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Trump and his Tweets: Presidential Propaganda and its Potential Influence on the Actions of Others

Stephanie Perry
Pace University

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Stephanie Perry

Communication Studies

Professor Marie Kittelstad

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ABSTRACT

President Donald Trump is arguably one of the most controversial political figures in American history and we, as a country, are only two years into his presidency. Most notably, socially, he has called Neo- Nazi's "very fine people" and continues to name the media "Fake News." Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist. Like all Presidents before him, Donald Trump has an agenda, but his includes a strategic way of using social media to push certain narratives and ideas. Through qualitative research methods in this study I will analyze if the President's words on Twitter have a relationship to violent events that have used his name and messages to commit crimes. I will further analyze his tweets and compare them to the seven propaganda devices formed by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) to gather information on whether or not the President is using these tactics to speak with the world.

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INTRODUCTION

"I want today to be a prophet again: if international Jewry inside and outside of Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, the result will not be the Bolshevization of the earth and therefore the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe." Adolf Hitler, Reichstag, January 30, 1939 (Parkin 2018).

1939 is the year World War II began and the start of what we have come to know as the Holocaust, where six million Jewish people were systematically murdered. Hitler's Germany was filled with Nazi propaganda that began in the early 1930's after his election to the Presidency in 1933. Hitler utilized radio, newspapers, rally's or public meetings, posters, film, and other forms of mass media to spread his "final solution" in making the Jewish the German "enemy."

"All those who are listening, rise so we can fight for our Rwanda. Fight with the weapons you have at your disposal: those who have arrows, with arrows, those who have spears, with spears. We must all fight." RTLM (Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines) Presenter George Ruggiu, 1993- 1994 (Witness, 2016))

"We must all fight the Tutsis. We must finish with them, exterminate them, sweep them from the whole country. There must be no refuge for them." RTLM Presenter, 1993- 1994 (Rwanda, 1994)

In 1994, the world watched as Rwandan Tutsis were murdered on the streets of their neighborhoods by Hutu Rwandans. The United Nations force (UNAMIR) was monitoring the

ceasefire that was achieved a year prior but could do nothing but try and protect trapped

foreigners in the country when the killing began. The Hutus main mass media usage came from

their government owned radio stations, mainly the Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines

(RTLM) where presenters and the radio owners called for the extermination of Tutsi Rwandans

or "cockroaches." After the genocide, the UN leadership was condemned for their failure to

respond to the warnings, the USA was criticized for failing to act when those who needed help

had asked the US to silence the airwaves, and European leaders for standing by as well.

Journalists who were in the country were sending back videos and pictures to the western world

so everyone could see, in real time, what was happening (Rwanda, 1994).

"When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best… They're not sending you.

They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing

those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And

some, I assume, are good people." June 16, 2015 at the announcement rally of his Presidential

Candidacy (Rielly, 2016).

"He's walking out with big high-fives, smiling, laughing… I'd like to punch him in the face I'll

tell you." Las Vegas, in reference to a security guard walking out a protester, February 2016

(Fox 5 NY, 2016).

"I've been treated very unfairly by this judge. Now, this judge is of Mexican heritage. I'm

building a wall, OK? I'm building a wall. I am going to do very well with the Hispanics, the

Mexicans." June 3rd 2016 interview on CNN (Rielly, 2016).

Referencing Rep. Greg Gianforte's attack on reporter, Ben Jacobs, *"any guy who can do*

a body slam, he is my type!" May 2017. *"Lock her Up!", "Build the Wall!"* Then candidate

Donald Trump, used violent imagery and publicly agreed with those who committed violent offenses through 2015 to present day. The only difference is now, he is President of the United States of America. The President enjoys his public rallies in different cities across the country where he is able to share his beliefs and lay out plans he wants to complete for Americans. He has attacked Mexicans, journalists, other citizens and organizations, so, at what point to we start to compile all the quotes and tweets into an analysis of what it all means? The President has the power to influence others and change the path our country takes.

Politicians must have the charisma to evoke emotion in small settings, large arenas, and through mass media, in order to be elected to office. Each of the above quotes were taken from previous televised rallies and radio broadcasts. Today's world politicians are also engaged in social media as a form of communication. Each of them come to the table with their own set of ideas on how the country should be run and things people should believe in. With their positions as leaders, they have the power to influence action and change policy. But what happens when their speech starts to dehumanize a group of people, name institutions "the enemy," and nickname their citizens negative adjectives? This study will dive into the rhetoric of Donald Trump, from his Twitter account, where he went to share personal voice.

Research

In the United States, we are currently two years into Donald J. Trump's first term as President. His words are divisive, praised by some but denounced by others. The President of the United States is often referred to as "The most powerful man in the world." I wanted to learn more about Trump's twitter usage, his affect on media, and analyze his messages to see if they align with previous propaganda campaigns done by political figures around the world. Ideas

pushed by powerful people often lead to actions taken by followers; whether that be repeating the message or physically participating in an event or movement. My research intends to find out, if there is enough content on the President's twitter account to conclude whether or not his tweets can be a form of propaganda and if they influence the violent actions of his followers. In order to begin to answer my questions I will will research events that have been reported as including the President's messages and ideas he has endorsed publically. Understanding and decoding his tweets will be an important part of history when historians write it down for the future generations. Past researchers have learned and taught millions about the tactics of people like Alexander "The Great," Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and the propaganda organizations run by the British and American governments.

