



**Stop Online Violence Against Women**

## **The Critical Race Theory False Narrative: Controlled by Conservative Media, Reinforced by Mainstream Media**

### **INTERIM ANALYSIS**

**By Shireen Mitchell, Amy Ruckes, and Bitsy Bentley**

**About SOVAW** The ongoing work of SOVAW's data scientists tracks disinformation campaigns that disproportionately affect Black voters and cause divisions based on Black identity (including inter- and intra-community divisions). Mitchell and her team have been monitoring online interactions since 2013, with topics and issues ranging from Russia interference, digital voter suppression, and targeting of women of color politicians to the 1619 Project, Stop Asian Hate, and CRT.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The broad and highly politicized debate around CRT and the 1619 Project has a public face: both are framed as a direct attack on American history and how it is taught within the K-12 educational system in the United States. But underlying this public face is a much more sinister, coordinated effort to criminalize diversity training and initiatives that broaden education around the truth of the country's origins, spread and perpetuate disinformation, and target Black identity and scholarship for political purposes.

## **CRT POLITICIZATION & POLARIZATION**

CRT is a complex construct and one that is misunderstood and misconstrued by actors seeking to exploit it. Notably, while its approach within Black Scholarship often varies, an understanding of its [origins](#) (as well as that of the 1619 Project) is essential.

As explained within a January 2021 American Bar [article](#):

“The originators of CRT include Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Cheryl Harris, Richard Delgado, Patricia Williams, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Tara Yosso, among others. CRT transcends a Black/white racial binary and recognizes that racism has impacted the experiences of various people of color, including Latinx, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. As a result, different branches, including LatCrit, TribalCrit, and AsianCRT have emerged from CRT. These different branches seek to examine specific experiences of oppression. CRT challenges white privilege and exposes deficit-informed research that ignores, and often omits, the scholarship of people of color. CRT began in the legal academy in the 1970s and grew in the 1980s and 1990s. It persists as a field of inquiry in the legal field and in other areas of scholarship. Mari Matsuda described CRT as, “the work of progressive legal scholars seeking to address the role of racism in the law and the work to eliminate it and other configurations of subordination.”

The equally controversial and critiqued 1619 Project is an award-winning, long-form journalism project developed by Pulitzer Prize recipient Nikole Hannah-Jones, writers from The New York Times, and [The New York Times Magazine](#). It “aims to reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the very center of the United States' national narrative”. The project was first published in The New York Times Magazine in August 2019, in recognition of the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in the English colony of Virginia.

The topic CRT [trended](#) on May 3, 2021 and has been consistently discussed online since this date. In order to understand how a field of academic study related to Black scholarship has become a popular focus of online conversation, SOVAW's data team searched for online resources elaborating how CRT might be incorporated in school curriculum and found one questionable website: [CriticalRace.Org](#).

This organization describes CRT foremost as “an outgrowth of the European Marxist school of critical theory” and claims that CRT is associated with identity politics and the Black Lives Matter movement which “serv[es] as an intellectual underpinning to grant the movement a perception of legitimacy as a civil rights movement”. (These statements are unfounded, factually untrue and yet, a part of the disinformation lexicon.) The criticalrace.org domain was created on November 11th, 2020, is run by a securities arbitration lawyer William A. Jacobson, and is supported by the Legal Insurrection Foundation. Mr. Jacobson, a known critic of the Black Lives Matter movement, states that criticalrace.org “seek[s] to fill a void of information in an easily accessible form for parents and students”. The Legal Insurrection Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, is owned by William A. Jacobson and was [launched](#) on March 4, 2019, although according to [tax](#)

[documentation](#), the foundation originated in 2017 but all activity began in 2019. The CriticalRace.org website was launched on February 1, 2021 and was [promoted](#) on Fox news.

In order to understand the difference between the scholarly definition of CRT and the more polarized version of CRT that we found online, we concurrently began a quantitative analysis of Twitter activity using the keyword 'Critical Race Theory'; this enabled us to see who was dominating the narratives and what retweets were being shared. We performed the analysis in a cross-platform approach by using Twitter and Facebook data from the time period of January 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021.

