critiques of his conceptions, underscores this unshakeable connection between communication and democracy.[12] Even those who disagree with his assumptions about the public sphere agree with him on this point.[13] Despite the rich nuance in public sphere theorizing across multiple disciplines, one key premise remains common to all such efforts—the idea that open communication is essential to the function of public spheres and thus to democratic life.[14]

"This vision of democratic self-government borrows from both deliberative and participatory theories of democracy," Alex Brown writes. "From the former it borrows the ideas that democracy is essentially a matter of genuine deliberation of issues. . . . From the latter it takes the notion that democracy by the people means some sort of popular participation in politics. But it also emphasizes the role that individuals play in contributing their authentic beliefs, ideas, opinions, and so on, to the processes in and through which public opinion is formed (i.e., public discourse)."[15] In other words, engaging in democracy always includes considerations of free speech, since it is precisely free speech enacted by individuals that creates and maintains democracy. One of the most well-known legal philosophers on this issue, Alexander Meiklejohn, famously argued that "no idea, no opinion, no doubt, no belief, no counterbelief, no relevant information, may be kept from them [the public]."[16] Thus the first premise of the grand strategy establishes the connection between free speech and democracy.

What is important for our purposes here, however, is how this idea has also led to widespread acceptance of the purest version of this position—the idea that *all* speech, regardless of its content, is equally and inherently valuable. This seemingly logical outgrowth represents a key part of the first premise, specifically that, when we consider any regulations of free speech, the speech's *content* must be treated as neutral. According to Weinstein, "The leitmotif of contemporary free speech jurisprudence is its intense hostility to laws that discriminate on the basis of the content of speech."[17] In fact, a "basic First Amendment precept" holds that there is an "'equality of status in the field of ideas' [which] extends to the expression of racist ideas, including 'virulent notions of racial supremacy.'" I would argue that this commitment to content neutrality is mythical. Reminiscent of the (erroneous) belief that there are simply good and bad ideas and no hierarchies of power, the myth of content neutrality promotes the belief that "the most offensive expression of racist ideology is on an equal footing with arguments for or against higher taxes, the legality of abortion, or the legitimacy of the war in Iraq."[18] On the surface, content neutrality makes sense, as exposure to a diversity of ideas and speech—even those whose content we may object to—is essential for a public to make important democratic decisions; it is how social change happens. However, promoting a diversity of ideas has increasingly been interpreted as promoting *all* ideas, *all* speech, regardless of the (lack of) democratic value and in spite of harms to particular people and to democracy itself. Thus, the lesson learned from content neutrality is that all speech is on equal footing in the public sphere. Taken to its conclusion, an argument that a progressive tax rate is economically beneficial becomes equally legitimate to an argument that a particular race or gender is an abomination and should be violently eradicated from the earth.

Of course, the content neutrality standard presumably applies only to *political* or *public* speech because it is that type of speech that is supposed to be most beneficial to a healthy democracy. Speech that is not deemed political is often subject to different standards or regulations. For example, in *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942) the Supreme Court established the "fighting words" doctrine, ruling that certain offensive speech, when directed at an individual in a face-to-face encounter, is not protected by the First Amendment because it is so offensive as to lead the targeted individual to engage in violence.[19] The fighting words doctrine is highly individualistic as it has not been extended to political speech because "courts have held that offensive speech may not be regulated *in public forums* such as streets and parks where listeners may avoid the speech by moving on or averting their eyes."[20]

In other words, organized hate groups are free to invoke the same *content* in public forums that would "bring men—this is a male-centered standard—to blows" with complete First Amendment protection because that speech has been deemed political.[21]

The idea that free speech is essential to a healthy democracy has been consistently reiterated in communication and political theory, philosophy of law, and First Amendment jurisprudence. It has, therefore, become hegemonic in our public understandings of what it means to maintain the power of the people in the face of challenges to democracy. Of course, this dominant premise's ability to remain largely unquestioned is not wholly unearned; this premise appeals to our deepest sense of liberty, as the freedom of individuals to express themselves and make decisions. However, that should not cause us to lose sight of it as a premise that, in conjunction with the second premise explored here, has constrained us in our struggles to combat hate speech.

Premise 2: Political Speech Must Not Be Regulated by the State

The first premise of the grand strategy, coupled with the Constitution's directive that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech" leads quite seamlessly to the second premise of the grand strategy—that political speech must not be regulated by the state. In the United States there is a national policy that, unlike its democratic peer nations, does not criminalize or regulate hate speech. It is important to note that I am not claiming that the United States takes an absolutist position on free speech or that we do not have a record of attempting to address racism, sexism, and discrimination. However, I do want to emphasize that the United States has decided that *state regulation* is not one of the tools we can use to combat hate speech, and in this the United States has diverged significantly from its peer nations. This divergence, I contend, can be attributed to the dominance of the grand strategy of the counterspeech system.

Given the first premise's equation of democracy and free speech, grasping the second premise requires a recognition of its uniqueness, especially in comparison to other democratic nations. In fact, "the United States stands virtually alone in extending freedom of expression to what has come to be called hate speech. Most countries tolerate some degree of regulation."[22] After World War II Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Austria criminalized or regulated hate speech (variously defined). In 2008 the European Union sought to bring all its member nations in line with these types of regulations and passed the *Council Framework Decision . . . on Combating Certain Forms and*

Expressions of Racism and Xenophobia by Means of Criminal Law, which speci-
fies that hate speech should be sanctioned, and punitive measures should be
taken against individuals or groups engaged in hate speech.[23] Other nations
outside of Europe, including Canada and South Africa, have also passed hate
speech regulations or are in the process of doing so.[24]

In addition to these individual nations' regulations, the international
community as a whole has adopted a number of conventions and statements
regarding hate speech—which again highlights the United States' unique-
ness in its stance against such regulations. For example, the United Nations'
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states that "any advocacy of
national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimina-
tion, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law."[25] In 1977 the U.S. Sen-
ate raised concerns about this covenant, despite the fact that "virtually every
European country has enacted content-based restriction on racially insulting
or inciting speech."[26] Similarly, article 4 of the *International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* requires all nation-states
party to the convention to criminalize racist hate speech.[27] In 1965 this con-
vention was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly,
and the United States is in fact a signatory. However, the U.S. Senate refused
to ratify the convention in 1978, because of reservations over its conflict with
First Amendment free speech protections.

The reasons usually posited for the uniqueness of the United States' posi-
tion on hate speech regulation are numerous, but the most widely accepted
is that free speech was under constant threat from the state in the early days
of U.S. democracy. "Profoundly influencing contemporary doctrine is the
Supreme Court's dismal failure during the first half of the twentieth century
to protect speech that must be allowed in any democratic society," Weinstein
argues. "So what might look like senseless overprotection of speech to many
Europeans (and many Americans as well), in fact reflects hard-learned lessons
about what is needed to adequately protect the right of dissent in a democratic
society."[28] These "hard-learned lessons," of course, form the core of the second
premise that limits our ability to combat hate speech through state regulation.

U.S. history, while distinct from Europe's history with official state-based
fascism and oppression, is not as determinant as it might first appear. As
Jamal Greene writes, "Although it is tempting to ascribe the American posi-
tion on hate speech to a kind of libertarian cultural DNA, it was not inevi-
table that differences with the rest of the western world would develop in this
area." For example, in 1952 numerous pieces of legislation were proposed
in the United States seeking to criminalize "group libel."[29] However, as the

nation was on the cusp of the civil rights movement, political and social movement activists made decisions to champion other First Amendment issues over this one. Civil rights groups, at the time, placed their emphasis on cases that hinged on free speech issues related to the submission of membership lists, as with *NAACP v. Alabama ex rel. Patterson* (1958), or with challenges to the protection of speech that "stirs the public to anger or dispute," as in *Terminiello v. Chicago* (1949).[30] In other words, during the 1940s and 1950s, when the United States might have moved toward regulation that could have protected minoritized groups from hate speech, free speech regulations targeting these groups were perceived as a greater threat than hate speech.

I would suggest that this is indicative of the constitutive nature of context. The content and transmission of a message—in this case, a statement that group libel or hate speech should be regulated—is never enough to determine its significance. The message's place within the temporal and political contexts that constitute the communicative system determine whether such a message is effective or even culturally legible—a point that is quite evident in this example. Despite proposed legislation that was in keeping with other nations' approaches to hate speech and despite sound arguments in the case law for regulating racist speech at the conclusion of World War II, it was simply not the right context for a movement toward hate speech regulation in the United States. The unfortunate result is that the idea that hate speech should not be regulated by the state became entrenched through the confluence of those cultural and constitutional contexts.

Despite that entrenchment, the counterspeech system continued to be at war with itself throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Perhaps the most famous battle in this war was the controversial case, *National Socialist Party of America v. Village of Skokie* (1977).[31] This case involved a faction of Nazi followers who sought to demonstrate in Nazi regalia in the Village of Skokie—a place with a large population of Holocaust survivors. The Village of Skokie attempted to preemptively block the demonstration through the use of citywide ordinances and excessive permit fees. The National Socialist Party, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union, challenged these attempts in a series of court cases. Eventually, and quite controversially, the Supreme Court ruled that the state could not preemptively prevent the party from marching in Skokie, as this would constitute a violation of the First Amendment. In her book exploring the consequences of this decision, Philippa Strum concludes that "the United States made a reasoned decision, based on American history and political culture, that we can weather even the most

undemocratic speech and that it is best for us to absorb whatever hurts come from words that wound."[32]

This conclusion, particularly its focus on "absorbing" the harms of hate speech is revealing of a significant shift in the normative commitments used to defend the absence of hate speech regulation. Instead of justifying a lack of regulation solely in the service of democracy, in these decades we see a rhetorical shift toward a valorization of *tolerance* of hate speech. Put simply, the logic behind the second premise, that hate speech should not be regulated, is as follows: because hate speech cannot be regulated by the state, then we, as a nation or as individual targets, must be *tolerant* of hate speech. "Our" ability to weather the harms of hate speech not only is the price "we" pay for free speech but also demonstrates our absolute commitment to tolerance as a value. Lee C. Bollinger provides the most definitive support and account of this shift in values and justification, arguing that tolerance of hate speech is, in fact, a civic teacher. "Free speech involves a special act of carving out one area of social interaction for extraordinary self-restraint, the purpose of which is to develop and demonstrate a social capacity to control feelings evoked by a host of social encounters," he proposes. In other words, the value of demonstrating our tolerance of hate speech, Bollinger contends, lies in its ability to create a more civilized society, one whose members are capable of controlling their emotions.[33]

Of course, those most called on to perform such tolerance and restraint in the face of hate are those most harmed by it. Peters roundly criticizes Bollinger's view on the value of tolerance, concluding that such an "act of unreciprocated magnanimity" on the part of minoritized populations is a "twisted performance."[34] Similarly, Herbert Marcuse argues that such tolerance is repressive and is actually harmful to democracy because it serves the cause of oppression against communities that have been historically disadvantaged.[35] An eventual consequence of this excessive valorization of tolerance is not simply the acceptance of hate speech as an inevitable consequence of free speech, but to a public, and even rapturous, *defense* of the most pernicious hate speech—a defense the American Civil Liberties Union, some legal and communication scholars, and many others have proudly demonstrated over several decades.[36]

This idea—that targets of hate speech must simply bear the brunt of its harms to demonstrate our society's commitment to tolerance—is particularly obvious when examining the "other means" argument in First Amendment case law. This argument holds that speech-based regulations are not needed to combat hate because there are other means for protecting minoritized people. In *R.A.V. v. City of St. Paul* (1992), these "other means" included

laws against vandalism or outdoor fires, which were deemed sufficient for addressing a cross burning on a Black family's front yard.[37]

I would be remiss not to note the appropriation of the term *tolerance* in this example, as well as the term *diversity*, as mentioned in premise 1's focus on the diversity of ideas. Adherence to the first and second premises of the grand strategy, when taken together, leads to a problematic public understanding of these two terms. Within the counterspeech system tolerance and diversity are reimagined, not as tolerance of diverse social identities but as a tolerance of diverse ideas and speech. In recent years these calls for tolerance of diverse ideas have been almost exclusively used to defend the most heinous—and nearly universally rejected—ideas about racial or gender inferiority. Such an appropriation of tolerance is a logical, if problematic, outgrowth of the grand strategy when it is threatened by new logics—that is, when confronted with the idea that democracy can actually be harmed by the lack of hate speech regulations, the logic of the system shifts to include a commitment to tolerance of diverse ideas instead of just a commitment to democracy. The counterspeech system, as with other dominant systems, neutralizes new logics that attempt to challenge it.

The system's second premise, with its commitment to tolerance as a justification for not regulating hate speech, is also reflected in the rejection of campus hate speech codes in the 1980s and 1990s and in other case law of the time. With regard to hate speech codes, university populations once primarily white, heterosexual, male, and upper class saw an increase in diversity among faculty and students and subsequently an increase in hate speech on campus. Many universities enacted speech codes in an attempt to curb that speech and create safe learning environments for students.[38] Some of these codes are still in place on some campuses, but many of them have been extensively revised or eliminated after successful court challenges.[39] Greene argues that these speech codes were the first serious challenge to the U.S. position on nonregulation of hate speech, but they ultimately failed, because "the doctrinal carapace against content-based regulation of offensive speech was too thick for speech-code activists to penetrate."[40]

Drawing on context theory, however, I would suggest that what the reversal of these speech codes brings to light is the dominance of the grand strategy, especially the second premise and its shift to an emphasis on tolerance. These cases established not only that the state should not regulate hate speech at universities but also that a lack of regulation should be understood as revealing of a university's commitment to tolerance. In fact, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), the self-appointed neoliberal

watchdog of free speech on campus, declined to include eight universities in their survey of campuses that "seriously imperil speech," on the grounds that those universities "clearly and consistently [stated] that [they hold] a set of values above a commitment to freedom of speech."[41] As these examples suggest, there is an overwhelming acceptance in the public imagination that our society's commitment to tolerance of diverse ideas should override other values, such as equality or the protection of minoritized people.

As suggested throughout this explication of the two central premises forming the counterspeech's grand strategy, there are consequences for accepting this dominant view in terms of our ability to combat hate. In the next section of this chapter, I therefore argue that the constraining nature of this grand strategy harms both individual targets of hate speech and democracy as a whole. The First Amendment, despite its important protections, "has suffered from an ideological refusal to acknowledge its dangerous implications for the growth of hate speech, whether against people of color or other subordinated groups."[42] I suggest, then, that if we want to combat hate, we must push past such an ideological blindness and take seriously the consequences of the counterspeech system.

Consequences of the Grand Strategy

The grand strategy of the counterspeech system, particularly the national policy that political speech should not be regulated by the state, has the unfortunate consequence of allowing hate speech to flourish. That hate speech has been systematically developed and left unchecked over time has led to the acceptance of hate speech, not just from so-called extremists but in mainstream U.S. discourse.[43] In fact, hate speech has been found to subtly permeate everyday discourses and contexts, such as organizations and mainstream media.[44] Michael Waltman and John Haas have compared extremist hate group discourse to that of mainstream politicians, political operatives, and media pundits, finding that those "voices are often more alike than they are different."[45] In short, the unchecked presence of hate speech has led to it finding its way from the extremist margins into mainstream political discourse and even into everyday language practices.

The presence of hate speech on so many levels has egregious effects on individual targets, as documented extensively in psychology, sociology, law, and communication. Mari J. Matsuda points out that "the negative effects of hate messages are real and immediate for the victims. Victims of vicious hate propaganda experience physiological symptoms and emotional distress

ranging from fear in the gut to rapid pulse rate and difficulty in breathing, nightmares, post-traumatic stress disorder, hypertension, psychosis, and suicide."[46] Being targeted by hate speech has also been shown to result in mental health issues such as isolation, self-hatred, and psychosomatic disease, while also affecting minoritized people's interpersonal relationships and parenting practices.[47] Although many of the harms of hate speech were first documented in the 1980s and 1990s, a more recent study confirms similar harms of hate speech on individual targets in contemporary U.S. culture.[48] Similarly, in 2018 Arjun Singh Sethi documented the compelling stories of those targeted by hate in U.S. culture and consequently demonstrated the persistence of its harms over the subsequent three decades.[49] In other words, scholarship across several fields, over the course of several decades, demonstrates that hate speech should not be understood simply as content-neutral political speech because it has insidious and unequal harms. The United States' refusal to regulate hate speech allows it to perpetually generate these harms—harms that adversely affect the most vulnerable and historically disadvantaged people.

These harms are not felt solely at the level of the individual—they also harm our ability to engage in meaningful democratic deliberation. Recent studies on the effects of hate speech confirm that it does in fact lead to an increase in systemic prejudice, dehumanization, and human rights abuses.[50] As Jeremy Waldron writes, "A social environment polluted by anti-gay leaflets, Nazi banners, and burning crosses sends an implicit message to the targets of such hatred: your security is uncertain[,] and you can expect to face humiliation and discrimination when you leave your home." Such humiliation and discrimination are not simply an affront to targets' "feelings"; they also constitute an assault on "their social standing, the fundamentals of basic reputation that entitles them to be treated as equals in the ordinary operations of society."[51] Unchecked hate speech leads to "the subordination of racial minorities, including the perpetuation and reinforcement of discriminatory attitudes and behaviors. In brief, use of racist expressions creates and maintains a social reality of racism that promotes disparate treatment of minorities."[52]

In addition, the harm in hate speech "comes not only from the hate message itself, but also from the government response of tolerance."[53] When people of color, women, LGBTQIA+ people, and others face death or rape threats and racist, misogynist, or other assaultive speech at alarming rates, their ability to participate in the public spaces of democracy becomes effectively nullified. As social media platforms have increasingly become spaces for democratic deliberation, these incidents of hate speech occur more frequently and thus have a compounded silencing effect.[54] Minoritized people

attempting to access spaces of democracy, either online or off-line, are simply more at risk than nonminoritized people, and many scholars argue this limits their access to democracy and perpetuates inequality. A lack of state regulation of hate speech thus fosters discrimination of disadvantaged groups—a decidedly undemocratic consequence of pervasive hate speech and a clear consequence of the dominance of the counterspeech system.

Perhaps a "democratic argument for [unregulated] freedom of expression can still be made," but only as an "appropriate ideal for which society should strive." Until such an ideal is realized, there must instead be a recognition of the need to protect minoritized groups' rights to equal access to the spaces of democratic deliberation. Governmental protection of hate speech, "assumes that it is acceptable to sacrifice the good of one group of persons in society for the sake of striving for a yet to be fully realized collective value. . . . Indeed, what guarantees do we have that permitting hate speech now will make that future more, not less, likely?"[55] We must be willing to at least consider the possibility that hate speech regulations might, in fact, *enhance* democracy for those who have historically been denied its promises. We should consider the idea that regulating hate speech might not harm our democracy but instead strengthen it in our current moment—a moment in which democracy is not fully realized for all persons.

Given the extensive documentation of the undemocratic consequences of the grand strategy of the counterspeech system, the question remains: What has prevented changes in the United States' approach to hate speech? In part, changes have not occurred because our acceptance of the grand strategy constrains the range of possible options we perceive for combating hate. The grand strategy neutralizes all arguments within the counterspeech system, and the logics of the system are ubiquitous in our public and scholarly understandings of free speech, hate speech, and democracy. To grasp this point more fully, I return to Wilden's context theory to explore the second level of the counterspeech system to see how the grand strategy's objectives are fulfilled through the more-speech strategy—and also to set up the next chapter's exploration of more-speech tactics.

More-Speech Strategy

Communicative systems within context theory are understood as semidependent hierarchical structures. The levels of the structure (grand strategy, strategy, grand tactics, and tactics) are interrelated, and the higher levels

constrain (to some degree) the levels below them. What remains for this chapter, then, is to explore the next level of this hierarchy, what Wilden calls *strategy*. Simply put, strategy is "the art of applying . . . means to fulfil the ends of policy."[56] When applied to the counterspeech system, the grand strategy corresponds to the system's general goals of protecting free speech and avoiding state regulation of political speech. The strategy, then, consists of the means to reach those goals. The only means of combating hate speech, while fulfilling the objectives of the grand strategy, is what I call the more-speech strategy. In other words, within our system, more speech becomes the only means through which we, the people, can combat hate speech because other options are constrained by the idea that political speech must not be regulated by the state.

The more-speech strategy finds its foundation in the oft-cited words of Justice Louis Brandeis in *Whitney v. California* (1927): "If there be time to expose through discussion the falsehood and fallacies, to avert the evil by the processes of education, the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence."[57] In other words, when faced with unreasonable speech or falsehoods, we should overcome such speech with more reasonable truths, thereby educating the unreasonable and correcting the false. When dealing with falsehoods or with contentious *political* speech, it is most assuredly good practice to meet such speech with more speech, education, or persuasion, as Brandeis's concurring opinion makes clear. However, despite its being deployed consistently in the free speech–hate speech debate, *Whitney v. California* was actually a case about the limits of political speech when used to incite criminal syndicalism; it was, in other words, *not* a case about hate speech. Brandeis's words were specific to the context of that case, but in the nearly one hundred years since they were uttered, they have been co-opted into the free speech–hate speech debate and consequently have been treated as the basis for the more-speech strategy. This acontextual appropriation of Brandeis's words sets up a problematic equation of hate speech and political speech, since it treats both as equally worthy of public deliberation in our democratic system. Some scholars and legal experts do not agree with this definition of hate speech and contend instead that hate speech is not the same as political speech because it has no democratic value and is a unique form of harmful, and thus regulatable, speech.[58] However, because of the dominance of the grand strategy within the United States, more speech remains the only intelligible strategy or means for combating hate speech.

The more-speech strategy dictates not only the *means* through which the grand strategy is fulfilled but also *who* is responsible for engaging in more

speech. The grand strategy prohibits the *state* from engaging in more speech, as that would violate its commitment to (and, I would argue, the myth of) content neutrality. When confrontations between hate speech purveyors and targets happen in public spaces, the state claims to maintain a neutral stance by not supporting either side. Instead, the onus for engaging in more speech is placed solely on the targets of hate speech and their allies. An adherence to the more-speech strategy assumes that "when it comes to engaging in more speech, (1) the response ought to be undertaken by the targeted individuals or groups themselves, and (2), what is implicit in the first, that those individuals and groups are up to the task. That is, a notion of *unsupported* counterspeech is at play in these arguments."[59] Thus, the more-speech strategy places the entirety of the burden of combating hate speech on its targets and their allies— but without providing any support for meeting that burden.[60] Reflecting the link between the levels of the hierarchy, the more-speech strategy, like its overarching grand strategy, is unique to the United States. In fact, other nations do not even address the idea that targets should engage in more speech as a viable response to hate speech, as interactions with hate speech purveyors can be dangerous. "Reports of minority-group members who were attacked and seriously injured as a result of talking back to their harassers cast doubt on the wisdom of this counsel," as Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic point out.[61]

The problem with the more-speech approach is due, in part, to the counterspeech system's reliance on an acontextual, transmission model of communication. A transmission model of communication ignores power relations, assuming that all parties in a communicative system are equal and that content should be treated as neutral—commitments characteristic of liberalism. "The basic structure of the liberal ideology rests on the illiberal belief that there are 'two sides to every question'—and no real hierarchies of power," Wilden writes. "By its very structure capitalist liberal theory . . . ignores the fact that many questions have many 'sides' . . . that certain questions and kinds of questions—such as racism and torture—have only one side."[62] The more-speech strategy, based in these tenets of liberal political theory, is built on a similar assumption—that rhetorics of hate are simply questions with two sides, that power contexts are irrelevant, and that the "better" side will win out through more speech. The more-speech strategy, in short, rests on the idea that communication has some innate ability to solve any problem simply through its free expression.

Another central assumption of the more-speech strategy is that speech is not action. In communication studies this position is most forcefully articulated

by Franklyn Haiman, who argues that we must distinguish pure speech as "*words* of hatred that are uttered or *symbols* of hatred that are displayed" from "*acts* of racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual discrimination or physical abuse." He concludes from this premise that hate speech affects individuals only on a psychological level and thus its harms are "subjective in nature."[63] Haiman's discussion of harms individualizes a public context. Hate speech not only harms individuals but degrades democracy itself by preventing equal access— its harms are public and political. In his studies of the colonizing effects of language, Frantz Fanon argues that the psychological ruptures suffered by colonized Black men should be understood not as *individual* defects but as a consequence of the public power relationships created and maintained through colonizing language.[64] In other words, the harms of hate speech, like the harms of discursive colonialization, should not be understood as simply individualized or subjective. I would also add that placing the harms of hate speech solely in the realm of the individual, while simultaneously placing its content solely in the realm of public or political speech, is simply contradictory.

Haiman goes on to separate speech from action when he claims that hate speech has only the *potential* to harm individuals, and because it is subjective targets can simply choose not to be affected by it. However, this potentiality test does not apply to other First Amendment exceptions. For example, libelous speech is regulated, regardless of whether the target's reputation can potentially bear the consequences of the defamation. Deceptive advertising is also regulated, regardless of the potential of some people to see through the deception. As a result, Haiman's dismissal of hate speech harms simply because they are *potential* harms seems to contradict how we already think about First Amendment exceptions.

Interestingly, Haiman does argue that some speech can be "situation-altering" in particular instances, for example, "where the communication has come from persons in positions of authority and has been directed to individuals under their power." Specifically, he refers to those who have *institutionally* been granted authority, such as teachers over students or employers over employees. Haiman states that such "authority introduces potential consequences into a relationship that are not present in symbolic transactions between peers and thus gives to the utterances of persons in positions of authority a weight greater than the words themselves."[65] It would appear from this distinction that Haiman accepts that speech used in institutional power contexts can be understood as action and thus be legally actionable. However, he does not grant this distinction to hate speech because he does

not believe that "symbolic transactions among peers" involve relations of power—assuming a pristine equality among peers that is in keeping with the logics of the more-speech strategy.[66] This logic clearly ignores *disciplinary* understandings of power, which reveal how power relationships are linguistically created and maintained, not just institutionally granted.[67] In short, power infuses *all* relationships, including peer relationships, and those power dynamics are inherently linked to speech and language.

The more-speech strategy leads us to ignore these power dynamics and adhere to an understanding of hate speech as something devoid of "real" consequences or harms. This violates a basic premise of communication studies, specifically that speech should not be understood simply as a means to transmit information but as something that *acts* in the world. This idea is ubiquitous in the field of rhetoric and draws from, among other theories, Kenneth Burke's assertion that "language is a species of action, symbolic action."[68] Most communication scholars, in other words, simply do not accept the idea that speech does not constitute action.[69] Put simply, humans *act* with language, and action is possible because of humans' use of language. Burke's maxim seems rather apt: "to call a man a murderer is to propose a hanging."[70] Or, within the context of hate speech, to call people vermin is to propose their extermination.

Haiman does argue, and I agree, that there is a distinction between calling someone the N-word and legally denying Black people equal access to housing, jobs, or education. However, as legal and social contexts change, so too do the consequences of such speech. Because legal and structural barriers to equality have been removed (to some extent), hate speech is what does the work of subordinating minoritized groups; "hate speech has replaced formal slavery, Jim Crow laws, female subjugation, and Japanese internment as means to keep subordinate groups in line."[71] Even if we grant that the type and degree of harms from speech and action are distinct, simply divorcing speech from action does not help us remedy the insidious and power-laden consequences of allowing hate speech to continue to grow unabated.

The persistence of the idea that hate speech simply transmits information that can be combated with the transmission of more speech—even in a field that almost universally accepts in every other context that speech is action and is constitutive of social realties—is revealing of the dominance of the more-speech strategy. This dominance is also revealing of the seemingly unending cycle of stalemates in deliberations surrounding free speech and hate speech. Therefore, in the final section of this chapter, I use context theory to analyze the most common arguments in those deliberations.

Proposed Regulations, Common Arguments, and Defeatism

If the harms of hate speech are so prevalent, serious, and well documented, then why does the United States continue to refuse all attempts to regulate it? Greene posits one theory, that "in the free-speech area no less than in other realms of constitutional law, a brilliant argument is neither sufficient nor even necessary to effect constitutional change in the United States. Such arguments must engage the American people in the right way, and at the right time."[72] Although Greene's *kairotic* argument certainly rings true, if we consider the seemingly unending debates about free speech and hate speech through the lens of context theory, we see not just the determinism of kairos but the ability of the counterspeech system to neutralize many argumentative challenges. This ability rests on the fact that "the defense of free expression can be an all but foolproof method of claiming the moral high ground."[73] Adhering to the premises of the grand strategy means that the harms of hate speech are deemed irrelevant in face of free speech concerns. Similarly, all arguments, regardless of their merit or logic, become unintelligible because, as the common arguments tend to ask, what could be more valuable than free speech? What is more righteous than protecting democracy? How could anyone be *against* democracy and free speech and *for* tyranny and an Orwellian thought police?

The grand strategy, which holds that free speech should not be regulated because it is essential to democracy, monopolizes the debate and neutralizes any challenge to its dominance. Such neutralization prevents us from seeing that our democratic process is actually threatened, not only by hate speech itself but by the state's continued tolerance of it. Thus the conclusion that the public should simply combat hate speech with more speech becomes the only solution available within the counterspeech system. "It would, of course, be preferable if hate could be defeated by reason," Michel Rosenfeld writes. "Unfortunately, that has failed all too often, so there seems no alternative but to combat hate speech through regulation to secure a minimum of civility in the public area."[74] There are a number of people who take the harms of unregulated hate speech seriously and, as a result, have outlined specific policy proposals for combating these harms through regulations that would criminalize hate speech by legally redefining it. However, a critical evaluation of these proposed policies reveals that they continue to adhere to the second premise of the grand strategy—that *political* speech should not be regulated by the state. Thus, while I do think these types of policies could be positive steps forward in the fight against hate, they remain limited as they

attempt to simply work around, instead of directly challenging, the confines of the counterspeech system.

As a first example, Alexander Tsesis proposes two models for criminalizing hate speech, both of which are tailored to "distinguish legitimate forms of political dialogue from hate speech."[75] In other words, he accepts the premise that political speech should not be regulated by the state but argues that hate speech should not be understood as political speech. Instead, it should be defined as speech that incites violence or discrimination. When understood as incitement, Tsesis argues, hate speech would not fall under the protection of the First Amendment. The specifics of his proposals are clearly outlined, and he is careful to craft his proposals to fit into current prohibitions against incitement—exceptions that have already been established in our First Amendment jurisprudence. Although his proposal is regulatory, it fails to fully challenge the premises of the grand strategy; it simply criminalizes an already accepted First Amendment exception.

Similarly, Matsuda attempts to work around the prohibition on political speech regulations also by arguing that hate speech should be considered a unique form of regulatable speech and *not* as political speech. She proposes state sanctions against (nonpolitical) hate speech and contends that "explicit content-based rejection of narrowly defined racist speech is more protective of civil liberties than the competing-interests tests or the likely-to-incite-violence tests [such as Tsesis's proposal] that can spill over to censor forms of political speech."[76] Her proposal, then, also remains consistent with the premises of the grand strategy, because it simply seeks to provide more protection for political speech by distinguishing it from regulatable hate speech.

In addition to those proposed regulations that would criminalize hate speech, others have suggested regulations that are not punitive but instead work to assist individual targets as they engage in more speech. For example, Katharine Gelber calls for state funding of programs that support individual victims of hate speech by assisting them in directly responding to the hate speech they encounter, enabling them to "speak back."[77] Specifically, individual targets would be enabled, through regulation, to speak to public audiences through community newsletters, antiracism-awareness programs, community workshops, radio or television advertisements or programs, community art projects, or the production of online videos.[78] And although Gelber's suggestions are unique in providing both a regulatory and persuasive-dialogic response, "speaking back" is, of course, directly reminiscent of the language of the more-speech strategy and therefore falls victim to its same limitations.

Although I agree that state regulation of hate speech could be essential to combating hate while also ensuring access to the spaces of democracy for historically oppressed people, I would point out that one of the reasons these policies have remained *proposals* is precisely because they do not challenge the grand strategy of the counterspeech system. If we understand proposed regulations as operating within the counterspeech system, it is clear that although they could possibly do much to combat hate at a *tactical* level, they are easily defeated because they do not attack the logic of the grand strategy. The reason for this failure is twofold. First, proposed regulations accept the logic of the first premise that free speech (perhaps more than any other value) is essential to democracy. Although they purport to elevate the value of equality to be on par with free speech, ultimately the proposed regulations put equality in the service of free speech, simply extending free speech to those historically denied it. The grand strategy protects free speech *from* the state, so these scholars' regulations simply propose to protect free speech *through* the state. The logic of the grand strategy, then, remains unchallenged.

Second, these proposed regulations fail to gain traction because they appear to protect one group's free speech over another's, a proposal that is easily defeated by the counterspeech system's logic that any state regulation of speech must, at the very least, be content neutral. Putting forth a regulation that criminalizes the content of hate groups' speech and not minoritized groups' speech violates the system's emphasis on content neutrality, as long as hate speech is considered political speech. Matsuda tries to circumvent this by distinguishing hate speech from political speech, but her effort ultimately fails because of the pervasiveness of the counterspeech system and its ability to blind us to such an alternative meaning structure. Proposed regulations like the ones outlined here are well conceived and address a number of the common objections made by civil libertarians, yet they either have never been adopted or have been unable to survive legal challenges in the United States long enough for their possible effectiveness to be assessed. They fail because they work only to *adjust* the counterspeech system without reframing its grand strategy—falling victim again and again to its limiting premises.

In addition to regulatory proposals, there are a number of common arguments put forward by opponents of hate speech regulations. Delgado and Stefancic provide an extensive account of how these arguments can be easily refuted, arguing that some common arguments are "empirically groundless, others assume a social world unlike the one we live in, [and] others are inconsistent with the values that we hold." If such arguments are so easily refuted, then why do they persist and in fact win out over arguments for

regulation? Delgado and Stefancic believe the hate speech and free speech debate remains entrenched because we do not allow for any balance between the value of equality (or any other values) and free speech. They argue that when such an imbalance exists, it places us "outside the realm of politics, and instead inside that of sheer power."[79] I would add that this happens because the counterspeech system holds that free speech is essential to democracy; thus any proposed state regulation of that speech is summarily defeated to maintain the logic of the system and consequently to maintain the hierarchical power relations produced and reinforced within it.