Social media is a form of mass media that has evolved the internet rapidly over the past ten years. Social media allows for people with the same ideas to connect, those who live in the same neighborhood to talk, and for people around the world to share experiences with each other. On social media, every person has a platform to share their beliefs. Over the past couple of years the term "fake news," has been used to mark stories that are filled with falsehoods or sometimes, people mark stories "fake news," simply because they do not agree with the message. There is no longer a one way flow information that is given to the public, everyone is now both the creator and the receiver.

In the short years of society with social media, there has been an increase in the ability for activists to influence public action around the world. A few movements that were born on Facebook and Twitter include: The Arab Spring in late 2010 that started in Tunisia, Occupy Wall Street in 2011 in New York City, 15- M or the Indignados Movement that was also in 2011 in

Madrid, Spain, #BlackLivesMatter in 2013 across the United States, "Je suis Charlie" in 2015 France, and March for our Lives which began in 2017, Florida, USA. All of these events started as an idea and mobilized online. They gained followers and supporters that would would participate physically in a demonstrations as an act of solidarity. Each of these movements protested against an establishment or evil act. Since many would view these movements as, arguably, "good" social movements, social media is also the medium used for those who have more narrow view points. For example, the Islamic State (ISIS) and groups like the Klu Klux Klan and Neo- Nazi's, are also able to use the media to spread their message. The way these groups have used social media, directly relates to how Donald Trump has used Twitter to connect to his supporters and express his thoughts on current political and non-political relations.

Research Questions

Since the beginning of Donald Trump's presidency to March of 2019, he has tweeted 452 tweets on Russia and Collusion, 362 tweets about Fake News, 315 times about Fox News or Sean Hannity (Fox News Commentator), 202 times about Hillary Clinton, 171 tweets on former President Barack Obama, 73 tweets about CNN, 71 tweets on The New York Times, and 58 tweets about NBC (Brown, 2019). These statistics do not include his tweets about policy, other organizations, other political opponents, and events that have happened around the world. This study will aim to research the following questions:

RQ1: Does the President's tweets play a role in influencing the physical actions of others that have resulted in harming another person, physically or emotionally?

RQ2: Is Twitter Donald Trump's medium for presidential propaganda?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Background: Propaganda Defined

To identify a message as propaganda is to suggest the message is manipulative and dishonest. Propaganda, in its purest form, was used to mean to promote particular ideas or to disseminate (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2018, pg. 2). Today, propaganda has taken on new synonyms like spin and fake news. A definition focused more on the communication aspect of propaganda states that "propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2018, pg. 6)."

Propaganda takes many forms but in relation to accuracy of information and sources there are three ways to describe the relationships; white, black, and grey. White Propaganda comes from a source that is identified correctly, and the information in the message tends to be accurate, It is presented in a manner that attempts to convince the audience that the sender is the "good guy" with the best ideas and political ideology. It also attempts to build credibility with the audience. An example would be international sports competitions like the Olympics where the journalists from countries around the world tend to focus on the athletes from their own country regardless of who won or lost. Black Propaganda is when the source is concealed or credited to a false authority and spreads lies, fabrications, and deceptions. It is the "Big lie." An example of this would be the Allied forces "Ghost Army" in World War II where they placed rubber army units and weapons in strategic locations to trick the Germans into attacking nothing; this tactic ended up saving Allied lives. Another example of propaganda lies come from the

actions of the British Security Coordination (BSC) team who inserted themselves into American newspapers and radios, prior to 1941, in an effort to get the United States to join the war. The success or failure of black propaganda depends on the receivers willingness to accept the credibility of the source and content of the message. Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's prop minister, said outrageous charges evoke more belief than milder statements that mildly twist the truth. Grey Propaganda is when the source may or may not be correctly identified, and the accuracy of the information is uncertain. In 1961, the United States Intelligence Agency partook in grey propaganda when they denied having participated in the Bay of Pigs invasion. Grey propaganda is often paired with disinformation, false or misleading information that is passed to a targeted group or country (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2018, pg. 17-24).

Political Speech

In "Fueling the Fire" by Kalmoe, they link political action speech to cues that activate a response in the audience. Political figures often use metaphors to help their audience understand their ideas more clearly and to help them make social judgements. Recent studies show that metaphors increase attention and interest in arguments and motivate systematic processing in people with interest in the domain, so violent content may appeal to more aggressive citizens. Trait aggression, has diverse social and biological origins- childhood trauma, exposure to media violence, neurological- passed from generation to generation. Kalmoe found that his hypothesis was correct, predicting that violent language does effect human action. This research is significant to my study because it does confirm, to a small extent, that language has the power to influence action as well as relate to another series of research. With mass media, television, and

video games, violence is much more accessible and can be part of a person's everyday life. If we could all agree that exposure to violence makes a person more desensitized to violent images and susceptible to violent action, then why would it be a stretch to believe those with a large following have the ability to influence their followers actions after promoting violence or showing a lack of disapproval of violent behavior and speech.

"Fueling the Fire," in general, was a study that tested a politicians words by looking at the effect is has on the population they are speaking to. "Post Truth Politics," written by Montgomery, specifically looks at how the President, Donald Trump, speaks and the weight his words carry. Montgomery begins by describing Trump's campaign discourse as authoritarian, appealing to the masses more than describing content. "Authenticity" rather than "truth" was the cornerstone to the appeal to his base. Many said they liked how blunt he was compared to other politicians. His base, after looking at the 2016 election results, were white- non hispanic, more men voted for him than women, 67% of white persons without college degrees, rural voters, and a majority lived in the rust- belt states (IA, MI, OH, PA, WI). Trump identified himself with those persons who call themselves the "forgotten working people of America," in the wake of Obama policies that aimed to help people of color and immigrants. He was patriotic ("Make America Great Again" slogan), anti establishment, law and order, anti diversity- mixture of xenophobia (stricter immigration control), conspiracy of the elites (Fake news and evil media narratives), international perceptions of weakness ("They are laughing at us"), and protectionism (America First). His rhetorical appeal and persuasion techniques caused the media to respond by wanting to expose his lies, and check facts on his historical statements and statistics. For his base, this confirmed the conspiracy of a liberal elite. He follows Aristotle, "persuasion is

achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken to make us think him credible."