## **TWITTER DATA ANALYSIS**

An initial analysis of Twitter activity from May 29, 2020 until May 29, 2021, provided our research team with a visualization to track the spikes in trends to better understand when the term 'Critical Race Theory' was amplified online (Image 1).

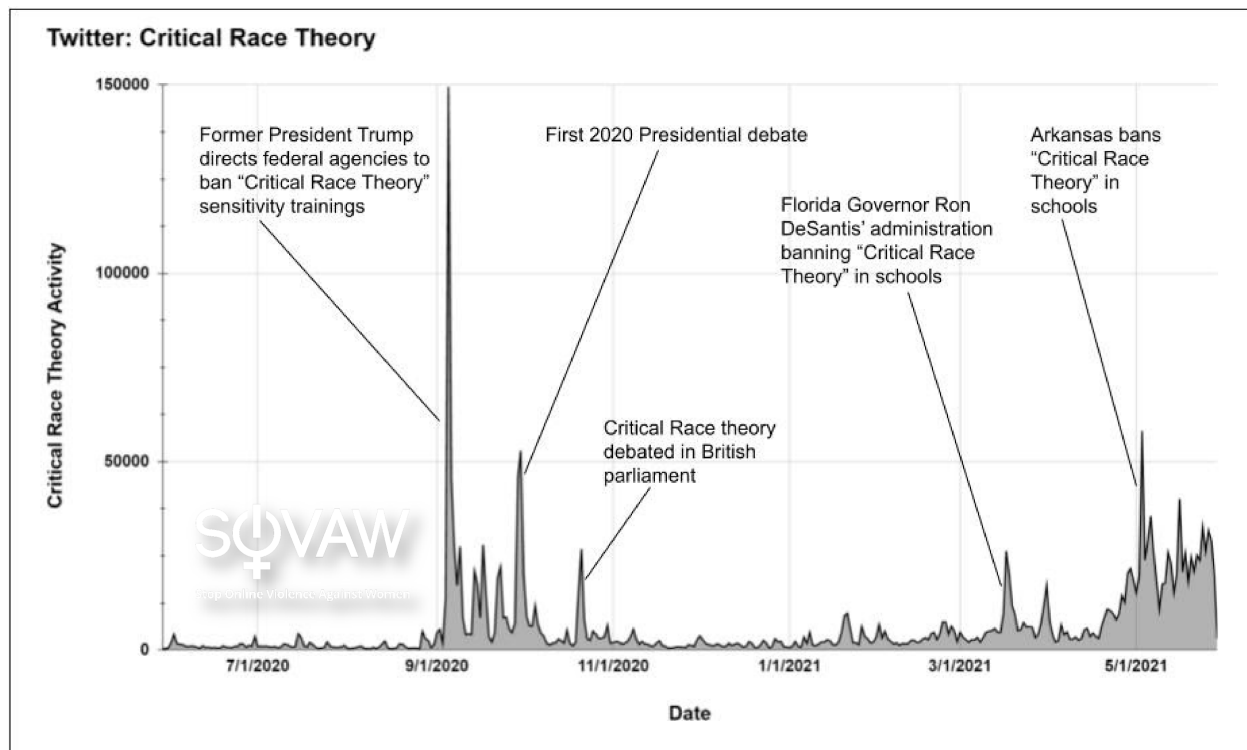


Image 1. Shows the Twitter timeline of activity from May 29, 2020 until May 29, 2021

We noticed immediately that CRT became prominent as a topic of discussion on Twitter in September 2020 (Image 1), with a specific trending activity on September 5, 2020, and again on May 3, 2021. Notably, this increase in Twitter discussions in September coincided with a Trump administration directive from September 4, 2020 to stop funding federal training programs that taught "[divisive, anti-American propaganda](#)" regarding racial inequalities within U.S. society. The former President was also asked to explain his administration's actions regarding this policy at

the [1st Presidential debate](#) on September 29, 2020. The increase in activity in the beginning of May relates to various state legislative bills to ban school curriculums related to the 1619 Project.

Further analysis of Twitter activity has been broken up into individual sets of data across two time frames to focus on the spikes in activity.

