

The Trump Effect: How 2016 Campaign Rallies Explain Spikes in Hate

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ABSTRACT

The 2016 Trump campaign held more than 300 rallies. Our research examines whether these rallies and Trump's rhetoric served as opportunities for the spread of hate. We measured the number of reported white-supremacist propaganda, anti-Semitic incidents, and extremist behaviors that occurred both leading up to and directly following these campaign events. We contend that Trump's rhetoric and rallies increased the perceived threat facing white Americans, heightening their white identity, all while justifying violence and extralegal methods to address their grievances and thereby increasing reported bias incidents. We find that counties that hosted a Trump rally experienced an increase in hate-motivated events. We systematically show that Trump political rallies were associated with a limited size but significant rise in the likelihood of reported hate and bias incidents.

In light of the tragic events that transpired at the US Capitol building on January 6, 2021, it is imperative to examine the effect of Donald Trump's rhetoric on his supporters. The 2016 Trump campaign held more than 300 rallies, with attendance ranging from a few hundred supporters to tens of thousands of devotees. Fiery speeches at these rallies often used contentious language that sometimes closely mirrored narratives of prominent US white nationalists and far-right extremist groups. White nationalists frequently celebrated Trump's candidacy and election to the presidency, including Richard Spencer, who addressed an audience of far-right supporters in Washington, DC, just days after Trump's election, saying, "Hail Trump, hail our people, hail victory" (Lombroso and Appelbaum 2016).

Although organizations (e.g., Anti-Defamation League 2018) postulated that the substantial rise in reported hate incidents across the United States since his election in part are the result of Trump-related white-nationalist enthusiasm, empirical analysis evaluating this link has been minimal. Our research examines whether Trump's rallies resulted in increased reported hate incidents and is more prudent than ever before for both scholars and

security-oriented practitioners. Specifically, we contend that Trump's inflammatory and divisive rhetoric, frequently used at rallies during his presidential campaign, animated white supremacists and stimulated additional hate crime and bias incidents. We used reported hate activities from 2016 and a list of all Trump rallies during this period to analyze the role that these campaign rallies had on the variation of reported bias incidents across the United States. Our research found that counties that hosted a Trump campaign rally were significantly more likely to witness a spike in reported hate incidents in subsequent months.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Presidential rhetoric and its effects have been a critical research area in political science for decades (Cohen 1995; Eshbaugh-Soha and Peake 2011; Wood 2021; Zarefsky 2004). Whereas much of this research focuses on the role that presidential rhetoric has on altering public opinion and affecting agenda setting, a growing body of scholars—particularly following the election of Donald Trump—is interested in the effects that presidential rhetoric may have on broader political processes (Rubin 2020; Sanchez 2018; Schneider 2020). Stuckey (2020, 386) argued that to study presidential power effectively, scholars must examine not only presidential speeches and tweets but also the uptake and circulation of that rhetoric. This article builds on this assertion, suggesting that presidents who frequently and publicly use toxic discourse—particularly language that undermines key political institutions, demeans and stereotypes marginalized groups, and underscores

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imminent threat—are likely to affect more than only the structure of our national conversations, also resulting in changes to constituent behavior (Edwards and Rushin 2018).

Trump's norm-shattering rhetoric also has led scholars to examine how it affects his support and electoral success. Scholars

Perhaps most infamously was Trump's proposed "Muslim Ban" (Blumenfeld 2016). Trump rationalized this decree as necessary for national security, invoking the notion that Islam as a religion and Muslims as a people pose a unique threat to the United States. Another key incident invoking undesirable minority stereotypes

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examined how this rhetoric contributed to Trump's support by underscoring how "the threat of increasing diversity" may make certain whites more likely to favor candidates who promulgate an existential risk from outgroups (e.g., Major, Blodorn, and Blascovich 2018). Lajevardi and Oskooi's (2018) findings underscored a connection between "old-fashioned racism" and support for Trump. Other scholars suggest that this rhetorical mainstreaming of fringe ideas and conspiracy theories may result in violence and the organization of pro-Trump militias to defend against perceived enemies (e.g., Barkun 2017).

Social-psychological theories of identity and intergroup relations demonstrate how demographic, ideological, and political realities make outgroup threats more pronounced, leading to political positions that discriminate against outgroups (McGregor, Prentice, and Nash 2009; Tajfel et al. 1979). For example, Stephan, Diaz-Loving, and Duran's (2000) integrated threat theory uses a combination of tangible (i.e., competition over resources) and symbolic (i.e., destruction of values) threats posed by increasing American diversity to produce increased white prejudice toward immigrants. This aligns with findings that considerable numbers of white Americans have diminishing bias toward minorities and a consequent increase in bias toward whites, intimating that movement toward equality of all groups comes at a specific cost to whites. Thus, the promotion of racial- and ethnic-equality ideas and policies is a threat to some whites, heightening their group identity. According to De Jonge (2016), supporters of then-presidential candidate Trump frequently exhibited this belief.