Propaganda during the World Wars

In 1937 the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) was started by Columbia University professor Clyde R. Miller. The group of professors who participated in this institute were not only concerned with foreign propaganda but also domestic issues like the Ku Klux Klan, communists, fascism, and advertising. All of which was seen as a threat to the American way of life. In their second issue they wrote an article listing seven common "devices." These devices include: Name- calling, glittering generality or associating something with a "virtue word" without evidence, transferring the respect of something established to something new or transferring something already disrespected to something new to bring positive or negative connotations to the latter, having someone respected or hated testify that something else is a bad or good idea, the speaker attempting to make themselves appeal to the "plain folk," stacking facts or falsehoods, illustrations or distractions and logical or illogical statements to make a case for a new idea or program, and finally, the bandwagon theme of "everybody- at least all of us- is doing it!" While the IPA did not survive the Cold War, new technology made the IPA's findings seem simplistic, they have served as a basis for understanding the subtle role of propaganda in everyday lives (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2018, pg. 217-219).

Hitler's Regime was successful in creating in having a propaganda department in his government that was able to spread their ideas to Germans and other occupied states. In the article "Argument for Genocide," Byterk explains how the Nazi's used propaganda techniques

without ever calling it propaganda. The Nazi's claimed that they the were only defending themselves against Jewish plans to destroy Germany and own all the wealth. The Nazi's repeated this claim over and over in an attempt to make it more believable. They used speakers, public meetings, and the radios they gave to their citizens, to convey their messages with strongly worded speeches. In the 1930's the Nazi's began their systematic removal of the Jewish and put them into ghettos, stripped them of their rights, made them wear a yellow Star of David on their clothes in public, and treated them as "sub humans." In order to get the German public on board, they tried to make the new treatment of the Jewish ordinary. They are quoted as repeating words like destroy, wipe out, exterminate, and extirpate. They also labeled them the "Jewish capitalist enemy." These words were repeating by both the Nazi propagandists and Hitler himself. The domestic propaganda office used mass media to spread the message through posters, magazines, radio broadcasts, and newspapers.

Hitler would not have been as successful without his propaganda office creating a Nazi brand to promote. O'Shaughnessy named his study "Selling Hitler: Propaganda and the Nazi Brand." Looking at the operations of the propaganda office, there are many similarities with a marketing department. The Nazi's used audience targeting, market segmentation, packaging, spin tactics, and consumerism. They understood the power of a brand, imagery, and symbolism. They used propaganda everywhere in the form of military marches, youth marches, posters, pamphlets, and the promise to create a utopian society. The symbols were the style of the swastika that was a show of authority, Hitler himself, and the Jewish star.

Mass Media and Modern Society

During wartimes it was easy to identify the source of material that would show up in mass media but today, with the internet and social media, it has become increasingly hard to identify sources and know if the information is accurate or not.

Mass media has served as a medium for propaganda to be spread quickly and to as many people as possible. The first forms of mass media were books, newspapers, and flyers which then expanded to the short wave radio, into broadcast television, and finally into today's world where we use all these methods and the internet. "To access and control the media literally means access to and potential control of public opinion (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2018, pg. 325)."

In "Post- truth, propaganda and the Transformation of the Spiral of Silence" written by Stamatis Poulakidakos, Anastasia Veneti, and Christos Fangonikolopoulos, they touch on the importance mass media plays in society and how political influencers like Donald Trump have utilized these mediums. The quoted another researcher saying "Mass media has been a major actor in the formation of social reality" followed by one from 1985. They said, "we don't see reality the way it is, but the way our languages are. Our languages are the media. The media are our metaphors. Our metaphors create the content of our culture." In 2016, the term "post truth" became more closely associated with political figures such as, Donald Trump, Nigel Farage, Recep Erdogan and Vladimir Putin. The Oxford Dictionary defines "post truth" as an "adjective relating to, or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief (pg. 372)." Post truth statements, in the list of political influencers, have a United States President in the same category as dictators, far right party members, and totalitarian presidents. Their post truth statements have gotten the

reputation as people who will skip the facts and say what they think will help them in the long run with the help of mass media to get their message across.

"Political influencers. A study of Donald Trump's personal brand on Twitter and its Impact on the Media and Users, Communication, & Society" written by Pérez-Curie and Naharro is a research study that details the relationship between Donald Trump's personal twitter account and front page news from USA Today, The Boston Globe, The Wall Street Journal, and The New York Times. They conducted this study by quantifying the public's response based on digital prosumer metrics, "likes, retweets, and comments." They concluded their study with confirming that Trump's empowerment on Twitter is both a main source of news and as a political influencers in regards to media and citizenry.

METHODOLOGY

Analysis

Through qualitative research methods of Donald Trump's Twitter account, this study will gather the words and phrases from his tweets to be compared and analyzed in two parts. The first part will be to analyze his words and phrases for connections to past events. His tweets may or may not be a telling factor in seeing the potential of the President's twitter words inciting his followers to take action or to mimic his actions. The selected events involved Trump's slogan "Make America Great Again (MAGA)," his supporters, mimicked his ideas, or the direct people and organizations he has targeted. The second part will be to analyze the potential connections between Trump's words and phrases to the propaganda tactics the IPA has laid out. The collection of tweets that will be analyzed are from the duration of his presidency.