### **A Breakdown of Twitter Activity: September 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020**

Analyzing the activity on Twitter from September 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020 (total of 1838 tweets, 1546 Nodes, 1560 Edges in the visualization), we discovered that Conservative actors were dominating the online narratives. The most retweeted accounts for this time period were Christopher F. Rufo (@realchrisrufo) of the Manhattan Institute (723 retweets, 42.3% of retweeted tweets) and James Lindsay (@ConceptualJames) of New Discourses LLC (405 retweets, 24% of retweeted tweets), (Image 2).

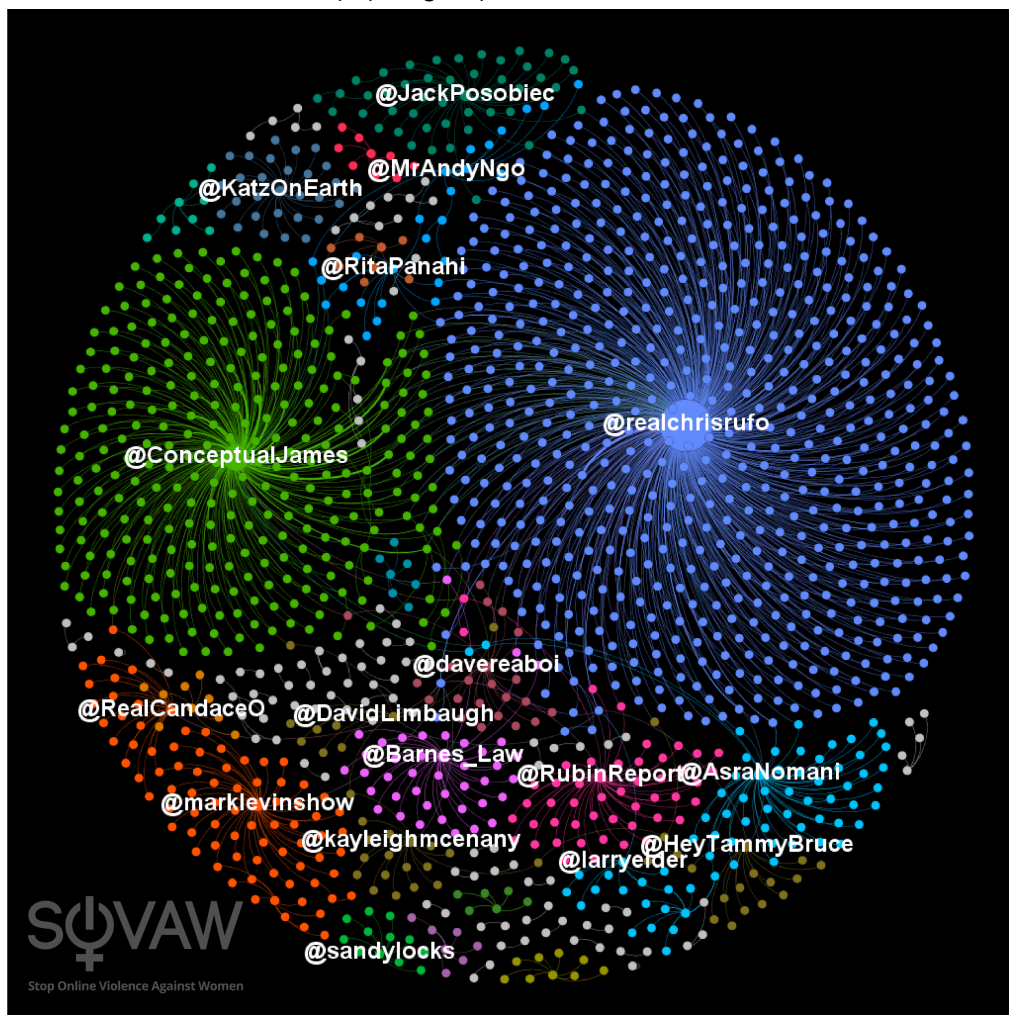


Image 2. Shows a visualization of Critical Race Theory activity on Twitter from Sept 1, 2020 to Sept 30, 2020.