Major, Blodorn, and Blascovich (2018) found that whites high in ethnic identification were more likely to support Trump and his anti-immigrant policies and to oppose certain political-correctness norms. Furthermore, they found that increased group-status threat and support for Trump was specific to exposed white individuals with high ethnic identification; however, no change was perceived among exposed white individuals with low ethnic identification. Although identifying the tangible effects of political rhetoric on support for candidates who promise to address concerns regarding perceived threats is critical, questions remain regarding the material effects. Studies of minority targeting indicate that whereas bias-motivated incidents and hate crimes tend to occur in predominantly white areas, they are most common when those locations experience a rapid influx of minorities (Green, Glaser, and Rich 1998; Lyons 2007), thereby increasing perceived minority threat to the status quo.

In several instances, Trump evoked negative stereotypes of racial, ethnic, and religious minority groups, speaking to the potential threat that these groups pose to white Americans.

was Trump's quote referring to Mexicans: "They are bringing drugs. They are bringing crime. They are rapists" (Sanchez 2015). This language often is indistinguishable from the contemporary rhetoric of white nationalists.

Not only did Trump use political rhetoric explicitly claiming that minorities are a unique threat to America; he also regularly promoted violence toward his political opponents. For example, on February 1, 2016, Trump said during a speech, "If you see somebody getting ready to throw a tomato, knock the crap out of them, would you. Seriously. I will pay for the legal fees, I promise" (Banfield 2016). The advocacy of violence against political enemies or the ex-post justification is commonplace within hate groups, which seek nonlegal means to respond to perceived threats posed by outgroups.

Another feature of Trump's political rhetoric was his heavy reliance on conspiracy theories, which were used to underscore the severity of the threat posed by his political opponents or groups that interfered with his version of and vision for "American Greatness." For example, at a rally in West Palm Beach, Florida, Trump said, "Hillary Clinton meets in secret with international banks to plot the destruction of US sovereignty in order to enrich these global financial powers, her special-interest friends, and her donors" (Chokshi 2016). As a chief executive of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) observed following the rally, "Mr. Trump focuses on the very issues and themes that obsess conspiratorial anti-Semites: they believe that there is an elite group of Jews who control the media, the government, and banking and who are trying to destroy white America" (Chokshi 2016). Similar to the consequences of the promotion of violence, Trump's espousal of "deep-state" or global conspiracies to constituents purposefully undermined the use of acceptable political behavior and civic activities designed to address social concerns. When the means of the state can no longer be relied on to rebuff threats, extralegal actions such as bias incidents and hate crimes can become more justifiable, closely resembling Black's (1983) theory of crime as a means of justice seeking when turning to law enforcement or government is unreasonable (King and Sutton 2013, 873).

Critical to our analysis is the contention that political rhetoric—which heightens and underscores a threat to group identity—encourages violence and justifies extralegal activities with tangible behavioral consequences. Using political rhetoric to encourage outgroup hostilities is well documented, especially as it relates to economic threats posed by the outgroups (Green, Glaser, and Rich 1998; Horowitz 1985). An externalized threat to the status quo, economic or otherwise, can lead to instability and contribute to hate crimes targeting those perceived as responsible for the

societal strain (Edwards and Rushin 2018, 5; Hall 2014). Karapın (1999), in particular, identified the role that threat-invoking political rhetoric has in targeting immigrants in Western Europe.

Another research area vital to our study explores the link between antecedent events and hate crime and bias-incident variation. Lickel et al. (2006) found that hate crimes can be

sense of legitimacy for the positions being espoused by the speaker because of the many supporters in attendance combined with a greater sense of excitement as a result of the party-like atmosphere at the rallies. Media reports revealed that Trump rallies tended to follow a similar format of “spectacle” more akin to a sporting event than a political meeting (Hall, Goldstein, and Ingram 2016), where

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triggered by specific events that would motivate the need for retributive action by the victimized ingroup toward the responsible outgroup. King and Sutton (2013) expanded the study of the temporal clustering of hate incidents and found that highly visible criminal trials with an interracial component and lethal domestic-terror attacks result in spikes of both religious and racial hate crime. Feinberg (2020a, 2020b) confirmed that larger geopolitical events can affect reported bias incidents: America’s Jewish diaspora faced increased hate crimes during violent Israeli military conflicts.

THEORY

We contend that inflammatory political speech that uses racial, ethnic, and religious tropes excuses the use of violence; promotes conspiracy theories; represents a dangerous oratorical “cocktail” that emboldens ingroup threat; and encourages bias incidents, hate crimes, and extremism. The effect of this dangerous speech is most evident when ardent supporters of the speaker meet at a discrete time and location (e.g., a political rally). Consequently, we expected counties that hosted Trump rallies, which frequently used this incendiary rhetoric, were more likely than other counties that did not host Trump rallies to witness an increase in reported bias incidents.