I will use existing databases and my own research to quantify Trump's most used words and phrases from the selected tweets. The tweets that are related to the selected events will be broken down into categories based off the language. The tweets will be coded by the language used such as, the use of repetitive words, perceived facts and information, direct use of names of civilians and organizations, and the context the words were used in. In part one the events that will be examined will be chosen based on news coverage and police reports detailing the specifics of what occured between the years of 2016 to present day. This time period includes Donald Trump's campaign and the first two years of his presidency. The news reports will be articles written after the events have concluded and after all investigations have concluded in order to ensure that the information given is factual. After selecting the events, I will go to twitter to analyze tweets the President had sent leading up to the specific incident and his tweets that may have been a reaction to the incident, if he commented. I am looking at the tweets to draw potential connections between the President's words and the actions of people around the country and internationally.

In order to try and find an answer for part two, I will just the IPA's seven theories on how to find a propagandists as a search tool. This analysis will include the President's tweets that have assigned vilifying names to his opposition and descriptive words he has used to express disdain or affirmation towards a group.

Twitter is a medium where in 280 characters a tweet, the user has to choose what to say in very few words. Facebook and Twitter were two platforms, of many, that were released in 2009. President Barack Obama, the 44th President of the United States, was the first U.S. President to use these platforms, specifically Twitter with the handle @POTUS (President of the

United States). As we have seen over the past few years, Trump uses both @POTUS and his own personal handle @realDonaldTrump. His personal handle is where more of his personality comes through in the tweets. The following variables will be used to categorize tweets as potential propaganda or as tweets that inspired violent events.

<u>Variables for Coding</u>

Propagandist tactics: Throughout history, political figures have used propaganda and other means to attract an audience. Based on previous research done by the IPA, in the 1930's they described propaganda as including name calling, transferring positive or negative connotations to a person or group, attempts to appeal to the "common" person, and bandwagoning where the "everyone is doing it so, so should you" argument is promoted. Each of these characterizations will be used to analyze the tweets. The analysis of these categorized tweets will help to determine if President Trump has expressed propagandists sentiments on his Twitter platform. I will chart my findings to keep track of which words and phrases are used the most and the context in which they are used.

Action words: Tweets that were meant to address certain groups or recent events will also be split into subsets. Trump has a base, which has been defined by researchers who studied the voting results of 2016. The statistics of 2016 voters were as follows: 51 percent of white voters voted for Trump over Clinton, 42 percent of women, 53 percent of men, and 52 percent of those without a college degree. Among white non college voters, Trump won 67 percent of the vote and among whites with a college degree, he got 49 percent of the vote. Younger voters (18-29 years old) preferred Hillary Clinton while those 65 years old and older preferred Trump.

(Tyson and Manim, 2016). The demographics of Trump supporters is important in determining their point of view when reading Trump's tweets.

For part one, the action verbs used, sentiments towards violence, persons or organizations being vilified, and name calling will also be separated into categories. His tweets will also be broken down to categorize them as being words of affirmation or condemnation, if they are positive or negative based off the adjectives used, and his comments on the media.Tracking Trump's words and who he is talking to will make more visible the possibility to the potential of his words playing a role in the violent events.

Trump's tweets, photos and videos posted, and his retweets, all speak to the ideas and behavioral patterns he agrees with and the platforms he is endorsing. In part two, keeping track of the semantics of the tweets will speak to the motives behind them. For example, on March 26, 2019, Trump tweeted from his personal account (@realDonaldTrump), "The Fake News Media has lost tremendous credibility with its corrupt coverage of the illegal Democrat Witch Hunt of your all time favorite duly elected President, me! T.V. ratings of CNN & MSNBC tanked last night after seeing the Mueller Report statement. @FoxNews up BIG!" (Trump, 2019). This tweet vilifies CNN and MSNBC as news organizations, chastises the Democratic Party for acting within their congressional powers, favors himself as the public's "favorite" President, and presents Fox News as the only credible source for news. The potential of his tweets being classified as a form of propaganda.

FINDINGS

Throughout Donald Trump's presidential campaign and his presidency there have been a number of high profile incidents that has happened in the United States and internationally that

were inspired, in part, by far right ideas that were met with opposition. The events were covered by major news companies and were spoken about on social media platforms. Overall, it is clear that the President of the United States plays a role in the feelings and actions of citizens especially today, where on Twitter he has the ability to talk with the world. In my findings, I have discovered a pattern in behavior from the President when it comes to major news events and have seen how the IPA's seven common devices can be found within the President's personal twitter account, @realDonaldTrump.

Part I

Three Men from Kansas plan to Bomb Somali Refugees

In October of 2016, Patrick Eugene Stein, Curtis Allen, and Gavin Wright were arrested for plotting to blow up an apartment complex in a western Kansas refugee community, home to Somali Muslims. According to authorities, they chose this location partly because of the mosque the community built. The acting US Attorney General Matthew Whitaker, after sentencing in 2019 said, "Today's sentence is a significant victory against hate crimes and domestic terrorism… The defendants in this case acted with clear premeditation in an attempt to kill innocent people on the basis of their religion and national origin. That's not just illegal-- it's morally repugnant." The three men were found guilty of one count of conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction and one count of conspiracy to violate the housing rights of their intended victims each, as well as Wright also being convicted of lying to the FBI involving domestic terrorism. During the trial, prosecutors said they had started planning the attacks after the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting in Florida where 49 people were killed because of their sexuality. The FBI conducted an eight- month investigation where they also found the men

referring to Somali Muslims as "cockroaches." They were caught after trying to buy explosives

from undercover FBI agents. Allen was sentenced to 25 years, Wright was sentenced to 26 years

and Stein got 30 years (Sterling, 2019).