Anthony Cortese suggests a move away from state regulation altogether, arguing that "legal solutions to hate speech are too cumbersome and impractical. There is a push to move hate speech partially away from the legal, political, and court systems—where absolutist views of the First Amendment are still dominant."[80] Such a view indicates not only the dominance of the counterspeech system but also its ability to generate a defeatist attitude among those embroiled in the free speech–hate speech battle. Wilden suggests that such defeatism permeates all forms of popular struggle: "The big lie behind the psychological warfare of defeatism is that no human relations better than the present have existed or can exist. . . . When we ask for proof, we are told that the present is the result of the will of God, original sin, wicked Eve, Pandora's box, innate evil, natural selection, the survival of the fittest, might is right, the Soviet Union, cherchez la femme, or the 'determinism' of our genes."[81]

Within the context of the counterspeech system, we are told that no other (legal) system is better or can even exist if we wish to preserve democracy. When we ask for proof, we are presented with a number of specious arguments, such as (1) hate speech regulations will lead to the regulation of all speech and the downfall of democracy; (2) such regulations will ultimately hurt minoritized people and progressive causes; (3) regulating hate speech will ultimately help hate groups; and (4) no one can decide what even counts as hate speech or how it should be regulated. Here I review these arguments in detail, as well as counterarguments to them, to illuminate how such argumentative challenges to the counterspeech system get neutralized by its dominance and thus why our system continues to be perpetually at war with itself.

First, the argument that hate speech regulations will eventually lead to regulation of free speech rights in toto and ultimately to the downfall of democracy is a classic slippery-slope fallacy that operates outside of political history and context. Such a fallacy tends to ignore empirical examples to the contrary, such as those democratic countries who have hate speech regulations, many of which have been in effect for decades. Regulations in these

democracies have in no way led to the elimination of all free speech or to the fall of those countries' democracies. (Tellingly, we still call them *democracies*.)

In 1992 the International Centre Against Censorship assessed countries' hate speech laws and generated a report to provide empirical evidence of how these regulations worked in practice and to determine what "the most effective sanctions and remedies for hate expression" might be, if any.[82] When considering the question of whether hate speech regulations erode freedom of speech or chill public discussion, no country's report mentioned this concern.

> If protecting hate speech . . . were essential to safeguarding freedom of inquiry and a flourishing democratic politics, we would expect to find that nations that have adopted hate-speech rules . . . would suffer a sharp erosion on the spirit of free inquiry. But this has not happened. A host of Western industrialized nations, including Sweden, Italy, Canada, and Great Britain, have instituted laws against hate speech and hate propaganda, many in order to comply with international treaties and conventions requiring such action. . . . No such nation has reported any erosion of the atmosphere of free speech or debate.[83]

Although this report was released in the early 1990s, at the time of this writing the nations included in it still maintain hate speech regulations and are still fully functioning democracies with free speech rights. In fact, as of 2019 the United States ranked lower than these countries in both the World Press Freedom Index and Freedom in the World rankings.[84]

Although we are hard-pressed to find examples of hate speech regulations leading to the fall of democracy, we can easily find a number of empirical, historical examples of unchecked hate speech and hate group organizing leading to the elimination of democratic systems via violence, genocide, and war.[85] Perhaps the slippery slope we should be concerned about, if we are truly concerned with preserving free speech and democracy, is the one that has occurred historically when small organized hate groups spread anti-Semitism, racism, misogyny, and nationalism unabated. Such groups gained followers through further dissemination of hate speech, became larger organizations, and eventually became official political parties whose reign ushered in genocide and war.[86] Simply put, we certainly can (and should) argue over the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of hate speech regulations on a number of levels; however, I suggest that rejecting regulations outright on the grounds that they inevitably lead to the death of free speech and democracy has no basis in history or empirical evidence. In other words, despite

the evidence that hate speech regulations have not led to the regulation of all speech or to the downfall of democracy, the counterspeech system persists in the United States simply because we unquestioningly accept its logic.

The second argument commonly advanced against regulating hate speech is that any regulations, even those specifically designed to protect minoritized groups, will ultimately harm those groups and other progressive social movements. This is known as the "reverse enforcement argument."[87] Any cursory review of progressive social movements in the United States reveals that the state does in fact have a long history of suppressing movements and denying free speech to minoritized people.[88] However, such suppression usually occurs through violent or even deadly means, not through hate speech regulation. Although there are a few examples of minoritized people being charged under free speech regulations, the "empirical evidence does not suggest that this is the pattern. . . . [Instead, these few instances occurred] in repressive societies such as South Africa [in the 1980s]."[89] Furthermore, the claim that regulating hate speech would somehow harm historically oppressed people is paternalistic, because it disingenuously invokes the interests of minoritized people to refute something that might actually be in their best interest.[90]

Yet, from the perspective of context theory, we can see that the reverse enforcement argument continues to get deployed in the free speech–hate speech debate because it works within the taken-for-granted logics of the counterspeech system—specifically the myth of content neutrality. Continued adherence to the principle of content neutrality, a premise we accept in the counterspeech system's grand strategy, forces us to divorce messages from their history and context. Delgado and Stefancic argued against this myth more than twenty years ago, and their point still rings true today, perhaps even more so: "hate speech today lies not at the periphery, but at the center, and political speech at the periphery of First Amendment ideology. The center and the periphery have traded places in a second sense, as well: . . . injuries to whites are now placed at the fore of constitutional jurisprudence, with redress to blacks' historical injustices allowed only when it coincides with benefits to whites."[91] In other words, the myth of content neutrality ignores the antidemocratic consequences of providing state protection for hate speech purveyors while denying protection to minoritized people. Put bluntly, we need to reject the myths of content neutrality and context-free communication and stop pretending that limiting hate speech is a bigger threat to minoritized people or democracy than allowing it to grow in a state-protected environment.

The idea that protecting hate speech ultimately protects minoritized targets is related to a third argument—that regulating hate speech will actually

help hate groups. This argument holds that regulating hate speech will have two possible effects: (1) it will force hate and racism underground, making it more difficult to combat, or (2) it will place more attention on the hate groups and allow them to become free speech martyrs. The first aspect of this argument is again easily dismissed through a cursory look at evidence from those nations who have hate speech regulations. Most countries with regulations have not found that these laws make it more difficult to combat hate groups, in fact, they do the opposite.[92] I would also add that if it were the case that regulations forced hate speech underground, the end result would be a positive one, as keeping hate speech from public platforms and social media makes hate group organizing and recruitment more difficult.

The second aspect of this argument deserves a bit more attention, however. It seems clear in our contemporary moment that when hate speech regulations are proposed (or even when people speak out against hate speech), the counterspeech system can, in fact, create free speech martyrs, at least in the public imagination. This martyrdom is clearly another effect of our unthinking adherence to the grand strategy of the counterspeech system. However, the symbolic benefits of protecting targets from hate speech and elevating other values above free speech (such as equal protection for minoritized people) far outweigh any potential free speech martyrdom that might also occur through these efforts.

For example, Great Britain and Australian officials have stated that outlawing hate speech is justified because it "expresses official [state] condemnation of bigotry and ethnic hatred."[93] Thus, regulating hate speech sends a message to hate groups, from the highest levels of government, that their speech will not be tolerated. It simultaneously sends a message to minoritized groups that equal protection and the elimination of discrimination are of importance to the state. In other words, the creation of free speech martyrs may be unavoidable in this instance, but it is a comparatively minor consequence compared to the benefits of rethinking our uncritical embrace of the grand strategy.

This point is further strengthened if we reject the separation of the symbolic and the material effects expressed in these views. I agree with the basic contention that state regulations send an important symbolic message, but I would not be so quick to dismiss the material dimensions of such regulations. Delgado and Stefancic suggest that a law's function may be "merely" symbolic in the absence of direct causal effects, but rhetorical scholars would be quick to note that such symbolic action actually constitutes our social world and does have material, if not always quantifiable, effects in that world. Although we may not be able to immediately account for the effects of hate

speech regulations on racism writ large, we know that these laws and the rhetoric they create do in fact have such effects over time. James Boyd White argues that "law is most usefully seen not, as it usually is by academics and philosophers, as a system of rules, but as a branch of rhetoric; and that the kind of rhetoric of which law is a species is most usefully seen . . . as the central art by which community and culture are established, maintained, and transformed."[94] Laws, like all rhetoric, have symbolic value, create meaning, constitute social reality, and have material consequences far beyond a simple gesture of the state.

The final defeatist argument that I consider here is typically phrased as a question: "Who decides what counts as hate speech?" This question is sometimes presented in good faith, as a way to express concern over unilateral decision making by the state.[95] However, this concern can be addressed if we consider the basic premise that in a democratic system it is *we, the people*, who decide what counts through democratic deliberation. We must accept, though, that to make such decisions we must reject the defeatist attitude that we, the people, are *incapable* of making these determinations. On an individual, ethical level, we often decide where to draw the line regarding offensive speech in our culture. In recent years instances of offensive speech, such as controversies over blackface, appropriation of cultural dress, or white people's use of the N-word have generated extensive public scrutiny and debate.[96] Further, we have made decisions about the (un)ethical uses of these types of speech; even if there is not unanimous consensus (an unattainable standard in any context), we eventually draw the line somewhere. Other free speech controversies also continue to be at the forefront of our ethical considerations: Should private companies provide a platform for misogynist or white nationalist websites or social media accounts? Is online doxing ethical? In what context? When confronted with such issues in the public sphere, we often make ethical distinctions based in our own values or, better, in deliberation with others.

We are similarly capable of making decisions about the difference between speech that should be regulated and speech that should not be regulated, with some adjustments for larger political structures. We have done so throughout our history on a host of free speech issues as they relate to commerce; libel and defamation; fighting words; clear-and-present danger; time, manner, and place restrictions; and many others. In fact, "in the area of commerce and industrial relations, expression is frequently limited. False statements about products, suggestions that prices be fixed, opinions about the value of stock, and proemployer propaganda during union elections are all examples of expressions of ideas that are limited by the law. . . . The override occurs

again in the area of privacy and defamation. Expressing intimate and private facts about a private individual is subject to civil damages, as is the spread of untruths damaging to either public or private figures."[97] These decisions have been made, and sometimes reversed or adjusted, as our culture evolves and grapples with changing contexts and values. For example, speech that could lead to imminent lawless action is not protected by the First Amendment.[98] Obscenity is also not protected.[99] In fact, it would seem that speech regulations are almost commonplace when it comes to serving the ends of capital or privacy but not when it comes to protecting minoritized people or democracy from the harms of hate speech.

So, when talking about who decides, with regard to hate speech and free speech, we need to consider what we already know about how legal distinctions get made, by whom, and what power relations those distinctions serve. For example, in the criminal justice system, numerous people, some of whom are elected, are entrusted with determining whether a crime has been committed or the nature and severity of charges leveled against a suspect. Judges, prosecutors, and grand juries make such decisions through their roles as representatives of "the people." Jury members, who are "the people," are instructed to consider the context of a situation when determining an alleged perpetrator's intent, state of mind, guilt, and innocence. Juries distinguish between aggravating and mitigating factors when determining sentences or, in civil matters, the extent of liability or damages awarded to litigants. All these important, sometimes life-and-death decisions are placed on the people; they are part and parcel of the everyday workings of democratic decision making that determines what is just and what kind of world we wish to create.

In short, our democratic systems work on behalf of the people (though never perfectly) to create laws, challenge them, overturn them, create new ones, and on and on. Our democracy is a living system that is always deciding and redeciding. So who decides with regard to hate speech is no more or less complex an issue than the decisions we have made about the abolition of slavery, the prohibition of alcohol (and later its repeal), women's suffrage, marriage equality, civil rights, or any other issue. However, due to the dominance of the counterspeech system, with the issue of hate speech we find ourselves bound by a seemingly unshakeable assumption that this particular form of speech should not be regulated by the state. Thus, we are stymied by the "who decides?" argument because who decides is an irrelevant question when the decision is apparently already made. Thinking outside of the counterspeech system, though, not only allows us to answer the question of

who decides but also gives us some ideas on *how* to decide—through ethical communication and through democratic deliberation.

If we step further outside of the counterspeech system's framing and consider relations of power, we are equipped to productively reframe this question and open up our options for combating hate. The question then becomes not who decides but who benefits from a system that takes democratic decision making out of the hands of the people? In *United States v. Stevens* (2010) the court held that "the First Amendment itself reflects a judgment by the American people that the benefits of its restrictions on the Government outweigh its costs. Our Constitution *forecloses any attempt to revise* that judgment simply on the basis that some speech is not worth it."[100] This idea flies in the face of the dialogic nature of the law and constitutional democracy; "it might be that the American people are inalterably libertarian on speech issues. . . . But it is more plausible, and more true to our constitutional heritage, to conclude that the American people are inalterably dynamic, viewing arguments in the different lights of changing circumstance."[101] Foreclosing any attempt at revision is a statement that clearly expresses and operates within the constraints of the counterspeech system, because it assumes that some decisions are not up for revision, that defeat is inevitable. Such a defeatist viewpoint clearly benefits those already in power who are the least harmed by hate speech.

As reviewed extensively throughout this chapter, democracy itself is a system that allows us to make decisions and draw lines based on the people's ability to deliberate and consider contexts. Our collective consciousness is never permanently fixed. Instead, I believe the counterspeech system is what has granted the arguments reviewed here so much power over our free speech imagination. The fact that these arguments can so easily be refuted, yet still remain in force, is revealing, not of an *inability* to make change but of an *unwillingness* to. That unwillingness maintains a status quo in which those who are least harmed by hate speech stand to benefit the most from the current, inequitable system. Minoritized people's participation in democratic life is threatened by a system that perpetuates the continued presence of hate speech. An unwillingness to change that system is revealing of defeatism, of a learned inability to confront a grand strategy that forecloses other options.

Wilden challenges us to reject this defeatist attitude; "defeatism is a denial of personal dignity which cripples the creative faculties. But to attack it and go beyond it . . . mean[s] recognizing that every unjust system seeks to deny even the idea of hope, dignity, and self-determination to the peoples it oppresses."[102] Overcoming defeatism involves challenging the system that limits our options and dictates that we are incapable of making decisions—reframing the hate

speech–free speech debate is key to this progress. If we begin with the premise that the counterspeech system may in fact be unjust and undemocratic (for certain people, in certain contexts) and that regulation of hate speech may better serve democratic ends, then we have the ability to move beyond the counterspeech system and combat hate speech more effectively.

In sum, we see only the choices our systems enable; understanding systems through the lens of context theory reveals how communicative systems constitute and constrain our choices and create or reinforce power contexts. Applying context theory to the counterspeech system allows us to see this dominant system as a system that contains both opportunities and limitations. It is a system that enables a certain communicative strategy (e.g., more speech) while constraining others. Context theory also allows us to see that such a system is not inevitable—others are possible. But only by stepping outside of the system can we recognize these equally valid, and perhaps radical, alternatives. However, before delving into possible alternatives to this system, in the next chapter I first explore the tactical levels enabled by the more-speech strategy—what I call "more-speech tactics."

2

MORE-SPEECH TACTICS

Fight hate speech with more speech.

—American Civil Liberties Union's full-motion
advertisement that ran thirty-six times per day
on the Times Square Jumbotron in 2011

For those wishing to confront the ever-present and increasing occurrences of hate speech and violence in the United States, the counterspeech system does enable numerous tactics for combating hate—tactics communicative in nature and deployed by multiple publics in various contexts. For the purposes of this chapter, I focus specifically on the tactics that operate within this system's more-speech strategy. Some of these more-speech tactics will be recognizable to the reader, as they are commonly deployed modes of democratic deliberation that utilize persuasion and dialogue. Others are perhaps less well known, such as the confrontational tactics I have participated in through my rhetorical field methods and activism at protests of hate group demonstrations. Despite their unique contexts, all the more-speech tactics explored in this chapter operate within the parameters of the more-speech strategy.

Recall from chapter 1 the first two levels of the counterspeech system: the grand strategy that holds that free speech is essential to democracy and thus should not be regulated by the state and the more-speech strategy that fulfills the ends of this grand strategy by calling on the public to respond to hate speech by engaging in their own counterspeech. The next step in delineating and analyzing the counterspeech system, then, involves exploring the grand tactics and tactics enabled by the first two levels of the system, specifically those tactics enacted by various publics in their attempts to combat hate. *Grand*
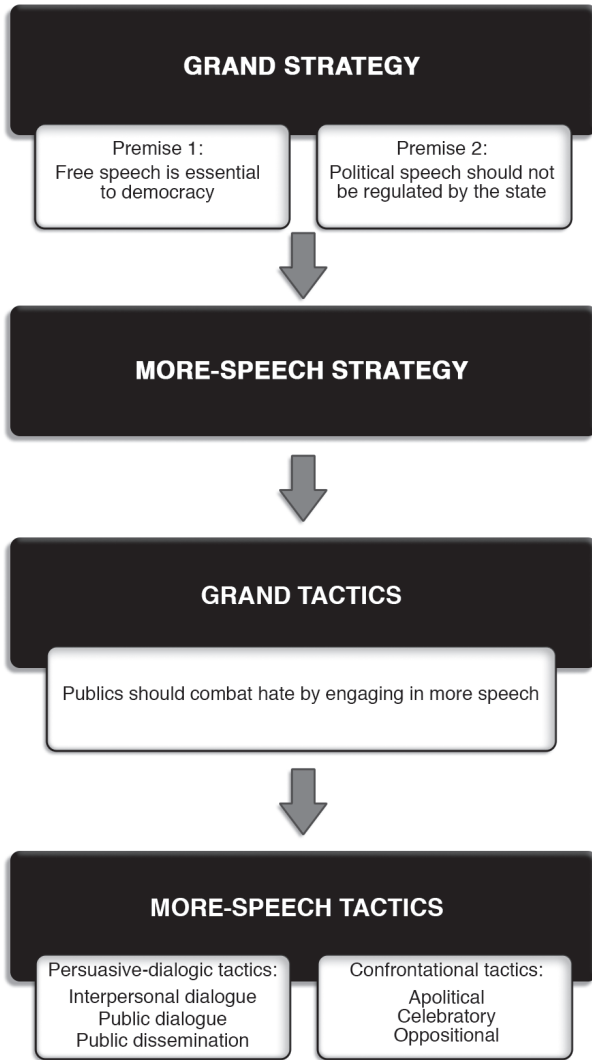
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                    ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                    │        GRAND STRATEGY        │
                    │  ┌───────────┐ ┌───────────┐ │
                    │  │ Premise 1: │ │ Premise 2: │ │
                    │  │Free speech │ │Political   │ │
                    │  │is essential│ │speech      │ │
                    │  │to democracy│ │should not  │ │
                    │  └───────────┘ │be regulated│ │
                    │                │by the state│ │
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Fig. 1   Counterspeech System

tactics correspond to the "framing of operations; . . . and *tactics*, to the punctuation of action within the frame of operations."[1] The hierarchy of the counterspeech system is illustrated in figure 1. As the figure shows, grand tactics are dependent on strategy (in this case, the more-speech strategy), and it is this strategy that makes more-speech tactics both possible and culturally legible.

When hate speech occurs, the counterspeech system's grand tactics frame the options available for the public to combat this speech. The tactics level,

then, involves *how* these various publics can engage in more speech, or what Wilden refers to as their "immediate approach in the field" and the "punctuation[s] of action" in which they participate.[2] More-speech tactics are expressions of the more-speech strategy and include two categories, both of which encompass a number of related approaches, as illustrated in the bottom boxes of figure 1. What I am calling persuasive-dialogic tactics include interpersonal dialogue, public dialogue, and public dissemination approaches, while confrontational tactics include apolitical, celebratory, and oppositional approaches. Although this typology encompasses what I see to be the entirety of more-speech tactics, a public's choice of one approach from these options reflects the context within which they encounter hate speech. For example, when confronting Westboro's hate speech in a funeral context, publics engage in a specific kind of confrontational more-speech tactic, one they characterize as "apolitical." The sacred nature of a funeral context discourages other approaches, such as celebratory tactics. In what follows, I explore each more-speech tactic in detail, assessing both its effectiveness for combating hate and its limitations, both in itself and, ultimately, as an expression of constraints of the counterspeech system.

Persuasive-Dialogic Tactics

Persuasive-dialogic tactics will likely seem commonplace to anyone familiar with communication campaigns of any kind. Such tactics are the foundation of all awareness-raising, educational, and social movement campaigns and include communicative actions such as consciousness-raising groups, public speeches, social or mass media dissemination, public dialogues, and face-to-face conversations. A list of specific deliberative actions like these could likely go on, but such tactics all operate under the presumption that persuasive-dialogic communication can address a multitude of social problems.[3] My review of persuasive-dialogic tactics here should not be understood as an exhaustive account. The primary focus of my research has been on those tactics that are accessible through rhetorical field methods and not on specific campaigns like the ones explored in this section. However, it seems important to include these persuasive and dialogic tactics for comparative purposes as well as to provide a comprehensive account of the different tactics used to combat hate. I use the term *persuasive-dialogic* to indicate that these specific more-speech tactics are (1) audience-centered, as they address persuadable individuals or general-public audiences, and (2) message-oriented, as they

work to convince these audiences to think or act differently. The assumption that activist tactics should be persuasive or dialogic has been central to how many rhetorical scholars theorize about social change and has also influenced how most of the public understands what tactics are (or are not) effective and ethical, even in the context of hate speech.

At a most basic level, understanding the persuasive-dialogic tactics that operate under the more-speech strategy requires understanding how these tactics address particular audiences and frame messages and the specific communicative actions they employ to combat hate. Wilden would call these specific communicative actions "punctuation[s] of action" and would also encourage us to understand the "immediate approach to the field of combat" that organizes these tactics.[4] The "approach to the field" includes the overarching communicative mode that organizes the choices of audiences, messages, and punctuations of action—such as an interpersonal or public mode of communication. For example, a persuasive-dialogic tactic might involve an individual hate group member (*audience*) who can be persuaded by appeals to human dignity and mutual respect (*messages*); therefore, one might use an interpersonal mode (*approach*) to transmit those messages specifically through face-to-face conversations with that individual (*punctuation of action*). In what follows I have identified three approaches that fall within the overarching category of persuasive-dialogic tactics: interpersonal dialogue, public dialogue, and public dissemination. Under each approach I explore the audiences, messages, and punctuations of action, as outlined in figure 2.[5] After exploring their constitutive elements, I conclude each section by discussing each approach's effectiveness and limitations.

Interpersonal Dialogue

The first persuasive-dialogic tactic involves an interpersonal approach to combating hate on an individual level, specifically through attempts to persuade individual members of hate groups to change their beliefs and actions. These tactics are most often deployed by exit programs that assist individuals seeking to leave hate groups; examples include Life After Hate in the United States and EXIT-Deutschland in Europe. EXIT-Deutschland, one of the oldest of these exit programs, works to "help individuals from all backgrounds, but mainly from highly radicalized milieus (group leaders, terrorists, party leaders) to leave the movement."[6] Sometimes referred to as deradicalization programs, these programs are often staffed by psychologists and social work professionals, as well as by former hate group members, known as
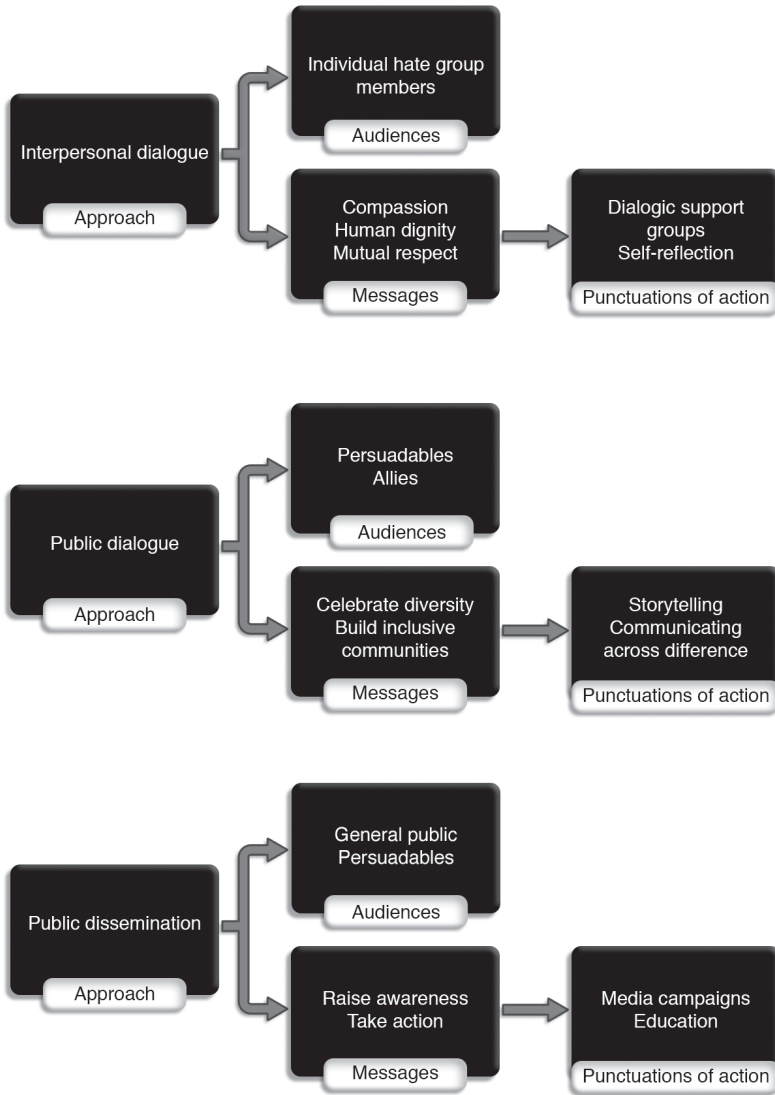
Interpersonal dialogue	Individual hate group members	
Approach	**Audiences**	
	Compassion Human dignity Mutual respect	Dialogic support groups Self-reflection
	Messages	**Punctuations of action**

Public dialogue	Persuadables Allies	
Approach	**Audiences**	
	Celebrate diversity Build inclusive communities	Storytelling Communicating across difference
	Messages	**Punctuations of action**

Public dissemination	General public Persuadables	
Approach	**Audiences**	
	Raise awareness Take action	Media campaigns Education
	Messages	**Punctuations of action**

Fig. 2   Persuasive-Dialogic Tactics

"formers."[7] These programs operate in numerous countries across six continents, and the SPLC reports that they often enjoy substantial institutional and governmental support.[8]

The focus on the individual as audience is ubiquitous in these programs, as they seek to guide people "away from lives of hate" through "individualized education" and dialogic-based support groups.[9] Perhaps the most well-known

exit program in the United States is Life After Hate and its affiliated program ExitUSA, which are "dedicated to inspiring individuals to a place of compassion and forgiveness, for themselves and for all people."[10] Messages like these, characteristic of this approach, emphasize compassion and forgiveness and are often accompanied by messages focused on human dignity and mutual respect.

Exit programs' punctuations of action include conversation-based and dialogic support groups and individualized self-reflection. These communicative actions, Life After Hate argues, are persuasive because they "push back extremist narratives," while "individualized education and job training programs . . . help individuals get their life back on track."[11] Similarly, EXIT-Deutschland achieves this persuasive goal through "personal reflection [which] is of great importance prior to ultimately leaving right-wing groups." These messages and their deployment through interpersonal interactions work to persuade individuals to adopt an "alternative world view and outlook on life."[12]

Some academic research has been done to assess the effectiveness of these programs, though the results have been somewhat mixed due to the inherent complexity of working on an individual level with those who have unique needs and investments in different types of extremist rhetoric.[13] Anecdotally, EXIT-Deutschland boasts that "since the year 2000 over 500 individual cases have been successfully finished with a recidivism rate of approx. 3%."[14] Life After Hate reports that they have more than fifty formers actively involved in their ExitUSA online support group and that they have "helped more than 500 individuals and families confront violent extremism."[15] Thus, an interpersonal approach works to combat hate by decreasing hate groups' numbers one individual at a time, and the punctuations of action used in these exit programs has proven effective in providing individual formers with new meaning structures that replace hate messages with messages that focus on compassion, human dignity, and mutual respect.

I would agree that this approach can be effective in the ways listed here; however, there are also limitations to such an approach. Ryan Lenz describes some of these limitations: "Some of the older exit programs have come under occasional criticism for ignoring the social basis for racism, for glorifying former extremists as newly minted 'experts,' for failing to root out participants' ingrained racism and anti-Semitism, and for being used by state security apparatuses."[16] This interpersonal approach, in other words, does not work at a systemic level to address public meaning structures. Admittedly, this is not usually the goal of an interpersonal dialogue and is why many exit programs combine this approach with other types of public education programs.

However, these programs' high visibility also presents potential pitfalls—since it has led some to insist that an interpersonal approach is the most effective, or only, way to combat hate.[17] For example, Jennifer Rich, drawing on research from David Broockman and Joshua Kalla, asserts that "even brief conversations about hot-button issues can decrease prejudice and encourage people to reconsider their ideas."[18] Such calls for dialogue with individual racists (or transphobic people in the research study cited) has a tendency to ignore the constitutive nature of public, rhetorical meaning structures in perpetuating hate—and to overstate the lasting impact of interpersonal interactions. In other words, no approach is a panacea, and an interpersonal approach may be ineffective, or even unethical, in some contexts. To address some of the critiques leveled against this type of approach, theories and practices related to *public* dialogue have been developed, specifically within the field of communication; taken together, these form a second persuasive-dialogic tactic employed by publics to combat hate.

Public Dialogue

Drawing on the foundations of interpersonal dialogue that privilege personal narratives, inclusivity, and intergroup conversation, a public dialogue approach seeks to transfer these interpersonal modes of communication to public contexts, to raise awareness, celebrate diversity, and build inclusive communities. Public dialogues have been heralded in communication studies as an effective way to address a number of public problems.[19] Not surprisingly, the promise of this approach has generated copious amounts of literature, spanning a host of contexts, including a strong focus on campus communities.[20] As a result, a number of well-established organizations, such as Campus Pride and the Human Rights Campaign, have adopted this approach and developed their own public dialogue programs to combat hate.[21] Campus Pride, for example, works to "encourage dialogue between colleges and universities and from within the campus community" and sponsors a public dialogue program called Stop the Hate.[22]

Unlike interpersonal dialogue, which focuses on individual-level interactions, public dialogue focuses on larger groups, seeking to apply dialogic practices at a social level. When deployed in the counterspeech system, this approach is most effective when the targeted audience includes persuadables or allies—those most likely to seek out opportunities to engage in self-reflection, listen to the stories of minoritized people, and participate in inclusive community building.[23] For example, Not in Our Town (NIOT) specifically targets allies

rather than members of hate groups, stating that "bystanders can be transformed into upstanders—people who speak up against intolerance or when someone is being harmed."[24] The SPLC similarly encourages public dialogue as an outreach tactic for reaching persuadables, stating that "more people than we imagine want to do something; they just need a little push."[25]

Because these types of audiences are already open to the idea of working to combat hate or becoming allies to targeted groups, the messages communicated in this approach tend to focus on ways to celebrate diversity and build inclusive communities. NIOT states their belief that "differences should be viewed as assets" and that "engaging diverse community members gives everyone a voice and leads to a greater sense of inclusion."[26] Similarly, Erase the Hate, a social impact campaign established in 1994, works to "celebrate those taking action in the fight against hate . . . lighting the way toward a more inclusive, equitable America."[27]

These messages are deployed through a number of punctuations of action, including storytelling and intergroup dialogues that seek to generate communication across lines of difference. NIOT hosts workshops in which narratives are shared through film and in intergroup conversations, claiming that "story telling is a tool for inspiring action and engagement."[28] These workshops are described as opportunities for "people to feel empathy and view multiple perspectives" through dialogue among diverse people. Expressing the promise of dialogue central to this approach, NIOT argues that "positive stories in the wake of bullying or bigotry offer solutions and are more likely to shift community norms. . . . One story of positive change can spark many more."[29] Public dialogue may well deliver on this promise for those persuadable and ally audiences, particularly through its emphasis on inclusive community building. Their focus on empowering communities through public dialogue is clear: "Real change happens at the local level. Our work focuses on solutions that inspire and empower communities . . . where everyone is encouraged to participate."[30] The sheer number of such programs across the country is indicative of the widespread acceptance of public dialogue as an important tactic for combating hate that works to bring communities together to reflect on issues of diversity and build a movement.

Yet, despite the nearly ubiquitous commitment to dialogue in the field of communication and in anti-hate organizing, there are some limitations of the dialogic approach, when applied as a solution to public problems like hate speech. "Dialogue has attained something of a holy status," John Durham Peters posits. "It is held up as the summit of human encounter, the essence of liberal education, and the medium of participatory democracy. . . . [However,]

the strenuous standard of dialogue . . . can stigmatize a great deal of the things we do with words. Much of culture is not necessarily dyadic, mutual, or interactive."[31] In other words, a singular focus on dialogue can negate the importance of and need for other communicative approaches that privilege argumentation, dissemination, or disruption over personal narratives and conversation. Referring specifically to the "(im)possibility of dialogue" to address systemic problems of race, Mark McPhail argues that white racism and the perceptions it creates may never be overcome by interracial dialogues, as such perceptions are simply too constraining on white people.[32]

Additionally, Mari Boor Tonn argues that "certain dangers lurk in employing private or social communication modes for public problem-solving," as such a focus may lead only to an ethic of care for others, without concern for the necessary systemic changes that ensure an ethic of justice.[33] The sheer prevalence of these approaches testifies to their importance—and their appeal. However, an adherence to a dialogic approach, whether interpersonal or public, may lead to the neglect and stigmatization of other approaches, such as those I have encountered in the field, that may be more effective or ethical or, at the very least, may work best in concert with other tactics that combat hate. This is important to recognize not only in struggles to combat hate but, more broadly, in theories about how social change happens. Before turning to those tactics that might better challenge public meaning structures in the fight against hate, though, I first develop the final persuasive-dialogic tactic used to combat hate speech: public dissemination.

Public Dissemination

A public dissemination approach to combating hate reflects the central assumptions of persuasive-dialogic tactics but is distinct from both interpersonal and public dialogue approaches. Although a public dissemination approach still adheres to the idea that persuasive communication is essential to combating hate, its focus shifts away from dialogic modes of communication—grounded in narratives and interpersonal conversation—to the dissemination of information. Instead of exchanging information in a face-to-face context, a public dissemination approach utilizes public channels such as social or mass media platforms to spread messages to audiences. These audiences are broad and may include persuadables—those unaware that hate is a problem—or those looking to take specific actions against hate speech. In terms of its explicit goals, public dissemination does not focus on change at an individual level, as

with dialogue, but on broadcasting messages via multiple channels, with the hope that they will be taken up by larger publics.

Messages disseminated in this approach usually have two foci. First, the message may focus on raising awareness about the extent or harms of hate speech or hate crimes, whether in particular communities or nationwide. NIOT distributed a number of films that focus on exposing the extent of the hate problem, emphasizing that "hate crimes happen every day in this country but are often ignored."[34] In another film, *Manhattan Beach*, they depict the story of a Black family that was victimized by hate when their home was burned down.[35] In keeping with a second focus common in public dissemination messaging, this film depicts how the Manhattan Beach community responded, as hundreds of residents worked to support the targeted family. Many anti-hate campaigns similarly highlight specific ally and community actions that occur in the wake of hate speech or a hate crime. The purpose of these messages is to inspire others to take similar actions when hate occurs in their communities.