Several causal reasons explain our expectation that counties that hosted a Trump rally would see heightened minority targeting; however, because of limitations in this study’s data, we cannot specifically evaluate each reason. First, Trump’s political rhetoric drew on perceived threats to whites, thus heightening white identity. The notion of whites losing out to minorities was already common among many Trump supporters (De Jong 2016). Having their cultural and economic fears confirmed by Trump and a community of believers may have bolstered extralegal action to combat these perceived threats posed to whites by “responsible” outgroups. These actions were further encouraged by the frequent usage of conspiracy theories suggesting that the government itself is complicit in the threats facing white Americans, making legal political behavior such as voting or reliance on law enforcement unreliable or insufficient in rectifying their concerns. Furthermore, individuals and groups who are highly sympathetic or openly white supremacist perceived Trump’s political speech as a tool for mainstreaming their political identity and aims. They often interpret the adoration of his millions of supporters as confirmation that their tactics, including those that are extralegal in nature, are succeeding.

Physically attending a rally—as opposed to listening to a report about the event covered by the national media—produces a greater

the audience is encouraged to cheer and boo as Trump “voluminously belittled and mocked his enemies in politics, government, and the press” (Parks 2019). Furthermore, many rallies featured specific calls to action by Trump to attendees. Consequently, we expected counties that hosted Trump rallies, which frequently used incendiary rhetoric, were more likely than other counties to witness spikes in reported bias incidents. We contend that these ingredients resulted in Trump rallies serving as particularly explosive events that led to the increased reporting of hate and bias incidents. For these reasons, we hypothesized the following:

Hypothesis 1: In the months following a Trump rally, the hosting county was more likely to report an increase in hate incidents.

DATA AND METHOD

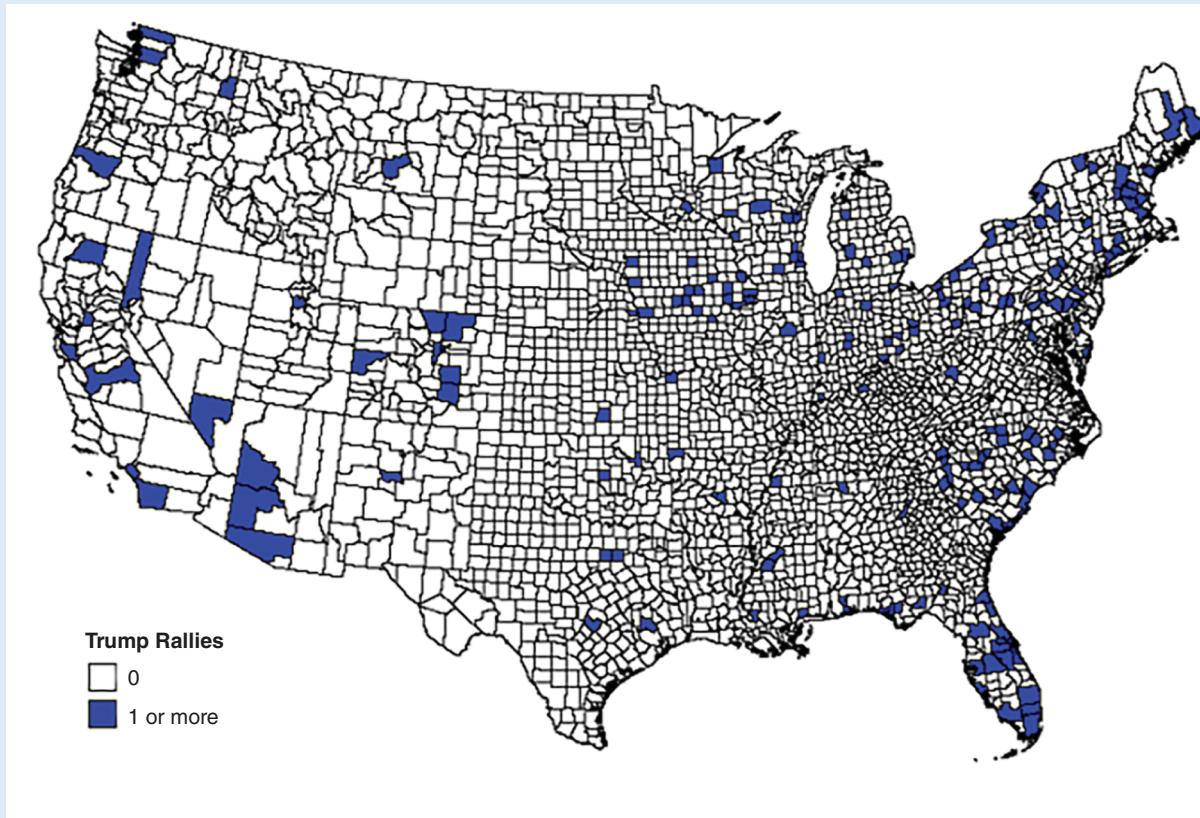
To examine whether the 2016 Trump political rallies¹ influenced incidents targeting minorities, we used two pieces of data (Feinberg, Branton, and Martinez-Ebers 2022). First, we used data compiled by the ADL Center on Extremism regarding hate incidents reported between January 1 and December 31, 2016. These data provide information on the city and date of incidents reported.² Second, we compiled information regarding the city and date of each rally that Trump held between January 1 and December 31, 2016.³