During the trial, Stein's attorney, Jim Pratt, had asked for a more lenient sentence for his

client because of Donald Trump's campaign rhetoric. He said, "it wasn't just the rhetoric of

Trump, who ahead of the election called for a ban against all Muslims entering the US, but it was

the rhetoric of everybody that put fear into the system and made people believe that if Trump

won, on the first day he'd take office, the world was going to implode. Or if he won, martial law

was going to be declared and Hillary (Clinton) was going to be put in office." The men had

wanted to time their attack for the day after the 2016 election, but they were arrested a month

prior. "Trump's win changed everything, and it is reasonable to speculate that it would have

changed things among the defendants as well, the urgency for action would be gone, the feeling

of losing a battle would be gone,"- Jim Pratt (Sterling, 2019). The President did not comment on

twitter in 2016 when the arrests occurred nor did he respond when they used him in their

defense. In 2015 and 2016, Trump did however, call a Somali refugee community in Minnesota

"A rich pool of potential recruiting targets for Islamist terror groups" (Koumpilova, 2016).

Quebec Mosque Shooting

On January 29th in 2017, Alexandre Bissonnette walked into the Islamic Cultural Center

in Quebec, Canada and opened fire on 53 men who were just finishing their evening prayers.

Bissonnette killed six, paralyzed one, and injured 19. In May of 2018 he was sentenced to 150

years in prison, after pleading guilty to six counts of first- degree murder (Bilefsky, 2018). At the

time, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau denounced this event as a "terrorist attack." The judge did

not see it this way, instead, Justice Francois Huot said the actions were of a person with

prejudices against Muslim immigrants. Huot also made note of Bissonnette's mental health

challenges and history of suicidal thoughts (Al Jazeera, 2019). The New York Times article

included a small background to why Bissonnette felt the need to kill Muslims. This attack came a

day after PM Trudeau tweeted "To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will

welcomes you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcomeToCanada." This

tweet, Bissonnette told police, made him snap. He also told investigators that he had wished he

killed more, wanting to protect his family from Islamic terrorists. During the hearing,

prosecutors, survivors, and prison psychologists painted Bissonnette as a socially isolated young

man who developed an obsession with the fair right, mass killers, Donald Trump and Muslims.

Investigators found that in the month before the shooting, he searched the internet 819 times for

posts relating to Donald Trump, Trump's twitter, and on the President's travel ban on several

Muslim- majority countries. They also found that he visited pages linked to white nationalists

Richard Spencer, David Duke (Klu Klux Klan former leader), and Dylann Roof who killed nine

African Americans in a South Carolina Church. The Al Jazeera article also reported that there

has been a rise in anti- Muslim hate crimes in Canada. "Between 2012 and 2015, hate crimes

targeting Muslims increased by 253 percent, according to Statistics Canada data. In 2017 the

total number of hate crimes in Canada reached an all- time high."

President Trump did not tweet anything or condolences in relation to this event. Though,

in 2018 on April 28th following the Toronto Van Attack he quote tweeted Trudeau's press

release saying, "Americans stand with you and all of Canada, Prime Minister @JustinTrudeau.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. #TorontoStrong." During this attack, 10 were killed

and 16 injured (Levenson, 2018). No minorities were mentioned in the reporting.

Charlottesville "Unite the Right Rally"

In 2017, many southern states started to debate on whether or not to keep their

Confederate statues on display in public spaces. On August 11th, white nationalists, Ku Klux

Klan members, and neo- Nazis started to gather for the next day's "Unite the Right" rally. On the

night of August 11th, they gathered on University of Virginia's campus and marched with tiki

torches lit, chanting Nazi- associated "blood and soil" and "Jews will not replace us!" The march

ended near a statue of Thomas Jefferson where they were met with opposition. Fights broke out

that night and continued into the morning causing the Governor to declare a state of emergency.

In the afternoon of the 12th, James Alex Fields drove his car into a crowd of counter protesters

and killed 32- year old Heather Heyer and injured 19 others (Keneally, 2018).

President Trump made many comments about this march and protest through televised

press conferences and on his Twitter account. On August 12th, he tweeted "Am in Bedminster

for meetings & press conference on V.A. & all that we have done, and are doing, to make it

better-but Charlottesville sad!," "What is vital now is a swift restoration of law and order and the

protection of innocent lives #Charlottesville" linked to televised statement, and "Condolences to

the family of the young woman killed today, and best regards to all of those injured, in

Charlottesville, Virginia. So sad!" While these comments seem sincere, the televised statement

he linked his tweet to, was a clip of him saying "we condemn… this egregious display of hatred,

bigotry, and violence on many sides- on many sides…" This clip caused the media to focus on

the point that Trump never outwardly condemned the Alt Right for their views. On August 14th, Trump tweeted ""Made additional remarks on Charlottesville and realize once again that the #Fake News Media will never be satisfied...truly bad people!" in retaliation to the presses reaction to his "many sides" comment. Those responsible for the violence that day and James Fields have faced criminal charges.