A public dissemination approach utilizes specific punctuations of action such as mass media campaigns, public service announcements, and social media campaigns. These campaigns focus on awareness raising and on driving a large general audience to particular organizations' websites, where they can learn more about the prevalence of hate and how to combat it. Erase the Hate, a multiplatform media campaign, highlights how specific people and community groups engage in public action so that they might inspire audiences to also work to combat hate.[36] Similarly, the SPLC has a number of extensive public-messaging campaigns, including "Ten Ways to Fight Hate: A Community Response Guide," which outlines the importance of "educating yourself" and "supporting the victims" of hate incidents. This guide also encourages reaching out to allies, signing petitions, and speaking to the press, even offering detailed instructions on "how to engage in an effective media campaign."[37] Similar punctuations of action, as outlined by Katharine Gelber, include community newsletters, antiracism awareness campaigns, radio or television advertisements, art projects, or online videos.[38] Although most public dissemination tactics focus on adult audiences, some educational programs also target younger children. Anthony Cortese argues that we must move away from proposing regulatory solutions and toward a public dissemination approach focused on the "cultural transmission" of "moral education," specifically for school-age children.[39] These types of programs focus on educating young people about prejudice, discrimination, and tolerance of difference.[40]

Similar to public dialogue programs, the sheer number of public dissemination campaigns across the country is indicative of widespread confidence in the effectiveness of persuasive communication in combating hate. Messages that focus on raising awareness about the extent of the problem and on particular kinds of action steps are appealing to general public audiences, and educational programs focused on disseminating information to young children certainly can work to combat hate over time. However, the limitations of such broad messaging lie in their long-term orientation toward effectiveness. Although it is true that public dissemination is an invaluable part of changing public attitudes over time, it does not address immediate instances of hate speech. Instead, public dissemination relies on the logic of multiplier effects to account for long-term effectiveness or how messaging can work to create shifts in public consciousness. I agree wholly that public dissemination is absolutely essential to social change; however, I would point out that these tactics are, to some extent, only reactive. They do not work to disrupt hate groups' organizing or to protect targets of hate from violence or intimidation. Of course, no single tactic will serve as an all-encompassing remedy to hate, but context theory offers us insight into certain tactics' successes and limitations so that we might choose among them and become more effective in the fight.

Tactical Ignorance

Persuasive-dialogic tactics undoubtedly contribute to combating hate. Reflecting the imperative to offer more speech, these particular tactics operate under the assumption that to combat hate we need to replace hateful messages with more inclusive or moral ones. Thus, I argue that these tactics can be effective in combating what Wilden would call "tactical ignorance." Tactical ignorance is a communication problem that exists because of a lack of information or the presence of wrong information—this is a problem at the level of the *message*.[41] Persuasive-dialogic tactics combat tactical ignorance because they seek to remedy information or message problems through more or other information. These tactics address situations in which people simply did not get the message—that hate speech is a problem—or got the wrong message: that all people, regardless of race, gender, ability, and so on, deserve equal and humane treatment. Thus, the persuasive-dialogic tactics enabled by the more-speech strategy involve transmitting, through dialogue or dissemination, the "right" messages. We can easily detect tactical ignorance and

remedy it with more information; this is why persuasive-dialogic tactics are so ubiquitous in our discourses about hate and so commonly accepted as cure-alls. Problems stemming from tactical ignorance are easily remedied with familiar communication tactics, such as dialogue or dissemination.

However, persuasive-dialogic tactics are limited in their effectiveness, specifically at a systemic level, because they are problematically constrained by the logics of the counterspeech system's strategy. We have learned through centuries of liberal political philosophy and decades of First Amendment jurisprudence that the only way to combat hate is to engage in more speech—and in fact the "best" more speech is usually framed as creating more persuasive or dialogic messages, as these examples reveal. Persuasive-dialogic tactics do not address the fact that more or better information is not the paramount problem we face when attempting to combat hate. Instead, I would argue that most of us, even members of hate groups, have received the message that hate is wrong and that we should treat others with respect. Although it is important to combat tactical ignorance in some cases, what context theory allows us to see is that hate speech is not only (or even mostly) a problem of tactical ignorance, because we are not usually facing an information or messaging problem. The message that racism, white supremacy, gender discrimination, or prejudice of any kind is wrong is not a message that most people have simply missed or misunderstood.

Instead, our problem is one that exists at the level of the code (strategy), not the level of the message (tactics). Discourses of hate operate within particular strategies (e.g., rhetorics of white supremacy or transphobia) that comprise multiple, imbricated meaning structures that draw on and reinforce oppressive histories. These strategies are more subtle and pervasive than any individual messages they might prompt, and these strategies also, Wilden emphasizes, actively distort any messages that might conflict with them. Viewed in this way, hate speech becomes a problem that can be effectively combated only through changes at the level of strategy, since it is the strategy that limits the effectiveness of countermessages. However, making changes in those larger meaning structures requires more complex rhetorical work, or what Wilden would call "tactical innovations"—tactics that work to challenge or shift strategies, not tactics that simply produce more messages. A tactical innovation "breaks through the constraints of the existing code (or codes) and restructures it, making radically new messages possible."[42] In the next section I explore some tactics that are innovative in their attempts to address hate at the level of strategy—what I have termed *confrontational tactics*. I distinguish these tactics from the persuasive-dialogic

ones because they are constituted differently in the counterspeech system in terms of approach, audiences, messages, punctuations of action, effectiveness, and limitations. Although confrontational tactics do attempt to address hate at a strategic level, they can also remain constrained by the more-speech strategy in certain ways.

Confrontational Tactics

In contrast to the persuasive-dialogic tactics considered earlier, confrontational tactics are those more-speech tactics that involve combating hate through direct action in the field. Rather than seeking dialogue or only disseminating messages, those who engage in confrontational tactics are committed to directly defying or opposing hate groups in contexts such as rallies, demonstrations, or other public spectacles. In this section, therefore, I explore these confrontational tactics in critical detail, drawing extensively on my work in the field—because confrontational tactics are the tactics I have most frequently encountered through my rhetorical fieldwork and scholar activism. This fieldwork has led me to both recognize and define confrontational tactics as a discrete category within my typology and also to divide these tactics into three central approaches, as illustrated in figure 3: apolitical, celebratory, and oppositional. A focus on *direct action* against hate groups is what sets confrontational tactics apart from other more-speech tactics. Confrontational tactics still operate within the more-speech strategy, but, in contrast to persuasive-dialogic tactics, they do not focus on dialogue or persuasion with hate groups. Instead, those using confrontational tactics engage in more speech *against* hate group audiences—communicating a definitive no to that audience.

Confrontational tactics also reject a commonly suggested tactic for dealing with hate groups, known as quarantine, which suggests that the best response to hate groups' public organizing is "no response." Quarantine tactics encourage people to just "stay home" and ignore the hate group's public organizing. Traditionally, journalists engaged in quarantine policies, also referred to as strategic silencing, in their editorial practices. In the 1960s "Jewish community groups challenged journalists to consider not covering white supremacists' ideas. They called this strategy 'quarantine,' and it involved working with community organizations to minimize public confrontations and provide local journalists with enough context to understand why the American Nazi party was not newsworthy."[43] In other words, when covering hate group rallies, journalists worked to prevent their news platforms from being manipulated
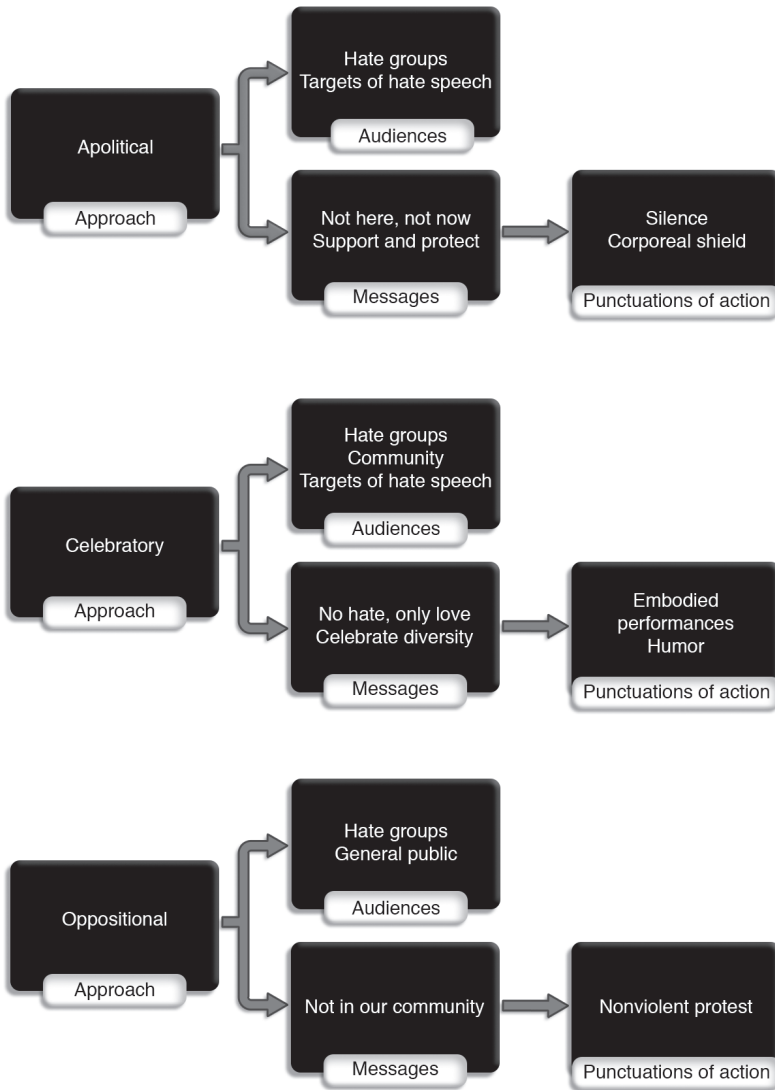
Fig. 3   Confrontational Tactics

by hate groups seeking publicity. However, in our current moment, with the infiltration of white supremacist rhetoric into mainstream discourses on the Right, as well as its circulation through social media platforms, journalistic quarantine policies have been less utilized and also less effective.[44]

Police departments and local government officials have taken the idea of quarantine out of the context of journalistic ethics and applied it to public

spaces of protest, urging people to stay home when hate groups plan rallies in their communities. They often suggest that the best way to deal with hate groups is to refuse to give them any attention. In one sense quarantine tactics, when applied to the public, do not fully operate within the more-speech strategy because they involve meeting hate speech with *no* speech. At the neo-Nazi rally I attended in Newnan, the police chief was quoted numerous times in the media as saying, "We want to send a message and encourage residents to stay away. . . . They [the neo-Nazis] want an audience. We don't want to give them that."[45] When the Klan and neo-Nazi rally in Columbia was announced, South Carolina governor Nikki Haley similarly encouraged people to "steer clear" and to join her family in "staying away from the disruptive, hateful spectacle members of the Ku Klux Klan hope to create over the weekend and instead focus on what brings us together."[46]

Interestingly, the state is not alone in its promotion of quarantine. Some prominent antiracist organizations and scholars have also encouraged the public to simply ignore hate groups. To cite a famous example, when the National Socialist Party of America first threatened to march in Skokie, the Anti-Defamation League and the American Civil Liberties Union urged the residents of the village to "adopt a 'quarantine' policy, permitting [but] ignoring the demonstration in order to deprive the demonstrators of the publicity they sought." In fact, the rabbis in the community were encouraged by these organizations to speak specifically to their congregations about adopting this policy: "Abbot Rosen, the Anti-Defamation League's Midwest leader and an ACLU member, told Skokie audiences that any attempts to block the demonstration would only give the Nazis the publicity they craved."[47]

Although Skokie residents ultimately rejected these quarantine policies, they are still promoted and widely accepted as a good way to deal with hate group rallies. For example, in the "Ten Ways to Fight Hate" resource guide developed by the SPLC, they explicitly advise community members not to counter hate rallies. Similarly, Michael Waltman and John Haas argue that individuals should not "fight hate . . . through protests or counter-protests." They argue that such direct actions "detract from the message that hate is a threat to liberal democracies" and that confronting hate groups is simply "attention-getting" and antithetical to "peaceful action," as well as a "burden" on law enforcement.[48] It would seem that "fighting" hate in these examples involves avoiding any direct confrontation with hate groups. The examples I explore in the remainder of this chapter, however, reject such a stance and quarantine in general, opting instead to combat hate through direct (though still nonviolent) confrontational tactics. The first of these is what I term the

apolitical approach, a confrontational more-speech tactic often deployed in response to Westboro Baptist Church.

Apolitical Tactics

Apolitical tactics, like all the tactics reviewed in this chapter, are enabled—and constrained—by the more-speech strategy. In contrast to persuasive-dialogue tactics, however, an apolitical approach is confrontational in that it involves direct action in the field, a rejection of dialogue or persuasion with hate groups, and a definitive no to those hate groups. These tactics are quite unique in that they maintain an apolitical approach in their messaging, despite functioning as confrontational in their punctuations of action.[49] Of course, the very act of naming something *apolitical* has political consequences, and from a rhetorical perspective strictly apolitical tactics do not really exist, especially within the context of combating hate. However, I use the term to describe this approach because those engaging in these tactics repeatedly refer to what they do as "not political." The term is thus reflective of how they understand their tactics, as well as the particular contexts within which they are combating hate. On the surface it may appear contradictory to be both apolitical and confrontational, but, when placed back into the context of these tactics' deployment—funerals—these characteristics can be more readily reconciled. Since the symbolic and spatial contexts of funeral spaces enable and constrain acceptable communicative choices, an apolitical approach is the most appealing to community members seeking to directly confront hate in that specific context.

The apolitical tactics I have observed in media accounts and in the field have been implemented most often in direct response to Westboro's picketing of funerals and memorial services and not their demonstrations at public, political venues. One of the first, and most famous, examples of an apolitical more-speech tactic was staged after Westboro's picketing at the funeral of Matthew Shepard, a gay man who was brutally murdered in Wyoming in 1999. After seeing Westboro's hate-filled signs at Shepard's funeral, reading "Matt in Hell" and "God Hates Fags," his friend, Romaine Patterson, organized community members into what she termed an "Angel Action." When Westboro brought their hate to the courthouse, where Shepard's murderers were being tried and where his family would be in attendance, this public worked to block Westboro's signs by dressing in "flowing white angel costumes with 10-foot wingspans rising seven feet high."[50] After this beautiful spectacle of love and protection for the Shepard family, Patterson

began getting requests for DIY angel kits from a number of people across the country who were also attempting to protect mourners from Westboro's hate speech, specifically at memorial services.

In addition to Angel Actions, the Patriot Guard Riders (PGR) has also utilized an apolitical approach in response to Westboro's funeral picketing.[51] The PGR was founded in 2005 in response to Westboro's picketing at the funeral of a "fallen hero" in Kansas.[52] PGR members are motorcycle enthusiasts who, when invited by families, use motorcycles and large U.S. flags to shield mourners from Westboro's hate speech at funerals and along funeral routes. According to their website, PGR members are a "diverse amalgamation of riders from across the nation. We have one thing in common besides motorcycles. We have an unwavering respect for those who risk their very lives for America's freedom and security including Fallen Military Heroes, First Responders and Honorably Discharged Veterans." PGR's membership stretches across the United States, and they are registered as a federal 501(c)(3) nonprofit group. The group's stated mission is to protect the "mourning family and their friends from interruptions created by any protestor."[53] In the examples that follow, I draw on media accounts of Angel Actions and PGR confrontations with Westboro, as well as my own participation in a Human Wall action at the memorials for the Emanuel Nine, who were murdered by a white supremacist at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, in 2015. When Westboro threatened to picket the victims' memorial services, people in the Charleston community organized to create a "human wall" to block their picketing.

Those engaging in apolitical tactics tend to address two audiences: hate groups and their targets. When addressing Westboro specifically, community members communicate a definitive message that says, "NO. Not here, not now." Although these community members might acknowledge that political speech is important or that we must tolerate hate speech in some contexts, they argue that a memorial service (or anywhere mourners may be present) is simply not the time or place for *any* political speech, especially hate speech. Their definitive no communicates that political picketing at a funeral is disrespectful, inappropriate, and even profane, given the sacred nature of a funeral. Although it could be argued that memorial services are public events or that certain parts of burial rituals occur in public spaces, the families subjected to Westboro's picketing clearly view their situation as outside of the realm of political, public speech. According to Linda Gibson, mother of a KIA soldier whose funeral was picketed by Westboro, "It was really upsetting to know that someone would want to come and disrupt

our special time to say goodbye to our son."[54] The community members who respond to Westboro share this sentiment, so, in addition to communicating no to Westboro, they also communicate to these targeted families that they will be supported and protected while they are grieving.

A press release from Patterson reveals this important sentiment. She described the first Angel Action as a "peaceful protest in order to share a message of peace, compassion and love in a time where everyone was focused on the issue of hate."[55] Communicating such messages of support and protecting families within the context of a funeral, these community members argue, encourages, even demands, an apolitical approach. In an interview with Anderson Cooper following a mass shooting in Tucson, Arizona, that Westboro threatened to picket, Angel Action organizer Christin Gilmer stated that the participants were "not considering it a protest . . . our goal isn't to make a political statement."[56] PGR also maintain this position, appearing at funerals only when explicitly invited by targeted families. At the Human Wall action in Charleston, participants were reminded many times by the organizer to "remember we are only here for the families" and that "we have no agenda."[57] In keeping with PGR's precedent, the organizer of the Human Wall action also ensured that our presence was welcomed by the families of the victims through extensive and repeated conversations with the families' attorney. Our organizer stated on many occasions that, although the families wanted us there, we should not be present anywhere the families felt was too personal or private.

In the case of the PGR, the entire organization is founded on the premise that they are not political. According to PGR Northwest Oregon District captain Dennis Reynolds, "we are not political in any way."[58] The PGR official website communicates a message of support to families, and their code of conduct similarly emphasizes their nonpolitical stance—requiring members to pledge that "in any interaction with the media and general public, I will avoid actions . . . which could present the appearance of political activism on behalf of PGR. The PGR is a non-political organization. I agree to maintain a strict non-political stance when representing the PGR in any capacity."[59] The PGR's statement concerning its apolitical stance reflects its founding intent, to serve as protectors of grieving families at funerals. As Nick Kinler, an assistant state captain with PGR, states, "You want to go and hit them [Westboro picketers] or do something violent to them; but at the same time, you know you can't. You know that it's the antithesis of what we're supposed to do."[60] In other words, the funeral context dictates what the community is and is not supposed to do to combat hate; the community is supposed to be

supportive and protective of targets of hate speech and is not supposed to engage in any political response.

Protecting political speech, including hate speech, is usually justified in the counterspeech system because its protection promotes dialogue among opposing groups. Communication is at the heart of deliberative democracy, and, in fact, it is sometimes argued that the promotion of dialogue is the *only* reason to protect freedom of speech.[61] In her defense of the decision in *Snyder v. Phelps*, Mary Elizabeth Bezanson argues that "at its very heart, *Snyder v. Phelps* protects the process of persuasion" between Westboro and its audiences.[62] However, for the community members confronting Westboro's hate speech, dialogue or persuasion with Westboro's members is not the goal. In fact, dialogue with Westboro is often discouraged as strenuously as political messages. As Gilmer expressed this point, an Angel Action is "not about dialogue. It's about protecting the family and letting them grieve."[63] These messages of support and protection to targeted families and of "not here, not now" to Westboro are key to understanding these community members' punctuations of action.

Like all the more-speech tactics explored in this chapter, apolitical tactics meet hate speech with more speech. However, this particular "speech" is less verbal and more corporeal, less vocal and more silent. Because Westboro's speech is considered by most to be profane within a funeral setting, apolitical tactics' punctuations of action involve being silent in confrontations with Westboro. Those engaging in these tactics are usually adamant about not speaking directly to the hate group. Patterson recounts how "the angels turned their backs on Phelps, smiled and silently blocked him from the view of passersby."[64] It was also a common refrain among the participants in the Human Wall action to maintain a peaceful, quiet presence.[65] Funerals and memorials are solemn, sacred contexts where silence, or at least quietness, is expected as a show of respect.

Although PGR members will, if asked, use their loud motorcycle engines to drown out Westboro's chants or singing along funeral routes, usually they line up silently. This silence is indicative of their commitment to ensuring "dignity and respect" in the sacred space of the funeral.[66] Similarly, in her review of *Snyder v. Phelps*, which includes references to PGR actions against Westboro, Cindy Simmons argues that the best way to "protect the sacred act of burying our war dead" is by showing up "with candles, with flags, as *silent* witnesses—and *putting our bodies* between Westboro Baptist Church members and those who would be personally harmed by seeing Westboro Baptists' messages."[67] Simmons's reference to PGR's flags, silence, and candles are

indicative of the ways in which community members can work to be effective in confronting Westboro, while preserving the sanctity of the funeral context.

A second punctuation of action characteristic of apolitical tactics is what I have termed the *corporeal shield.* Corporeal shields involve community members using their bodies (or signs, angel wings, or flags) to create barriers between mourners and Westboro picketers. Although many states and the federal government have instituted funeral-picketing laws in recent years that create buffer zones where picketers are not permitted to demonstrate, community members find that these buffer zones do not adequately protect mourners from hate speech.[68] Buffer zones are deemed insufficient because they are empty and therefore do not actually prevent mourners from seeing Westboro's large, neon-colored signs. In the CNN report about the Angel Action in Tucson, Anderson Cooper stated that, in response to the threat of Westboro's picketing, "the Arizona Legislature quickly passed legislation making it a misdemeanor to protest within 300 feet of a funeral . . . [but] the community isn't standing by idly either."[69] Despite the creation of a buffer zone, community members in Tucson still felt it necessary to create a corporeal shield with their angel wings. Upon seeing the Angel Action in Tucson, Patterson stated that what made her most proud was not Arizona's law setting a distance between Westboro and the mourners, but the Angels that "spread their wings" and filled that space. Patterson recognized the limitations of buffer zones in her first Angel Action and described how the participants filled the space with their "huge outstretched wings blocking their vicious signs from view," working "to form a living shield."[70]

Buffer zones may also fail to successfully insulate mourners from hate speech as they travel to a funeral, where Westboro could easily, and legally, display their messages along the roadside. The PGR in particular have responded by creating corporeal shields outside of actual cemetery spaces, often lining up along funeral procession routes with large flags attached to their motorcycles or person. Barriers like these are necessary because of the limited area covered by a buffer zone and work to actually protect mourners from seeing the hate speech. The importance of this corporeal presence is clear in a statement made by PGR district captain Reynolds. He explains that the PGR's sole purpose is "to shield the families from these people [Westboro], shield them physically with our bodies and our flags."[71] Empty buffer zones, while helpful, simply do not shield, because shields must be solid. Therefore, community members seek to fill these empty spaces with their bodies, wings, and flags to protect mourners from the profane messages of Westboro.

The apolitical tactics outlined here can be effective in combating hate, because their innovative use of corporeal presence reasserts boundaries between public and private spaces and between the sacred and profane, in ways that regulatory tactics, such as buffer-zone ordinances, cannot. Determining a definitive boundary between the public and the private can be difficult, but the court demarcates these types of boundaries in the case law. In *Madsen v. Women's Health Center* (1994), the court upheld a thirty-six-foot buffer zone for picketing around an abortion clinic but rejected a three-hundred-foot zone, indicating the court's tendency to spatialize "privacy in literal ways."[72] Such a spatialization influences people's tactics in public spaces.

Although the decision in *Snyder v. Phelps* does not address the constitutionality of buffer zones or picketing laws, it does assert that Westboro's speech at a funeral is *public* and thus protected from tort liability. The *Snyder v. Phelps* ruling reveals important distinctions between matters of public or private concern, and, as Christina Haas argues with regards to the *Madsen v. Women's Health Center* decision, these distinctions have been translated into corporeal practices in public spaces. In the majority opinion Justice John Roberts stated that "Westboro conducted its picketing peacefully on matters of *public* concern at a *public* place adjacent to a *public* street." He goes on to state that, because "Westboro's speech was at a public place on a matter of public concern, that speech is entitled to 'special protection' under the First Amendment."[73] In this decision the court clearly designates what counts as a matter of public concern, as well as what counts as a public space. What I argue, then, is that the court's assertion of what is *public* enables communities to be effective in (re)asserting, through their corporeal punctuations of action, what is *private* as they confront hate speech in a funeral space.

In his analysis of funeral-picketing laws, Dale Herbeck states that "it is easy to confuse the offensiveness of the message with the offensiveness of the intrusion. The right of privacy does not protect an individual from exposure to objectionable *messages*, but rather from an outrageous invasion of private *space*."[74] However, because the court asserts in *Snyder v. Phelps* that Westboro's picketing took place in a public space, they remove the ability to pursue a tort claim on grounds of an invasion of private space. "Simply put, the church members had the right to be where they were" because it was a public space.[75] I would argue that this disavowal of what most people consider to be a private context, a funeral, is problematic because it ignores how such contexts symbolically and spatially dictate behavior. In fact, Craig Smith argues that the context of the funeral (in addition to a closer reading of Westboro's personal attacks against the Snyder family) should have been

considered by the court when determining the public or private nature of Westboro's speech. He argues that "location determines context in this situation," and therefore Westboro's speech should not have been considered public protected speech.[76] What the ruling leaves open, then, is the possibility for community members, as opposed to the courts, to *reassert* a private boundary around the "public" funeral space.

Thus, the decision in *Snyder v. Phelps*, as an expression of the more-speech strategy, encourages specific more-speech tactics by establishing what is public and leaves to the community the power to effectively reassert what is private. That decision enables, and even seems to invite, the public to take responsibility for asserting a zone of privacy through corporeal practices in the funeral space. The PGR, Angel Actions, and Human Wall participants, by physically placing themselves between the mourners and Westboro, form a corporeal boundary between the public space for hate speech and the mourners' private space for grieving. Although such responses are constrained in unique ways, confronting hate in these contexts provides unique opportunities to explore more innovative, and in this case corporeal, modes of more speech. However, one of the consequences of reasserting a public/private boundary is that, in doing so, community members also reconstitute the funeral space as sacred. On the surface this would seem to be a positive effect, protecting the sacred space from the profane speech of Westboro. But such a delineation of the sacred and profane can be limiting, as community members appoint themselves protectors of the sacred and deem *all* political speech, not just hate speech, as profane.

During my time participating in the Human Wall action, a stated aversion to political communications of any kind was frequently reinforced. When an overtly political, but antiracist, banner was set up about half a block west of Emanuel AME Church, most of the participants with the Human Wall action abhorred its presence (as indicated by their conversations with me), repeating, "This is not the place or time for political statements."[77] Extending their focus away from just blocking Westboro's threatened picketing, many participants in the Human Wall action made it their mission to prevent anything they deemed to be political from occurring near the church. For example, on the evening of Reverend Clementa Pinckney's wake, a group of singers arrived outside of the church about an hour before the service was scheduled to begin. Clearly part of a men's choir, they sang a number of traditional Black spirituals, some of which I recognized as songs about the struggles of slavery and the civil rights movement.[78] The Human Wall participants reacted to the singers with disdain, however, talking among

themselves about the "disruption," claiming the song lyrics seemed inappropriate or perhaps even violent. Despite my attempts to talk with these participants about the role of the AME Church as a site of resistance to racism in the South throughout its history—and therefore the appropriateness of such a tribute in the context of the racially motivated violence inflicted on its members—most were quite adamant that the singers' presence and choice of "political" songs was inappropriate.[79]

As a final example of the participants' desire to maintain a sacred space at the church, a participant in the Human Wall action posted the following story on the group's Facebook page:

> As we stood holding our sign outside of Emanuel AME Church Saturday a reporter from MSNBC approached us and started interviewing us. She asked a couple of questions about our city and the outpouring of support for the families. Then she asked about the [Confederate] flag issue that has come to the forefront since the tragedy. I paused for a second to gather my thoughts and heard my husband politely say "Ma'am, this isn't the time or the place to discuss that, we are here for the families." So proud to be part of the love offered to support the families of the Emanuel Nine![80]

The Human Wall participants' unyielding adherence to their roles as protectors of the sacred is revealing of how an apolitical approach can be limiting, since it dictates appropriate and inappropriate tactics for confronting hate, despite the very political nature of the shooting and subsequent eulogies.[81] By positioning themselves as protectors of the sacred and as arbiters of appropriate behavior within these contexts, participants instantiated a boundary between (what they considered) the sacred and the profane.

Although these arguments suggest clear limitations to an apolitical approach, overall I believe such tactics do constitute a tactical innovation in that they can be effective in proactively shielding mourners from hate speech in the context of a funeral or memorial space. Community members engaging in such tactics reject the common quarantine advice—that the best response to groups like Westboro is "no response"—and instead reveal how effective confrontational, though still apolitical, tactics can be when other, more confrontational more-speech tactics are contextually inappropriate. Apolitical tactics lead us to consider the importance of the symbolic and spatial contexts where hate speech appears, by providing an innovative example of more speech that is less verbal, more corporeal, less vocal, and more silent. However, that is not to say that these are the only possible modes

of engaging hate speech or even of engaging Westboro's actions. In the next section I therefore explore a second confrontational tactic I have experienced at other field sites involving both Westboro and other hate groups; these tactics confront hate with celebrations of love, diversity, and unity.

Celebratory Tactics

More-speech tactics that adopt a celebratory approach usually occur in spaces either directly adjacent to or in the same general area of a hate speech rally. In contrast to the apolitical tactics described earlier, these tactics work to confront hate groups through alternative events that counter messages of hate with messages of love. Celebratory tactics thus approach the "field of combat" by engaging in direct action through a variety of embodied performances; these typically foreground humor and provide countervisuals and messages that highlight diversity and unity. Like all confrontational tactics, though, a celebratory approach is a tactical innovation in that it does not involve persuasion or dialogue with hate group members. For example, when a group of metalheads organized a "counter-party" to Westboro, organizer Randy Blythe stated that "there's no point in engaging these people."[82] Instead, as Blythe suggests, those adopting a celebratory approach communicate that they will not simply ignore hate when it appears publicly in their community; instead, they will confront hate with celebrations of love.

Not surprisingly, then, celebratory tactics usually involve a boisterous, party-like atmosphere, and, though they remain nonviolent, they are best described as confrontational because they engage in direct action in the field, while communicating a definitive no—in this case, usually a message of "No hate, only love." In addition, performances of diversity and unity are directed at the public, which indicates that celebratory tactics engage two distinct audiences: both the hate group and the larger community that includes targets of the group's hate speech. In the field I have observed these more-speech tactics at numerous protests against a variety of hate groups. They often work in tandem with the oppositional tactics explored later in this chapter, but, for the purposes of analytical clarity, I focus here on counterevents that specifically foreground celebratory tactics.

In the United States the hate group audience most often confronted with celebratory tactics is Westboro. Although Westboro is most well known for picketing at funerals and memorial services, members also engage in demonstrations at a variety of public venues, including political rallies and music concerts. In this section I focus on the celebratory confrontations with Westboro at

the Mazzoni Center in Philadelphia, at a metalhead demonstration in support of Virginia's first openly transgender state delegate, and at Planting Peace's Equality House, an LGBTQIA+ resource center in Topeka, Kansas. Although I begin with a focus on these tactics when employed in response to Westboro, I also explore additional examples of celebratory confrontations with other hate groups. These examples include an EXIT-Deutschland hosted walkathon against neo-Nazis in Wunsiedel, Germany, and actions staged by the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a group of trans and queer performers who "use humor and irreverent wit to expose the forces of bigotry, complacency and guilt that chain the human spirit."[83] I have interacted with the Sisters in the field at two actions against the alt-right, both in Washington, D.C.

Publics engaging in celebratory tactics communicate messages of love, diversity, and unity directed at hate groups, their targets, and larger community audiences. The Equality House, located directly across the street from Westboro, was founded by Aaron Jackson through the nonprofit humanitarian organization Planting Peace. Equality House is a "symbol of compassion, peace, and positive change. The house, which is painted the colors of the Pride flag, serves as the resource center for all Planting Peace human rights initiatives and stands as a visual reminder of our commitment, as global citizens, to equality for all."[84] Planting Peace was able to acquire an additional house across from Westboro and, on Transgender Day of Remembrance in 2016, painted it in the blue and pink colors of the transgender solidarity flag. The two resource centers serve as brightly colored material reminders of the importance of diversity and equality and stand in direct confrontation to Westboro's hate speech. Its position across from Westboro allows the Equality House "to take a stand against the hurtful words and actions of hate groups like the WBC," while also communicating to LGBTQIA+ youth that "they have a broad platform of love and support in this world."[85] Similarly, when Westboro picketed the Mazzoni Center (an LGBTQIA+-focused health center) during the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia in 2016, the community created messages of love and unity. Organizers of the action distributed signs, flyers, and T-shirts proclaiming that we would meet Westboro's hate speech with a "Great Wall of Love," that "Philly ♥ Trans People," that "Love Wins," and that the community recognized the importance of celebrating "Our Lives, Our Community."[86]

However, these messages, which are quite similar to those espoused through persuasive-dialogic tactics, are not really what is most interesting about celebratory tactics; instead, I believe it is *how* these messages are communicated that is most worth noting. Through their punctuations of actions,

publics engaging in celebratory tactics communicate messages of love and diversity through embodied performances and humor, confronting hate in unique ways. The most common punctuations of action are counterevents that include dance parties, noise brigades, individual performances, and children's activities. Some, like the Mazzoni Center action, included all these celebratory tactics. Before Westboro arrived at the center, lyrics were distributed among the crowd for such songs as "Rainbow Connection," "Stand by Me," "Beautiful," and "Seasons of Love." Subsequently, live musical accompaniment was provided by the Philadelphia Freedom Band, a group of four bands "rooted in the LGBTQ and Ally community."[87] When Westboro arrived, the crowd sang and the band played, creating a noise brigade intended to drown out the hate speech coming from Westboro's picketers.

Attendees at the action were specifically encouraged to avoid directly engaging with Westboro (though some did taunt and mock them); instead, we were asked to remain in the "staging area," down the block from the small space where Westboro picketers were surrounded by bike cops. In the staging area tables were set up with educational literature, but some were set aside for children's activities, such as blowing bubbles, painting flags and hats, and making beaded bracelets in the pink and blue colors of transgender solidarity. Hundreds of attendees packed the blocks around the Mazzoni Center and dance performances filled the space, entertaining the crowd with both spontaneous and choreographed routines. The space also included transgender performers on stilts in stunning costumes with large butterfly-like wings, as well as other individuals donning large angel wings—in homage to the Angel Actions used against Westboro in funeral contexts.