Christopher F. Rufo ([@realchrisrufo](https://twitter.com/realchrisrufo)) (Image 3) describes CRT as "radical ideology"; while James Lindsay ([@ConceptualJames](https://twitter.com/ConceptualJames)), author of *Cynical Theories*, shares a thread on flashcards to educate "Dummies" on the ideology of CRT.

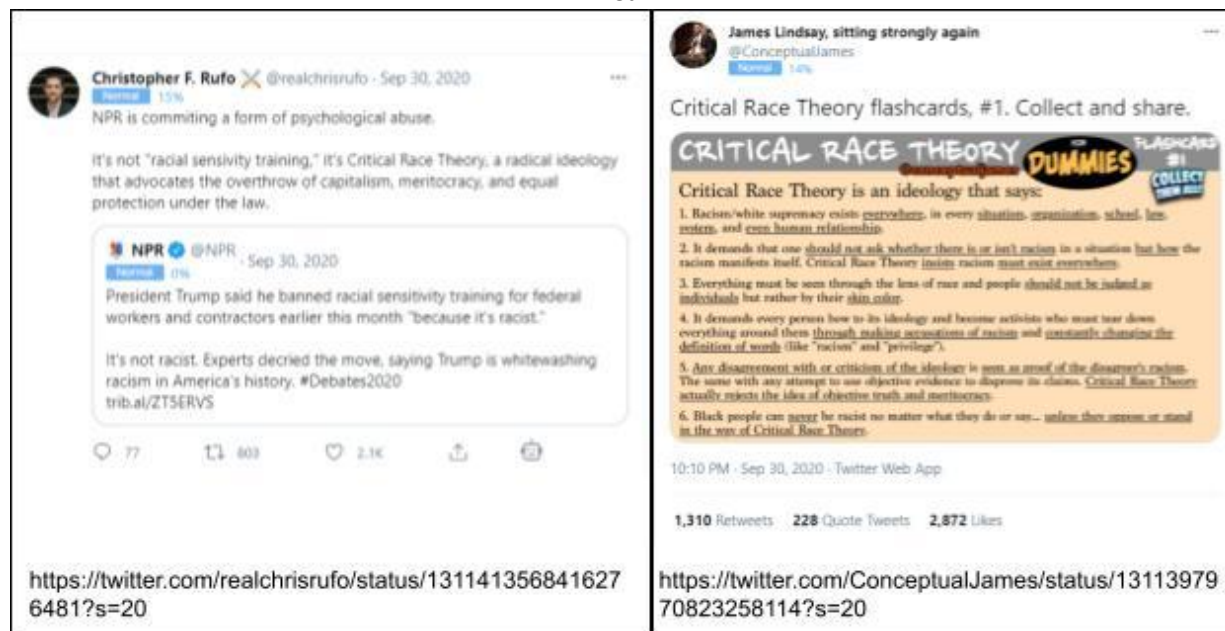


Image 3. Shows the retweeted tweets from the two most retweeted accounts in September 2020.

Christopher F. Rufo is the director of the Center on Wealth and Poverty at the [Discovery Institute](https://www.discovery.com/), senior fellow at the [Manhattan Institute](https://www.manhattaninstitute.org/), and a visiting fellow at the Heritage Foundation. Following Mr. Rufo's appearance on [Tucker Carlson](https://www.tucker-carlson.com/) on September 1, 2020 (during which he criticized CRT in federal training programs and stated that CRT is "[being weaponized against the American people](#)"), former President Trump retweeted Mr. Rufo's appearance, and in another tweet declared that CRT is "[a sickness that cannot be allowed to continue](#)". (Following this Twitter activity, the Trump Administration issued a directive to stop funding CRT in federal training programs on September 4th.)