We aggregated the incident data and Trump-rally data to the county level; thus, the unit of analysis was county–month. The aggregation of the data was intended to recognize that exposure to information and the impact of a rally likely extended beyond a singular city. To identify the county in which each Trump rally and hate incidents occurred, we used GIS to locate the county in which each city of a rally and an incident are located. Figure 1 illustrates the wide distribution of Trump-held rallies across the United States. The counties in which Trump held a rally are highlighted in blue.

A logit analysis indicated that the Trump campaign was significantly more likely to hold a rally in an urban area, in the Northeast or Midwest, and in more affluent counties. (This auxiliary analysis is included in the online appendix, table B.) Notably, the findings indicate that county-level hate incidents and state-level hate groups were not significantly associated with the likelihood of the Trump campaign holding a rally. In essence, the urbanness and the regional location influenced the campaign’s decision to hold a rally.

The dependent variable is a count of the hate incidents that occurred in each county by month (i.e., the county–month unit of

Figure 1
Trump Rally Location



Note: This illustrates Trump-held rallies across the United States.

analysis) in 2016. The number of county-month incidents ranged from zero to 16, with a mean of 0.03.⁴ Given the nature of the dependent variable, we used negative binomial regression to estimate the impact of Trump rallies on hate incidents.⁵ The map in figure 2 demonstrates the variation in and number of hate incidents. Darker colors reflect a greater number of hate incidents. Substantively, this figure highlights the vast variability in hate incidents across US counties.

The key independent variable is a dichotomous variable coded “1” if the Trump rally occurred in a county in a month and “0” if there was no rally. We used a one-month lead version of the Trump-rally variable. For example, Trump held a rally in Waukesha County, Wisconsin, in September 2016; therefore, the variable for Waukesha County was coded “1” for October and “0” for all other months. In some instances, Trump held more than one rally in a county—for example, in Fulton County, Georgia, in February and June of 2016. The rally variable for Fulton County was coded “1” for March and July and “0” for all other months.⁶ The structure of the coding of the rally variable accounts for repeated rallies in the same county.

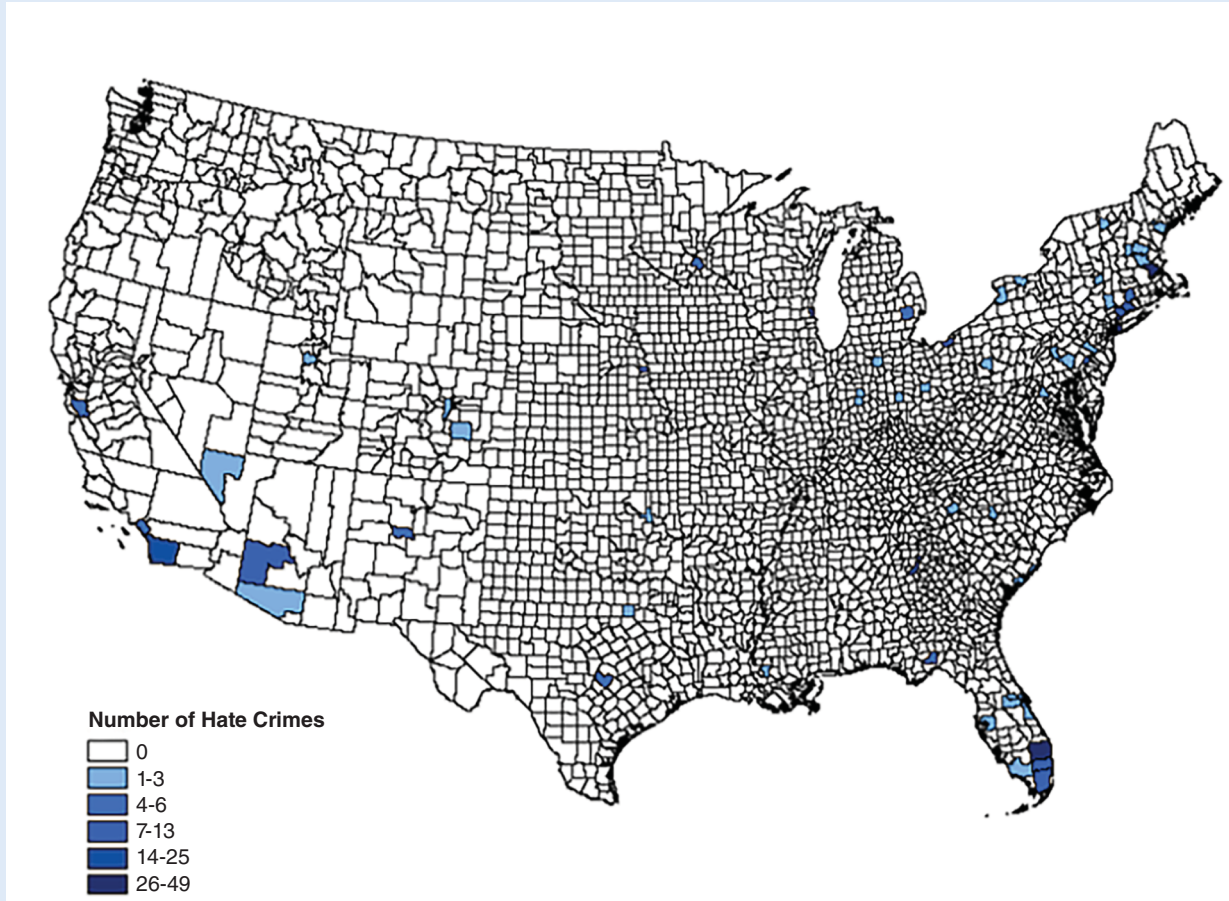
The histograms in figure 3 illustrate the distribution of reported per capita hate incidents. The top-left panel presents the histogram of hate incidents in counties that hosted a rally in the month before the rally; the top-right panel illustrates hate incidents in those same counties in the month after the rally; and the bottom-left panel illustrates hate incidents in counties with no