Celebratory tactics at other counterevents similarly produce this party-like atmosphere. At the metalhead action against Westboro in Virginia, for example, Richmond-based singer Randy Blythe, who organized the counterparty and noise brigade, "called on his fans to dress in the most absurd costumes they could muster and promised to hand out free kazoos, which were in abundance. . . . 'These people [Westboro] are coming out and speaking a bunch of ignorance about my friend [delegate Danica Roem],' Blythe said. 'I don't like that. So we came out and just drowned them out [with the kazoos]. That's the easiest way.'"[88] The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence are also well known for using creative noise brigades to drown out hate speech. At an action in Washington, D.C., in 2019, the Sisters drowned out an alt-right media outlet by continuously flapping large hand fans for close to two minutes.[89] Although the Sisters are clear that the "work of a Sister also includes ministry, education and entertainment," they often confront the alt-right and

other racist or anti-LGBTQIA+ groups in these creative and festive ways.[90] Noise brigades and counterparties like these take (not so) seriously the call to meet hate speech with more, and certainly louder, speech.

Celebrations are, as a rule, festive and full of laughter, and the punctuations of action at these counterevents are no exception. In addition to using humorous noisemakers such as kazoos and hand fans, community members often punctuate their actions with witty signs and costumes. For example, at many counterevents against Westboro, including the Mazzoni Center action, people dress up as religious figures, usually Jesus, and directly confront Westboro's messages with signs reading, "No I don't [hate]" or "I said I hate FIGS." At the Mazzoni Center action, one such performer dressed as a priest had humorous signs, complete with Bible verses, that said things such as "God Hates Mixed Fabrics, Deuteronomy 22:11," and "God Hates Figs, Matthew 21:19."[91]

More elaborate performances have been staged in response to the presence of hate groups. For example, when Westboro threatened to picket J. K. Rowling after she tweeted a meme about Gandalf and Dumbledore getting married, the Equality House confronted Westboro by actually staging the wedding. Equality House spokesperson Aaron Jackson stated, "We are delighted to be hosting the Dumbledore and Gandalf wedding and stand with them in the face of bigotry and celebrate equality for all. The WBC won't have to go too far to picket this union. They can look out their front window."[92]

Such humorous celebrations also often include fundraising components for various antiracist or LGBTQIA+ causes. One of most elaborate, and humorous, fundraising counterevents was hosted in Wunsiedel, Germany, in 2014. Each year neo-Nazis travel to Wunsiedel and march through the town to commemorate the death of Rudolf Hess, deputy führer of the Nazi Party, who was once buried there. Dismayed by the annual intrusion into their town, Wunsiedel residents have "attempted protests and numerous legal complaints to no avail."[93] However, in 2014 residents tried a new approach—a humorous, celebratory tactic pranking the neo-Nazi marchers. Before the march organizers from EXIT-Deutschland surreptitiously found sponsors willing to donate ten euros for every meter the neo-Nazis marched, turning the march into a type of walkathon. All the money raised funded EXIT-Deutschland's programs that help extremists leave hate groups. Organizers called the walkathon "Nazis Against Nazis," and, when the neo-Nazis arrived for their march, they were met with humorous, brightly colored signs thanking them for their donations and with slogans reading, "'If only the Führer knew!' and 'Mein Mampf' (my munch) next to a table laden with bananas."[94] This type of humorous prank works to humiliate "white supremacists and fosters internal divisions within

neo-Nazi groups, rather than leaving them feeling triumphant."[95] By marching through Wunsiedel, the neo-Nazis involuntarily raised €10,000 for EXIT-Deutschland, in effect, reducing their own membership numbers.

This type of fundraising is effective and important, but celebratory tactics can also be effective in reducing participation in hate group rallies and in empowering communities to combat hate, especially when considered as an alternative to quarantine. In terms of hate group organizing, there is some anecdotal support for the effectiveness of celebratory tactics in limiting the amount of time hate groups spend recruiting and in decreasing the number of participants at the marches. Yannik Thiem, a philosophy professor and former resident of Wunsiedel, notes that after the walkathon in 2014, "the neo-Nazis left town very quickly after doing their march. . . . They no longer hang around and hand out information."[96] Similar walkathons were staged in other German towns after the success in Wunsiedel, and those organizers also noted decreases in the number of neo-Nazis participating in the marches. Elissa Stolman reported that "in 2015, Nazis Against Nazis expanded its efforts to two more German towns, Bad Nenndorf and Remagen, where [organizer Fabian] Wichmann claims attendance at annual right-wing rallies fell by nearly half. . . . 'I don't know if Nazis Against Nazis is the reason the group shrank, but we see that the neo-Nazis see our actions, discuss them, and think about how to handle it. I think they have no idea how to combat our actions.'"[97] Examples like these suggest that celebratory tactics can be quite effective in limiting hate group organizing in public spaces.

Moreover, celebratory tactics, especially the counterevents described in this section, create space for the dissemination of countervisuals and messages to the community and hate group targets, thereby empowering the community in their stance against hate speech. Wichmann, also an education researcher at EXIT-Deutschland, expressed this point quite clearly: "We want to show what else you can do, what other courses of action you have. You can do more than just block the street or close the shutters."[98] Thiem concurred, stating that "these participatory protests . . . are important. . . . When antifascist, antiracist protests are big and have lots of people turn out, it communicates that this is 'the normal/right way to think'—it empowers anti-racists to speak up and it marginalizes racists."[99] In other words, confronting hate with celebrations of diversity, as opposed to simply ignoring the hate group's denigrating messages, creates inclusive spaces where community members can both say no to hate and demonstrate their unity.

It is important to note, however, the importance of context when understanding the effectiveness and limitations of celebratory tactics. In the

United States organizers attempted two pranking-type fundraisers, inspired by the Nazis Against Nazis walkathons; one was immediately after the election of Donald Trump and the other after the Unite the Right march and subsequent white nationalist violence in Charlottesville.[100] However, these celebratory counterevents were far more limited in terms of participation and effectiveness. It would seem that celebratory tactics are most effective in contexts in which a hate group is viewed as more of a nuisance than as an actual threat, such as Westboro's small-scale picketing at public venues or the neo-Nazis commemorative march in Wunsiedel. As noted in the introduction, when I first began this research, it was difficult to convince some people to take seriously the importance of combating hate (or researching it) at what were, at the time, small rallies—rallies whose attendees were dismissed as fringe groups with no real political clout. However, since the 2016 presidential election and its accompanying spike in hate crimes and hate speech, I have witnessed fewer instances of publics employing celebratory tactics in the field. I think it is not a coincidence that the two pranking-type fundraisers attempted after the election and after the tragic events in Charlottesville appear to have had little impact.

Thus, as our political context has shifted, and particularly after the events in Charlottesville, celebratory tactics have been utilized less frequently as a mode of confronting the threat posed by the alt-right and white supremacist groups.[101] When hate group organizing is no longer seen as an anomaly to be laughed at, when it is perceived instead as a grave and serious threat, then celebrations and humor seem less appropriate and less effective. Although some celebratory elements still appear at confrontations with hate groups, it seems that the escalation of violent nationalism has created a rather humorless context, one in which those wishing to confront hate have become more oppositional (or more combative).[102] In the next section I therefore turn to these more oppositional tactics—the last of the confrontational tactics that I have observed through my work in the field—and then conclude the chapter by exploring the ways in which all these tactics remain constrained, in consequential ways, by the more-speech strategy.

Oppositional Tactics

As with the other confrontational tactics explored in this section, an oppositional approach rejects dialogue and persuasion with hate group members and responds with a definitive no to hate groups through direct action in the field. In this case those adopting an oppositional approach explicitly

communicate a message of "No. Not in our community." Although celebratory performances and oppositional tactics often occur in the same spaces and address the same audiences (i.e., hate groups and the larger community), the latter take less of a celebratory or humorous approach and instead engage in overtly political protest in response to hate speech. An oppositional approach thus involves direct confrontations with hate groups that foreground the more traditional, nonviolent protest practices with which most people are familiar—whether from their own participation, from media reports, or from historical accounts of social movements. Every protest of hate group rallies I have attended involved a majority of participants engaging in traditional protest action, such as making and displaying signs, participating in chants, giving and listening to political speeches, and marching through public spaces.

Participants at the protests I have attended have usually been quite diverse in terms of race, religious affiliation, gender, age, and ability, with participants ranging from seasoned veterans of various protest movements to community members who had never before attended a protest. Each protest also, interestingly, included a mix of both organized groups and unaffiliated, concerned community members. For example, at the white supremacist rally in Stone Mountain, I found myself alongside protesters from a plethora of different political, religious, antiracist, and antifascist groups—but also with individuals who lived in the Atlanta area who had come out specifically to protest the white supremacists' rally. Similar protests against white supremacists in Newnan, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., included organized groups such as the Coweta County African American Alliance and the Jewish Solidarity Caucus, as well as concerned community members unaffiliated with any group.[103] At each of these protests, as well as the one in Columbia, South Carolina, creative signs were displayed, with messages such as "No Hate in My State," "NO Nazis in Newnan," "NO to White Supremacy," and "No Phascists, just Phanatics."[104] These messages were clearly directed at the hate groups, telling them, "no, not in our community."

Interestingly, in Newnan I saw one protest sign that read, "No Silence, No Violence." This sign succinctly summarizes the punctuations of action deployed in an oppositional approach; it indicates the importance of both confronting hate (no silence) and maintaining a traditional nonviolent stance in terms of protest (no violence). As discussed in chapter 1, the more-speech strategy and the tactics it enables are grounded in the liberal humanist tradition, which holds that nonviolent communication is a cornerstone of democratic deliberation. Consequently, the oppositional tactics explored here

approach the "field of combat" through punctuations of action that presuppose a commitment to nonviolent protest as the primary avenue to social change. A commitment to and expectation of nonviolence was communicated to participants in advance of each event in which I participated—for example, on social media and websites created by protest organizers—as well as through flyers handed out at the protests themselves. With the exception of those who engaged in combative tactics at these protests, participants dutifully adhered to these ubiquitous calls for nonviolence.

Although nonviolent protest was at the forefront of these punctuations of action, this does not diminish the oppositional nature of these confrontations. As any rhetorical scholar of social movements is aware, nonviolent protest is based in teachings from Martin Luther King Jr. and Mohandas Gandhi, among others, and demonstrates a *principled* commitment to nonviolence while also *strategically* bringing the reality of oppression and injustice to the forefront of public consciousness and conscience.[105] In other words, nonviolent protest is an oppositional and even radical tactic in some contexts and should not be equated with passivity.[106]

Within the context of hate group rallies, those engaging in nonviolent oppositional tactics attempt to create a kind of tension through their insistence on direct confrontation with hate groups. In my experience protesters at hate group rallies often go out of their way to ensure that their protests are seen and heard by the hate groups rallying. This was certainly the case in Stone Mountain, where protesters went (literally) the extra mile to ensure confrontation with the hate group. Stone Mountain Park encompasses an enormous area, covering 3,200 total acres and many miles of walking trails. It includes a large amusement park and, of course, the infamous memorial to the Confederacy carved into the mountain itself. During my time at the protest in Stone Mountain Park, police attempted to create a quarantined-type space by restricting the hate group to an area at the back of an expansive parking lot that was surrounded by thick forest on three sides. The only access road to the parking lot was barricaded by dozens of police officers, while the rally itself was surrounded by a fence and another cadre of armed riot control agents and tactical vehicles.

It took protesters all morning to simply locate the rally in the park itself (aided in part by the obviously excessive number of riot control agents). Once it was clear that the rally was down the barricaded street, protesters refused to be deterred by the heavily armed riot control agents and their use of stun grenades. Instead, some protesters resorted to running through the wooded area to reach the parking area where the rally was being held. The wooded

space opened up on the south end of the parking lot, across the lot from the rally, which was fenced off in the farthermost north corner. Police established a secondary line at the south end of the parking lot once it was clear that protesters were not to be deterred from entering the space. These protesters got as close as possible to the rally, considering the police lines and fencing, to engage in their oppositional confrontation with the hate group, which included the brandishing of signs and large flags, as well as chanting.

Oppositional protesters in Columbia were similarly insistent on a direct confrontation with the Klan and neo-Nazis rallying at the South Carolina statehouse grounds. As discussed in the introduction, within one month of the racially motivated murders of the Emanuel Nine in Charleston, the State of South Carolina removed the Confederate flag from its coveted place on the statehouse grounds. Within a week of that decision, Klansmen and neo-Nazis announced plans for a rally on the grounds, which was quickly followed by the announcement of a counterrally by members of Black Educators for Justice. Both rallies were granted permits and the rallies were staged at slightly overlapping times, on opposite sides of the statehouse. In this particular instance it might have seemed pointless to confront the hate rally, as attendance by the white supremacists was expected to be low (about two dozen attended), and the removal of the Confederate flag was considered a victory for antiracists. Nonetheless, around two thousand protesters showed up to oppose the rally. This number is of note because it was not until after the 2016 election (this protest was in July 2015) that I had seen so many people attend a protest against a hate group. This surge in numbers may have been due to a number of factors, such as the recency of the Emanuel Nine shooting or the voyeuristic desire to see the supposedly "dueling" protests between white and Black nationalists. However, considering that a substantial number of the people I saw that day were local South Carolinians carrying homemade signs, it seems clear that these protesters were interested in directly confronting the hate that had inspired Dylann Roof.

What is also interesting about the Columbia action as an example of protesters' insistence on direct confrontation is that one might expect that, after the counterrally, protesters would disperse. One seventy-five-year-old veteran of the civil rights movement, in fact, encouraged protesters to go home, walking around the counter-event space calling for all to be "civilized." He shouted repeatedly, "The flag is in the museum where it belongs. Governor Nikki Haley signed that in the bill. Y'all welcome at the State House, but that flag ain't welcome. [That] flag is gone, ain't coming back no more."[107] Despite his calls, most protesters appeared to be there to ensure a confrontation with

hate, as evidenced by their movement from the south-side space of the counterevent to the north-side space, where they awaited the appearance of the white supremacists, who arrived under police escort.

Although my assessment of these protesters' motivations is based on my observations of the movements of people in spaces such as Stone Mountain and Columbia, the commitment to and insistence on direct confrontation as a punctuation of action was also expressed explicitly in some of my conversations in the field. For example, in Newnan, I spoke with members of the Coweta County African American Alliance, a group that works to bring "the community together through our shared history in Coweta County, Georgia."[108] These men attended the protest in Newnan (dressed in business suits) and told me they were there because it was important to be present and stand up to hate groups. As many at the Newnan protest mentioned, they wanted to be there to make sure their community did not turn into another Charlottesville. Similarly, the "unarmed black man" in Columbia, mentioned in the introduction, was clear in his conversation with me that "we all have to do what we have to do."[109] What seems clear, both through their presence in these spaces and in their conversations with me, is that those engaging in oppositional tactics believe that "what we have to do" is stand in direct confrontation to hate—demonstrating time and again a commitment to the position that the "best response" is *not* "no response."

In general, nonviolent protest, such as that displayed in these oppositional tactics, is typically viewed as the most effective and ethical mode of direct action. Nonviolent protest is often described as the apex of effective activism. However, part of this effectiveness, particularly during the civil rights movement, was due to the deployment of nonviolence as a *strategy* of resistance within that historical context. In other words, civil rights activists used nonviolent protest not as simply a tactic but as a strategy for disrupting particular laws, public spaces, and oppressive social norms. They used nonviolence strategically to demonstrate the violence and racism inherent in the state and in public consciousness. As Wilden would argue, the deployment of nonviolence in that context was a tactical innovation with strategic implications—an innovation necessary at the time because traditional tactics for ensuring social change, such as voting, legal challenges, or persuasive appeals in the public sphere, were either unavailable to Black Americans or simply unproductive. Discriminatory practices had eliminated, or at best minimized, the impact of Black voters, while appeals to the legal and legislative systems of the time were often unsuccessful. Therefore, activists utilized

nonviolent protest in an innovative way to break through the unjust "strategy" of state-based segregation and racial discrimination.

When considering the oppositional tactics used to confront hate groups, nonviolent punctuations of action function similarly as tactical innovations because they disrupt two taken-for-granted assumptions of the more-speech strategy: (1) that the public should ignore hate speech by adopting a quarantine policy and (2) that the best more-speech tactics are those based in a persuasive-dialogic approach. As noted earlier, the state (sometimes joined by journalists and members of the general public) promotes quarantine when it comes to dealing with public hate group rallies. However, when the public ignores that advice and engages in more-speech tactics, the more-speech strategy works to dictate *what kinds* of more speech are most acceptable—specifically privileging the persuasive-dialogic over other possible forms of counterspeech. Indeed, the entire framing of the problem, one where hate speech can be met only with a rebuttal, implicitly suggests that the situation calls for persuasion and dialogue. Within the context of the counterspeech system, then, a kind of double bind is created: publics are encouraged to ignore hate speech, but, if they must engage in more speech, then it should be speech that is not directly oppositional. Oppositional tactics, however, by their very nature are not dialogic or persuasive; they are disruptive. As with the nonviolent protests commonly accepted as part and parcel of effective social movement organizing, within the counterspeech system oppositional tactics are tactical innovations because they reject quarantine, persuasion, and dialogue as tactical choices. It is this disruption of "acceptable," state-prescribed tactics that is effective in pushing the limits of the more-speech tactics available to those seeking to combat hate.

As a result, oppositional tactics do not fall victim to the same limitations as persuasive-dialogic tactics. Those engaging in oppositional tactics do not accept that hate speech is a problem of tactical ignorance; they attempt to engage the level of strategy by engaging in innovations that reject the problematic meaning structures inherent in some of our oppressive systems, not just the individual messages they produce. In other words, they do not assume that hate groups can be stopped with better messages, and they do not assume that ignoring hate is the best way to combat it. Instead, those engaging in oppositional tactics disrupt some of the constraints of the more-speech strategy by pushing the limits of what more-speech options we have available.

Although oppositional tactics are effective in pushing the boundaries of our tactical choices, they do remain entrenched within the context of the

counterspeech system and therefore remain limited in some ways by the more-speech strategy. Like all confrontational tactics, oppositional tactics do not prevent hate group organizing or hate speech dissemination. Instead, they are constrained by the logic of the counterspeech system that holds that hate groups have a right to organize and engage in the public dissemination of hate speech. As discussed in chapter 1, this logic reflects the counterspeech system's adherence to liberal political theory, which assumes a deliberative context, where rational subjects are on equal footing, and issues simply have two sides. Unfortunately, accepting the legitimacy of this frame constrains the tactical innovations constituted by confrontational tactics. A return to context theory illuminates this point.

Strategic Ignorance

The more-speech tactics reviewed in this chapter operate within the logics of the counterspeech system, and, despite their tactical innovations or effectiveness in some contexts, they do not overcome the *strategic ignorance* created and perpetuated by the counterspeech system. Strategic ignorance is an "ignorance we are not aware of. When strategically ignorant, we do not recognize what we lack, or indeed that we lack any kind of perception, experience, or understanding at all." Unlike tactical ignorance, strategic ignorance is not an "ignorance resulting from an absence of information, nor by an ignorance resulting from the presence of false information, both of which involve message (tactical) information, but rather by an ignorance at the level of the code. This is strategic ignorance, a perspective that actively distorts or otherwise renders unintelligible any attempt to turn it into useful knowledge."[110] We can easily detect tactical ignorance and remedy it with more or correct information; this is why persuasive-dialogic tactics are so ubiquitous in our discourses about hate and so easily accepted as solutions. But strategic ignorance is different and much more difficult to address because it prevents us from recognizing a system's limitations—or even recognizing that another system is possible.

When applied to the counterspeech system and its more-speech strategy, strategic ignorance limits our awareness of the tactics available for combating hate. In the fight against hate, the more-speech strategy restricts the public to more-speech tactics and thus limits our ability to imagine any tactics (or strategies) not grounded in more speech. This strategic ignorance, moreover, actively distorts any information coming in about the counterspeech

system's limitations, as evidenced by the defeatist arguments that neutralize logics challenging the limits of the counterspeech system. Strategic ignorance prevents us from perceiving the legitimacy of these arguments or the viability of alternative tactics for combating hate.

Most important, in the context of the counterspeech system, we have fostered an assumption that all parties to the system are aligned strategically—that hate groups, the state, and the publics combating hate are all working toward the same ultimate goal of engaging in the free speech essential to democracy. The result is an inability to envision the possibility of other systems addressing the situation quite differently. The system frames the rules of engagement as two equal, but opposing, sides using free speech to persuade each other of the merit of their arguments; it is assumed that all involved parties are aligned to the same goal—to follow the rules and trust that the "better side" will win. However, I argue that this taken-for-granted framing produces strategic ignorance, since it leaves most of us ignorant of the strategy of hate groups (and possibly the state itself). This is not, in other words, a tactical ignorance, an information deficit that could be addressed through more accurate messages regarding hate groups' actions. Instead, it is an inability to recognize that hate groups are, in fact, *operating under a different strategy* than those who confront them—playing by different rules and working toward other, antidemocratic, goals. Hate groups are not simply engaging in free speech as a means to participate in democracy; their actions are, instead, tactical expressions of a very different strategy—a strategy enabled by the state. This does not mean that we must necessarily remain in this state of ignorance, that we have no other options if we want to combat hate. On the contrary, after exploring the tactics and strategies of hate groups in detail, I provide a detailed account of the tactics and strategies I have observed working at a strategic level to combat them. Through this discussion I demonstrate that overcoming strategic ignorance, seeing beyond the constraints of the counterspeech system, is possible—and, in our current moment, absolutely essential.

3

COMBATIVE TACTICS

Without radical innovation you can't beat strategy with tactics.

—Anthony Wilden

If strategic ignorance is a "learned disability that one can come to recognize only by a radical change in perspective at the level of the code," then what is needed in our fight against hate is a *strategic innovation* that reveals and surpasses the limitations of the counterspeech system.[1] In this chapter I explore how we might move beyond the dominant counterspeech system to realize more emancipatory futures, particularly within the context of combating hate. The approach to combating hate that I detail here is one I have encountered in the field that works outside of persuasive-dialogic and confrontational more-speech tactics—what I have come to call *combative tactics*.

I use the term *combative* quite deliberately here to signal that the public spaces of the counterspeech system are rhetorically and materially constructed as *fields of combat*. Thus, in what follows I first establish the parameters of these fields of combat, as I have experienced them through my rhetorical fieldwork and activism. To do this I explore how the police-state frame their operations within the more-speech strategy. Next I focus on police-state punctuations of action in the field of combat and argue that these tactics reinforce the more-speech strategy by constructing two equal, but opposing, sides—confederates to be protected and enemies to be fought. By reinforcing the idea that hate speech is simply an issue with two sides, these tactics suggest that the police-state must choose a side, revealing the *myth* of content neutrality. Moreover, I contend that the counterspeech system as a whole, including but not limited to police-state tactics, reinforces

both a tactical and strategic ignorance that distorts both public and scholarly perceptions of combative tactics, particularly those enacted by antifascists. Rather than relying on these (distorted) views, I conclude the chapter with an exploration of the combative tactics I have encountered in the field, arguing that these tactics constitute a strategic innovation. Read in this way, combative tactics not only challenge the more-speech strategy and effectively combat hate at a strategic level but also open up avenues for engaging allied tactics—the subject of this book's fourth chapter.

Police-State Tactics

Although chapter 2 focuses on the more-speech tactics engaged by various *publics* working to combat hate, they are not the only actors in these spaces—beyond the hate groups and those opposed to them are representatives of the state, most often (and most visibly) police officers.[2] Therefore, in this section I focus on police-state tactics deployed in counterspeech spaces that are directed by the more-speech strategy, which also work to reinforce the strategic ignorance produced by the counterspeech system. At the most general level, the police-state frames its operations—its grand tactics—as protecting free speech, in keeping with the more-speech strategy. Recall that this strategy, however, generates and promotes the myth of content neutrality, the idea that hate speech should be considered on equal footing with any other political speech content and deserving of the state's protection. Within this view, protecting *free* speech means that, in practice, the police-state must protect *hate* speech.

As discussed at length in chapter 1, some theorists and activists have argued that it is antidemocratic for the state to protect hate speech; however, the police-state defends its actions and makes its operations culturally legible through the more-speech strategy. The more-speech strategy is based in the tenets of liberal political theory, which presuppose that rhetorics of hate are simply questions with two sides, that power contexts are irrelevant, and that the "better" side will simply win out through the presentation of more speech. Taken together with the idea that the state must remain neutral with regard to content in these exchanges, the state regularly frames its operations as simply providing a neutral, protected space for the "two sides" of a legitimate political deliberation to engage in an exchange of free speech. An interesting example of this can be seen in an entry on the Department of Defense's photo-gallery website. The site provides a photo of protesters at the Columbia action, titled

Dueling Demonstrations, explicitly defining the action as a contest between two equal parties, while also, tellingly, framing them within the violent connotation of a duel.[3] As mentioned in chapter 2, this two-sides framing of operations is also often reinforced in media accounts, as evidenced by journalists' portrayal of that same action as a pair of "dueling rallies."[4] In keeping with this frame, then, the police-state describes itself (and is depicted in the media) as a neutral actor deployed in the public spaces of the counterspeech system, where hate groups simply represent one side of a political argument—one that needs to be protected from people on the "other side."

This framing makes sense when we consider not only the more-speech strategy but also our nation's history of policing any kind of protest space. During the civil rights movement, for example, police were (presumably) deployed to protect the free speech rights of Black activists, who were threatened by the violence of angry mobs seeking to prevent them from demonstrating. As Franklyn Haiman puts it, "Only by the firmest display of the government's intention to use all the power at its disposal to protect the constitutional rights of dissenters will hecklers be discouraged from taking the law into their own hands."[5] This idea points correctly to how the state *should* use its power to protect free speech, particularly the free speech of oppressed groups. However, this view of the relationship between the state and protesters is based on an assumption that the protection of dissent is a priority for the state—an assumption that simply has not held true, given our nation's history of violence against protestors across a number of contexts, including during the civil rights movement.[6] Historical accounts of police violence against civil rights activists, labor rights organizers, antiwar protesters, and many others are revealing of the fact that the state not only fails to protect protesters in public spaces but actively works to harm and silence them. This trend was again demonstrated in stunning detail during the Black Lives Matter protests in 2014 and 2020, when numerous reports detailed violence used by police against protesters, including tear gas and rubber bullets.[7] In 2020 this police violence was instigated and encouraged at the highest levels of the state, including the then attorney general William Barr and president Donald Trump.[8]

As this police violence reveals and as many journalists, scholars, and activists have pointed out, the state has a vested interest in protecting its power *from* protesters.[9] In fact, when not engaging in outright violence against protesters, the police-state often uses surveillance technology and constitutional time, manner, and place (TMP) restrictions to discipline protesters and create a chilling effect on free expression.[10] Sometimes, restricting the time, manner, or place of a protest is important for pragmatic or safety concerns, such as

when vehicular traffic needs to be blocked to ensure both the safety of protesters and the ability of motorists to travel.[11] However, the police-state can abuse these restrictions, such as when it forces protesters into "free speech cages" or kettles them, to discipline their protest's disruptive function.[12]

Within the counterspeech system the use of TMP restrictions is a particularly shrewd one because it allows the state to frame its operations as a commitment to the second premise of the counterspeech system—that free speech should not be regulated by the state. Through TMP restrictions, the state can easily claim they are not regulating free speech *content*; they are regulating *spaces*. And, further, they are regulating those spaces to *protect* free speech itself. But in practice these TMP restrictions are instead quite effective in regulating free speech—not, perhaps, through direct regulation of free speech content but through regulation of the public spaces that give rise to it.

This discussion of police-state practices in all public spaces of protest is consistent with how they frame their operations in the counterspeech system. Just as publics enact tactics consistent with the more-speech strategy, this strategy similarly dictates specific police-state tactics deployed in the spaces of the counterspeech system. However, unlike the tactics deployed by publics, police-state tactics are characterized by a militarized approach to the field of combat, as indicated by the presence of riot control agents (RCAs) and other police officers armed with military-grade equipment, including tactical vehicles and weapons. The increased militarization of domestic police forces has been well documented and is further evidenced by my activist fieldwork in a variety of protest spaces over the past eighteen years, including counterspeech spaces.[13]

Protest spaces have always included police, but my fieldwork indicates that, in counterspeech spaces, their presence rarely takes the form of local police officers in traditional municipal uniforms using basic equipment. Instead, I have seen increased numbers of police officers, joined by riot control agents appearing in full combat gear—even wearing camouflage military fatigues. They are often equipped with large shields and helmets with face shields, indicative of the combative attitude they take toward counterspeech spaces. RCAs are also usually armed with large batons, handheld grenade launchers, and twelve-gauge shotguns. Although the ammunition used in these weapons, such as stun grenades and rubber bullets, are "less lethal" than live ammunition, they have led to numerous serious injuries and even death.[14] Although RCAs use less-lethal ammunition in their primary weapons, in my experience local police officers in the space are still armed with lethal sidearms.

The most heavily militarized police forces I encountered during my time in the field were in Newnan and Stone Mountain, both very small towns, but ones that resembled cities at war or under siege on the days of the protests. Hundreds of police officers and RCAs were stationed throughout both areas, all fully armed with multiple types of weapons. In Newnan, for example, I watched as military-grade tactical Humvees and BearCat vehicles (one interestingly labeled "Peacekeeper") patrolled the streets of a town that would ordinarily look like something out of a movie set in nostalgic, small town America.[15] Beyond the concerns raised by numerous activists and scholars regarding this militarization—concerns that I share—I would also point to the implications of this militarized approach for our understanding of the more-speech strategy and its limitations. First, the construction of counterspeech spaces as spaces of combat, ironically, creates a context that is in no way conducive to persuasive-dialogic communication; a space where two sides are divided by heavily armed RCAs and barricades is hardly a space designed for conversation.

More important, however, it also structures the site as a space of combat, where enemies are fought and confederates protected. This militarized approach to counterspeech spaces, involving the designation of enemies and confederates, is indicated by the police-state's specific punctuations of action in the field, including the use of excessive force, the taking of "prisoners," and the creation and maintenance of lines of defense. Taken as a whole, these tactics work to construct *those combating hate* as the enemy, reflecting and reinforcing the "two sides" assumption of the counterspeech system and further instantiating the police-state as firmly on the side of protecting hate speech. To illustrate this in relation to the counterspeech system as a whole, figure 4 outlines the entirety of the system, including the approaches and punctuations of action used by the publics engaging in more-speech tactics, as well as police-state tactics in the field of combat.

The police-state's militarized approach often creates an environment in which police respond to protesters, even nonviolent protesters, with excessive force. Tellingly, I have never seen police react the same way toward hate group members in these spaces. In my field experience arbitrary rules, such as requiring protesters to stay on sidewalks or leave their phones and wallets in their cars, are enforced aggressively in counterspeech spaces, but only in relation to protesters of hate speech rallies. For example, when a group of protesters were walking toward the hate group's rally site in Newnan, a few individuals inadvertently stepped off the narrow sidewalk. RCAs, who had been walking for at least a block alongside the protesters, weapons at

GRAND STRATEGY

Premise 1:
Free speech is essential
to democracy

Premise 2:
Political speech should not
be regulated by the state

MORE-SPEECH STRATEGY

GRAND TACTICS

Publics should combat hate by engaging in more speech

MORE-SPEECH TACTICS

Persuasive-dialogic tactics
Confrontational tactics

Police-state tactics:
Excessive force
Prisoners
Lines of defense
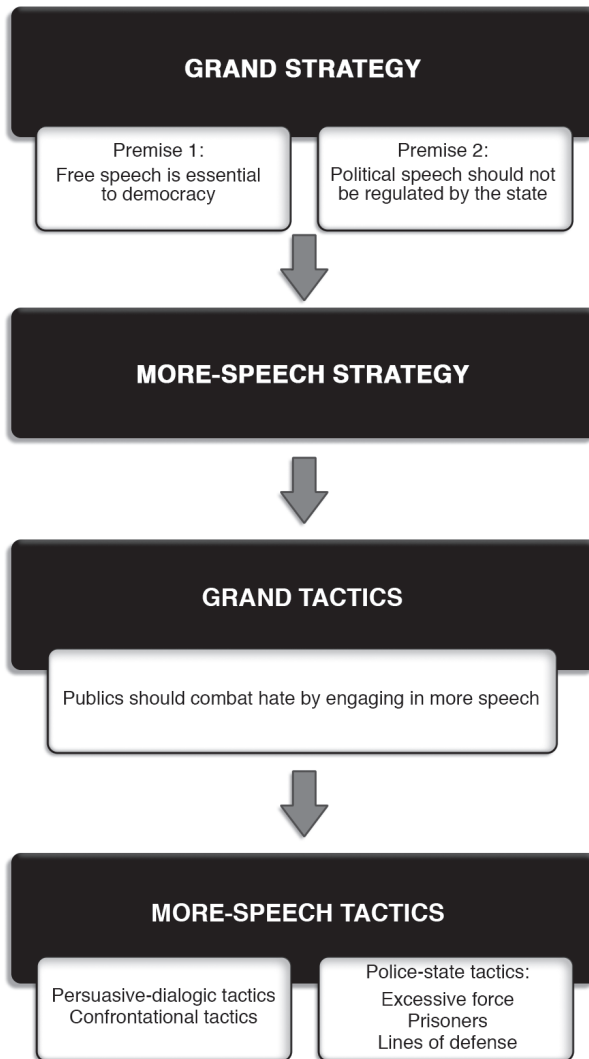
Fig. 4   Counterspeech System with Police-State Tactics

the ready, pushed these "offenders" to the ground. Even though less-lethal weapons are supposed to be used only for crowd dispersal and never aimed directly at individuals, the RCAs pointed guns directly in the faces of these unarmed, incapacitated protesters. Later that day, while walking with a small group of protesters down a street that had been cordoned off from vehicular traffic, an individual protester was singled out by RCAs, pushed to the ground, and handcuffed. When a National Lawyers Guild member moved

closer to observe the interaction, other RCAs pointed their weapons directly at her and ordered her back onto the sidewalk.[16]

Some of these TMP restrictions seem to be arbitrarily created and enforced by police in the moment, such as remaining on a sidewalk even when a street is open to pedestrians. Rules against wearing masks, however, became increasingly enforced in these spaces, serving as a premise for police to "take prisoners" by preemptive arrest.[17] Rules against face coverings in public contexts are based in antiquated laws and local ordinances, dating back to the mid-twentieth century when, ironically, they were passed to prevent the terrorist and criminal activities of the Ku Klux Klan.[18] However, over the course of my fieldwork (before the COVID-19 pandemic), the police-state invoked these laws in protest spaces, specifically against protesters who chose to cover their faces for personal security reasons. In Newnan, for example, RCAs repeatedly ordered protesters to remove their masks, forcing them to the ground and pointing their weapons if the protesters refused or did not comply quickly enough.[19] Similarly, in Stone Mountain I watched three protesters get arrested early in the day (before the hate group had even arrived at the park) for wearing masks. In 2018 federal lawmakers even attempted to make masks illegal in protest spaces. However, revealing again of the myth of the state's content neutrality, they have focused the law solely on antifascist protesters.[20]

In Newnan the handcuffed protester was immediately released by police just one block away from where he was detained. In my experience many "prisoners" are released like this or at least released later in the day with no charges filed. Although this catch-and-release tactic is not always used (some protesters are formally charged and required to post bail or pay a fine), it does occur often enough to indicate that taking prisoners is an important police-state tactic in counterspeech spaces—even if such prisoners never face charges or are only detained briefly. This tactic works to quell dissent in the moment and also sets up protesters as an always-already threat to be contained by police in public spaces—despite the fact that in none of these particular examples did I witness protesters engaging in illegal or violent acts. It seems evident, then, that when the police-state adopts a militarized approach in a public space, it reflects and reinforces the assumption that violent combat with an enemy is inevitable. It also serves as a justification for police to act violently toward protesters and to take prisoners—regardless of those protesters' actions.