CNN Bomb threats and threats to Trump's critics

In October of 2018, CNN, top Democrats, and known democrat supporters were sent packages that contained bombs. None of the bombs detonated and no one was injured. In addition to the CNN Time Warner building, the bombs were addressed to democratic donor George Soros, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, former Attorney General Eric Holder, US Rep. Maxine Waters, former CIA Director John Brennan, actor Robert De Niro, former Vice President Joe Biden, US Senator Cory Booker, former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, US Senator Kamala Harris, and democratic donor Tom Steyer. (Karimi, 2018) All of these people share their political affiliation and have publicly disagreed with Donald Trump. The man responsible for these threats is 56- year old Cesar Sayoc. Sayoc was living in his can at the time of his arrest. The van's windows had been covered with posters that said "Trump, Pence," "CNN Sucks," "Dishonest Media," pictures of Trump and Pence, a picture of Hillary Clinton with a target on her face and more. Sayoc faces 48 years in prison (Wagner, Rocha, Tatum, Levenson, Riles, Murphy, Yeung, 2018).

Just one day prior to the beginning of the week of bomb scares, Trump tweeted "Facebook has just stated that they are setting up a system to 'purge' themselves of Fake News.

Does that mean CNN will finally be put out of business?" As the week went on, with more commentators bringing up the possibility that Trump was partially to blame, he said on October 26th "Funny how lowly rated CNN, and others, can criticize me at will, even blaming me for the current spate of Bombs and ridiculously comparing this to September 11th and the Oklahoma City bombing, yet when I criticize them they go wild and scream, 'it's just not Presidential!'" On October 29th he tweeted "CNN and others in the Fake News Business keep purposely and inaccurately reporting that I said the 'Media is the Enemy of the People.' Wrong! I said that the 'Fake News (Media) is the Enemy of the People,' a very big difference. When you give out false information - not good!" This tweet is especially misleading since in the tweet he says CNN is in the "Fake News Business," which would then mean that he is in fact inferring CNN is an "enemy of the people" because he classifies them as the "Fake News Media." The President never expressed well wishes for those who were mailed packages and instead praised the FBI and mail services for stopping the attacks. Trump also said in a press release that he was not to blame and that he did not see his face on the suspects van (Wagner, Rocha, Tatum, Levenson, Riles, Murphy, Yeung, 2018).

Kentucky school kids vs. Native Americans

One of the more confusing events to have occurred during Trump's presidency was the encounter between high school kids from Kentucky's Covington Catholic High School and Native Americans in Washington D.C. on January 18th, 2019. A video emerged showing a clip of the kids smiling and laughing facing Native Americans who were playing their drums, they seemed to be standing just one foot a part. Nick Sandmann, was the student clearly seen in the

video. All of the students were wearing "Make America Great Again" hats. Earlier in the day

was the Indigenous People's March and the high schoolers had gone to the March for Life, an

anti- abortion rally. Nathan Phillips, the Native American in the video, said the confrontation felt

like "hate unbridled" (Williams and Grinberg, 2019). Sandmann, in an interview, said "As far as

standing there, I had every right to do so.My position is that I was not disrespectful to Mr.

Phillips (Stewart, 2019)."

　　　Because the videos made it seem like the teens were being hostile towards the Native

Americans and the added commentary from the Natives saying how they felt, the media ran with

that side of the story. Trump had a lot to say on this subject, since his MAGA supporters were

under "attack" of sorts. He said on January 21st, "Looking like Nick Sandman & Covington

Catholic students were treated unfairly with early judgements proving out to be false - smeared

by media. Not good, but making big comeback! 'New footage shows that media was wrong

about teen's encounter with Native American' @TuckerCarlson." On the 22nd he added, "Nick

Sandmann and the students of Covington have become symbols of Fake News and how evil it

can be. They have captivated the attention of the world, and I know they will use it for the good -

maybe even to bring people together. It started off unpleasant, but can end in a dream!" Almost a

month later, he further commented on the media's role in the hysteria tweeting "The Washington

Post ignored basic journalistic standards because it wanted to advance its well-known and easily

documented biased agenda against President Donald J. Trump.' Covington student suing WAPO.

Go get them Nick. Fake News!" on February 20th.

Planned Parenthood arson attacks, Missouri

The Columbia Health Center, home to Planned Parenthood in Kansas City, Missouri was attacked on February 10, 2019. According to an affidavit filed with the criminal charge of maliciously damaging a building that received federal financial assistance, a security camera captured images of a person walking to the center around 2:30 AM. The person on screen was later identified as 42 year old, Wesley Brian Kaster. By about 4:00 AM, Kaster officially started the fire with a two five- gallon buckets of gasoline and a molotov cocktail, and then fled the scene. Federal investigators were able to track him down from the materials used in the crime.They also found a Facebook post by Kaster's wife stating "Guns don't kill people, Planned Parenthood kills people," which they believe speak to his motive. Dr. Brandon Hill, who heads this location said, "Let this send a clear message: Blocking access to essential health care is against the law, whether it takes the form of violence and vandalism or threats against our patients, our providers, or our supporters… With seexual and reproductive health care under attack in Missouri, our mission is more important than ever before." This Planned Parenthood location has not provided abortions since 2015 (Rice, 2019).