rally. These three histograms demonstrate that the distributions are heavily right-skewed, meaning that in most months, there were zero reported hate incidents. However, a closer comparison of the panels reveals that the distributions are different. The most notable difference is in the greater presence of hate incidents in the top-right panel (i.e., rally counties, post-rally) compared with other panels. Additionally, reporting of no hate incidents is lowest in the top-right panel compared to other panels.

The analysis includes several control variables: one state-level variable (i.e., hate groups) and six county-level variables (i.e., % urban, Jewish population, violent crime, property crime, partisan context, and regional dummies). We also included a state-level measure of the number of hate groups in 2016 as reported by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) (2018).⁷ Because of the lack of systematic county-level data on hate groups, we used a state-level measure. The number of hate groups ranged from zero to 79, with a mean of 24.6. As the number of hate groups increased within a state, it is likely that the number of incidents targeting minority groups also increased. The analysis included a county-level measure of the percentage of the population that lives in an urban area. We controlled for the percentage urban to account for potential differences in hate incidents in urban compared to rural counties. We included a county-level measure of the estimated per capita Jewish population from the 2011 North American Jewish Data Bank and the 2011 US Census American Community Survey (Comenetz 2012). The per capita Jewish population ranged from

Figure 2

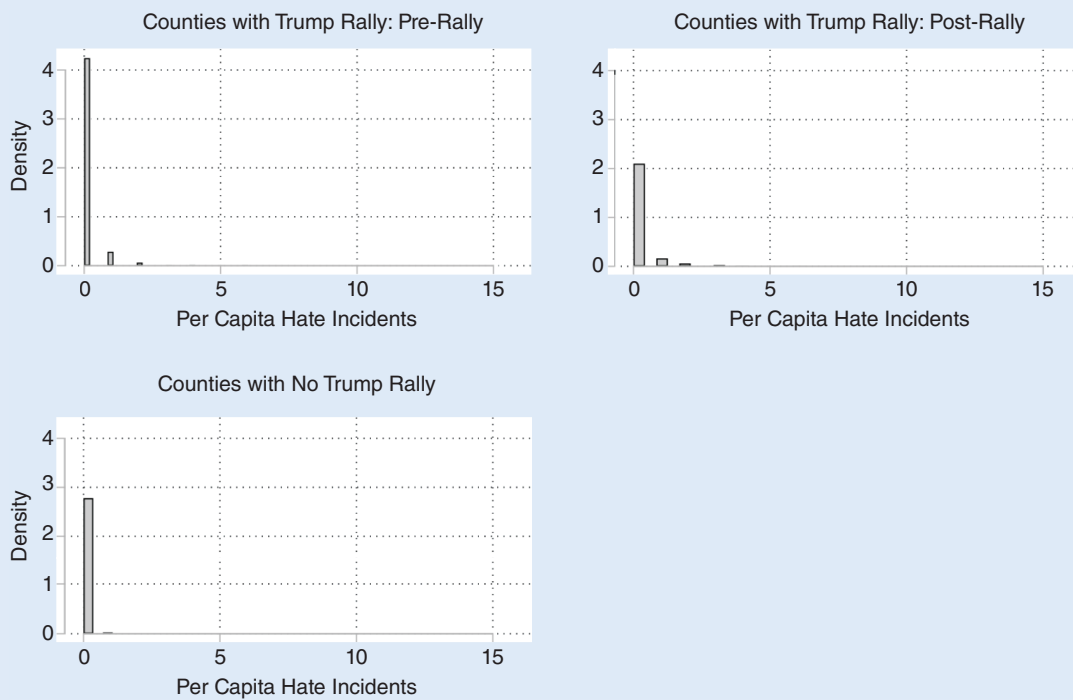
County-Level Hate Incidents



Note: This depicts the number of hate incidents.