James Lindsay is the Director of [New Discourses LLC](https://www.newdiscourses.com/) (incorporated on [September 17, 2019](https://www.newdiscourses.com/2019/09/17/)) and is best known for his criticism of culture studies and academia through his [Sokal Squared scandal](https://www.sokal-squared.com/) in which he, Helen Pluckrose, and Peter Boghossian submitted audaciously fake research to peer-reviewed publications in order to demonstrate that scholarship is "[based less upon finding truth and more upon attending to social grievances](#)". New Discourses LLC (file #L19000234287) was incorporated on [Sept 17, 2019](https://www.newdiscourses.com/2019/09/17/) and is registered under Michael O'Fallon with the following principal officials: James S. Lindsay, Michael W. O'Fallon, Stewart C Adams, and Peter Boghossian.

Michael O'Fallon, who views "[social justice](#)" "[a threat to the gospel](#)", is also the founder and owner of the business entity Sovereign Alliance (Sovereignnations.com is part of this entity). In 2019, Sovereign Nations, a Christian nationalist organization [created in 2017](#), sponsored a panel at [CPAC](https://www.cpac.org/) in which the panelists described viewing "injustice through a lens of 'intersectionality'" as "the tools of anti-Christian postmodernists out to deconstruct the

evangelical church”. Thus, we see that both Christopher F. Rufo and James Lindsay are both critics of CRT and created online disinformation accordingly.

When we further analyze Twitter activity that mentions Christopher F. Rufo (@realchrisrufo) in comparison to mentions of “Critical Race Theory,” we see a distinct correlation between this Twitter actor and the online discussions surrounding CRT (Images 4,5).

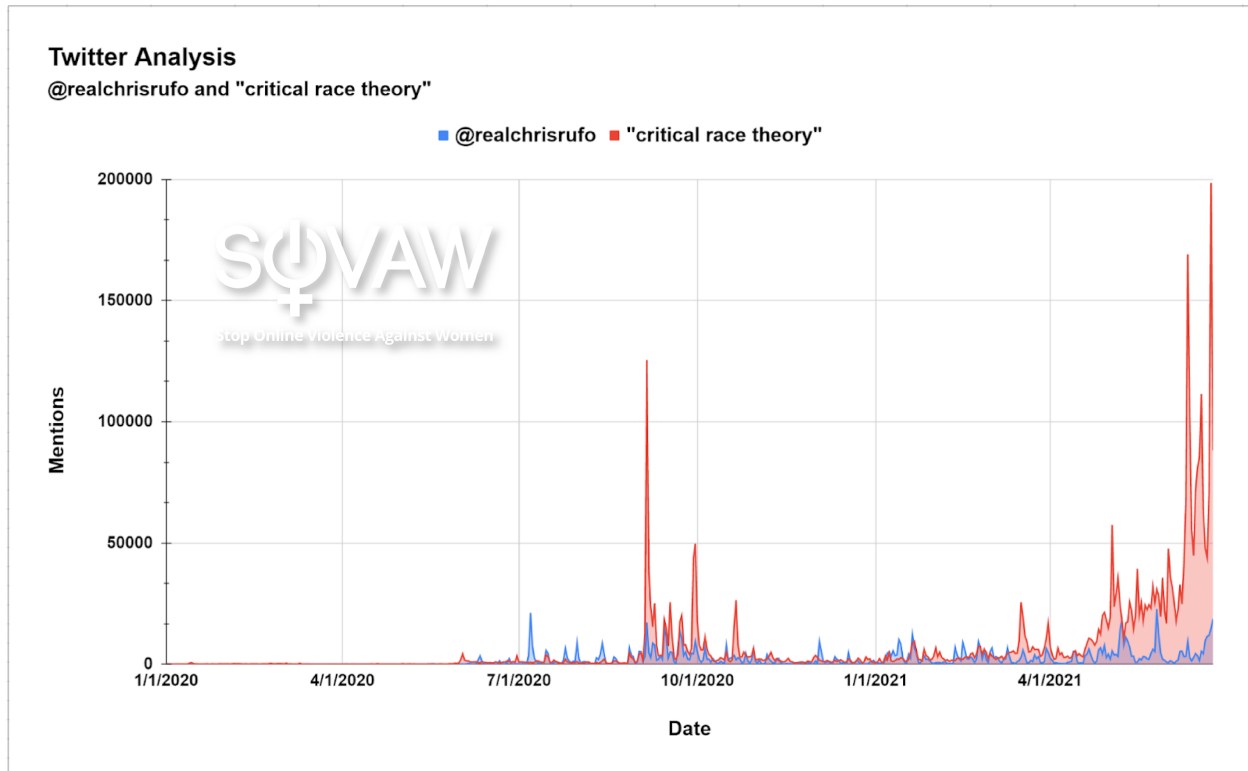


Image 4. Shows the Twitter mentions of @realchrisrufo (blue) in comparison to “Critical Race Theory” (red) from January 1, 2020 to June 24, 2021