In addition to the use of excessive force and the taking of prisoners, police-state punctuations of action also include the creation and maintenance of lines of defense, tactics that again reinforce the two-sides framing, as well as

the rhetorical construction of protesters as the enemy. Most obviously, this includes the police lines and barricades ubiquitous in every counterspeech space. These lines of defense are typically formed by rows of police officers or RCAs on foot, horseback, or bicycles. Sometimes they include knee- or waist-high metal or Jersey barriers in front of these officers, tactical vehicles behind their corporeal lines, or fencing around hate group members that extends anywhere from six to eight feet high. In Stone Mountain, for example, a three-person-wide line of RCAs armed with batons, shotguns, and grenade launchers was set up at a seemingly arbitrary spot in the road—a place where protesters were walking around but where no hate group members were gathered. Stun grenades were set off twice, presumably to push people back from the line the RCAs had just created, even though, again, no hate group members were present in this space. Interestingly, after about forty-five minutes, the RCAs completely exited the space, indicating that the presence of a hate group is not even necessary for police to establish lines of defense or to act aggressively and preemptively against protesters on the other side—that is to say, against their "enemy."

Most of the time, however, lines of defense are established directly in front of a hate group's rally space. In Newnan, Philadelphia, Stone Mountain, Columbia, and Washington, D.C., hate groups were placed in completely fenced-in or barricaded areas, and lines of defense were further delineated by the presence of police or RCAs between hate groups and protesters. Although the creation of these lines may simply seem pragmatic, their rhetorical effect is clear. When RCAs set up lines of defense, they line up closest to those they are defending—the hate group—and they always face *outward*, toward their enemy—the public there to engage in more speech.

Lines of defense are also established by police when they work to manage the ingress and egress of hate groups at counterspeech spaces—and, again, these work to designate both enemies and confederates. Escorting hate group members in and out of counterspeech spaces creates tense moments in the field, and in these moments it becomes clear that defense of the hate group is a top priority for the police-state. Armed RCAs or other police officers form corporeal lines of defense around the hate group members as they move into their permitted area, where the fences or barricades can then "protect" them from protesters. In Columbia, for example, the neo-Nazi and Klan members were walked through the protesters' space—completely surrounded by armed officers—to their barricaded space on the statehouse steps. Although they were subjected to taunts and the occasionally thrown plastic water bottle during their ingress, the police were able to escort them safely into their barricaded

space, where they were free to display their recruitment messages and hurl their racist insults and other hate speech into the crowd of protesters. When it was time for them to exit the space, they were similarly surrounded by the RCAs, whose line of defense was clearly formed by their weapons pointed at protesters and away from the hate group members. Similar management of egress occurred in Newnan and Stone Mountain and at the Mazzoni Center, where armed police escorted groups of white supremacists and Westboro members out of counterspeech spaces, keeping them under their protection. In Newnan and Stone Mountain, egress involved escorting the neo-Nazis to their cars, which were parked on side streets that had been blocked by large dump trucks and tactical vehicles. Afterward the police, in marked squad cars, provided escorts out of town and onto the highway.

In more populated, urban settings, such as Philadelphia or Washington, D.C., egress can work a bit differently but reflects the same focus on setting up lines of defense around hate groups. In Philadelphia, for example, police established lines of defense for the rally using police officers (not RCAs) on foot and on bicycles. However, when it was time for the rally to conclude, attendees were escorted by officers in small groups (two to four people) over the course of about forty-five minutes through the Philadelphia Independence Visitor Center. They exited through a back door, where they were then left by police to find their own way, with most attempting to call taxis or ride-hailing services. What is interesting about this egress though, is that once it began mounted officers on horseback, who had not been there previously, arrived and set up lines across the street where protesters had been assembled all day. These officers were not stationed at the actual space of egress for the attendees (where other officers on foot and bicycles were managing the exit); instead, they were lined up across the street, ready to combat their enemy if needed.

Although the police-state tactics reviewed here are ostensibly deployed to protect free speech, the unique context of the counterspeech system gives rise to a complex—and problematic—tension. Police-state tactics reinforce the assumption that counterspeech spaces are composed of two equally matched sides engaged in combat. Although it frames itself as a neutral protector of free speech, through its punctuations of action it is clear that the police-state chooses one side to defend, exploding the myth of content neutrality.[21] The police-state tactics, directed and constrained by the more-speech strategy, create confederates to protect and enemies to fight—enemies that are, ironically, made up of the very people who have been tasked by the state with engaging in more speech.

As the examples in this section indicate, the enemies created through the rhetorics of the counterspeech system can and do include anyone who attempts to engage in more speech through direct confrontation in the field. However, in my experience those engaging in combative tactics, particularly antifascists, are most often singled out as enemies by the police-state.[22] Although antifascists do not often frame their operations as combating hate speech, I have included them and their tactics in this book on combating hate because antifascists are the people I have encountered most consistently in the public spaces of the counterspeech system—both before and after the 2016 election. When I first began my fieldwork, at low-attendance hate group rallies that received little to no media attention—rallies that I sometimes spent hours researching online to even find—antifascists were there to combat the hate. Once these hate speech rallies became more well attended, and in the case of Charlottesville, more violent, antifascists were there, engaging in combative tactics. However, these tactics, and antifascists in general, are often misrepresented, misunderstood, and actively distorted in the public imagination. The most obvious explanation for these misperceptions is that many people have little to no direct contact with militant antifascists—a *tactical* ignorance I hope to remedy through the research presented in this chapter. But for the purposes of this book, it is also important to understand that perceptions of antifascists and combative tactics are also distorted by a pervasive *strategic* ignorance created and maintained by the more-speech strategy.

Strategic Ignorance and Distorted Perceptions of Antifascists

Information the public receives about antifascists and the tactics they employ usually comes from media reports that show antifascists engaging in property destruction, appearing as a black bloc, or perhaps engaging in physically violent acts, such as the much-talked-about "Nazi punching" of alt-right figure Richard Spencer.[23] During the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020, for example, the NYPD commissioner claimed that antifascists were stockpiling bricks around the city to engage in looting and violence against police officers. However, a New York City council member, among others, were quick to report that the commissioner's claims were alarmist and false—noting that the piles of bricks were materials for ongoing construction projects in the city.[24] When encountering any information about "antifa," however, the public often understands it only as evidence that antifascists are violent or attention seeking.[25] In fact, at the height of the 2020 Black Lives Matter

protests, Trump claimed that antifascists were a domestic terrorist organization, furthering patently false conspiracy theories for the purpose of chilling dissent and delegitimizing Black protesters nationwide.[26] This rhetoric, when coupled with police-state tactics, constructs antifascists not just as enemies of the police in the field of combat but *as enemies of free speech itself*. This is a consequence of the strategic ignorance created by the more-speech strategy that renders combative tactics, and the people who engage them, unintelligible.

Although misperceptions of antifascists and combative tactics are common in mainstream media reports and conspiracy theories, these distortions are also evident in some of the scholarly literature. By providing a scholarly legitimacy to these distorted views of antifascists, these researchers reinforce the frame by which the public at large interprets their tactics. Scholarly literature on antifascists appears across a few disciplines, including critical and urban history, sociology, and criminology; however, very little appears to be interdisciplinary, and, surprisingly, little to no literature appears specifically in rhetorical studies. In the sociology field a special symposium appeared in early 2018 in the journal *Society*, titled "What Is Antifa?"[27] In this symposium David Pyrooz and James Densley define antifascists as a "gang" and argue that defining them this way is the best way to "deal with Antifa." Using the consensus Eurogang definition, they claim that "antifa meet gang criteria because they have a collective identity and engage in illegal violent activity." Though the authors purport to not be "passing moral judgment," they interpret antifascists' political ideology as ancillary to their identity, while interpreting their violent tactics as central to their identity. The authors rationalize this interpretation only by commenting that antifascists' presence at political rallies is "irrelevant."[28]

Such accounts both actively distort the importance of antifascists' ideological positioning and indicate the operation of strategic ignorance, since research on antifascists' extensive history of political organizing and activism has been documented by historians, journalists, and other scholars.[29] In a similarly etic fashion, Gary LaFree uses the Global Terrorism Database to analyze antifascists' actions in Charlottesville and determine if their actions constituted a terrorist event.[30] LaFree ultimately concludes that antifascists' actions in Charlottesville did not meet all the database guidelines but stresses that only one requirement was absent. The evidence LaFree provides for arguing that some of the requirements were met is derived solely from a few media accounts, including a Fox News commentary tellingly titled "Antifa Is a Domestic Terrorist Organization."[31] The difficulty with relying solely on

mainstream media reports for evidence, of course, is that many uncritically accept such accounts as apolitical, factual descriptions of reality, when in fact there are "universal misconceptions" about antifascists in the United Kingdom and the United States emanating from inaccurate media accounts.[32] This difficulty is heightened when these media accounts focus on protest activities that fall outside the more-speech strategy—as combative tactics do.

LaFree concludes his analysis by claiming that it is not surprising that antifascists' actions were not found to be terrorist because they were similar to another "non-terrorist" event in 2014 committed by two members of the Sovereign Citizens, a loosely affiliated, violent white supremacist group that the FBI, among others, have reported as engaging in domestic terrorism.[33] This incident involved two Sovereigns murdering two police officers and a bystander; draping their bodies in racist insignia, including a Nazi swastika; and announcing that they were starting "the revolution."[34] LaFree argues for the validity of this comparison between antifascists' actions in Charlottesville and the Sovereigns' terrorist murder spree by stating that "the GTD team strives to apply these inclusion rules in the exact same way in all cases and regardless of ideology." However, I would argue that equating the Sovereigns' racially motivated murders to "antifa activists [who] carried sticks, blocked entrances to the park where white supremacists planned to gather, and fought with right-wing marchers" in Charlottesville is, at best, a product of the myth of content neutrality and, at worst, a specious comparison that has important consequences for how we understand antifascists and combative tactics.[35]

It is important to consider LaFree's and Pyrooz and Densley's definitional claims within the context of the commentary that opens the *Society* symposium—a commentary that, I would argue, reflects the strategic ignorance perpetuated by the more-speech strategy, specifically through its attempts to construct a two-sides narrative. In this commentary Joe Phillips and Joseph Yi define the alt-right as a pluralist group engaged in nonviolent dialogue for social change and define antifascists as authoritarian and dangerous to democratic discourse.[36] Although the article is labeled "commentary," the authors go to great lengths to present their essay as based in rigorous, non-biased research. The evidence provided to support their definition of the alt-right comes from alt-right websites in which members describe themselves as advocating a "peaceful approach" to preserving white identity, descriptions that are not critically engaged by the authors. Such evidence would be valid for understanding how members of the alt-right understand their own identity; however, Phillips and Yi do not make this claim, concluding instead that alt-right members' rhetoric about their identity should be accepted as

the definition of the alt-right. When Phillips and Yi turn to defining anti-fascists, then, they *exclude* antifascists' self-definitions and rely only on mainstream media accounts of antifascists to create their definition. Such an asymmetrical use of evidence and unequally applied methodology seems spurious and suggests that this analysis is constrained by both a tactical and strategic ignorance.

The strategic nature of this ignorance is indicated by the fact that the authors seem to be unable to turn the information about the racially motivated violence perpetrated by members of the alt-right's variously affiliated groups into useful knowledge. Evidence of the alt-right's white nationalist and violent tendencies, including racially motivated murders and assaults, has been extensively documented, beginning as early as May 2014, and was abundantly clear in the attack on the U.S. Capitol in January 2021.[37] In 2017 organizers of the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville were charged (and some later convicted) of felony rioting statutes, conspiracy, criminal assault, malicious wounding, and, in the case of James Fields Jr., violation of federal hate crimes statutes and first-degree murder.[38] In addition, a civil action was filed against alt-right organizers in which Charlottesville residents have accused them of "conspiracy to foster racial hatred, and . . . plotting to deprive them of their civil rights by encouraging their followers to arm themselves and partake in violence."[39] Phillips and Yi, however, ignore this information as well as the SPLC and Anti-Defamation League consensus, mentioned in the introduction, that the alt-right is a violent form of white supremacy, indicating that this strategic ignorance pervades not only the popular press but also some of the scholarly literature on antifascists.

However, research on the historical and transnational contexts of anti-fascist organizing challenges the tactical and strategic ignorance about anti-fascists and their tactics by providing historical and contextual grounding for understanding antifascists and their more militant tactics.[40] Similarly, research based in interviews with antifascists across global borders concludes that antifascism can be understood as "a method of politics, a locus of individual and group self-identification, and a transnational movement that adapted preexisting socialist, anarchist, and communist currents to a sudden need to react to the fascist menace."[41] Such research leads to the conclusion that "anti-fascism is far too variegated and ideologically-driven a phenomenon to collapse under a common definition and understanding of 'gangs.'"[42]

Moreover, despite what is most often portrayed in mainstream media accounts, antifascists do not exclusively engage in militant or combative

tactics. Most people combating hate utilize different tactics depending on the contexts in which they find themselves. Determining what tactics will be effective in a given context requires extensive research, a hallmark of any successful activism, including antifascist activism. Kim Kelly argues that "Research is like the anti-fascist version of watching TV. . . . You research what new Nazi groups are there, what are they about, do they have militias, have they violently attacked anyone . . . because you want your family and friends to be safe."[43] This research is then disseminated to warn communities about possible threats in their neighborhoods or places of work—a tactic known as doxing. Although a controversial, and sometimes misunderstood, practice within antifascist organizing, doxing is a direct action tactic that involves posting information about a fascist, racist, or otherwise dangerous person online or in neighborhoods to alert communities to the threat. Doxing can also involve calling the person's employer with similar information. The purpose of this type of doxing is to warn the community but also to encourage community members to reject the person's hate speech or unethical behavior. Antifascists engage in doxing to expose individual threats to the judgment of their communities, holding them accountable to the community's ethical standards and to dispossess them of the privilege of community support.

With regard to the physical spaces of activism, research is also an integral tactic for antifascists.[44] "There is far more to the movement that readily meets the eye," Kelly writes. "Those few hours on the streets [at the Unite the Right 2 rally in Washington, D.C.] are outweighed by the days and months invested in surveillance and information gathering (to say nothing of flyering, wheatpasting, tearing down fascist propaganda, monitoring local bars, fundraising, jail support, self-defence skillshares, child care . . .). As activists emphasize, there are so many other tactics involved in this work." Despite the failure of Unite the Right 2 rally, "the media launched into its predictable 'violent antifa' narrative, with no mention of the way our [antifascists'] years of careful and strategic organizing have contributed to the downfall of the alt-right."[45] The research and community organizing involved in antifascism are often, if not always, overlooked in mainstream media accounts, as well as in some of the academic literature.

Clearly, antifascists do not eschew nonviolent tactics in all of their work, despite the strategic ignorance that prevents some scholars, the mainstream media, and the general public from accounting for their multimodal activism. Like many of the other activists working to combat hate, they do not focus on any one tactic: "Anti-fascists conduct research on the Far Right

online, in person, and sometimes through infiltration; they dox them, push cultural milieux to disown them, pressure bosses to fire them, and demand that venues cancel their shows, conferences, and meetings; they organize educational events, readings groups, trainings, athletic tournaments, and fund-raisers; they write articles, leaflets, and newspapers, drop banners, and make videos; they support refugees and immigrants, defend reproductive rights, and stand up against police brutality." All these tactics indicate a focus on a number of different social justice issues, and some of them even fall within persuasive-dialogic and nonviolent confrontational tactics. Mark Bray writes, "In fact, the vast majority [of antifascists] would rather devote their time to these productive activities than have to risk their safety and well-being to confront dangerous neo-Nazis and white supremacists."[46] A commitment to persuasive-dialogic and nonviolent confrontational tactics, when contextually appropriate, not only indicates that antifascists should not be understood as gangs or terrorists, but also points to their commitment to building communities based in principles of equality, justice, and freedom.

It should not be inferred from these descriptions of antifascists that the staunch differences in understanding them and their combative tactics are simply the result of paradigmatic, or even ideological, disagreements among different scholars. Definitional disputes, such as these, are important and are often at the heart of scholarly argument and in broader, public struggles over meaning. Definitional claims—such as "antifa is a gang" or "antifa are terrorists"—are indicative of both a tactical and strategic ignorance that prevents us from understanding the effectiveness and ethics of a multiplicity of tactics deployed in the fight against hate. These definitions are prescriptive, especially those that have the credibility and weight of the academy.

The inability or unwillingness to accept the substantial amount of research and publicly available information on antifascists, I believe, is indicative of the need to challenge the tactical and strategic ignorance of the more-speech strategy. This ignorance is not only distorting our interpretations of the nature and tactics of antifascism but is also preventing us from turning this information into knowledge useful for combating hate. In the next section, therefore, I attempt to begin such a conversation by offering an account of the combative tactics I have encountered in my fieldwork. This research can be particularly useful for combating the tactical ignorance surrounding these tactics. Moreover, this account of combative tactics also challenges the strategic ignorance produced by the more-speech strategy—a strategic ignorance that limits our understandings of combative tactics themselves, as well as our ability to envision and enact more effective strategies for combating hate.

The Indirect Approach to Combating Hate

An understanding of combative tactics must begin from a recognition that these tactics do *not* operate within the logics of the more-speech strategy. In other words, combative tactics appear in the *spaces* of the counterspeech system, but they are not *more-speech* tactics. Making this distinction allows us to grasp the unique aim and effectiveness of combative tactics as a strategic innovation. Therefore, in what follows I begin by reviewing the specific ways in which combative tactics differ from more-speech tactics, which ultimately enables us to recognize their unique potential for combating hate in our current moment.

First, and foremost, the term *combative* is indicative of how antifascists approach the field in which they engage, as well as some of the publics within it.[47] As with the field constructed through police-state tactics, combative tactics rhetorically construct a field where comrades must be protected and enemies fought. For antifascists, though, these enemies include both hate groups and the police-state. Further, these enemies should not simply be confronted with more speech but should instead be combated directly. The term *combative* also indicates a second way that these tactics differ from the more-speech tactics of the counterspeech system: unlike many activists working within the counterspeech system, antifascists argue that their tactics are not working to combat *hate speech* per se. Although antifascists would agree that hate speech is harmful, they would also argue that "hate" is *not* what they are combating. The term *hate*, some argue, depoliticizes the ideological nature of gender-based or racially motivated violence and can have the unintended effect of locating the source of this violence in an individual perpetrator's opinions or emotions. For example, if we understand Dylann Roof as murdering people out of his "hate" for them, then his act becomes that of a single, troubled individual. This characterization makes it difficult to situate his actions within larger discourses of white supremacy, nationalism, or fascism, thereby limiting strategic solutions for preventing such acts of violence.

Moreover, antifascists reject the idea that they are simply combating hate *speech*. Antifascists, the majority of whom are antiauthoritarian, reject the idea that a right to free speech is something given to the people by the state. Thus, framing the issue—as the counterspeech system does—as an issue of protecting hate speech from state infringement is something they find to be illegitimate, particularly because it is based in the tenets of liberal political theory. "Much of the antifa reluctance to engage with this issue stems from their rejection of the classical liberal terms of debate that limit political questions

about personal and group expression to the confines of legalistic rights-based discourse," Bray says. "For liberals, the prime question is the status of the free speech rights of fascists. For revolutionary socialist antifa, the prime question is the political struggle against fascism."[48] Antifascists' rejection of some tenets of liberal political theory is, of course, in keeping with their rejection of the more-speech strategy, which is constrained by the same logics. These logics are apparent in the more-speech strategy that reduces hate speech to the mere expression of an individual political opinion. Antifascists challenge this logic because it deflects understandings of how hate speech works to construct and reinforce other oppressive meaning systems (e.g., white supremacy).

As a result, antifascists recognize that hate speech is not, in fact, a tactic aligned with the more-speech strategy—it is not simply a type of political speech used to fulfill the ends of democracy. Instead, *hate speech is an expression of a very different strategy*—one antifascists characterize as fascist. Understood in this way, hate speech is a public organizing tactic used to fulfill the ends of a fascist strategy. It is, in other words, less a form of (hateful) expression than a *tactic* used to recruit more members into their ranks and to intimidate minoritized targets so that they do not engage in their own free speech—a very antidemocratic (i.e., fascist) consequence.

Hate group recruitment, facilitated by hate speech, was evident in Columbia, where I witnessed a young man walking around the grounds alone throughout the day with a large Confederate flag, throwing up an occasional Nazi salute. It did not appear that he was affiliated with a particular group, because he did not arrive with the Klan and neo-Nazis gathered there. However, once these groups arrived, this man appeared to ask permission to join them behind the police lines on their platform and then began shaking hands with and introducing himself to the Klansmen and neo-Nazis. A *New York Times* report on the Columbia rally recounts a similar recruitment effect of hate group rallies:

> Some of the white people who circulated in the crowd before the Klan rally said they were drawn to the protests by a blend of curiosity and support for preserving Southern history. "We're not allowed to have this as a heritage," Jerry Anderson, a 49-year-old white man who drove here from northwest Georgia, said as he gestured toward another man's Confederate battle flag. "But they [Black people] can fly theirs [Pan-African flag], and they can say what they want to, and it's O.K." Mr. Anderson said he had never attended a Klan event, adding: "I've never had a reason to go to one. But they take that away and holler that we're the racists, so, yeah, I'm here."

Anderson would have little difficulty finding his next event, as the Klan/neo-Nazi banner displayed on the statehouse steps that day included a website and phone number to call for more information. As these anecdotes make clear, these rallies are important recruiting tools. And the hate speech espoused there, as is evident in these examples, functions as a tactic, not to engage in political speech to fulfill the ends of democracy but to fulfill the ends of a fascist strategy. This is why antifascists frame what they do as targeting "fascist *organizing* not fascist *speech*."[49]

For antifascists, then, operating within the constraints of the more-speech strategy is too limiting because it does not allow them to combat a fascist strategy. Working within the parameters of the more-speech strategy means fighting one tactic (hate speech) with another equally matched tactic (more speech). Within the context of war, battles are often fought at this tactical level—person versus person, gun versus gun. Sometimes tactical innovations can lead to victory in battle, as when the tank improved the chance of victory simply by virtue of its being a tactical innovation over the gun. Similarly, within the context of the counterspeech system, battles are also often fought at a tactical level—hate speech versus more speech. Sometimes a tactical innovation such as an Angel Action can occur and win a particular hate speech battle by virtue of its being a tactical innovation over persuasion or quarantine. However, in each of these examples, the strategies (of war, fascism, or more speech) remain largely intact—we are only fighting tactics with tactics.

However, Wilden is clear that "you cannot beat strategy with tactics"; instead, "what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy."[50] Antifascists, I argue, seek to combat the fascist *strategy*, of which hate speech is simply one tactic.[51] We might win some hate speech battles with tactical innovations and even address some aspects of the more-speech strategy that way, but "tactical victories cannot prevent strategic defeats."[52] Antifascists, therefore, attack fascist strategy, not just hate speech tactics. Thus, by focusing on how they frame their operations and the combative tactics that they deploy, we can see how these tactics constitute a strategic innovation through what Wilden calls an indirect approach—since they work to both combat the fascist strategy and envelop the more-speech strategy.

First, antifascists frame their operations according to a central ethical and ideological justification: self-defense. In fact, antifascists often explicitly state that "anti-fascism *is* self-defense."[53] When combative tactics are framed within the more-speech strategy, they become distorted, obscuring any cultural legibility—they are legible only as indiscriminate violence or as attention seeking. Understanding combative tactics within the self-defense frame,

however, allows us to overcome this strategic ignorance about antifascists and the punctuations of action they often deploy in the field.[54]

Self-defense, as a grand tactic, includes not only the protection of an individual person from harm but also the defense of others—including protecting targeted groups and the larger community from the fascist organizing that can lead to large-scale violence. As Bray argues, "Anti-fascists challenge conventional interpretations of self-defense grounded in individualist personal ethics by legitimating offensive tactics in order to forestall the potential need for a literal self-defense down the line." Self-defense, in this formulation, means taking a *proactive* stance against fascist organizing on a small scale—stopping it before it again becomes a large-scale threat to communities and the world. According to one antifascist, "You fight them by writing letters and making phone calls so you don't have to fight them with fists. You fight them with fists so you don't have to fight them with knives. You fight them with knives so you don't have to fight them with guns. You fight them with guns so you don't have to fight them with tanks."[55] In other words, central to this framing is the contention that taking a proactive position against hate speech is important for preventing its recruitment effects from blossoming into a full-scale implementation of fascism. This represents an important distinction, I would emphasize, between combative tactics and the more-speech tactics available for combating hate. The more-speech strategy limits the public to *reactive* tactics only—reacting to hate speech with more speech. Combative tactics, on the other hand, take a *proactive* stance against hate speech—attempting to combat it *before* it is uttered and before it can escalate into fascist violence.

Such a proactive stance constitutes an indirect approach to fighting at a strategic level. Guerilla warfare is an example of an indirect approach, as troops engage in tactical attacks *not* "against the enemy's main strength or weakness, but against his [*sic*] most accessible material."[56] Taking an indirect approach to fighting the fascist strategy, similarly, does not mean attacking fascism once it has become a strong, entrenched political system; instead, it involves attacking hate speech, the most accessible material of fascist organizing. This constitutes an indirect attack on fascist strategy. In this view attacking fascism indirectly, through a proactive attack on hate speech, helps prevent fascism from growing and becoming something one must fight on a large scale, as in World War II. This combat occurs not in one grand battle but in small-scale, sustained attacks on the fascist strategy. This is why even the smallest, most poorly attended hate group rallies I observed were always met with a contingent of antifascist activists who engaged not in reactive, more-speech tactics but in sustained action against a fascist strategy.

Combative Tactics

Grasping the full implications of this point requires a more sustained attention to the nature and deployment of combative tactics. Detailed articulations of the self-defense framing and its connection to the approaches and punctuations of action of combative tactics are summarized in figure 5.

As the figure shows, the combative tactics I have observed are characterized by two interrelated approaches within the self-defense frame: deplatforming and community protection. In the public spaces of the counterspeech system, deplatforming can involve physically blocking access to a rally site or engaging in property destruction.[57] Community protection, relatedly, involves ensuring a physical presence in or a patrolling of public spaces and, in some cases, physical violence against enemies. By attending more fully to these punctuations of action, we are able to move past the distorted interpretations of combative tactics and better recognize the indirect approach to attacking fascist strategy—as well as the more-speech
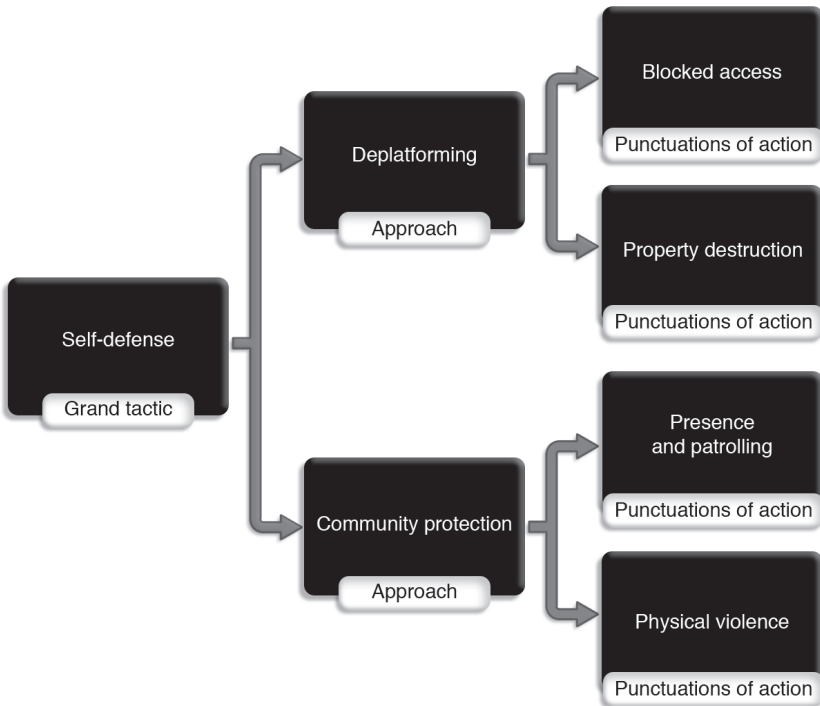
Fig. 5   Combative Tactics

strategy. I begin with the first kind of self-defense enacted by antifascists: deplatforming.

Deplatforming

For antifascists one of the best ways to engage in self-defense—including defense of self, others, and the larger community—is to defend against the spread of fascism through deplatforming. Antifascist organizing "differentiates itself by direct engagement with fascists in the streets, fighting over 'contested spaces,' and using a 'no platform' strategy."[58] Although the police-state claims to be neutral in its protection of speech, when it protects hate speech and hate group rallies, it is, in effect, providing a *platform* for those hate groups to organize publicly and spread their messages. As John Herrman writes, "To provide a platform is to share power, to convey legitimacy and to amplify voices. . . . A platform is a system that enables other systems."[59] By providing a public space, or platform, for hate groups to have rallies, the police-state is allowing such groups to garner the benefits of their protection while they organize, recruit new followers, intimidate minoritized people, and embolden one another and their ideology. In other words, the platform provided by the counterspeech system allows hate groups to share the power of the police-state, conveys legitimacy on their hate speech as a valid form of political speech, facilitates their recruitment efforts, and, as a result, enables fascist organizing.

Therefore, to defend against the spread of hate speech and eventual fascist violence, antifascists engage in combative tactics to deplatform such speech.[60] One punctuation of action engaged to accomplish this is the physical blocking of access to a hate speech rally space. In the contested spaces created by hate group rallies, antifascists often block access by creating a black bloc to deplatform the rally before it begins. A black bloc is formed when antifascists, usually dressed in all black clothing, work together and use their bodies to physically block hate group members from entering the rally site. This tactic has been used successfully at a number of different types of protests, including protests against the World Trade Organization in Seattle in 1999, where protesters linked their arms together with long pipes, chains, and locks and effectively shut down the delegates' meetings.[61] Within a counterspeech space, such as at the Columbia action, I witnessed activists attempt to block Klansmen's and neo-Nazis' access to the statehouse steps with their bodies. This worked at first, by forcing the hate group's police escort to divert to a different ingress point on the statehouse grounds, but eventually the police and hate

group were successful in accessing the rally site. In Stone Mountain, where most hate group members accessed the space by car instead of on foot, activists placed fallen branches and rocks across one of the access roads leading into the rally space. Blocking access in this way is a nonviolent, though still physical, punctuation of action intended to attack the enemies' most accessible material—their state-protected hate speech platform.

Moreover, antifascists engage in property destruction as a deplatforming punctuation of action, both before and during a hate group rally. Property destruction involves tearing down police barricades, smashing windows, setting small fires, or other property damage that is not directed at people. In counterspeech spaces I have observed antifascists engage in property destruction in a few different ways: setting off fireworks, lighting trash cans on fire, breaking windows, and spray-painting buildings or monuments. Although often framed by the media and some scholars as an attention-seeking ploy, property destruction is actually a tactical maneuver that attempts to cause extensive disruptions in the counterspeech space. The purpose of property destruction may be, to some extent, to make a rhetorical statement against an authoritarian symbol—such as the spray-painting of the Confederate monuments in Columbia. However, my fieldwork reveals that this tactic's key purpose, in a counterspeech space, is to cause such a disruption that the hate group rally cannot proceed—deplatforming it and preventing further hate speech and, by extension, fascist organizing.

These deplatforming efforts are not always fully understood by the police-state, other protesters, media professionals, or scholars and are often critiqued as a form of the heckler's veto. The heckler's veto is commonly understood as any attempt by protesters to disrupt or interrupt speakers to the point they cannot continue their speech. But, legally speaking, a heckler's veto occurs only when the *police-state* preemptively shuts down an event because of the *threat* of hecklers; it has been deemed unconstitutional for the *state* to preemptively shut down an event for this reason.[62] In fact, preventing a heckler's veto is the ostensible reason why police are deployed in public spaces of protest. Those who reject deplatforming as an unethical tactic, as a consequence, often erroneously equate it with a heckler's veto and then, predictably, argue for more speech in the face of hate.[63]

However, antifascists do not destroy property to get the *police-state* to preemptively shut down a hate speech rally. Instead, antifascists understand deplatforming as a tactic of self-defense that protects communities from hate speech in ways that the police-state refuses to do. Antifascists know the state is bound by the more-speech strategy (i.e., the constitutional restraint on the

heckler's veto), so they provide for their own and the community's defense by blocking access to the hate groups' state-provided platforms. Put simply, the self-defense frame means that the responsibility for combating hate rests with the people—that communities must protect themselves, not through reactive more speech or through the state, but through proactive deplatforming that stops hate speech before it ushers in something worse. This is why antifascists often say, "we protect us," because they believe that the police-state has not and will not defend the community.

Those who critique deplatforming tactics tend to resort to the same more-speech arguments reviewed in chapter 1—that the best way to combat hate speech is to allow it and then engage in more speech as a form of rebuttal. Antifascists, however, do not operate within this more-speech logic, nor do they accept the premise that the police-state is simply a neutral protector of such speech. Such a premise requires assuming that we live in a "pristine state of free speech safeguarded by the American government"—that the government has historically protected all speech equally.[64] Instead, as demonstrated earlier, the police-state actively works to protect hate groups so they can access their state-sponsored platform, while arresting and using excessive force against other protesters. Sethi argues that "communities must ultimately decide what will keep them safe. They cannot necessarily look to the state and its institutions as a solution, because much of the violence they endure comes at the hands of the state. Instead, community groups must consider to what degree they can complement, supplement, or even replace traditional law enforcement, or, in some cases, serve as a defense against them."[65] Thus, antifascists justify *community* deplatforming as an ethical approach necessary for protecting people from a violent and oppressive system that has historically posed a threat to minoritized people and to freedom itself worldwide.