Figure 3

Histograms of Number of Hate Crimes



Note: This illustrates the distribution of reported per capita hate incidents.

zero to 28,903.7, with a mean of 315.7. This variable was included based on the expectation that counties with a sizeable Jewish population may experience higher rates of anti-Semitic incidents. To control for incidents more generally, we included a measure of county-level per capita violent crime and per capita property crime.⁸ Both crime measures were provided by the FBI's 2015 Unified Crime Report (Federal Bureau of Investigation 2015).

To account for partisanship, we used county-level vote share received by the Republican presidential candidate in the 2012 election. The partisan measure, % Republican 2012, ranged from 7.1% to 95.9%, with a mean of 59.7%. Next, to create a measure of socioeconomic context, we used the 2015 American Community Survey population estimates for college-educated people (US Census Bureau 2015). The measure, % college, represents the percentage of the county-level population older than age 25 that is college educated, which ranged from 3 to 80.2, with a mean of 20.8. To account for regional differences in the dependent variable, the model included three regional dummy variables: South, Northeast, and Midwest (the West is the baseline category).⁹ Finally, the analysis included a dummy variable for each month to control for unmeasured events that may influence hate incidents (November is the baseline category).¹⁰

PREDICTING EXTREMIST AND ANTI-SEMITIC INCIDENTS

Table 1 presents results for the number of hate incidents that occurred by month across US counties. The negative binomial coefficients for the full sample are listed in the first column, the corresponding standard errors are in the second column, and the predicted change in incident ratio rates (IRRs) is in the third column. Note that for a robustness test, we also used coarsened exact matching (CEM) to match counties that held a Trump rally and those that did not based on county-level demographic characteristics.¹¹ We estimated a second model using the matched sample are listed in the fourth column, the corresponding standard errors are in the fifth column, and the predicted change in IRRs is in the sixth column. The results based on the matched cases are substantively and statistically consistent with those for the full sample.

We began by examining whether the occurrence of a Trump rally affected hate incidents at the county level. The results indicated that the month after Trump held a political rally within a county, the number of hate incidents significantly increased. The predicted IRR was statistically significant and positive. Furthermore, the results indicated that there were heightened incidents in

Table 1
Number of Hate Incidents

	Full Sample			Matched Sample		
	Coefficient	Standard Error	Incident Rate Ratio	Coefficient	Standard Error	Incident Rate Ratio
Trump Rally	0.850***	(0.159)	2.340***	0.531***	(0.158)	1.701***
# Hate Groups	0.019***	(0.005)	1.019***	0.005	(0.007)	1.005
% Urban	0.070***	(0.009)	1.073***	0.052***	(0.013)	1.053***
Jewish Population	0.000***	(0.000)	1.000***	0.000***	(0.000)	1.000***
Violent Crime	0.009	(0.005)	1.009	-0.006	(0.004)	0.994
Property Crime	-0.001	(0.002)	0.999	0.005*	(0.002)	1.005**
% Republican 2012	-0.036***	(0.006)	0.964***	-0.049***	(0.014)	0.952***
College	0.035***	(0.008)	1.035***	0.050***	(0.014)	1.051***
South	-0.904**	(0.323)	0.405	-0.377	(0.423)	0.686
Northeast	0.549	(0.295)	1.731	0.302	(0.406)	1.352
Midwest	-0.513*	(0.280)	0.598*	-0.616*	(0.457)	0.540
January	-1.177***	(0.171)	0.308***	-0.846***	(0.243)	0.429***
February	-1.225***	(0.164)	0.294***	-1.469***	(0.273)	0.230***
March	-0.590***	(0.141)	0.554***	-0.829***	(0.217)	0.437***
April	-0.903***	(0.158)	0.405***	-0.934***	(0.259)	0.393***
May	-0.924***	(0.157)	0.397***	-0.983***	(0.260)	0.374***
June	-0.846***	(0.179)	0.429***	-1.144***	(0.320)	0.319***
July	-1.303***	(0.191)	0.272***	-1.352***	(0.257)	0.259***
August	-1.044***	(0.157)	0.352***	-1.314***	(0.204)	0.269***
September	-0.991***	(0.159)	0.371***	-1.393***	(0.261)	0.248***
October	-0.656***	(0.140)	0.519***	-0.929***	(0.209)	0.395***
December	-0.400*	(0.164)	0.670***	-0.583*	(0.250)	0.558*
Constant	-4.835***	(0.553)	0.008***	-3.554***	(0.955)	0.029***
ln(α)	1.301***	(0.166)		0.603	(0.327)	
N Cases	37,631			16,368		
Wald χ^2	920.38***			970.97***		