President Trump did not tweet about this act of violence, but did tweet a few weeks later saying "Senate Democrats just voted against legislation to prevent the killing of newborn infant children. The Democrat position on abortion is now so extreme that they don't mind executing babies AFTER birth.... ....This will be remembered as one of the most shocking votes in the history of Congress. If there is one thing we should all agree on, it's protecting the lives of innocent babies" on February 25th. While this tweet is a gross exaggeration of abortion, it is in line with the President's other tweets about Democratic Congressmen. In 2017 he tweeted, "The people of Alabama will do the right thing. Doug Jones is Pro-Abortion, weak on Crime, Military

and Illegal Immigration, Bad for Gun Owners and Veterans and against the WALL. Jones is a Pelosi/Schumer Puppet. Roy Moore will always vote with us. VOTE ROY MOORE!" and in 2019 he said, "Democrats are becoming the Party of late term abortion, high taxes, Open Borders and Crime!" These tweets show the President's thoughts on abortion rights, his appeal to Republican voters, and his rhetoric concerning Democrats.

Event Analysis

After studying all six of the events chosen events, I can conclude that the President only comments on major news events if he has something to gain and that the actions of all participants involved had been affected by his words. In Kansas, the three men arrested for plotting to bomb the Somali refugee apartment complex used Trump's rhetoric as part of their defense. They said Trump's words and hysteria over immigration caused them to fear for their lives and react by trying to take the lives of others "first." At the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville and the altercation between Native Americans and the Covington Catholic high school boys, one side can be seen wearing "Make America Great Again" caps. The man behind the CNN bomb threats lived in a van covered with pro- Trump stickers, Make America Great Again, CNN Sucks, and more politically charged posters. Some of those responsible for the crimes committed also acted in a way that coincides with the President's statements on Twitter. The man responsible for setting the Planned Parenthood building on fire, Wesley Kaster, shared the same view of abortion as the President does. They both believe it is wrong and should be stopped, Kaster just turned the words into action.

From all the tweets from the President surrounding the events I found that he only commented directly on 50% of them (Chart 1). He did not comment on the Kansas attempted

bombing, the Quebec Mosque Shooting, and the Planned Parenthood arson attack. His attitude

towards the events as a whole were mostly negative. Out of the six events, five events he spoke

negatively about. Whether he was calling the media "Fake News" or assigning negative

connotations to his political opponents he had nothing positive to add. The one mixed review I

marked on Chart 2, was for his response to the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, NC.

While the President did condemn the violence and advocate for peace, at first, he followed those

statements with saying there were "very good people, on both sides." One side was comprised of

people holding Confederate Flags, called themselves the 'alt- right," and were wearing Klan

hoods- all components that are not inherently "good." Chart 3 shows the President commented

on the media for four of the events in a negative way. Those events were Charlottesville, the

CNN Bomb scares, Kentucky School students, and Planned Parenthood. In my final chart (#4),

of all 12 tweets, Trump said "Fake News" the most, followed by "CNN" and words along the

lines of "Media is wrong" third.

Part II

Propaganda Findings

As I have previously stated the seven devices in detecting propaganda were coined by the

IPA during the second World War, a time where all world powers were using propaganda to gain

support or hurt an enemy. The seven devices are name calling, glittering generality, transfer,

testimonial, plain folks, card stacking, and bandwagon. Out of these seven devices I found that

Trump most often uses five of them. The two he does not use much of, are transfer and

bandwagoning. Transfer is the act of using something respected and associating it with

something else to make that thing accepted as well. It also works negatively where something not respected would be used. The Bandwagon technique has a theme of "everybody - at least all of us- is doing it!" and tries to get others to do it too out of fear of being left out (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2018)

The first device that Trump has been using on Twitter is Name Calling. Name calling is giving a bad label to something or someone, therefore condemning it, without looking at the evidence. One name Trump often uses to call Senator Elizabeth Warren, is Pocahontas. Pocahontas was a Native American woman alive during the 1600's. On January 13th, 2019 Trump tweeted, "If Elizabeth Warren, often referred to by me as Pocahontas, did this commercial from Bighorn or Wounded Knee instead of her kitchen, with her husband dressed in full Indian garb, it would have been a smash!" with a video of Warren in her kitchen attached. Trump uses "Pocahontas" to make fun of Elizabeth Warren after she said publicly that she is part Native American. In his tweet he mentions Native American land, Wounded Knee, and Bighorn [Little Bighorn], and Indian garb as a further way to make fun of the video posted and Warren.

Glittering Generality is the act of associating something with a "virtue word" and creating acceptance and approval without examining the evidence. One example of this is his slogan. Trump often tweets "Make America Great Again" as a way to spark patriotism and support for his administration. He has not explained this slogan though. "Again" implies that America turned bad at some point so when was it not great and who are you making it great for? If you were to ask an African American what point in time they would go back to, i'm sure anything before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is not a period they would go back to. If you ask

women when they would want to go back to, and I think they would be stumped. There is no better time than today in society's fight for equality for all.

The third device that has evidence to support Trump's use of it is testimonial. Testimonial is having someone respected or hated, say they support an idea of program which would make that idea or program seemingly good or bad. Trump often tweets in support of Sean Hannity and Tucker Carlson as a way to show his support for FOX news, a "right leaning" news source. In 2015 he tweeted "@tuckercarlson is doing a really good job on Fox, especially when talking politics. He has come a long way fast!" If Trump is saying good things about them, and they are showing support for Trump, that must mean their network is credible.

Plain Folks is a method used to make an idea seem good because they are "of the people" or plain folks. Donald Trump does this in a number of ways. On twitter, in 2015, Trump tweeted a quote, "@muhfuck: @BernieSanders Donald Trump is the only candidate for middle class America @realDonaldTrump #Trump2016 #MakeAmericaGreatAgain." Trump, from the beginning, made himself out to be a "normal" person who understands except for the fact that he was born a millionaire. Trump was born into money and therefore has never known what it is to be middle class which is why it is fascinating that so many people associated him with being that "normal" person and candidate.

