



Right-Wing Extremism in the United States Mythopoeia and Political Violence

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January 6, 2021, has become a symbol of the far-right in the United States, when extremist groups went out in protests claiming that the elections were fraudulently manipulated under a conspiracy by the deep state. These claims persisted regardless of the fact that there was clear evidence of winning by a substantial margin of over seven million votes and the absence of credible proof of electoral fraud. All irrefutable evidence is belied by the incendiary discourse aiming to mobilize the far-right angry masses rebelling against the results of the 2020 elections and seeking to invalidate them by force.

Extremist Practices

The new right-wing extremists have shown their disdain for the federal government through bigoted practices that resemble the blind fanaticism that ignited the American Civil War between 1861 and 1865. These practices include opposing equality and democracy, claiming to feel marginalized due to the bureaucracy and taxes imposed by the federal government, the dominance of liberal elites, expressing concerns about perceived threats posed by highly advanced modern production processes, relying on technological innovation and preoccupation with efficiency and expertise.

Evangelicals are the most practiced right-wing people. Whether religious or secular, right-wing extremists tend to privilege faith over rational reasoning, prejudice over science, and intuition over critical reflection.

Right-wing extremists have worked hard for achieving political success. They have participated in local and national elections, which had low voter turnout, allowing organized minorities to win seats in city councils, school administrations, and other institutions.

Their beginnings were at the end of President George W. Bush's presidential term. After the country had been burdened by the repercussions of the invasion of Iraq and the economic recession of 2007-2008, the Tea Party movement emerged, a fiscally conservative political movement with far-right and republican tendencies. Following President Obama's assumption of power in 2008 and the intensification of political competition between the two parties, the rhetoric of racist incitement grew and became more prominent. This led to the emergence of a polarized atmosphere in which right-wing extremism flourished. Nationalism quickly became a part of everyday political life, accompanied by an increase in hatred towards foreigners and immigrants.

Similarly, extreme right-wing individuals have made significant contributions to party efforts aimed at restricting voting rights, manipulating electoral districts, banning abortion, closing doors to immigration, and revoking the rights of LGBT and gender non-conforming individuals, as well as reducing taxes for the wealthy and discontinuing social welfare programs.

Myths and Ideologies

Mythopoeia forms the far-right's perception of the world and life. The deeper the right wing delves into ideology, the more fanatical its political affiliations become. Extremists do not allow criticism of their distorted perception of the US. They believe the Golden Age is associated with the dominance of the white man, the supremacy of Christianity, and the continued domination of the rich and proprietors. They also believe that the promise of seeking happiness at the declaration of independence was directed at them alone, not at workers, people of color (black and yellow), women, Native Americans (Amerindians), Asians, or other groups of people.

To justify this romanticized vision, the far-right has come to assume that exploited and disenfranchised groups are happy with these conditions. Traditional (classical) works of reactionary art immortalize that myth as in *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), a movie that celebrates the extremely white-supremacist Ku Klux Klan (KKK) group. Different narratives were told in private and in public and included in school curricula to consolidate and confirm those convictions. Together, these works have forged the belief that those marginalized by their gender, race, culture, or economic status are either too infantilized, too lazy, or too degenerate to seek change on their own. Thus, vulnerable groups lose value, potency, social presence, justifications for objecting to the injustice inflicted upon them, and their ability to rise up to restore their looted rights.

Only one answer makes sense to them and, the more extremist they are, the more this becomes a firm conviction: an evil and cunning cabal has intoxicated those simple souls with crazy notions of equality and incited them to revolt against their preordained inferior status. Whether the conspiracy is led by communists or liberals is irrelevant. The only threat is manifested in the attacks by the disempowered against their legitimate white supremacist, Christian, male rulers, thereby destroying “the greatest nation on earth”.

They also believe that the cabal has let African-American criminals loose on the streets, opened the US borders to immigrant gangs from various countries, and destroyed the morale of the police. Proof of such claims is irrelevant because alternative facts are always available from Fox News and other established right-wing media conglomerates, such as neo-Nazi web-sites. These media outlets have contributed to waves of misinformation that have polarized the country and undermined the realistic, sound discourse, creating differences and contradiction so much that there is no longer a consensus on what constitutes “truth”.

Right-Wing Violence

Dissociating from consultative discourse, the far-right resorts to violence as the only way to settle disputes. There are now more than 500 million weapons in the US. In the wake of hundreds of mass and individual shootings, liberals and other left-leaning individuals have sought to curtail gun sales with scant success .

Not only right-wing extremists, but mainstream conservatives also oppose even the most modest reforms such as the bans on AK-47s. Especially given the many extremist militia actively operating in the US, indeed, the debate over gun control is not simply about the constitutional right to bear arms, but also the ability to employ constitutional debate and democratic freedoms to destroy democracy.

In the aftermath of the January 6th insurrection, extremist factions such as the «Proud Boys» and the «Oath Keepers» sought to downplay the gravity of the event, portraying it as a peaceful gathering. Some went as far as attributing the organization of the insurrection to anti-fascist anarchists known as «Antifa» or protesters advocating against institutional racism associated with the Black Lives Matter movement. Meanwhile, other right-wing extremists dismissed the entire incident as «fake news,» vehemently denying its occurrence. However, the undeniable truth remains that the insurrection was indicative of a disturbing new trend, wherein right-wing extremists

attempted to seize control of state assemblies, targeted and assaulted election observers, illegally entered the residence of Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, resulting in injuries to her husband, conspired to kidnap Governor Gretchen Whitmer (Michigan), perpetrated attacks on synagogues and black churches.

Antisemitism and Islamophobia have run rampant, and racism has become part of the usual political discourse. Calls for censoring critical interpretations of American history and “objectionable” narratives, especially those written by people of color, have grown louder. Instances of disruptions in city council and school board meetings, highlight the rampant gangsterism within the far-right movement.

Political and partisan lobbying by extremists has led to the formulation of an agenda that revolves around the notion of white men being the oppressed minority, advocating against immigration under the guise of protecting the They also promote opposing critical interpretations of American history as an alleged patriotic obligation, opposing reproductive rights in the name of upholding the supporting the death penalty as a means to combat crime, opposing efforts to enhance voting accessibility in order to ensure fair elections, and advocating for tax cuts for the wealthy and the reduction of welfare programs as the sole solution to creating an inclusive economy.

The policies of right-wing extremists primarily favor Christian Evangelicals, religious zealots, white nationalists, extremist gun enthusiasts, outright Nazis, and conspiracy fetishists. Despite being a minority, their provocative methods grant them a disproportionate amount of power relative to their numbers.

In conclusion, it is crucial for thoughtful politicians to adopt strong and principled positions in advocating for egalitarian economic policies, expanding civil liberties, and upholding the values of liberalism. Timidity has never been effective in combating fascism. Elected officials, the media, and the public must collectively address right-wing gangs and exert pressure on the judicial system to prosecute and suppress their activities. Additionally, engaging with young individuals and utilizing media creatively are essential in conveying the truth about extremists to independent voters.