Notes: Standard errors are in parentheses. *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001.

counties that hosted a rally compared to those that did not. Indeed, the results of the full and matched samples consistently indicated that counties that hosted a Trump rally experienced significantly higher rates of hate crimes when compared to counties that did not host a rally.¹²

To facilitate the discussion about the impact of a Trump rally on county-level hate incidents, figure 4 presents the predicted IRRs of the lagged-rally variable for both the full and the matched samples.^{13,14} The figure demonstrates the positive impact of Trump rallies on county-level hate incidents. Indeed, for the full sample, counties that hosted a rally were predicted to have an IRR 2.340 times higher (a 134% increase) than counties that did not host a rally. Furthermore, the predicted number of hate incidents in a county that hosted a Trump rally was 0.007 and the predicted number of hate incidents in a county that did not host a rally was 0.002 (significant difference at the 0.05 level). Regarding the

H₁. Although hate incidents in general are a rare event, these findings support our expectation that counties that hosted a Trump rally experienced heightened levels of hate incidents.

CONCLUSIONS

Does what a political leader says to supporters at rallies matter? This analysis shows that charged rhetoric at political rallies can produce additional hate-motivated incidents. Specifically, we established that the words of Donald Trump, as measured by the occurrence and location of his campaign rallies, significantly increased the level of hateful actions directed toward marginalized groups in the counties where his rallies were held. We contend that Trump's political message activated attentive whites' sense of threat and prejudice toward racial, ethnic, and religious minorities and encouraged a number of people to act on that threat. We could argue that the overall increase in hate incidents during this short

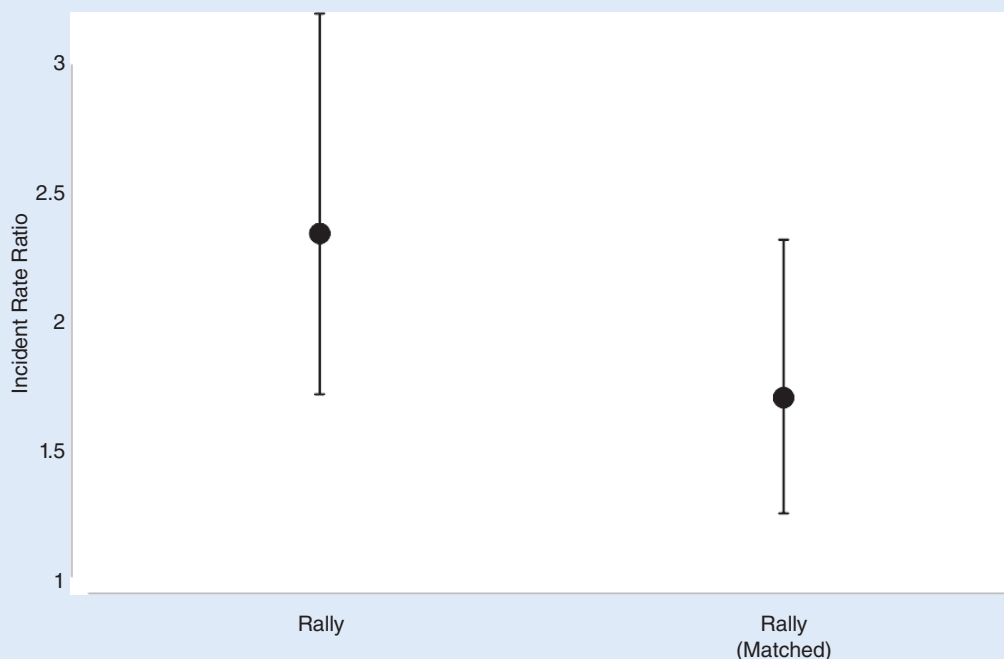
The results indicated that the month after Trump held a political rally within a county, the number of hate incidents significantly increased.

matched sample, counties that hosted a rally were predicted to have an IRR 1.701 times higher (a 70.1% increase) than counties that did not host a rally. The matched results indicated that the predicted number of hate incidents in a county that hosted a Trump rally was 0.011 and that the predicted number of hate incidents in a county that did not host a rally was 0.006 (significant difference at the 0.05 level). Taken together, the full and matched sample findings supported our expectation defined in Hypothesis

period in the campaign of a presidential candidate was minimal and not worth our attention. However, we contend that the implications of our findings are considerable as the political language used by Trump at rallies becomes increasingly mainstream. Furthermore, former President Trump continues to use the same charged rhetoric even after his removal from office not only to consolidate his political influence but also to fundraise for a possible presidential run in 2024.