Community Protection

This commitment to self-defense extends into a second approach in the public spaces of the counterspeech system—community protection. Although deplatforming is a type of community protection, in this section I focus more specifically on two punctuations of action I have observed when preemptive deplatforming tactics have not been immediately successful. An antifascist, Walter Tull, explains that "the job of the anti-fascist is to make [fascists] too afraid to act publicly."[66] Therefore, the first punctuation of action that attempts to intimidate hate group members while providing protection is what I call "presence and patrol." This action can be closely related to a second—physical

violence—a punctuation often associated with antifascists, but, I argue, one also distorted within and by the counterspeech system.

First, presence and patrol involves the physical presence and protection by an entire black bloc, or smaller group of antifascists, in public spaces. During a hate group rally, hate group members often seek to infiltrate oppositional spaces in an attempt to surveil protesters, videotaping or photographing them to dox or harass them or their families later. This is one of the reasons antifascists cover their faces in public protest spaces—as a safety precaution against hate group members' surveillance.[67] I witnessed this type of surveillance in Newnan, Philadelphia, Stone Mountain, and Washington, D.C. Antifascists, in response, formed black blocs in these spaces to protect protesters from the hate group's surveillance. This can work in a couple of ways. First, antifascists may use umbrellas, flags, or their bodies to block cameras and shield unmasked protesters from having their image recorded. Second, the black bloc can work to draw attention to itself, drawing the attention of hate group members onto themselves and working to intimidate through a show of numbers and strength.

Hate group members, at times, also work as provocateurs in counterspeech spaces, instigating physical violence to have protesters arrested or, in some cases, to record the fight for distribution on social and traditional media. These recordings are usually used by hate groups in two ways. First, they may be used in lawsuits against police departments for allegedly failing to protect the hate group members' free speech—a tactic Westboro uses to fund their operations.[68] Or, second, the recordings may be used to provide acontextual "evidence" to further the "violent antifa" narrative so readily accepted in mainstream discourse.[69] Appearing as a black bloc in such spaces creates an intimidating presence that can work to deter hate group members from entering the space at all or, at the very least, refrain from instigating violence against protesters. The show of strength that a black bloc demonstrates can also serve to draw the ire of hate group members onto it and away from other protesters, as occurred in Charlottesville.

In addition to larger black blocs, I have observed antifascists patrolling counterspeech spaces in small groups or pairs, monitoring for provocateurs. Because of their extensive research, antifascists can often identify such provocateurs by sight and then alert protesters to their presence. This patrolling is often necessary, since police do not protect protesters from surveillance or harassment in these spaces, responding reactively only if a physical fight breaks out. In Stone Mountain, for example, antifascists singled out a couple who entered the oppositional protest space and identified them as

participants in the white supremacist rally. A small group of antifascists surrounded the couple (who did not deny the accusations), yelling at them until they left the space. Antifascists followed the couple until they were deemed to be a safe-enough distance away from the protest space. Police observed the interaction but did not intervene.

Patrolling public spaces is particularly important at the conclusion of a hate group rally, when tensions among police, protesters, hate group members, and the public are high. Dangerous situations can manifest quickly at the conclusion of a rally, depending on the police's tactics for managing the hate group's egress. For example, in Columbia the police ended the Klan and neo-Nazi rally ahead of schedule (because of successful deplatforming tactics, I would argue) and escorted the rally-goers through the oppositional protest space. Many protesters (including, but not limited to, antifascists) patrolled this egress area, and at this point numerous violent encounters ensued. In this instance police did arrest a Klansman brandishing a knife at a group of Black protesters and broke up numerous other fights. However, this street fighting should not be understood as random violence instigated indiscriminately by antifascists. Instead, such patrolling, presence, and physical violence should be understood as a form of community protection.

In an interview with researcher Mark Bray, Tull expanded on the nature of the antifascist's job and explained that it includes acting "as volunteer targets for their [fascists'] hate and attacks which might keep them from thinking about burning down the mosque in their neighborhood."[70] This suggests that acting as volunteer targets is a common tactic of community protection deployed by antifascists.[71] In my experience the end of a rally is when hate group members are most energized and emboldened and when they are most likely to engage in violence against minoritized targets (as happened in Columbia). Therefore, antifascists patrol those spaces to physically defend minoritized community members or other protesters from anticipated violence. I have witnessed this patrolling of egress spaces at most, if not all, of the rallies I have attended. In Philadelphia, for example, antifascists patrolled the area around the Independence Visitor Center when it was clear that police were escorting rally-goers through the Center and onto Sixth Street, far from the oppositional protesters gathered near the Liberty Bell. As these rally-goers then attempted to hail rideshares and taxis, they were met with small groups of antifascists warning the drivers about the people they were about to pick up. The drivers then refused the fares and drove away.[72] Although no physical violence occurred in that particular space, antifascists were there to warn drivers and to act as volunteer targets if necessary.

The effectiveness of this tactic, of acting as volunteer targets, can be seen most clearly in the rise of "anti-Antifa" organizing in the United States in the past few years. Hate groups and neofascists have increasingly begun to hold rallies ostensibly to express their disdain for leftist ideas while actually engaging in a number of well-publicized violent attacks on both community members and antifascists. For example, members of the Proud Boys and Patriot Prayer have attacked antifascists in New York and Portland, respectively.[73] These groups have also organized rallies specifically targeting anti-fascists.[74] Becoming volunteer targets for fascist ire and violence is a tactic of community protection, but it also works as an indirect approach for disrupting fascist organizing. If a fascist strategy involves engaging in violence against minoritized groups (through individuals or large-scale fascist systems), then taking violence on oneself causes these groups to shift their strategy—toward organizing against and fighting *antifascists*.

However, the commitment to community protection, since it also generates threats to their individual safety, requires that antifascists are willing to engage in punctuations of action that include physical violence against enemies. This is, of course, the punctuation of action most often associated with antifascists, and it is typically condemned. Yet, I suggest, physical violence—such as the fighting that may occur at the conclusion of rally or the street fighting that transforms one into a volunteer target—can be understood differently by returning to the self-defense framing central to combative tactics. Antifascists provide a justification for such acts of violence because hate groups are under the state's protection and, as discussed earlier, because antifascists are perceived as enemies of the police-state. Thus, for antifascists, acts of violence may be necessary if the community is to be adequately protected. Their justification for physical violence is notable since, in general, most people accept the use of violence as ethically sound when used to protect the self or others or even to "protect freedom."

Although physical violence is possibly the most difficult tactic to defend to those committed to a nonviolent approach, this tactic should not be read simply as random, indiscriminate violence. On the contrary, combative tactics do not include violence for violence's sake. Instead, the ethical and ideological justifications provided by antifascists are revealing of their commitment to defeating fascism and not simply violence enacted because they "hate free speech."

A willingness to engage in community protection requires a great deal of research, training, and education. Antifascists' careful preparation and skillful direction were even acknowledged by police in Charlottesville, as reported

in an independent review of the events: "Law enforcement personnel immediately noticed Antifa's sophisticated level of organization. Lieutenant Hatter observed that Antifa coordinated with local activists, had logistics and medical support, and figured out the Klan's entrance location to the park. Lieutenant O'Donnell characterized Antifa as 'very organized' and totally coordinated."[75] Antifascists' understanding of hate speech as a tactic of fascist strategy, combined with their ethical justifications and extensive preparation, allow them to determine when the use of combative tactics is required. Understanding this context allows us to see how antifascists can be effective in combating fascist organizing despite, at times, suffering tactical defeats.

Combating the Fascist Strategy

Although combative tactics work to protect protesters and communities in the public spaces of the counterspeech system, they do not always "win" *hate speech* battles, especially considering the sheer number of police officers and militarized riot control agents protecting hate groups. But winning hate speech battles by engaging in more speech is not antifascists' goal, nor is it how we should understand their effectiveness in combating the fascist strategy. Instead, we should understand that "if one's strategy is right, tactical defeats do not necessarily prevent strategic success. . . . Here we are reminded . . . not to confuse the tactics of short-range survival with the grand strategy of long-range survival."[76] That is to say, unlike those publics working within the more-speech strategy, antifascists are not concerned with winning hate speech battles by presenting better arguments than hate groups. Instead, antifascists reject the more-speech strategy and its framing, working instead to combat fascist strategy. As Bray argues, "Rather than buying into the liberal notion that all political 'opinions' are equal, anti-fascists unabashedly attack the legitimacy of fascism and institutions that support it."[77] Attacking the fascist strategy, in this view, is what ensures long-range survival.

Antifascists' success in working toward long-range survival by combating hate group organizing in public spaces is evidenced by the failure of Unite the Right 2, the embarrassingly poorly attended neo-Nazi rally in Newnan (which was expected to be the "next Charlottesville") and the cancellation of a number of alt-right events due to low attendance and a leadership vacuum among white supremacist groups.[78] Many are quick to attribute the decrease in alt-right and hate group public organizing to anything other than antifascists' efforts—except, notably, Richard Spencer, who publicly lamented

that "Antifa is winning."[79] The distortion of antifascists' success in achieving the long-range goal of limiting fascist organizing is indicative of the continued prevalence of the strategic ignorance created by the more-speech strategy. What the analysis here reveals, though, is that winning individual hate speech battles by engaging in more speech is not the most effective way to combat hate at a strategic level. In fact, because combative tactics constitute a strategic innovation, they disrupt not only the *fascist* strategy but also the *more-speech* strategy. In the final section of this chapter, then, I explore how combative tactics work to envelop the more-speech strategy, creating a new context for combating hate—one that challenges more-speech logics and, subsequently, enables us to act more effectively.

Strategic Envelopment of the More-Speech Strategy

Although dominant systems, such as the counterspeech system, constrain our ability to combat hate, such systems are not determinant—they can be challenged. In any hierarchy higher levels usually constrain lower levels—that is, strategies constrain tactics. But under certain conditions "innovations at the level of the messages (tactics) can be projected into the level of the code (strategy). . . . The innovation breaks through the constraints of the existing code (or codes) and restructures it, making radically new messages possible."[80] In other words, what is often needed to win a war is not just a tactical innovation, like the confrontational tactics discussed in chapter 2, but a *strategic* innovation that makes radically new systems possible.

At its most basic a strategic innovation occurs when tactics intervene at the level of the code—when they move beyond a tactical level and create transformations at a strategic level. Strategic innovations can work in a number of different ways, but one way, called a "strategic envelopment," involves encircling a strategy and making it obsolete. For example, in World War II the Germans recognized how their development of blitzkrieg as a new tactic enabled a strategic envelopment that would make the enemy's familiar strategies obsolete. Beyond just a new tactical deployment of the tank, then, blitzkrieg represented a strategic innovation that completely enveloped other strategies of war, such as trench warfare or hand-to-hand combat. In other words, blitzkrieg created an entirely new context for engaging in war.[81] Similarly, the combative tactics deployed by antifascists operate as a strategic envelopment, one that encircles and makes obsolete the more-speech strategy by creating a new context for combating hate.

Revolutionary new contexts in society are often brought about through strategic innovations, but they "do not come about until they are called for, until conditions make them necessary."[82] When I began this project, I was focused on what more-speech looked like in our then-current moment. The counterspeech system, at that time, seemed a sufficient one for addressing hate speech, and I, in my own strategic ignorance, saw no reason to question its logic. However, as I witnessed the rise in hate group and fascist organizing, overt hate speech espoused in the highest levels of our political systems, and finally the very public resurgence of fascist rhetoric and violence, it became clear that a strategic innovation was necessary. The familiar more-speech tactics, I realized, were not enough—and other solutions were unimaginable, without moving beyond the confines of the counterspeech system. This, I argue, is why combative tactics are strategic innovations, because they reveal the logic that hate speech is a tactic of fascist strategy, not a tactic simply working within the more-speech strategy. Combative tactics reveal the obsolescence of the more-speech strategy, paving the way for us to see tactics, such as deplatforming, obscured by the counterspeech system.

Furthermore, combative tactics create a new context for combating hate by rupturing the central logic of the more-speech strategy—that we are engaged in an equally matched, two-sides political debate in which each side is aligned to a democratic end, with the police-state serving as the neutral protector of this deliberative contest. Instead, combative tactics rupture this logic by refusing to engage in this "debate" at all, arguing that hate groups and the police-state are enemies to be combated, not interlocutors to dialogue with or persuade.

Although antifascists may engage in dialogue or persuasion with certain audiences, they engage in combat with their "enemies." Ethically, antifascists argue, one does not dialogue with hate groups and fascists, because dialogue requires mutual respect. To engage in dialogue with this enemy is to accept, at least partially, that hate speech or fascism is something to dialogue about or respect as an equally valid worldview. They similarly reject persuasion because it would involve accepting the more-speech logic that fascism is simply one side of an ideological debate—an ideology whose legitimacy could be established through effective persuasion. Antifascists reject this logic as ideologically and ethically unsound because a fascist strategy, as well as the hate speech that enables it, rejects the humanity and threatens the safety of everyone who does not fit within a specific, nationalistic framework. Antifascists argue that "far-right groups don't actually want dialogue. They aim to spread paranoia to escalate the ongoing violence against marginalized people."[83] Enemies who promote such a worldview are not themselves open

to dialogue or persuasion, and so antifascists are not interested in attempting to win them over with more speech. Instead, they communicate a definitive no with regard to fascism and hate—specifically, "No. Never again."

In rhetorical studies our traditional understanding of dissent, which I would equate with confrontational tactics, is instructive here. "Dissent means advancing a significant difference of opinion or expressing a substantial disagreement *without making a complete break* with the prevailing viewpoint. It is a minority voice raised in a rhetorical act of *limited* nonconformity," Robert Ivie argues. "It is a transgression that aims to destabilize a prevailing mindset more or less to allow for some degree of *revision* sooner or later. It puts differences into play, *short of treating adversaries as enemies*."[84] In other words, when various publics engage in confrontational tactics, they abide by the logic that all members of the public and the state are ultimately working toward the same goal. Although they are confronting hate groups and may even dissent against the state, they do not make a complete break with the prevailing viewpoint that confronting hate is simply an adversarial, two-sides process with the police-state acting as a neutral party. Although combative tactics are similar to confrontational tactics in their rejection of persuasion and dialogue with hate groups, they are not synonymous with confrontational tactics because they are not combating *only* hate groups. Instead, reflecting their punctuations of action, they are also combating the police-state that enables and platforms these groups and their messages. Those engaging in combative tactics, as a result, make a complete break with the police-state and this more-speech strategy.

This break creates a new context and makes radically new messages and tactics possible—tactics that, I suggest, are illegible if we remain within the constraints of the more-speech strategy. In other words, antifascists do not accept the police-state's claims of neutrality in the counterspeech context. They argue instead that the state is, at best, indifferent to the harm of fascist organizing—and, at worst, an active enabler of fascism through its protection of hate speech. Thus, antifascists understand the police-state in a new context—as part of the fascist strategy and therefore as another enemy to be combated. Combative tactics, specifically those that involve violence, thus reveal a radically new message that says we cannot depend on the state to use its monopoly on violence to combat fascism. In fact, combative tactics are deemed necessary precisely because the police-state uses its power and monopoly on violence to platform the hate speech that leads to fascism.

Moreover, when an enemy possesses superior military technology and might, confrontational tactics alone may not be the most effective tactic for combating such an enemy. Instead, those engaging in combative tactics

work to envelop the enemy's (i.e., the state's) strategy. In fact, Wilden argues that the indirect approach is the most effective way to envelop the strategy of a militarily superior enemy. Applied to the context of the counterspeech system, combative tactics work to rupture the taken-for-granted assumption that the police-state is neutral and uses its monopoly on violence to work toward a democratic goal. Instead, antifascists place them squarely within the fascist strategy—rupturing this meaning structure by chanting, "Cops and Klan go hand-in-hand" and "Who do you serve? Who do you protect?"[85] Antifascists' ideological commitment to fighting fascist strategy, including its protectors, is coupled with a strategic flexibility, allowing them to work outside of the constraints of the more-speech strategy. The result of such a rupture and new context "is a revaluation of all values."[86] As discussed in chapter 1, critical race scholars have often called for such a revaluation when it comes to regulating hate speech; the defeatism generated by the counter-speech system, however, has frustrated any efforts to place other values on par with or above free speech. What context theory allows us to see, then, is how combative tactics can create a revaluation of democratic values—equality, community security, freedom of access, and freedom from oppression—in addition to, and *as much as,* freedom of speech.

Finally, antifascists' rejection of the more-speech strategy has the potential to make those committed to combating hate engage differently—not simply through deploying familiar, or even new, more-speech *tactics* but by enabling all publics to become *strategists.* Wilden calls this the "Democratic Rule":

The Democratic Rule: Everyone a strategist.

This contrasts with the Colonial Rule:

The Colonial Rule: Teach tactics only . . . ; make strategy, and indeed the very idea of strategy, a secret never to be revealed.[87]

It is through this Democratic Rule that we can work to mediate a revolutionary change. Such a transformation, I argue in the next chapter, can be mediated by the insights produced through rhetorical field methods coupled with a scholar-activist approach—allowing us to move past the "tactics only" constraints of the counterspeech system to all become strategists, allied in our fight against hate.

4

ALLIED TACTICS

Our people have made the mistake of confusing the methods with the
objectives. As long as we agree on objectives, we should never fall out
with each other just because we believe in different methods or tactics or
strategy to reach a common objective.

—Malcolm X

As detailed in chapters 2 and 3, counterspeech spaces include a diverse array
of publics, audiences, messages, and tactics, including persuasive-dialogic,
confrontational, and combative approaches. Such a diversity, inevitably, leads
to competing ideas about the effectiveness and ethicality of certain tactics
and strategies among these publics. However, if we are to enact the "Demo-
cratic Rule" and all become strategists in our fight against hate, then we
must be able to ally these divergent tactics, as they will surely continue to
coexist in counterspeech spaces. Creating such allied tactics requires over-
coming both our tactical and strategic ignorance, as well as a willingness to
work across differences in the field. In this chapter, therefore, I argue that
rhetorical field methods, when combined with a scholar-activist approach,
can provide unique insights into how allied tactics have been and can con-
tinue to be systematically enacted in counterspeech spaces. Here I attempt
to move beyond some of the critiques offered in the previous chapters and
instead detail the concrete interventions I have both witnessed as a rhetorical
critic and enacted as a scholar-activist. I argue that these interventions, when
systematically cultivated and deliberately deployed, can work to transform
more-speech tactics and combative tactics into *allied tactics*.[1]

Allied tactics, as I explore them here, are reminiscent of the coalitional moments explored by Karma R. Chávez, who argues that a "coalitional moment occurs when political issues coincide or merge in the public sphere in ways that create space to reenvision and potentially reconstruct rhetorical imaginaries." This theoretical frame is useful for understanding allied tactics' potential for overcoming the strategic ignorance perpetuated by the counterspeech system. Because anti-hate organizing has not coalesced into a social movement in any traditional sense, understanding the deployments of allied tactics as coalitional moments is important because "coalition connotes tension and precariousness." Such tensions are indicative of the interactions I have, at times, observed between combative and confrontational protesters in counterspeech spaces. Chávez is clear, however, that coalitions need not be temporary. Instead, a coalitional moment "describes the space in which we can engage, but because coalescing cannot be taken for granted, it requires constant work if it is to endure."[2] This is a hopeful vision, but, unfortunately, I have not yet witnessed this type of enduring coalition in anti-hate organizing, likely because of the difficulty in overcoming the strategic ignorance perpetuated by the counterspeech system and the seemingly intractable incompatibility of nonviolent and combative tactics. However, like Chávez, I believe the potential of allied tactics to forge more enduring coalitions can be realized through more systematic cultivations over time.

Although overcoming strategic ignorance will certainly require more than allied tactics, I believe such an approach is an essential first step in opening up the possibilities for "Democratic Rule," where those who use more-speech tactics can work to become strategists in a different system of meaning, one in which combating hate is more than simply meeting it with more speech. In what follows, then, I explore the potentiality of allied tactics as coalitional moments that can work to ally those with a strict commitment to nonviolence to those who embrace a combative approach—as well as with others present in counterspeech spaces, such as journalists, researchers, and those who may be unsure about what their role is in the fight against hate.

The Promise of Rhetorical Field Methods and an Activist Approach

Like many people entering counterspeech spaces for the first time, when I began this project, I had a great deal of tactical and strategic ignorance to overcome. Through my rhetorical fieldwork I saw the array of different tactics deployed in the fight against hate, and I defaulted, at first to familiar,

confrontational protest tactics. I, like so many others, misunderstood the combative tactics that I saw, asking myself, "Why do some people seem to be getting arrested on purpose? This isn't the context for those kinds of tactics." I also defaulted to my familiar theoretical frames: "The antifascists are getting media attention when they engage in property destruction, but it will be so negative. Doesn't that hurt the cause?" And, finally, I defaulted to fear, thinking, "Don't the antifascists (who were predominantly white) know that engaging an all-tactics approach will provoke the police and put others, especially BIPOC, in danger?"[3] Drawing on these ultimately ill-conceived assumptions, I began writing this book, thinking that combative tactics were a problem because I believed that such an all-tactics approach created an unequal risk for BIPOC in counterspeech spaces.

However, as I continued my fieldwork and scholar activism through 2017, I witnessed the continued rise of hate speech, neofascist organizing, and violence from the police-state and hate group members. In August of that year, I abhorred (though was not entirely surprised by) the sight of the large numbers of neofascists, their violence, and the state's complacency with it in Charlottesville. It was at this point that I began to reflect on my research and realized that I had much more work to do—as a rhetorical scholar and as an activist. So I pushed myself, first, as a scholar, to read more theory and to acquaint myself with the rhetoric, philosophies, and histories of violence and nonviolence as modes of pursuing social justice.[4] I reengaged with my field notes, spent more time in the field, sought out others' reflections on the events I participated in, questioned my perceptions, and, as a result, began to reconsider those early assumptions. These are things all researchers are taught to do as part of any rigorous methodology, but, as a scholar-activist, I had the added charge of working not only to further knowledge but to further social justice.

So I pushed myself, too, as an activist, by engaging more directly with a diversity of people and perspectives in the field and by stepping out of my comfort zone with traditional, confrontational protesters in those spaces. I sought out antifascists online and in the field and learned that many of these groups hosted public and online trainings in conversation with various community organizers. These trainings included education about different tactics, about how to engage in both personal and collective self-defense and, importantly, how to provide for the safety of and solidarity with the various publics engaging in a diversity of tactics in those spaces. Challenging my assumptions at the beginning of this project, I discovered that these trainings always included conversations about skin privilege, police tactics, and

risk *with* targeted BIPOC and other minoritized populations. They also often included considerations of (dis)ability and access in protest spaces, and, in keeping with allied tactics, they included assurances that those who did not wish to engage in combative tactics would be respected and protected.[5]

Despite these allied efforts, skin privilege, cis privilege, and other unequal burdens of risk persist in counterspeech spaces, as in any public protest space. Thus, all activists committed to combating hate should continue to interrogate and address these inequalities. However, what rhetorical field methods and a scholar-activist approach also revealed was that my initial understandings about what was happening in counterspeech spaces were woefully inadequate and uninformed. For example, when I put my (new) knowledge, gleaned from my position as a rhetorical scholar-activist, in conversation with my (old) ideas, I began to understand that what I had first seen as property destruction for the explicit purpose of getting arrested or gaining media attention was something quite different—that these familiar understandings did not adequately capture what these activists were doing. I learned that protecting targeted and vulnerable populations was of the utmost importance to these activists and that a nuanced understanding of how hate speech works as part of a fascist strategy was necessary for actually addressing the problem of unequal burdens of risk in public spaces. These insights, I maintain, were accessible only through rhetorical field methods combined with a scholar-activist approach, and they are indicative of the promise of such scholarship.

I reflect on my process here because I believe that, when put in conversation with the remainder of this chapter, it is revealing of the power of these combined approaches to both expand our knowledge and enhance our ability to ethically intervene in issues of social justice. Some might argue that all that really happened is that I "went native"—that I allowed myself to become "radicalized" or that I lost my objectivity. But I would argue instead that I used my position as a rhetorical scholar-activist to learn and produce knowledge, which is the goal of all research. The responsibility—and the privilege—of the scholar-activist is to approach the work as necessarily using this knowledge to intervene: to engage with activists, with theory, with new perspectives, and with unique contexts. Furthermore, although I have never purported to be "objective" in any kind of scientific sense, this does not mean I have lost my commitment to *critical* inquiry. Despite learning about the solidarity work already happening in counterspeech spaces—solidarity work often initiated by antifascists—as a critical scholar, there is more work to be done. Frustrations among different publics persist in counterspeech spaces,

and concerns about antifascists' use of combative tactics continue to be expressed. Antifascists, in turn, regularly express frustration with "liberals" or "centrists" who do not see the connection between hate speech and fascist organizing, the necessity of deplatforming, or the importance of engaging an all-tactics approach in some contexts.

However, what is important in moving from *all* tactics to *allied* tactics is to accept that these inevitable frustrations do not necessarily need to lead to unproductive divisions in the field of combat. Instead, to successfully fight at the level of strategy, we must "seek and obtain the best from friends and allies, remembering that one does not have to love one's allies to enjoy the benefits of mutual aid."[6] In other words, allying divergent tactics, such as more-speech and combative tactics, does not necessarily require various publics to agree on everything. But it does mean that we must continue the solidarity work that creates spaces where divergent tactics can be allied, especially if the goal is to avoid the divisions that prevent publics from effectively combating hate. In a time when establishment voices work tirelessly to divide us, allied tactics are essential.

An allied-tactics approach, as I envision it, works to meet two goals: (1) to overcome divisions among different publics in the field and (2) to combat hate at multiple levels simultaneously. As this suggests, the first task of an allied-tactics approach is to address the tendency of diverse tactics to reinforce rigid divisions among those working in counterspeech spaces. Although I would argue that allied tactics are essential to the continuing fight against hate, the process of allying tactics is made difficult by the pervasiveness of the counterspeech system and its ability to create and reinforce the distortions that divide us. As detailed in chapter 1, a dominant system, such as the counterspeech system, creates both tactical and strategic ignorance, ultimately preventing us from perceiving alternative tactics for combating hate. For the purposes of an allied-tactics approach, it is important to understand that these distortions also work to prevent us from accepting new information *about one another*, dividing us and hindering our ability to achieve a true solidarity. Oppressive meaning systems work according to the "original imperial strategy of divide and rule. . . . The strategy of domination teaches the victims to blame each other and fight among themselves."[7] As the epigraph to this chapter notes, it is a mistake to allow differences in methods, tactics, or even strategies to prevent us from achieving solidarity and working toward the same objective—in this case the objective of combating hate.

The excavation of the counterspeech system and its distorted perceptions, carried out in previous chapters of this book, clearly reveals the persistence

of divisions among more-speech and combative protesters; these differences in tactics, however, need not preclude solidarity in the field. The "St Paul Principles," for example, were developed during the Republican National Convention protests in 2008 to assist activists in establishing and maintaining solidarity among nonviolent and all-tactics protesters who faced state repression. The principles hold that "public infighting and policing of tactics divides the movement and does the State's work for them. When we allow space for all tactics, we are stronger, we are larger, we are united in purpose, and the powers that be are more challenged to hold us back." Although it could be argued that adhering to these principles can harm combative protesters' ability to reach critical mass in some contexts, I would argue that the focus on solidarity among different protesters and tactics can be an effective baseline for allying tactics within the specific context of the counterspeech system. Overcoming divisions is thus related to the second goal of an allied-tactics approach—to combat hate at multiple levels simultaneously. In fact, the third principle states that "our solidarity will be based on respect for a diversity of tactics and the plans of other groups."[8] Instead of seeing combative tactics and more-speech tactics as mutually exclusive, an allied-tactics approach works by drawing on the strengths of each type of tactic, in keeping with the demands of the specific context.

Drawing on my work as a rhetorical scholar-activist, I argue that the successful deployment of allied tactics involves three central principles of action: knowing your context, knowing your allies, and using your position. These principles of action have been discerned through interactions with people in the field, as well as through my scholarly reflections on those interactions. These principles are often already enacted by activists in counterspeech spaces and thus may be familiar to some readers of this book. However, I believe that these principles—often spontaneously or sporadically applied—can be more deliberately and systematically deployed in the service of an allied-tactics approach. In other words, by calling attention to them, I hope that these insights can serve as guiding principles of action for how we might work to better resist divisive forces and engage in allied tactics to combat hate.

Know Your Context

The first principle of action central to allied tactics is to know your context. As is clear to anyone who has been in counterspeech spaces, activists seeking to combat hate often do a great deal of research to understand their contexts

and determine the best strategies or tactics for engaging in those unique contexts. In part understanding this context involves an assessment of the broad political and cultural contexts within which we are immersed. However, the dynamic nature of political life requires that this assessment be continually repeated. For example, when I began this project I surveyed the political and theoretical contexts of the counterspeech system. At first my studies of this context led me to support the idea of combating hate through regulatory tactics, such as those reviewed in chapter 1. But the political and counterspeech contexts changed over the course of my research, and so I reassessed them—both through Anthony Wilden's context theory and through my scholar activism—to know my (evolving) context. My assessment of this context led me to conclude that the time for those carefully crafted regulations that may have prevented hate speech has likely passed for the foreseeable future—in short, now is not the time for those regulations. I say this because of the well-documented mainstreaming of fascist ideologies and the continued cult-like devotion to former president Donald Trump, who publicly announced he is a nationalist.[9] Similarly, the racially motivated violence at the U.S. southern border, carried out by both the state and armed militias, indicates a context in which regulating hate speech may be too little, too late.[10] Tragically, we are now in a moment when white supremacists, from Portland to Kentucky to Pittsburgh, have perpetrated hate crimes against BIPOC, Muslims, and Jewish people—hate crimes that were galvanized through unregulated hate speech but that are likely now more effectively neutralized through combative tactics and not through regulatory means.[11]

Knowing your context involves more than just consideration of these larger political contexts. When weighing strategic and tactical options, for example, most activists also know their context by engaging in extensive research about specific counterspeech spaces before entering them. This work is vital because "there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Local communities must consult with survivors, follow their lead, and decide what is best given their collective and historical experiences. . . . In response, communities can hold counter rallies, [and] events celebrating equity and justice, and support local organizations that fight bigotry on a daily basis."[12] In other words, it is vital that those seeking to combat hate know their contexts and their communities before engaging in the field. Many publics already do this work—engaging in careful examinations of both spatial and local contexts, working with local communities, talking to survivors of hate crimes, and researching particular hate groups. When activists deploy any type of tactic, they are usually mindful of the constraints of those specific contexts and

often attempt to ally their tactics. Thus, I would simply reemphasize that this should be recognized as a *central principle of action* necessary for the successful implementation of allied tactics.

Knowing the context can help foster understandings about why certain tactics are being deployed and how they can work with other tactics in a particular context—facilitating an allied approach in that counterspeech space rather than allowing divisions among diverse publics to persist. For example, at the Mazzoni Center action in Philadelphia, some groups engaged in celebratory tactics in a location about a block away from the space where Westboro engaged in their hate speech. These tactics worked to combat hate with humor and celebrations of diversity, while also providing a space for targeted individuals to avoid exposure to the hate speech itself if they chose. At the same time other activists remained at the police line directly in front of Westboro to engage in oppositional tactics, while still others moved throughout the spaces to raise money and awareness for LGBTQIA+ causes. Combative tactics were not present in this space because the context did not call for such a response. Allying the appropriate oppositional and celebratory tactics, in this instance, was effective in building community among activists. Knowing their context, as these activists did, was essential for the creation of allied tactics that prevented divisions among diverse groups, while also combating hate at multiple tactical levels.

In other counterspeech spaces, where both combative and more-speech tactics are contextually appropriate, following the principle of knowing your context is similarly important. For example, at the Philadelphia action in 2018, presence and patrolling tactics were used to provide community protection during and after the rally, while oppositional tactics were deployed to nonviolently send a definitive no to the hate group assembled there. Although deplatforming tactics were not deployed in that instance—likely because of the physical constraints of the space—other combative tactics worked to protect the community during and after the rally, while the oppositional tactics garnered media attention about the presence of Proud Boys in the Philadelphia area. After the rally both oppositional and combative protesters worked together to prevent rally-goers from taking advantage of rideshares and public transportation, as discussed in chapter 3. These allied tactics worked to combat hate speech, while also building solidarity among diverse community groups.

Although most activists do the research necessary to know their contexts, in my experience a number of people appear in counterspeech spaces who

are still not familiar with the unique context of the counterspeech system and its constraints. I have encountered at least a few people at each action I have attended who had never participated in a public protest of any kind before. My conversations with some of them also revealed that they had just recently come to the realization that white supremacy or gender-based hate is a real problem facing their community. Some of these people have been galvanized by the current political context and have the best of intentions, and their participation in the fight against hate is sorely needed. However, due to their inexperience, and often their social location, some may not understand that their bodies are not as much at risk in these spaces because their various privileges (race, class, cis appearance) protect them. As a rhetorical scholar-activist, I have often found myself in a position to talk to such participants about the unique context of a counterspeech protest. Using my position as a "researcher" gives me an entry point to talk to many of these people and provides me with some degree of credibility.[13] I usually help them know their context by talking about the specific hate group present, activists' varying tactics for confronting that hate group, police tactics and safety, and, most important, how to avoid unintentionally creating problematic or dangerous situations in the specific space. By attending precisely to the necessity of this work, the deliberate deployment of this principle of action can facilitate an allied-tactics approach in specific contexts. It also points toward the importance of intervention with certain participants—an intervention that can be accomplished by scholar-activists engaging in rhetorical field methods.

But this is not the only way in which knowing your context can be applied as a principle of action. One of the most productive ways I have intervened as a rhetorical scholar-activist has involved talking to people about mobile phones within the unique context of a counterspeech space. Some people take numerous pictures or videos in counterspeech spaces and post them on social media. With the best of intentions, they may believe that they are providing positive publicity for a particular cause or raising awareness about hate speech and hate group organizing. However, I often caution people to know their context and avoid photographing specific activists—and to never post photographs of activists publicly without explicit permission. As noted in chapter 3, hate groups often use publicly available photos in online forums to harass or harm activists. Usually, those taking photos are unaware of this problem, but, once we have talked about it, they are eager to delete the posts or stop filming. These interactions are examples of how to intervene with

those unfamiliar with the context of a counterspeech space, thereby opening up space for allied tactics to emerge among experienced and inexperienced activists.

This principle of action is also important to systematically and deliberately deploy because, within the field of combat, new contexts can emerge, or existing ones change, unexpectedly. As an example, at one protest I attended, white participants were asked to move to the back of the group during a march so that Black protesters could lead the way. In a bit of a reversal, at the Stone Mountain protest, white people were challenged to come to the front, to stand with their Black comrades, and to experience the risk of being on the front lines closest to the line of armed RCAs protecting the hate group. Black Lives Matter protests in the summer of 2020 have also revealed situations where activists were faced with these choices and where some of these types of requests were met with confusion and animosity among some of the white participants. An allied-tactics approach, then, could allow participants to understand that what it means to work in solidarity with diverse groups is fluid and contingent in these spaces, especially when considering issues of identity and privilege.