Card Stacking "involves the selection and use of facts or falsehoods, illustrations or distractions, and logical or illogical statements to give the best or worst possible case for an idea, program, person, or product (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2018)." When denouncing the Democrats and Congress, he often tweets something like, "A vote for today's resolution by Republican Senators is a vote for Nancy Pelosi, Crime, and the Open Border Democrats!" which was said on

March 14th, 2019 (Trump, 2019). In this tweet Trump is insinuating that if Republican Senators vote in favor of the resolution up for vote, that they would be voting for Nancy Pelosi (Senator Trump historically does not get along with), crime, and "open border Democrats" (something they have never advocated for). He stacked falsehoods into an illogical statement so sway a vote.

OVERVIEW/ DISCUSSION

Effective propaganda is not about facts and policy, it is about emotion. Trump has demonstrated that he is a master at evoking emotion in both his supporters and those who oppose him. I have found that Trump is both part of the reason why the selected events occurred or created such a media frenzy and I have found evidence that he is using propaganda devices that were used back in the 1940's. To say the President is inciting violence is to add another layer to the conversation that would involve the law. I cannot say that this is what he did or his intentions but I can acknowledge his part in changing the rhetoric surrounding immigration, race, and media has not been an overly positive change.

In my literature review, I mentioned O'Shaughnessy's study "Selling Hitler: Propaganda and the Nazi Brand." He found that the Nazi's used audience targeting, market segmentation, packaging, spin tactics, and consumerism just like the modern marketing departments and agencies of today. Through my analysis of Trump's reactions or non-reactions to the major news events and the propaganda devices he has used, I have seen that he also uses these marketing techniques as a supplement to the propaganda. The audience he is trying to appeal to is his base, those who voted for him in 2016 and those who he hopes will vote for him in 2020. Market segmentation, in this sense, would be the differences in moderate Republicans, Conservatives, Liberals and all other political affiliations. Each of these groups of people would seemingly

respond similarly to information to those they share characteristics with. For example, Republicans may all like that the President often praises FOX news while Democrats may all dislike that notion. Packaging and consumerism would be his slogan and merchandise that is for sale and stands for "patriotism." And finally, spin tactics, help candidates and Trump try to keep positive stories in the news and if something goes wrong, his team would "spin" the information to make it better.

Adolf Hitler and in Rwanda during 1993-1994, radio rhetoric was a large part of their governmental control. Trump's fiery rhetoric that we read online seems like it would have been something that we could have heard on the radio. He is blunt most of the time, demonizes the news media, and exaggerates policies to make them fit his agenda. All of which falls under his First Amendment rights of Freedom of Speech. Today's forms of communication have made spreading ideas easy for all those with access and have the means to be connected to the internet that radio and paper pamphlets are not widely used. Trump, through Twitter, is able to speak with everyone for there is little reason to use other mediums to engage with the public.

Limitations

Little research has been done on the impact of Trump's tweets or any that can conclude whether or not his tweets could be classified as propaganda. There is little knowledge on the implications of his tweets because we are in the midst of his presidency. Because of the work done on propaganda already, I am able to read his tweets and analyze them for codes and speech patterns that could conclude whether or not they are linked to characteristics of propaganda and linked to recent events. I was not, however, able to analyze all major news events that mentioned Donald Trump or all his tweets. I looked at a small pool of his tweets to get a picture of his

political agenda on Twitter. The President has more than 30,000 tweets (Brown, 2019) and if analyzed, researchers would be able to put together a full picture view of the Trump presidency on Twitter.

Future Research

There is a very small pool of research on the topic of Trump and Twitter because it is so new to society, as is research on social media platforms. Social media has only been around for 10 years so, it is hard to analyze what the long term effects will be from political commentary and mobilization online. Future research on this topic can go in the direction of expanding my work into including all of the President's tweets during his Presidency and campaign years to establish a clear picture of the Presidents use of Twitter. I also think future research should analyze the truthfulness of the President's tweets. If he is using Twitter as an official medium for presidential statements, I believe it would be useful to know if he is telling the truth on policy and current events.

Another medium that could be analyzed for propaganda in the Trump presidency would be his rallies. His rallies mirror the technique Adolf Hitler used to gain public support, push policies, and get supporters excited for the future. News outlets often report on the rallies, showing clips of what was said, but never stream the whole event. It would be interesting to see what could be uncovered if one would study these gatherings.

This topic is especially interesting when we, as a society, know that the generations after us will be studying these years. Everything we do today, affects tomorrow. As a society, we should be learning from past mistakes and tactics to ensure the future would be a better place. Citizens should never blindly follow governments because every administration has employed

propagandists. They each have an agenda they want to accomplish and that may come at the

expense of others. In history, we have already seen the danger in not questioning politicians.

Event Analysis

Chart 1:
Did President Trump comment on the Event?

	Yes	No	Total
Quantity	3	3	6
Percent of Total	50	50	100

Chart 2:
The President's Attitude

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Total
Quantity	0	5	1	6
Percent of Total	0	83.3	16.7	100

Chart 3:
The President's Comments on Media

	Positive	Negative	No Comment	Total
Quantity	0	4	2	6
Percent of Total	0	66.7	33.3	100

Chart 4:
Tweet Topic (mentioned in tweet)

	Fake News	Enemy of the People	CNN	Media is Wrong	Washington Post	Total
Quantity	5	1	3	2	1	12
Percent of Total	41.7	8.3	25	16.7	8.3	100

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