Figure 4

Hate Crime: Incident Rate Ratios



Note: This presents the predicted incident rate ratios for the lagged rally variable for both the full and matched samples.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Research documentation and data that support the findings of this study are openly available at the PS: Political Science & Politics Dataverse at <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/K2LOJN>.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit <http://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096521001621>. ■

NOTES

- Information regarding incidents targeting minorities is not available for 2015. Thus, our examination was limited to the 2016 campaign. Note that the majority of Trump's political rallies occurred in 2016 (275 rallies), not in 2015 (48 rallies).
- The ADL documents the location of incidents reported at www.adl.org/education-and-resources/resource-knowledge-base/adl-heat-map?gclid=CjoKQCQia68bhBRCKARIsABYUgickjBICpdrUlv7cGjBf4CnZ9M8iiGcRQlogXN_Xr8S3qCZSis4jDwgaAmhcEALw_wCB. Accessed on August 6, 2020. The ADL data, similar to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report data (Federal Bureau of Investigation 2015), does not contain consistent information about hate-crime perpetrators, particularly their demographic information and their political ideology. This is largely the result of many unsolved bias incidents and hate crimes in the United States. To extrapolate based only on incidents with perpetrator data would result in biased results.
- The location and date of the Trump rallies initially were identified at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_rallies_for_the_2016_Donald_Trump_presidential_campaign. Accessed on August 6, 2020. We cross-referenced the information to determine the accuracy of the information and then used Newsbank to search for unreported 2016 Trump rallies. No additional rallies during the 2016 campaign season were identified.
- We implemented a difference-of-means test to determine if there was a significant difference in hate incidents in the counties in which Trump held a rally in the months before the rally and the month(s) after the rally. This statistical test indicated that there was a significant difference in the county-level number of hate incidents (in counties that hosted a Trump rally) before and after the rally occurred. The average number of hate incidents before a rally was 0.15 and the average number after a rally was 0.24. The difference-of-means test rendered a t-statistic of 2.40, which is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.02. Substantively, this indicates that the average number of hate incidents was significantly higher after a Trump rally when compared to before a Trump rally. Finally, the monthly average number of hate incidents during the time observed for counties that did not host a Trump rally was 0.023. To illustrate the nature of the impact of Trump rallies on hate incidents, consider these examples: Greenville County, South Carolina, and Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The number of hate incidents in Greenville County in the month before the Trump rally was zero and the number in the month after the rally was one. In Bucks County, the number of hate incidents in the nine months prior to the Trump rally was two and the number in the two months after the rally was three. At face value, this might seem insignificant, but these descriptive statistics and examples are evidence that counties that hosted a Trump rally experienced heightened hate incidents in the aftermath of the rally.
- The likelihood ratio test on α indicates the existence of overdispersion; thus, confirming the negative binomial regression is preferred when compared to the Poisson regression.
- We estimated the model using two modified versions of the rally variable to demonstrate the robustness of the findings. First, we estimated the model including a measure coded "1" if the Trump rally occurred in a county in a given month and "0" if there was no rally. Furthermore, for counties that experienced a rally, once a rally was held, the subsequent months likewise were coded "1." In the second version, we estimated the model using a measure coded "1" if a rally occurred in a county in a given month and the month after the rally. The results were statistically and substantively consistent with the results presented herein.
- We believe that the use of the SPLC hate-group data represents the best way to control for the influence of organizations purveying in active bigotry in the United States. In doing so, we follow several recent scholars and analyses of bias incidents that also used these data (e.g., Adamczyk et al. 2014; Feinberg 2020a, 2020b; Jendryke and McClure 2019). We acknowledge that the SPLC's classification of hate groups is not without criticism, as noted by Montgomery (2018). However, because the FBI does not publicly report a systematic list of active hate groups operating in the United States, the SPLC remains the best source for the inclusion of this information for analysis purposes.
- Both crime measures are based on the number of crimes per 10,000 residents.
- The regional indicators are based on the US Census Bureau's classification.
- We estimated the models alternating each month as the baseline. As expected, only the coefficients and standard errors on the temporal dummies varied.

- CEM is a nonparametric method that extends other matching approaches by sectioning continuous or ordinal variables into a condensed set of strata (Iacus, King, and Porro 2012). Our use of CEM enhances the estimation of the impact of exposure to Trump rallies on county-level rates of hate incidents.
- We also ran auxiliary analysis replacing % urban with county population measures. Specifically, we ran two models—one with county-level population and the other with the log-transformed measure of county-level population—and then explained and tested whether the logged population measure had a mediating effect. The auxiliary analysis includes online appendix tables B, C, and D. Collectively, these three tables establish the mediating effect of the logged county population on hate-incident variation (Baron and Kenny 1986; Lilley and Wheaton 2019; MacKinnon, Krull, and Lockwood 2000).
- The predicted IRRs are based on setting all other covariates to their mean value.
- IRRs represent the exponent of the coefficient. IRRs higher than 1 reflect a positive rate and IRRs less than 1 reflect a negative rate.

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