An additional example revealing of the importance of communicating about what constitutes an allied tactic in a specific context occurred during the Unite the Right 2 actions in Washington, D.C. A number of counterevents staged that day were organized by two separate organizations: the ANSWER Coalition and D.C. United Against Hate, which was partially composed of a large Black Lives Matter contingency. These two organizations held complementary counterevents in different parts of the city throughout the day, and at a designated time the ANSWER Coalition began a protest march toward Lafayette Park, where Unite the Right 2 was being held. As we were marching, organizers began moving lines of protesters off of the street and onto the sidewalks to clear a space for a D.C. United Against Hate/Black Lives Matter group to stage a brief performance and then join the march. This was clearly planned ahead of time between the two organizations and served as an important demonstration of the importance of knowing your context. Although the requests to step out of the protest march could have easily been met with hostility or confusion, particularly from white protesters, it instead became an important moment for them to balance stepping up and stepping back. In other words, communicating about the fluidity of protest spaces and about what constitutes an allied tactic in those spaces is essential for knowing when to step up and put your body on the line and when to step back and allow others to take the lead. The deliberate deployment of knowing

your context as a principle of action is thus an important part of enacting an allied-tactics approach.

Know Your Allies

These examples are indicative of the importance of knowing your context but also reveal the necessity of attending to a second principle of action: knowing your allies. To put it simply, allied tactics require us to deliberately and systematically learn from one another, both before and during a counterspeech action, just as I have learned from activists and have attempted to teach others. Part of knowing your allies thus involves, at the very least, being open to communicating about the different tactics deployed in a counterspeech space. As noted earlier, antifascists and other counterspeech organizers often engage in online communication in advance of a rally, to create solidarity across numerous publics committed to different tactics. They offer trainings to get to know their allies and ensure one another's safety. Despite these efforts, though, some publics will never engage in combative tactics for personal, ethical, or other reasons. However, by consciously working to know one's allies, those in counterspeech spaces can work to ensure that these diverse publics still enjoy the benefits of mutual aid in the field.

One way to enact this principle is to take advantage of trainings and other outreach in advance of an action; this can allow members of various publics to know their allies and then work together in the field, even if they are not deploying the same tactics. Although some approaches are often framed as opposing and incompatible, those committed to nonviolent, more-speech tactics can still work in a number of ways with their allies engaged in combative tactics. For example, nonviolent protesters can maintain their nonviolent stance while also working as legal observers, taking down badge numbers of police officers who use excessive force against combative protesters. They can also provide support to street medics and other activists by providing water, food, and jail support. Confrontational protesters can also support their allies by preventing people from photographing or filming activists. This can be done nonviolently through conversation or corporeal shields. These are just a few examples of how those with differing tactical commitments can know their allies and ally their tactics in counterspeech spaces; other suggestions for how to do this kind of work can be found online and are often detailed in trainings before an action.[14]

By deliberately attending to the necessity of knowing your allies, it becomes possible to accomplish different, but compatible, objectives in the field. For

example, at Stone Mountain property destruction was used in an attempt to deplatform the hate rally. A few combative protesters were subsequently arrested, but those committed to a nonviolent approach contributed to a bail fund for those protesters—treating them as allies. Additionally, because the event was not preemptively deplatformed, those engaging in combative tactics worked with other protesters to locate the hate group rally so that they might all engage in oppositional tactics. In this case antifascists knew their allies and worked to provide for their protection from police and hate group infiltration. The ability of these various protesters to work effectively in this space was possible because of the abundance of pre-event trainings and in-field communication that allowed those in the counterspeech space to know their allies and thereby ally their tactics.

However, in my experience the potential of allied tactics can sometimes remain unfulfilled in counterspeech spaces. In Newnan, for example, antifascists engaged in combative tactics outside of the "free speech cage" created by police, while other groups entered the cordoned-off area to engage in oppositional tactics against the hate group. Other community members moved throughout the downtown area, far away from the hate group and police lines, to engage in persuasive-dialogic tactics by writing messages of love in sidewalk chalk and encouraging protesters to remain "peaceful." These divergent tactics were allied to some extent, as they worked to combat hate at different tactical levels simultaneously, but at that particular action a more effective allied tactics approach was possible. As I interacted with these diverse publics, it became clear that some of these groups had not been in direct communication with one another. The caged areas set up by police, which included searches and strict rules for access, certainly contributed to the inability of these diverse publics to communicate and ally their tactics. Such divisions limited our ability to combat hate and also created dangerous interactions with police following the rally. These divisions hindered our ability to protect one another from police violence as effectively as we might have if our tactics and goals had been allied and if the space had been more conducive to the development of such an allied approach.

Unfortunately, animosity among protesters committed to different tactics can result in media interviews and reports that further divisions among these publics—a point stressed in the scholarly literature. As an example, Kevin Michael DeLuca and Jennifer Peeples provide accounts of the animosity among different World Trade Organization protesters in their analysis of the Battle in Seattle in 1999. In their analysis they recount complaints made by nonviolent protesters who voiced their displeasure about combative tactics

in the field. For example, one nonviolent protester stated in a news report, "I am so disappointed how this turned out. We had weeks of training how to do this [nonviolent protest] correctly. It was supposed to be peaceful. . . . It's been completely destroyed. Our message is not going to get out and I'm so mad."[15] Counter to this perception, DeLuca and Peeples argue that the property destruction enacted by anarchists was actually quite effective in getting the protesters' message out on the public screen.

Although this person's perception of combative tactics is a common one, I would stress that it indicates a lack of allied tactics in the field. Combative tactics are not, in the first instance, deployed to get media attention. Their purpose, in the case of the World Trade Organization protests, was to prevent delegates from reaching the WTO meeting (a type of deplatforming), which had been deemed an undemocratic process that would enact policies harmful to labor, environmental, and other causes. Because media attention for a cause can happen as a result of property destruction, as DeLuca and Peeples prove, there are possibilities for allying those tactics with nonviolent tactics to reach multiple goals in protest spaces. In other words, instead of working against—and complaining about—those employing a diversity of tactics, communication among these groups at the trainings the protester mentioned could have ensured that they knew their allies. Following this principle, in other words, could have helped establish an allied-tactics approach that would work to create solidarity among the nonviolent protesters, combative protesters, and others in the space, while also working to meet the goals of each group—shutting down the meeting while also getting media attention for the cause.

Without deliberate attention to this principle of action, such divisions easily erupt in counterspeech spaces and prevent the successful deployment of allied tactics—and, as a result, undermine the groups' efforts to combat hate. This is often the case on university campuses, where hate speech is often platformed and where members of the community are often committed to different tactics. In both 2009 and 2017, for example, I was involved in campus actions against controversial speakers: Tom Tancredo at the University of North Carolina and Charles Murray at Villanova University, respectively.[16] In both these contexts those engaging in combative tactics and those seeking to engage in more-speech tactics—specifically, dialogue with the speakers—found themselves at cross-purposes. Michael Waltman and John Haas provide an account of the action at University of North Carolina, claiming that "the protestors' obscene and boorish behavior shamed the university, but it also worked against their own interests, making the evening

more successful for Tancredo and the national YWC [Youth for Western Civilization] than if he had been allowed to speak and answer questions from his audience."[17] This "obscene and boorish behavior," which I would instead call a deplatforming combative tactic, included holding a banner in front of Tancredo, singing the Black national anthem, chanting loudly outside of the room, and (possibly inadvertently) breaking one window. These combative tactics were deployed by a group of local activists and students, and I would argue they were quite successful in deplatforming the hate speech—since Tancredo chose to leave the space without delivering his speech. Moreover, within a few months the Youth for Western Civilization found themselves unable to recruit new members on campus, their advisor was forced to resign after he threatened violence against students, and within a couple of years the national group itself disbanded.

As a participant in that successful deplatforming action, I am not persuaded by Waltman and Haas's argument that such tactics are ineffective because they allowed Tancredo to portray himself as a free speech martyr. On the contrary, I saw students engage in a multiplicity of tactics—not simply combative tactics but also a celebration of diversity with a dance party in another part of campus, as well as nonviolent, oppositional tactics outside of the building where the event was being held. It is certainly true that the combative protesters (along with all the other students, regardless of whether they had engaged in combative tactics) were demonized in the media, and those students who wanted to engage in dialogue with Tancredo were angry that they were not permitted to do so, because of his deplatforming. However, upon learning about the anger from those students who wanted to dialogue with Tancredo at the event, those who engaged in combative tactics reached out and began a productive conversation in which they apologized for not coordinating earlier and vowed to find more productive ways to work in solidarity and avoid a clash of tactics in the future. The multiplicity of tactics could have been more successful had they been allied from the start; however, I believe the events were instructive for these students and activists as they moved forward.

What I learned from that experience was the importance of an allied-tactics approach to these contexts—a lesson that allowed me to talk to students at Villanova about getting to know their allies before the Charles Murray event, to work together more effectively. When Murray's talk was announced, I spoke with some students interested in a dialogic approach and others committed to trying to disrupt or deplatform the event. We talked

about the importance of presenting an allied front by supporting each other's divergent tactics and goals and coordinating these tactics in advance of the event. Such allied communication, I told them, would work to avoid the accusation that not all voices were heard or respected (as at University of North Carolina), while also avoiding the inevitable negative media depictions of the students' resistance. Admittedly, I would have liked to see more allied tactics in practice at that event, as those not privy to the conversations predictably denounced the more combative protesters as anti–free speech.[18] Some activists did engage in a successful disruption of the speech before being removed by police, and, unlike the Tancredo example, other students had the opportunity to remain at the event and engage with Murray.

Not surprisingly, those who attempted dialogue with Murray were disappointed to find that he was unwilling to entertain their questions (especially those posed by women). Many students left feeling angry that their university had allowed him the platform to speak without ensuring that they too would have the opportunity to counter his ideas.[19] As a professor of communication, I spoke with those students desiring dialogue. We talked about the fact that to have a truly productive dialogue with someone holding contrary views, all must come to the table willing to respect the diversity of others, must trust in their goodwill, and must arrive prepared to be honest and open-minded. I was honest with them that I did not believe that, given the opportunity to dialogue, they would find those conditions to be present in this context. Despite these warnings and this unfortunate, if predictable, outcome, this example is instructive for scholar-activists who often work with students in campus contexts, where hate speech too often finds a platform. Consciously attending to this principle of action—knowing your allies—enables activists (and, in this case, students) who have seemingly incompatible tactics and goals to work together and ally their tactics, avoiding the divisions that can prevent effectiveness.

Use Your Position

The first two principles of action—knowing your context and allies—also require commitment to a third: understanding your own positionality in those contexts and with those allies. In this final section, therefore, I argue that consciously and purposefully using your position, especially your skin, gender, class, or other privilege(s), is an important part of engaging in allied

tactics. As with all these principles of action, this is something that spontaneously or sporadically occurs in counterspeech spaces because most, if not all, of the tactics reviewed in chapters 2 and 3 are enacted by people attempting to interrogate their privilege and use their various positions to combat hate. Persuasive-dialogic tactics attempt to establish lines of communication across differences and work to educate various publics about hate speech, while those engaging in confrontational tactics use their positions to shield targeted groups from hate speech or to communicate a definitive no to hate groups. Those deploying combative tactics seek to use their position to serve as volunteer targets and to provide for the safety of their communities. However, the potential exists to more deliberately and systematically employ this principle of action—to facilitate the success of allied tactics in the fight against hate. As a rhetorical scholar-activist, for example, I occupy a unique position in counterspeech spaces and attempt to consciously use that privilege in the service of allied tactics and to intervene in this social justice context. Like all privilege, mine is not necessarily earned, but it nonetheless affords me a certain credibility and mobility in counterspeech spaces that others may not possess—and I have attempted to harness that privilege to ally myself with others in counterspeech spaces.

One of the ways allied tactics can be deployed by anyone in a counterspeech space is through the protection of activists from unwanted photographs, videos, and dissemination of their images. Although this allied tactic has proven effective when talking about it with certain people in counterspeech spaces, this same situation has been more difficult to navigate with journalists. For example, at the Unite the Right 2 rally in Washington, D.C., I spent a fair amount of time talking to journalists who were filming antifascists as they were patrolling the space. Although the antifascists repeatedly asked the journalists not to capture images of their faces for public dissemination, many journalists refused these requests and sometimes even moved to higher vantage points to film them. Using my position as a scholar-activist, I attempted to intervene, first, by handing the journalists my business card and offering to answer questions about why these activists would not want to be filmed, focusing on how such filming could place the activists in a great deal of danger. This worked with two journalists, who reoriented their cameras toward me and asked me interview questions before exiting the space. However, with other journalists I encountered a great deal of resistance and was even met with claims that I was interfering with the freedom of the press. When it was apparent that they would not stop filming, I used my body and a borrowed flag to shield the antifascists from the cameras—recognizing the advantage

my position afforded me and exploiting it in the service of my allies in the counterspeech space. In this effort I was joined by another activist in the space, who also used his own body to shield the activists from the journalists.

Interestingly, both the *Washington Post* and *Vox* reported that antifascists attacked journalists at that rally, claiming that this happened because they did not have enough fascists to fight. The *Vox* story concluded that "it wasn't neo-Nazis and white supremacists the antifa attacked. It was police who were there to help keep the peace among all the demonstrators and journalists who were there to cover the events. How that factors into antifa's ideology is anyone's guess." As someone who explicitly used their position to address journalists' problematic practices that day, this conclusion is indicative of the pervasiveness of media distortions of antifascists. An unwillingness to overcome this tactical ignorance through conversations with antifascists—or with me, in that particular example—of course leads to the conclusion that it was "anyone's guess" why activists would not want to be filmed or why they would engage in combative tactics against police "who were there to help keep the peace."[20]

As these accounts indicate, I was not wholly successful in facilitating allied tactics between combative protesters and journalists that day; however, this experience is instructive for how scholar-activists might find opportunities to use their position and credibility to intervene with media professionals. Such an intervention can lead to allied tactics between these often inimical groups about how to meet the goal of providing media coverage of newsworthy events while ensuring that journalists' interactions with activists preserve the latter's safety.[21] There is still much work to do, but this work, I believe, is necessary for allying the tactics of combative protesters, nonviolent activists, researchers, and journalists. For scholar-activists and others similarly committed to the fight against hate, using your position is essential for creating allied tactics among the diverse groups that come together in these counterspeech spaces.

Perhaps the most famous example of successfully deployed allied tactics occurred in Charlottesville at the Unite the Right rally, when combative and oppositional protesters understood their context, knew their allies, and—in that instance—used their differing positions to avoid divisions and work together to combat hate. As was reported in the wake of the rally, when white supremacists attacked oppositional, nonviolent protesters, antifascist protesters used combative tactics to defend and protect those protesters.[22] An anonymous account, by someone who identified as one of the clergy attacked in Charlottesville, is clear about how antifascists used their position to protect their allies that day:

> We [the clergy] were far outnumbered, but I watched countless antifa youth risk their lives, one by one, to fight back. Many of them were eventually carried away covered in blood from being beaten. Some screamed in the middle of the street as their eyes burned from the pepper spray. It was the most horrific scene I have ever seen in my life. . . . It was terrifying. This violence and chaos ensued for over an hour. The police did nothing. I looked over at the police many times in the midst of the chaos only to find some laughing at certain points.[23]

Other accounts from nonviolent, oppositional protesters reveal that they were "rescued from serious assault through a last-moment intercession by antifascists with their own clubs and shields. One nonviolent faith leader later described antifa 'as angels' to her in that moment."[24]

Another woman's story is particularly revealing of the allied communication taking place in the space. She recounts that the leader of the clergy protesting that day spoke with antifascists, "explaining what we were doing and our stance and asking them [the antifascists] to not provoke the Nazis. They agreed quickly and stood right in front of us, offering their help and protection."[25] Cornel West, also protesting in Charlottesville, similarly recalled that "the police, for the most part, pulled back. . . . We would have been crushed like cockroaches if it were not for the anarchists and the anti-fascists. . . . They saved our lives, actually."[26] In these examples some activists were committed to the oppositional tactic of nonviolent protest; however, they were also able to engage in allied tactics with antifascists engaged in combative tactics. The latter used their position to take on the violence of the white supremacists and thereby protect the oppositional protesters in the counterspeech space in ways that the police-state did not.

Although these accounts of allied tactics were shocking to many who saw them in media reports, there is actually a long, but often forgotten, history of such coalitional moments. In fact, "coalition building has always been central to the antifascist tradition."[27] Avram Alpert explores some of these coalitional moments in history, particularly those that successfully allied violent and nonviolent activists. Specifically he focuses on Immanuel Kant's views on the bloody French Revolution, Henry David Thoreau's public support of John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s refusal to officially condemn the property destruction he witnessed during the civil rights movement. Drawing on these examples, he explores how nonviolent revolutionary spectators (such as Kant, Thoreau, or King) can work to bear witness to acts of violence and then work to educate others about the

contexts surrounding that violence. For example, "to explain why the violence happened, [specifically] how it was created by a previous violence or oppression. . . . The nonviolent spectator will witness, speak, and write about the violent acts of those whose goals they share in such a way as to show their underlying struggle for peace." Such a witnessing and translation of events can "transform public consciousness."[28]

Alpert's theory, I believe, serves as a compelling example of how allied tactics can work in practice, as he argues that "most theoretical writings have kept nonviolence and violence strictly separate. Either one commits to refraining from violence regardless of the opposition's actions, or one commits to an armed struggle in order to achieve one's stated aims. But the actual history of political struggle, with its multiplicity of associated partisans, shows no such binary."[29] Similarly, then, I would argue that this unproductive binary is yet one more meaning structure that prevents us from overcoming our ignorance about how combative tactics can be allied to other nonviolent tactics to effectively combat hate while also pushing us to think outside of the violence/nonviolence binary. Applied to the examples from Charlottesville, we can understand the clergy as nonviolent revolutionary spectators who were committed to nonviolence but who also attempted to contextualize the physical violence antifascists used in self-defense. Their statements, in other words, attempted to transform the mainstream interpretation of antifascists and combative tactics.[30]

Scholar-activists can similarly use their position to contextualize combative tactics and facilitate the creation of allied tactics in counterspeech spaces, as I have attempted to do in this book, in the field, and with the media.[31] The allied tactics reviewed in this chapter provide avenues for nonviolent protesters to use their position to help larger publics grapple with the ethics of violence, nonviolence, and social justice. I would emphasize that the deliberate and systematic enactment of the principles of action outlined here can ensure that we more critically analyze the tactics available to us for combating hate, make decisions about our commitment to certain tactics or certain ethics, and thereby create more just and ultimately less hate-filled societies. In this way we can begin to collectively work toward realizing the potential in these coalitional moments to create more sustained resistance to hate.

CONCLUSION

The task of critical theory . . . is to throw the requisite light on the interrelations of things, and to distinguish from amongst the endless connection of events those which are really essential.

—Carl von Clauswitz

Hate remains a pervasive and enduring problem in the United States, one that we are not always well equipped to combat. Although my initial discussions of this research project were often met with skepticism, over the course of my work, virulent hate speech and aggressive nationalism have, if anything, claimed more mainstream status within our political landscape. This entrenched problem is not one that can be solely addressed through electoral politics. Despite some progressive wins in the 2020 election, we continue to see hate group membership at high levels. Hate crimes against Asian Americans and other groups abound, and rhetorics of hate and fascism were at the U.S. Capitol insurrection, including the erection of a scaffold and noose.[1] Yet, despite the well-documented nature of these disturbing trends, the United States continues to resist regulating hate speech, failing to protect its citizens from its antidemocratic harms and continuing to go to extreme lengths to tolerate—and even to violently defend—hate speech to demonstrate its ostensible commitment to free speech.

Following Joe Biden's victory in the 2020 presidential election, for example, conservative media flooded readers with articles decrying a 2019 op-ed penned by one of Biden's key transition officials, Richard Stengel, who had argued in favor of a regulatory approach to hate speech—a position

widely decried, unsurprisingly, as an assault on free speech.[2] The critique of Stengel's views not only reiterate many of the claims discussed (and critiqued) throughout *Combating Hate* but, more important, point directly to the central focus of this book: the need to take a more critical look at our commitment to more speech as the only solution to our hate speech problem.

As I argue in chapter 1, grasping the nature and limitations of this approach to hate speech and free speech requires an understanding of two key premises related to hate speech, political speech, the state, and democracy. I explore the United States' fully entrenched stance on hate speech, what I call the "counterspeech system," which has placed the entirety of the burden for combating hate on its targets and their allies. The intricacies of the counterspeech system, especially its commitment to the more-speech strategy, create and reinforce a vision of democracy as a series of public deliberations among equally legitimate ideas—as an arena where all speech, including hate speech, must receive equal consideration to fulfill the ends of democracy. Thus, those wishing to stem the tide of hate speech are told to present a better argument and persuade hate purveyors and their audiences of its merit, and then hate speech harms will be effectively nullified in the public sphere. Within this vision more speech involves the presentation of reasonable, persuasive arguments that the public then considers equally— alongside hate speech—to determine which side "wins." All speech is treated as equally valid and beneficial to democracy, and our faith in this deliberative contest leads us to believe that more speech has the ability to overcome hate speech and its insidious effects simply through its expression. This organized set of ideas, the more-speech strategy, has set the boundaries of our free speech imagination and has largely determined our approach to combating hate through the deployment of more-speech tactics.

The typology explored at length in chapter 2, then, reveals that a number of more-speech tactics can be effective in combating hate. In fact, understanding these expressions of more speech was the original impetus for my research. What does more speech look like as a mode of democratic deliberation? What happens when various publics work to combat hate? To answer these questions, among others that emerged, I engaged in five years of rhetorical fieldwork in the public spaces of the counterspeech system. These spaces, and the communicative practices therein, required a rhetorical field-methods approach, as such practices were inaccessible outside of the field due to a lack of media and scholarly attention. Utilizing this approach meant critically observing the rhetorical elements present in the counterspeech field—including deliberations

among various participants, police, media practitioners, members of the general public, and interactions with and within the parameters of the various physical spaces.

My fieldwork in these spaces led me to divide these more-speech tactics into two broad categories—persuasive-dialogic and confrontational—which are differentiated according to how they engage specific audiences, present key messages, and deploy certain communicative punctuations of actions. Persuasive-dialogic tactics, such as interpersonal and public dialogues or public dissemination campaigns, are those that work to persuade audiences to replace hate with compassion and mutual respect, while confrontational tactics, by contrast, meet the more-speech burden with a resounding no to hate groups. Confrontational tactics employ celebratory, apolitical, and oppositional approaches to combating hate, rejecting the common call to quarantine or ignore hate until it goes away. These more-speech tactics that I discerned from my time in the field are a clear testament that combating hate speech is worth the fight. When these publics stand together, form a corporeal shield, or say, "not here, not now, and not in our community," they embody a powerful and inspiring resistance that is invaluable in anti-hate organizing. To echo my friend in Columbia with the target on his back, they are doing what we all have to do.

But, as my fieldwork also indicated, these more-speech tactics are not enough to eliminate the antidemocratic dangers lurking in hate speech and hate group organizing. The more-speech strategy certainly enables these more-speech tactics, but it also, simultaneously, constrains our ability to engage, or even to *perceive*, alternative tactics for combating hate. More-speech tactics, as a result, are limited in their efficacy because they do not deploy the strategic innovations needed to shift our free speech imagination—to move us past the defeatist view that the only response to hate speech is more speech.

This is why I argue in chapter 3 that what is needed is a strategic innovation that shifts how we understand and deliberate about free speech, hate speech, and democracy. First, we need a rhetorical shift in our understanding of the state's role in our democratic deliberations, particularly the myth of content neutrality that, I contend, is disingenuous at best and detrimental to democratic participation at worst. Our free speech imagination, especially the more-speech strategy, dictates that the state maintain a neutral stance with regard to any and all speech content. In reality, of course, it is the state that provides the very platform used by hate groups to recruit new members, embolden their followers, and intimidate their targets. This platform is most often vigorously and violently protected by police with guns, batons, and

tear gas. Constructing this field of combat reinforces the idea that, within the realm of free speech, power contexts are irrelevant, and all democratic deliberations inherently consist of two equal, but opposing, sides. However, in platforming and protecting hate groups, the state chooses a side, revealing the mythical nature of content neutrality. In short, the state places the burden of combating hate entirely on the community, violently suppresses those who work to meet that burden, and then washes its hands of the issue behind a disingenuous, "neutral" stance.

Beyond this rejection of content neutrality, our understanding of the nature of hate speech and how it functions in our democracy is also in need of a rhetorical shift. My accounts from the field are revealing of how these rhetorical shifts are being facilitated by strategic innovations in counter-speech spaces—specifically in the form of combative tactics that both work outside of the more-speech strategy and highlight its limitations. Under-standing the combative tactics most often used by antifascists allows us to see that hate speech is not, in fact, a tactic aligned with the more-speech strategy—it is not simply a type of political speech used to fulfill the ends of democracy. Instead, hate speech is an expression of a very different strat-egy—one that constructs and reinforces oppressive meaning systems such as white supremacy, Islamophobia, transphobia, and anti-Semitism, among others. Understood in this way, hate speech is a public organizing tactic used to fulfill the ends of a *fascist* strategy. It is, in other words, less a form of (hateful) expression than a tactic used to recruit members and to intimidate minoritized targets so that they do not engage in their own free speech. Hate speech, understood in this way, is not simply free speech; it is an anti–free speech tactic of fascist organizing, with very real consequences.

Although occurring as this book neared publication, the U.S Capitol insur-rection provides us with a particularly noteworthy example. At the time of this writing, rhetorical critics are still working to make sense of the January 2021 insurrection, but it can be argued that the insurrection had very clear fascist overtones. Participants engaged in violence against Capitol police, attacked U.S. democratic institutions by interrupting vote counting, threatened vio-lence against duly elected legislators, and made it clear that their goal was to overthrow the election and install the nationalist leader of their choosing, Donald Trump. In fact, the insurrection resulted in a second impeachment trial for Trump, who was explicitly charged with inciting the insurrection-ary *action* through his *speech*. This seems a clear example of my argument that hate speech, of which much of Trump's rhetoric is derived, is a tactic of fascist organizing. Years of racist, misogynist, and nationalist speech from

Trump created fascist sentiments among his followers, emboldened them to act, and culminated in the violent attack on Congress.

Despite this troubling proof of the harms of hate speech, the general public continues to mischaracterize hate speech as a form of political speech working toward democratic goals—indicative of distortions created by the more-speech strategy. These distortions are in need of a rhetorical shift so that we can better understand hate speech, instead, as an antidemocratic tactic working toward fascist goals. Combative tactics serve as a strategic innovation specifically by engaging in deplatforming and community self-defense tactics, including the violence that is also often (mis)read according to the logics of the more-speech strategy. Put simply, operating within the parameters of the more-speech strategy means fighting one tactic (hate speech) with another, equally matched tactic (more speech). But deploying combative tactics means combating hate speech instead at the level of strategy—working outside of the constraints of more speech to attack fascism at its most accessible point. If we accept this rhetorical shift, we can read combative tactics not as antithetical to democratic deliberation but as an innovative and radically different strategy for combating hate. This strategic innovation explodes the myth of content neutrality and reveals that *it is hate speech, not combative tactics, that should be understood as working outside of democracy*.

Being open to this transformation of our free speech imagination is essential for the future of anti-hate organizing and its coalitional possibilities. That, of course, does not mean that all those committed to ending hate must themselves employ combative tactics. As outlined in chapter 4, I argue instead for a more just vision of democratic deliberation—one that moves beyond the hate speech/free speech and the violence/nonviolence binaries. In that chapter, then, I argue for the importance of a scholar-activist intervention, such as the ones I have participated in when combating hate. Such interventions, if more systematically cultivated and deliberately deployed, can work to convert more-speech tactics and combative tactics into *allied tactics*. Allied tactics, including knowing your context, knowing your allies, and using your position, have the potential to foster more just, democratic deliberations among those committed, not necessarily to the same tactics but to the same *objective* of combating hate.

Here, I believe, we can see the promise of coupling rhetorical field methods with a scholar-activist approach, especially the revelations that such work can yield. Within the context of my own project, I would argue that the value of this combined approach is two-fold, as it has allowed me: (1) to critically explore a dominant meaning system (the counterspeech system) to produce

new knowledge, and (2) to use that knowledge to further social justice (by combating hate). Chapters 2, 3, and 4 provide a rich account of how rhetorical field methods allowed me to produce that new knowledge about the counterspeech system, detailing the diverse tactics publics use to combat hate. My activist stance, though, pushed me further, leading me to excavate the limits of more-speech tactics. Thus, my efforts to link rhetorical field methods to activist interventions was organic to the development of this project and led me to realize that traditional rhetorical critique alone was not sufficient for combating hate.

Instead, as the epigraph for this conclusion states, "the task of critical theory . . . is to throw the requisite light on the interrelations of things, and to distinguish from amongst the endless connection of events those which are really essential."[3] Rhetorical field methods, together with a scholar-activist approach, can become part of a rich tradition of critical theory, whose purpose is to reveal the emancipatory moments in our history—and, in our current moment, work to intervene in issues of social justice. I have shown not only how more-speech tactics can be essential in the fight against hate but also how such tactics do not operate at the level of strategy. I hope I have, further, outlined the contours of a much-needed rhetorical shift by demonstrating how combative tactics can work outside of the more-speech strategy to provide us with unique opportunities to combat hate before it leads to further violence and, ultimately, to the public embrace of a fascist strategy. I maintain that combating hate effectively, at both tactical and strategic levels, requires us to overcome the divisions created by the counterspeech system by engaging in allied tactics, combining the strengths of all the tactics outlined in this book to protect and preserve our communities.

Over the course of this research I have used my position to throw light on the interrelations among hate speech and more speech, in both tactics and strategies. But, more than that, I have fulfilled the promises of scholar activism by moving beyond the theoretical work of the critic to engage the social justice work of the activist. Combating hate is one of the most urgent and important battles in our struggle for social justice. It is my hope that this book serves as a valuable tool in this ongoing fight.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Allen, "America's Hate Problem"; Freeman, "America Has a Hate Problem."

2. SPLC, "2011–2014 Hate Map." The SPLC defines a hate group as an "organization that—based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities—has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics."

3. SPLC.

4. Anti-Defamation League, "Hate on Display."

5. Of course, this dismissal comes mostly from those who do not confront hate on a regular basis. BIPOC, women, members of LGBTQIA+ communities, and others who are targeted have consistently reported that hate incidents are not all that uncommon in their everyday experiences.

6. SPLC, "2018 Hate Map."

7. Ingram, "Hate Is in the Ether"; Kerr, "White Supremacists."

8. Tameez, "We've Seen Hate."

9. Speri, "FBI Has Quietly Investigated"; Zraick, "Two Virginia Police Officers"; Carless, "Hundreds of Cops"; Carless and Corey, "Inside Hate Groups"; Shane, "One in Four Troops"; Shane, "Signs of White Supremacy"; Thompson, Winston, and Hanrahan, "Notorious Hate Group"; Bosque, "Border Patrol Union"; Linly, "White Nationalists Are Everywhere"; Haynes, "Racial Antics."

10. Federal Bureau of Investigation, "2016 Hate Crime Statistics"; Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Hate Crime Victimization"; SPLC, "FBI"; Bauman, "After 2016 Election." Due to the nature of data collection and legal controversies over how to define hate crimes, it has been argued that the actual number of hate crimes that occur in the United States is much larger than reported. See Sethi, *American Hate*.

11. Ye Hee Lee, "Donald Trump's False Comments"; Haberman and Oppel, "Donald Trump Criticizes"; Milbank, "Anti-Semitism"; Rowland, "Populist and Nationalist Roots"; Kessler, "Donald Trump's Revisionist History"; Finnegan and Barabak, "Shithole"; Cohen, "Donald Trump Sexism Tracker"; SPLC, "Update."

12. Edwards and Rushin, "President Trump's Election"; Kunzelman and Galvan, "Trump Words"; Williamson and Gelfand, "Trump and Racism."

13. Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Hate Crimes"; Ghaffary, "El Paso and Gilroy Shootings"; Wells and Lovett, "So What's His Kill Count?"

14. Hatzipanagos, "Online Hate."

15. As there is no all-encompassing definition of hate speech, this working definition of hate speech is drawn partially from UN Human Rights, "Stand Up."

16. De Cristofaro, "Memes Are Taking."

17. Phillips and Yi, "Charlottesville Paradox," 221; Anti-Defamation League, "Alt Right"; SPLC, "Alt-Right"; Hankes and Amend, "Alt-Right Is Killing People."

18. J. Berger, "Trump Is the Glue." See also J. Berger, *Extremism*.

19. SPLC, "Alt-Right"; Anti-Defamation League, "Alt Right"; SPLC, "Flags and Other Symbols."

20. J. Berger, "Trump Is the Glue."

21. Healy, "Five People Who Died"; Phillips and Stevenson, "Analysis."

22. Gray, "Former Homeland Security Official."

23. Joshua Green, *Devil's Bargain*; Dreyfuss, "Sebastian Gorka"; Rucker, "Sebastian Gorka."

24. Williams and Siemaszko, "State Department Worker"; Gray, "Former Homeland Security Official."

25. Kranz, Cranley, and Colarossi, "Stephen Miller."

26. Serwer, "Trump's White-Nationalist Vanguard."

27. J. Berger, "Trump Is the Glue"; see also Serwer, "Trump's White-Nationalist Vanguard."

28. Clover, *Black Wind, White Snow*; Faiola, "Austria's Right-Wing Populism"; Frayer, "Hindu Nationalism"; Tavan, "Aggressive Nationalism."

29. Laub, "Hate Speech."

30. "Hate Speech Exacerbating."

31. "Hate Speech 'on Notice.'"

32. Ortutay, "Facebook." For a discussion of nationalism as a positive discourse, see Lowry, *Case for Nationalism*. As the discussion here makes clear, I strongly disagree with Lowry's view of nationalism; however, it is outside the scope of this chapter to review his arguments in detail.

33. Niayesh, "Trump's Travel Ban"; Miroff and Blanco, "Trump Ramps Up"; Chaudhry, "India's New Law."

34. For an overview of those nations that have hate speech regulations, see D'Souza and Boyle, *Striking a Balance*.

35. Matsuda et al., *Words That Wound*, 1.

36. Whitney v. California, 274 U.S. 357 (1927) at 377.

37. Snyder v. Phelps, 562 U.S. 443 (2011) at 15.

38. C. Smith, "*Snyder v. Phelps*," 7.

39. Bruner and Balter-Reitz, "*Snyder v. Phelps*," 651.

40. Hunton and Williams, "Final Report."

41. I am indebted to Bryan Crable for introducing me to Wilden's theories.

42. Wilden, *Rules Are No Game*; Wilden, *Man and Woman*.

43. Whillock and Slayden, *Hate Speech*; Waltman and Haas, *Communication of Hate*; Calvert, "Hate Speech and Its Harms"; Downing, "Hate Speech"; Haiman, *Speech Acts*; Peters, *Courting the Abyss*.

44. Cortese, *Opposing Hate Speech*; Gelber, *Speaking Back*; Matsuda et al., *Words That Wound*.

45. McKinnon et al., *Text + Field*, 5, 4.

46. McKinnon et al., 6.

47. Pezzullo, "Resisting," 350.

48. Middleton, Senda-Cook, and Endres, "Articulating Rhetorical Field Methods." See also Hess, "Critical-Rhetorical Ethnography."

49. McKinnon et al., *Text + Field*, 5.

50. McGee, "Social Movement."

51. Perhaps the closest thing to an anti-hate movement would be antifascism; however, antifascists do not characterize their work as combating hate per se.

52. "Victims."

53. The Phelps are the respondents named in the controversial Supreme Court case *Snyder v. Phelps*.

54. SPLC, "Westboro Baptist Church"; Anti-Defamation League, "Westboro Baptist Church."

55. "Anti-gay Preachers Banned"; Van Atta, "Canada Denies Entry."

56. Deutsch, "Church Funeral Protests."

57. Dwyer, "Westboro Baptist Church."

58. Brouwer and Hess, "Making Sense," 70.

59. Sieczkowski, "Westboro Church's Disgusting Plan"; Stenovec, "Sandy Hook Vigil"; "Westboro Baptist Church Thanks."

60. Westboro has a history of lying about their presence at funerals. Caroom, "Staged Photo?"; Dolan, "Westboro Baptists Caught Lying."

61. Mazzoni Center, "About Mazzoni."

62. Mazzoni Center, "Meeting Hate with Love."

63. SPLC, "Frequently Asked Questions."

64. SPLC, "Proud Boys."

65. McCrummen and Izadi, "Confederate Flag Comes Down."

66. Blinder, "Ku Klux Klan."

67. Lacour, "KKK and African-American Group."

68. It's Going Down, "All Out Atlanta Says"; Grinberg and Sandoval, "'Pro-White,' Anti-KKK Groups."

69. Stone Mountain Park, "Stone Mountain Park"; Engebretson, "Modern Ku Klux Klan."

70. For more information on some of these groups, see "Tallahassee SDS," Facebook, December 8, 2019, https://www.facebook.com/tallysds; J. King, "'Bastards' Motorcycle Club"; "Bastards Motorcycle Club," Facebook, December 7, 2019, https://www.facebook.com/803bastastardsMC; Black Lives Matter, "Black Lives Matter."

71. Romo, "Wake of Charlottesville"; Steelman, "Police Increasing Security."

72. Fortin, "Neo-Nazi Rally."

73. Owen, "Here's All the Protests." Kessler's attempts to secure a permit for Unite the Right 2 in Charlottesville failed.

74. ANSWER Coalition, "Act Now to Stop War"; "D.C. United Against Hate," Facebook, March 8, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/DCAgainstHate.

75. Benshoff, "Proud Boys."

76. SPLC, "Keystone United"; SPLC, "Proud Boys"; SPLC, "Active Patriot Groups."

77. Pushback Campaign, "#PushBack"; One People's Project, "Hate Has Consequences."

78. McKinnon et al., *Text + Field*, 8, 4.

79. McKinnon et al., 2 (emphasis added).

80. McKinnon et al., 19.

81. Hikins and Cherwitz, "Engaged University," 115.

82. Frey et al., "Looking for Justice," 110.

83. Frey and Carragee, *Communication for Social Change*, 10.

84. Frey and Carragee; Frey and Carragee, *Media and Performance Activism*; Gunn and Lucaites, "Contest of Faculties"; Quaye, Shaw, and Hill, "Blending Scholar."

85. Frey, "Across the Great Divides," 36.

86. Kahn and Lee, *Activism and Rhetoric*, 1.

87. Frey, "Across the Great Divides," 45.

88. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 241.

89. Billie Murray, field notes, July 18, 2015, Columbia, S.C.

CHAPTER I

1. Anton, *Selfhood and Authenticity*; Kingwell, "Walk on the Wilden Side"; Thayer, *Pieces.*

2. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 233.

3. Wilden, *Rule Are No Games*, front matter, 303, 183.

4. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 267, 259, 232.

5. Wilden, 232.

6. Wilden, 237.

7. Wilden, 233–34.

8. Wilden, 235.

9. Hare and Weinstein, "General Introduction," 1–2.

10. Ober, *Athenian Revolution*; Rousseau, *Major Political Writings*; Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*.

11. Peters, *Courting the Abyss*, 15.

12. Habermas, *Structural Transformation*. For critiques, see Calhoun, *Habermas*; and Plot, "Communicative Action's Democratic Deficit."

13. Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere."

14. Rauchfleisch, "Public Sphere."

15. Brown, *Hate Speech Law*, 190.

16. Meiklejohn, *Political Freedom*, 75.

17. Weinstein, "Hate Speech, Viewpoint Neutrality," 148.

18. Weinstein, "American Free Speech Doctrine," 86.

19. Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire, 315 U.S. 568 (1942).

20. Lawrence, "If He Hollers," 70 (emphasis added).

21. Matsuda, "Public Response," 35.

22. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*, 123.

23. *Council Framework Decision*.

24. Ukah, "Africa and Free/Hate Speech"; Walker, "Freedom of Expression."

25. United Nations, *Civil and Political Rights*.

26. Greene, "Hate Speech," 94.

27. United Nations, *Racial Discrimination*.

28. Weinstein, "American Free Speech Doctrine," 91.

29. Greene, "Hate Speech," 95.

30. NAACP v. Alabama ex rel. Patterson, 357 U.S. 449 (1958); Terminiello v. Chicago, 337 U.S. 1 (1949).

31. National Socialist Party of America v. Village of Skokie, 432 U.S. 43 (1977).

32. Strum, *When the Nazis Came*, 135.

33. Bollinger, *Tolerant Society*, 10.

34. Peters, *Courting the Abyss*, 162–63.

35. Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance."

36. Peters, *Courting the Abyss*.

37. R.A.V. v. City of St. Paul, 505 U.S. 377 (1992).

38. FIRE, "Spotlight on Speech Codes." Although I do not agree with many of FIRE's evaluations of free speech issues nor the assumption that they are nonpartisan—because of their clear promotion of a neoliberal agenda in higher education—I cite them here because they provide a comprehensive account of campus speech codes, such as this spotlight report, and are often cited as a clearinghouse for data on such issues.

39. Doe v. University of Michigan, 721 F. Supp. 852 (E.D. Mich. 1989); UWM Post v. Board of Regents of University of Wisconsin, 774 F. Supp. 1163 (E.D. Wis. 1991); Dambrot v. Central Michigan University, 839 F. Supp. 477 (E.D. Mich. 1993).

40. Greene, "Hate Speech," 98.

41. Jacobson and Schlink, "Hate Speech and Self-Restraint," 236.

42. Downing, "Hate Speech," 175.

43. Tsesis, *Destructive Messages*.

44. Whillock and Slayden, *Hate Speech*.

45. Waltman and Haas, *Communication of Hate*, 7.

46. Matsuda, "Public Response," 24.

47. Delgado, "Words That Wound." See also Maitra and McGowan, *Speech and Harm*.

48. Gelber and McNamara, "Evidencing the Harms." Hate speech has continued to grow unabated since those studies were conducted in the 1980s and 1990s, possibly reaching its public zenith leading up to and following the 2016 presidential election. Thus, it makes sense to conclude that these harms have also continued to persist, or perhaps have gotten worse, for targeted people.

49. Sethi, *American Hate*.

50. Murrow and Murrow, "Hypothetical Neurological Association"; Soral, Bilewicz, and Winiewski, "Exposure to Hate Speech."

51. Waldron, *Harm in Hate Speech*, front matter, 5.

52. Calvert, "Hate Speech and Its Harms," 6.

53. Matsuda, "Public Response," 24–25.

54. Bojarska, *Dynamics of Hate Speech*.

55. Brown, *Hate Speech Law*, 189.

56. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 235.

57. *Whitney*, 274 U.S. at 357, 377.

58. Matsuda, "Public Response."

59. Gelber, "Reconceptualizing Counterspeech," 206.

60. Gelber, in *Speaking Back*, details policy suggestions through which the state could support targets of hate speech to meet their more-speech burden; however, such policies have never been adopted into the counterspeech system.

61. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*, 126.

62. Wilden, *Rules Are No Game*, 305.

63. Haiman, *Speech Acts*, 27, 29.

64. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*.

65. Haiman, *Speech Acts*, 30. I would be remiss if I did not note Haiman's reference here to *potential* consequences in this context that he summarily dismisses in his discussion of the *potential* harms of hate speech.

66. Haiman, *Speech Acts*, 30.

67. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

68. Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action*, 15.

69. See, for example, Austin, *How to Do Things*.

70. As cited in Kenny, "Rhetoric of Kevorkian's Battle," 393.

71. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*, 160.

72. Greene, "Hate Speech," 93.

73. Peters, *Courting the Abyss*, 20.

74. Rosenfeld, "Constitutional Jurisprudence," 288–89.

75. Tsesis, *Destructive Messages*, loc. 3952 of 5513.

76. Matsuda, "Public Response," 38.

77. Gelber, *Speaking Back*, 10; see also Gelber, "Reconceptualizing Counterspeech."

78. Gelber, "Reconceptualizing Counterspeech," 214.

79. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*, 150, 158.

80. Cortese, *Opposing Hate Speech*, 138–39.

81. Wilden, *Rules Are No Game*, 47.

82. D'Souza and Boyle, *Striking a Balance*, v.

83. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*, 154.

84. "World Press Freedom Index"; Freedom House, "Freedom in the World."

85. Tsesis, *Destructive Messages*; Suhrke, *Path of a Genocide*; Cotler, "State-Sanctioned Incitement."

86. Lest I be accused of Godwin's law, it is important to note that there are ways to combat such Hitleresque inevitabilities; I outline these strategies specifically in chapter 3.

87. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*, 99.

88. Adams and Keene, *Alice Paul*; Blackstock, *Cointelpro*; James Green, *Death in the Haymarket*; J. Haas, *Assassination of Fred Hampton*.

89. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*, 101. The examples from South Africa should be understood within the context of apartheid in the 1990s, when this report was compiled. Similarly, the only other countries reporting a problem with reverse enforcement were Sri Lanka, who had just come out of a repressive civil war, and Israel, who has a unique and complex history with regard to religious minority groups. For a nuanced discussion of Israel, anti-Semitism, and hate speech regulations, see Matsuda, "Public Response."

90. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*

91. Delgado and Stefancic, 151.

92. D'Souza and Boyle, *Striking a Balance*.

93. Delgado and Stefancic, *Must We Defend Nazis?*, 128.

94. White, "Law as Rhetoric," 684.

95. In my experience this question can be forwarded in bad faith, to shut down conversation about the issue. This works when people disingenuously argue that they don't know what hate speech is or how to possibly discern the difference between hate speech and other forms of political speech. I ignore the disingenuous deployment of this question and instead address it in this section as one of legitimate concern to those genuinely interested in working to address the problem of hate speech.

96. "Justin Trudeau Apologizes"; "Virginia Governor Embroiled"; Dastagir, "White Kid to Dress Up"; Petter, "Vogue Apologises"; Flaherty, "Free Speech Purist"; Irons, "Official's Use of N-Word."

97. Matsuda, "Public Response," 34–35.

98. Brandenburg v. Ohio, 395 U.S. 444 (1969).

99. Miller v. California, 413 U.S. 15 (1973).

100. United States v. Stevens, 559 U.S. 460 (2010) at 470 (emphasis added).

101. Greene, "Hate Speech," 99.

102. Wilden, *Rules Are No Game*, 47.

CHAPTER 2

1. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 233.

2. Wilden, 233.

3. Norander and Galanes, "Bridging the Gap"; Pearce and Pearce, "Extending the Theory"; Phillips, *Promise of Dialogue*.

4. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 234, 236.

5. Although I am separating these tactics and their constitutive elements here, these tactics are often imbricated, and those working to combat hate may use a number of different tactics. For example, although I talk about exit programs utilizing an interpersonal approach, these programs also utilize public dissemination. I focus on their interpersonal tactics for the sake of clarity and because they are one of the only programs that utilizes an interpersonal approach. Similar overlap may be true of other tactics explored throughout this chapter. My goal is not to critique specific programs but to provide an account of the *tactics'* strengths and weaknesses.

6. EXIT-Deutschland, "Exit-Germany."

7. Migration and Home Affairs, "Radicalisation Awareness Network."

8. Lenz, "Life After Hate."

9. Life After Hate, "Our Programs."

10. Life After Hate, "Who We Are."

11. Life After Hate, "Our Programs."

12. EXIT-Deutschland, "Aims."

13. Bubolz and Simi, "Leaving the World"; Horgan et al., "Walking Away"; Koehler, *Understanding Deradicalization*; Norman, "Assessment of De-radicalization Hypothesis"; Suratman, "Effectiveness of De-radicalization."

14. EXIT-Deutschland, "EXIT-Germany."

15. Life After Hate, "Our Impact."

16. Lenz, "Life After Hate."

17. Renkl, "How to Talk."

18. Rich, "Extremist Beliefs Can Change"; Broockman and Kalla, "Durably Reducing Transphobia."

19. Jovanovic et al., "Promoting Deliberative Democracy," 69.

20. Alimo, "From Dialogue to Action"; Barge and Little, "Dialogical Wisdom"; Black and Wiederhold, "Discursive Strategies"; D'Andrea and Daniels, "Dealing with Institutional Racism"; Gayles et al., "Faculty Teaching Diversity"; Ramasubramanian, Sousa, and Gonlin, "Facilitated Difficult Dialogues"; Zoller, "Place You Haven't Visited."

21. Campus Pride, "Stop the Hate"; Human Rights Campaign, "Stop the Hate."

22. Campus Pride, "Stop the Hate."

23. DeTurk, "Allies in Action."

24. Not in Our Town, "Why This Matters."

25. SPLC, "Ten Ways."

26. Not in Our Town, "Why This Matters."

27. Erase the Hate, "About."

28. Not in Our Town, "NIOT and NIOS Workshops."

29. Not in Our Town, "Why This Matters."

30. Not in Our Town, "About Us."

31. Peters, *Speaking into the Air*, 33–34.

32. McPhail, "(Im)Possibility of Dialogue."

33. Tonn, "Taking Conversation," 406. See also Cloud, *Control and Consolation*; and Schudson, "Soul of Democracy."

34. Not in Our Town, *Not in Our Town*.

35. Not in Our Town, *Manhattan Beach*.

36. Erase the Hate, "Meet the Change Makers."

37. SPLC, "Ten Ways."

38. Gelber, "Reconceptualizing Counterspeech."

39. Cortese, *Opposing Hate Speech*, 139.

40. Partners Against Hate, "Educators Against Hate."

41. Wilden, *Man and Woman*.

42. Wilden, 235.

43. Donovan and Boyd, "Case for Quarantining."

44. Panetta, "Twitter Reportedly Won't Use"; Birnbaum, "Twitter Pushes Back." See also Data and Society, "Media Manipulation."

45. Leslie and Park, "Newnan Police."

46. U.S. Department of Defense, *Dueling Demonstrations*.

47. Strum, *When the Nazis Came*, 17, 18.

48. Waltman and Haas, *Communication of Hate*, 148.

49. Portions of this section on apolitical tactics first appeared in Billie Murray, "Words That Wound, Bodies that Shield: Corporeal Responses to Westboro Baptist Church's Hate Speech," *First Amendment Studies* 50, no. 1 (2016): 32–34, https://doi.org/10.1080/21689725.2016.1189345, reprinted by permission of the publisher (Taylor & Francis Ltd, http://www.tandfonline.com). Although I argue in that article that apolitical tactics are nonconfrontational, upon further reflection and study, I have amended that claim here, as explained in this section.

50. Laramie and Matthew, "Angel Action."

51. My references to PGR actions were derived mostly from their official website and their promotional video "Patriot Guard." Although the NRA Life of Duty Network produced the video, it includes interviews with various members of PGR as well as footage depicting their actions.

52. Patriot Guard Riders, "Our History."

53. Patriot Guard Riders, "Welcome to the PGR."

54. NRA Life of Duty, "Patriot Guard" (emphasis added).

55. "Angel Action."

56. "Angel Action."

57. Murray, field notes, June 25, 2015, Charleston, S.C.

58. NRA Life of Duty, "Patriot Guard."

59. Patriot Guard Riders, "Code of Conduct."

60. NRA Life of Duty, "Patriot Guard."

61. Nickel, "Free Speech."

62. Bezanson, "*Snyder v. Phelps*," 33.

63. "Angel Action."

64. Laramie and Matthew, "Angel Action."

65. Murray, field notes, June 25, 2015, Charleston, S.C.

66. Patriot Guard Riders, "Welcome to the PGR."

67. Simmons, "*Snyder v. Phelps* Ruling," 31 (emphasis added).

68. Respect for the Funerals of Fallen Heroes, Pub. L. No. 109–464, 120 Stat. 3480 (2006). https://uscode.house.gov/statutes/pl/109/464.pdf.

69. "Angel Action."

70. Patterson, "Let Westboro Baptist Have."

71. NRA Life of Duty, "Patriot Guard."

72. C. Haas, "Materializing Public and Private," 232.

73. *Snyder*, 562 U.S. (emphasis added).

74. Herbeck, "Beyond *Snyder v. Phelps*," 26 (emphasis added).

75. *Snyder*, 562 U.S.

76. C. Smith, "*Snyder v. Phelps*," 6.

77. Murray, field notes, June 25, 2015, Charleston, S.C.

78. Emanuel AME Church has a long history of resistance to slavery and civil rights activism, dating back to its founding in 1791. See Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal, "Brief History."

79. Interestingly, none of the participants I met who participated in the Human Wall action were Black, despite the large numbers of Black mourners and community members I observed in the space surrounding the church during my time there. Though the focus of this chapter does not permit sufficient attention to this issue, it is worth noting that the history of activism within the AME church is not, in my experience, largely understood or acknowledged by white parishioners of other churches in the area. This is perhaps due, in part, to the continued segregation of most congregations in the southern United States.

80. Donna Clark, "Human Wall Barrier to Protect AME Funerals," Facebook, June 29, 2015, https://www.facebook.com/events/384423898421487/?active_tab=posts.

81. For an example of the political nature of the eulogies offered for the Emanuel Nine, see Sack and Harris, "Obama Eulogizes Charleston Pastor."

82. Oliver, "Metalheads with Kazoos."

83. Sisters, "Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence."

84. Planting Peace, "Equality House."

85. Nichols, "Dumbledore and Gandalf."

86. Murray, field artifacts, July 26, 2016, Philadelphia.

87. Murray, field artifacts.

88. Oliver, "Metalheads with Kazoos."

89. Unicorn Riot, *Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence*.

90. Sisters, "Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence."

91. Deuteronomy 22:11 (NIV) reads, "Do not wear clothes of wool and linen woven together." Matthew 21:19 (NIV) reads, "Seeing a fig tree by the road, he [Jesus] went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, 'May you never bear fruit again!' Immediately the tree withered."

92. Nichols, "Dumbledore and Gandalf." The wedding occurred before Rowling's controversial transphobic statements were made public.

93. Cresci, "German Town Tricks Neo-Nazis." The legal challenges surrounding the march in Wunsiedel have a complex history. Currently, the march is permitted because it is considered a commemorative march and therefore does not fall under German Basic Law that forbids Nazi propaganda. See Hipp, "Germany's Nazi Exception."

94. Cresci, "German Town Tricks Neo-Nazis."

95. Milhiser, "German Town Turned Neo-Nazis."

96. Milhiser.

97. Stolman, "German Activists Are Trolling."

98. Cresci, "German Town Tricks Neo-Nazis."

99. Milhiser, "German Town Turned Neo-Nazis."

100. Two events, Operation Make Lemonade and the Daily Constitutional, are mentioned briefly in an article about Wunsiedel; see Milhiser. However, I have been unable to find any references to these events elsewhere online, indicating their limited participation.

101. Confrontations with Westboro appear to be an exception, because Westboro is still viewed largely as a nuisance.

102. For more on the importance of context when understanding humor in protest, see Bruner, "Carnivalesque Protest."

103. For more information on these groups, see Coweta County, "African American Alliance"; McClatchy, "Black Educators"; and "Jewish Solidarity Caucus," Facebook, December 8, 2019, https://www.facebook.com/JewishSolidarityCaucus.

104. Murray, field notes, November 17, 2018, Philadelphia. "Phanatics" is a reference to the Phillie Phanatic, mascot for the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team.

105. Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West*; M. King, *Papers*; Kosek, *Acts of Conscience*; Long, *We the Resistance*.

106. At the Martin Luther King Jr. Keynote Address I attended at Villanova University, civil rights activist Diane Nash stated, "We were not passivists; we were activists." "My Life."

107. Murray, personal communication, July 18, 2015, Columbia, S.C.

108. Coweta County, "African American Alliance."

109. Murray, personal communication.

110. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 241, 240.

CHAPTER 3

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1. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 241.

2. The police are the material instantiation of the state through their enforcement of state laws and policies.

3. U.S. Department of Defense, *Dueling Demonstrations*.

4. Lacour, "KKK and African-American Group"; Novacic, "Tale of Two Rallies."

5. Haiman, "Rhetoric of the Streets," 108.

6. Porta and Reiter, *Policing Protest*; Porta, Peterson, and Reiter, *Policing of Transnational Protest*.

7. Associated Press, "Ferguson Protesters Sue"; Gabbatt, "Protests About Police Brutality"; Kindy, Jacobs, and Farenthold, "Protests Against Police Brutality."

8. Lanxon and Savov, "Twitter Flags President"; Department of Justice Office, "William P. Barr's Statement."

9. Schenwar, Macaré, and Price, *Who Do You Serve*.

10. Fernandez, *Policing Dissent*; Low and Smith, *Politics of Public Space*; Mitchell, *Right to the City*.

11. After Black Lives Matter activists engaged in civil disobedience by blocking traffic during their protests, some states attempted to pass legislation that would protect drivers who hit protesters with their cars, further revealing of the state's active attempts to quell dissent. Andone, "States That Have Introduced Bills."

12. Murray, "Disciplining Disruption"; see Oreb, "Case Comment," on kettling as a tactic that police use to corral groups of protesters into a confined area to prevent them from protesting.

13. Balko, *Rise of the Warrior Cop*; Burkhardt and Baker, "Agency Correlates"; Fisher, *SWAT Madness*; Kappeler and Kraska, "Normalising Police Militarisation"; Lieblich and Shinar, "Case Against Police Militarization"; Moule, Fox, and Parry, "Long Shadow of Ferguson"; Wood, *Crisis and Control*.

14. Physicians for Human Rights, "Lethal in Disguise"; M. Berger, "Nonlethal Weapons." There are many terms for referring to these weapons, including *nonlethal*, *less lethal*, *less than lethal*, *compliance*, *crowd control*, and *pain inducing*.

15. Mathias, "Militarized Cops." The video at the conclusion of this article is indicative of the jarring sight of tactical military vehicles in this space.

16. For more information about this group of legal observers who work to ensure the rights of protesters, see National Lawyers Guild, "Law for the People."

17. Of course, restrictions on face masks changed dramatically over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

18. Haag, "Illegal to Wear Masks."

19. Politi, "Neo-Nazi Counterprotesters."

20. Unmasking Antifa Act of 2018, Pub. L. No. HR 6054 (2018), https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/6054. Interestingly, at the Second Amendment rally in Richmond, Virginia, in January 2020, numerous armed militia members wore masks but were not detained or even asked by police to remove them. One woman of color not affiliated with the rally, however, was arrested for refusing to remove her bandana. See "Richmond Woman Charged."

21. See also Levin, "Revealed."

22. Combative tactics can be enacted by anyone in the field, regardless of whether they explicitly identify as antifascist. However, most of the people I have encountered in the field who engage in combative tactics identify as antifascist. Therefore, in what follows, for simplicity's sake I use the shorthand equation of "those who engage in combative tactics" with "antifascists."

23. Steinmetz, "Fighting Words"; Suerth, "What Is Antifa?"; Stack, "Attack on Alt-Right Leader."

24. "NYPD Commissioner."

25. Parke, "Antifa Apocalypse?"; Rupp, "Not a Political Movement"; Thiessen, "Moral Equivalent." Although some of these articles are marked as opinion pieces, their appearance in mainstream media outlets is revealing of their assumed credibility in the public sphere.

26. Alba, "Misinformation About George Floyd"; Biesecker et al., "President Trump Condemns"; DeVega, "As the People Rise Up"; Feldman, "Trump's Antifa Threat"; Mac-Farquhar, Feuer, and Goldman, "Federal Arrests."

27. Imber, "Symposium."

28. Pyrooz and Densley, "On Public Protest," 229, 232, 234.

29. Birchall, *Beating the Fascists*; Bray, *Antifa*; Copsey, "Militant Antifascism"; Weiß, "Civil Society." Centering antifascists' ideology, as these scholars and I do, of course, has consequences, but what is important is ensuring that such choices and interpretations are grounded in empirical evidence in the historical record and research with antifascists, as opposed to simply dismissing certain evidence as "irrelevant."

30. LaFree, "Is Antifa a Terrorist Group?"

31. Ryun, "Domestic Terrorist Organization."

32. Testa, "Good Deal of Disorder," 11.

33. Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Domestic Terrorism"; Anti-Defamation League, "Sovereign Citizen Movement"; SPLC, "Sovereign Citizens Movement."

34. MacNab, "Las Vegas Police Killings."

35. LaFree, "Is Antifa a Terrorist Group?," 251, 252.

36. Phillips and Yi, "Charlottesville Paradox."

37. Hankes and Amend, "Alt-Right Is Killing People."

38. Associated Press, "White Supremacists Plead Guilty"; Victor, "Third Man Arrested"; Duggan, "Charge Upgraded"; Held, "Federal Hate Crime Charges."

39. Feuer, "Deadly Charlottesville Rally."

40. Copsey, "Militant Antifascism."

41. Bray, *Antifa*, xiv.

42. Copsey, "Militant Antifascism," 243.

43. Kelly, "Grunt Work of Antifascism."

44. Of course, this holds true not only for antifascists but for any community members that attend a protest to ensure the safety of protesters and the larger community. However, in this section I want to emphasize that antifascists' tactics vary and are often nonviolent in nature.

45. Kelly, "Grunt Work of Antifascism."

46. Bray, *Antifa*, 168, xvi.

47. Although many scholars talk about antifascists' tactics as *militant*, I use the term *combative* to describe their tactics, in keeping with Wilden's terminology and the uniqueness of counterspeech spaces.

48. Bray, 150.

49. Bray, 150.

50. Wilden, *Rules Are No Game*, 48.

51. For a review of other tactics or techniques of fascist organizing, see Burke, "Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle"; and Stanley, *How Fascism Works*.

52. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 239.

53. CrimethInc, "Anti-fascism Is Self-Defense" (emphasis added). See also Bray, *Antifa*; and Burley, *Fascism Today*.

54. Of course, this is not to say that this framing must be uncritically accepted as ideologically or ethically sound by audiences or scholars, but I would emphasize that understanding how it is articulated to particular tactics is vital for understanding how different publics combat hate.

55. Bray, *Antifa*, 169.

56. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 264.

57. *Deplatforming* can also refer to corporate social media sites banning users for violations of their terms of service. Activists have had some success in assisting with this deplatforming; however, in this section I focus exclusively on the physical deplatforming tactics I have observed in the field. See Chandrasekharan et al., "You Can't Stay Here"; and McKay, "Reddit's Bigoted Jerkwards."

58. Burley, *Fascism Today*, 10.

59. Herrman, "Who's Responsible."

60. E. Smith, *No Platform*.

61. Flygec, *1999 Battle of Seattle*. Protesters used similar tactics to successfully block attendees from accessing entrances to the inauguration of Donald Trump in January 2017.

62. *Terminiello*, 337 U.S.; Feiner v. New York, 340 U.S. 315 (1951); Brown v. Louisiana, 383 U.S. 131 (1966); *National Socialist Party*, 432 U.S.; Forsyth County v. Nationalist Movement, 505 U.S. 123 (1992).

63. Greenberg, "Heckler's Veto."

64. Bray, *Antifa*, 144.

65. Sethi, *American Hate*, 156; see also Vysotsky, "Anarchy Police."

66. Bray, *Antifa*, xxiv.

67. Covering the face is also, of course, a defense against police-state surveillance. It also provides some protection from chemical agents deployed by police in the field.

68. Hagerty, "Peek Inside."

69. Beauchamp, "Assault on Conservative Journalist."

70. Bray, *Antifa*, xxiv.

71. Sander, "Right Wing Violence."

72. Rahim, "Far Right Protesters."

73. Moynihan, "Two Proud Boys Sentenced"; Jaquiss, "Joey Gibson."

74. Bacon, "Far-Right Proud Boys"; Wilson, "Portland."

75. Hunton and Williams, "Final Report," 64. Interestingly, the antifascist planning and coordination praised in the Charlottesville context, when discussed in the context of the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020, was talked about as proof of nefarious activity. In a phone interview with a Reuters reporter in June 2020, I was questioned extensively about antifascists' preplanning as if such planning were indicative of intent to engage in violence.

76. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 239.

77. Bray, *Antifa*, 156.

78. Berr, "Milo Yiannopoulos Website"; Kafka, "What Happened"; McCoy, "Imploding"; Siegler and Kelly, "Alt-Right Groups Splinter"; Anti-Defamation League, "Two Years Ago"; Wilson, "Weakening of the 'Alt-Right.'"

79. Lennard, "Is Antifa Counterproductive?"; Svrluga, "Antifa Is Winning."

80. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 235.

81. Wilden, 273–74.
82. Wilden, 280.
83. CrimethInc, "Anti-fascism Is Self-Defense."
84. Ivie, "Enabling Democratic Dissent," 50 (emphasis added).
85. Murray, field notes, April 23, 2016, Stone Mountain, Ga.
86. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 282.
87. Wilden, 237–38.

CHAPTER 4

1. Being "allied" usually refers to nation-states joining forces during war time; therefore I use this term in keeping with the "field of combat" metaphor explored in chapter 3. Thus the term *allied* here indicates how tactics can be combined or united for mutual benefit in the field of combat. For a discussion of the etymology of terms such as *alliance* or *coalition*, see Chavez, *Queer Migration Politics*.

2. Chavez, 307, 286.

3. Most of the antifascists I have encountered in the field have been white. However, in recent years, especially since the 2016 election, I have noticed an increased number of BIPOC participating in black blocs and antifascist organizing. For specific and historical accounts of Black-led antifascist resistance, see Cleaver, "Political Murder"; Black Panther Party, "Call for a United Front"; Birchall, *Beating the Fascists*; and Vials, *Haunted by Hitler*.

4. Arendt, *On Violence*; Bowen, "Does Non-violence Persuade?"; Bowen, "Future of Non-violence"; Cobb, *Get You Killed*; Gelderloos, *How Nonviolence Protects*; Kinshasa, *Black Resistance*; Meckfessel, *Nonviolence*; T. Smith, *Weird John Brown*.

5. As these trainings indicate, and as I would also stress, those without proper training in self-defense should not engage in combative tactics.

6. Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 275.

7. Wilden, *Rules Are No Game*, 47. There are, of course, a number of other meaning systems that contribute to these divisions. In fact, one of the key contributions of Wilden's work is his exploration of the imperialist, misogynist, racist, and capitalist systems that work to divide and rule differently minoritized peoples.

8. Neighborhood Anarchist Collective, "St Paul Principles Flyer."

9. Baker, "Use That Word"; Blake, "Trump's Embrace."

10. Hennessy-Fiske, "Migrant Children Have Died"; Romero, "Militia in New Mexico."

11. Haag and Fortin, "Two Killed in Portland"; Chokshi, "Kroger Shooting Suspect"; Zapotosky, Barrett, and Berman, "Suspect in Pittsburgh Synagogue."

12. Sethi, *American Hate*, 160.

13. My own cis appearance, age, class, and skin privileges, of course, also contribute to this ease in those spaces.

14. Richmond Police (@BeQueerDoCrime), "Anti-fascist Work Is so Much More Than Masking Up and Confronting Violent Fascists in the Streets," Twitter, January 30, 2020, https://twitter.com/BeQueerDoCrime/status/1222887532930785280.

15. DeLuca and Peeples, "Public Sphere," 138.

16. Tom Tancredo would be considered a controversial speaker or even a purveyor of hate speech, based on his well-documented nativist rhetoric that dehumanizes immigrants. His speech at the University of North Carolina was sponsored by the now-defunct Youth for Western Civilization, and its content was advertised as discussing why "illegals" should not be allowed in-state tuition status. For an analysis of Tancredo's nativist

rhetoric, see Waltman and Haas, *Communication of Hate.* Controversies surrounding Charles Murray stem from his widely debunked claims that Black Americans and women are less intellectually capable and employable than white males; see Herrnstein and Murray, *Bell Curve.*

17. Waltman and Haas, *Communication of Hate*, 99.

18. FIRE, "Protesters Disrupt Charles Murray."

19. Students communicated this sentiment to me personally and through social media channels, particularly the student-run Instagram account, "Get Woke Nova."

20. Selk, "Antifa Protesters"; Williams, "Antifa Clashes."

21. There are a number of independent journalists who do engage ethically with protesters; see, for example, Unicorn Riot, "Unicorn Riot."

22. Lithwick, "'Alt-Left' Trump Despises."

23. It's Going Down, "Antifa Saved Their Lives."

24. Jenkins, "Ethics Under Pressure," 172.

25. Lithwick, "'Alt-Left' Trump Despises."

26. "Dr. Cornel West."

27. Mullen and Vials, *U.S. Antifascism Reader*, 277.

28. Alpert, "Praise of Violence," 52, 62.

29. Alpert, 53.

30. Interestingly, some of the journalists covering Charlottesville also seemed, for a short time, to be allied to those combating hate in that context, moving away from the usual "violent antifa" narrative and revealing the possibility of future allied tactics. See, for example, Lithwick, "'Alt-Left' Trump Despises"; Stockman, "Counterprotesters in Charlottesville"; and "What Charlottesville Changed."

31. "Hate Crimes Are on the Rise"; Mangan, "Neo-Nazis and Antifascists Clash"; Murray, "Meeting Hate Speech"; Schroeder, "Professor Attends KKK, Nazi Rallies."

CONCLUSION

1. SPLC, "2020 Hate Map"; Yam, "3,800 Anti-Asian Racist Incidents"; Jett and Robinson, "Chilling Similarities."

2. Harsanyi, "Free-Speech Antagonist."

3. Quoted in Wilden, *Man and Woman*, 238.

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