The activity mentioning @realchrisrufo on July 7, 2020 did not mention CRT specifically, but did pertain to racial oppression. "First, diversity trainers informed white participants that "objectivity," "individualism," "intellectualization," and "comfort" are all vestiges of internalized racial oppression"([tweet](#) from July 7, 2020).

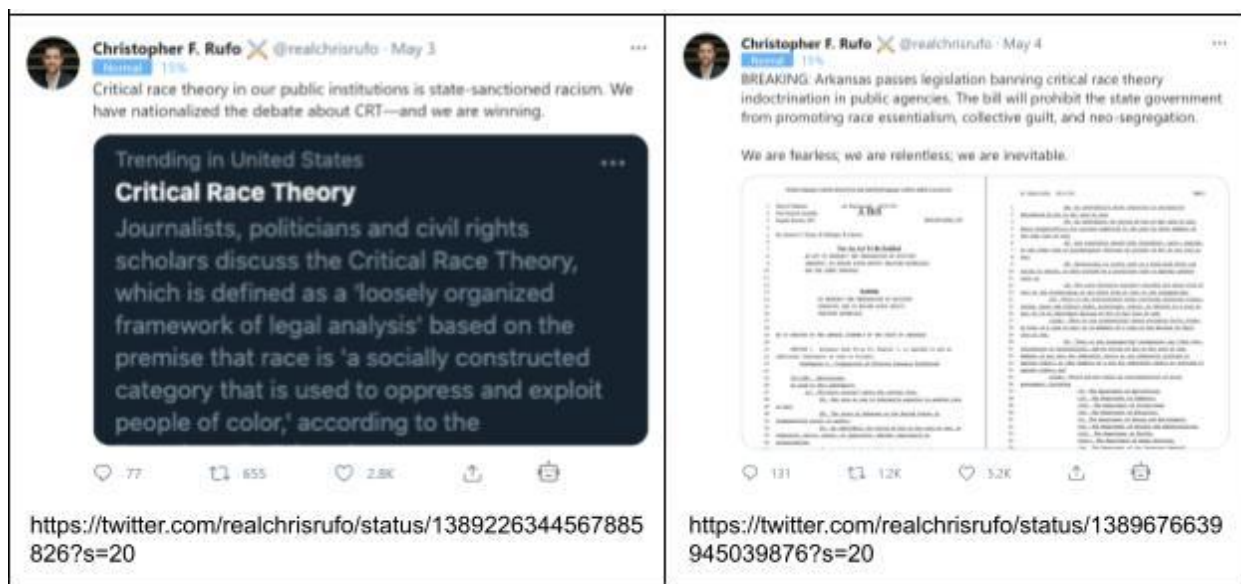


Image 5. Images show the most retweeted tweets from Rufo from May 1 to May 4, 2021.

## May 5 to May 8, 2021

We then analyzed activity on Twitter from May 5 to May 8, 2021 (total of 2000 tweets, 1710 Nodes, 1630 Edges in the visualization) to see how the conversation changed after CRT trended. We found that the top 5 most retweeted authors comprised 50% of all the retweets for this time period: @BreitbartNews (18.75%), @jsolomonReports (12.90%), @RepLeeZeldin (7.76%), @ZinnEdProject (5.19%), @newsmax (4.96%), (Image 6). The far-right news outlet Breitbart News and the journalist John Solomon were the two most retweeted authors (Image 7). According to online records, John Solomon's false reporting during the former Administration included "[laundered dirt provided to him by Donald Trump's attorney, Rudy Giuliani, producing articles that directly led to](#)" the Whistleblower Report and consequently, former President Trump's first impeachment.

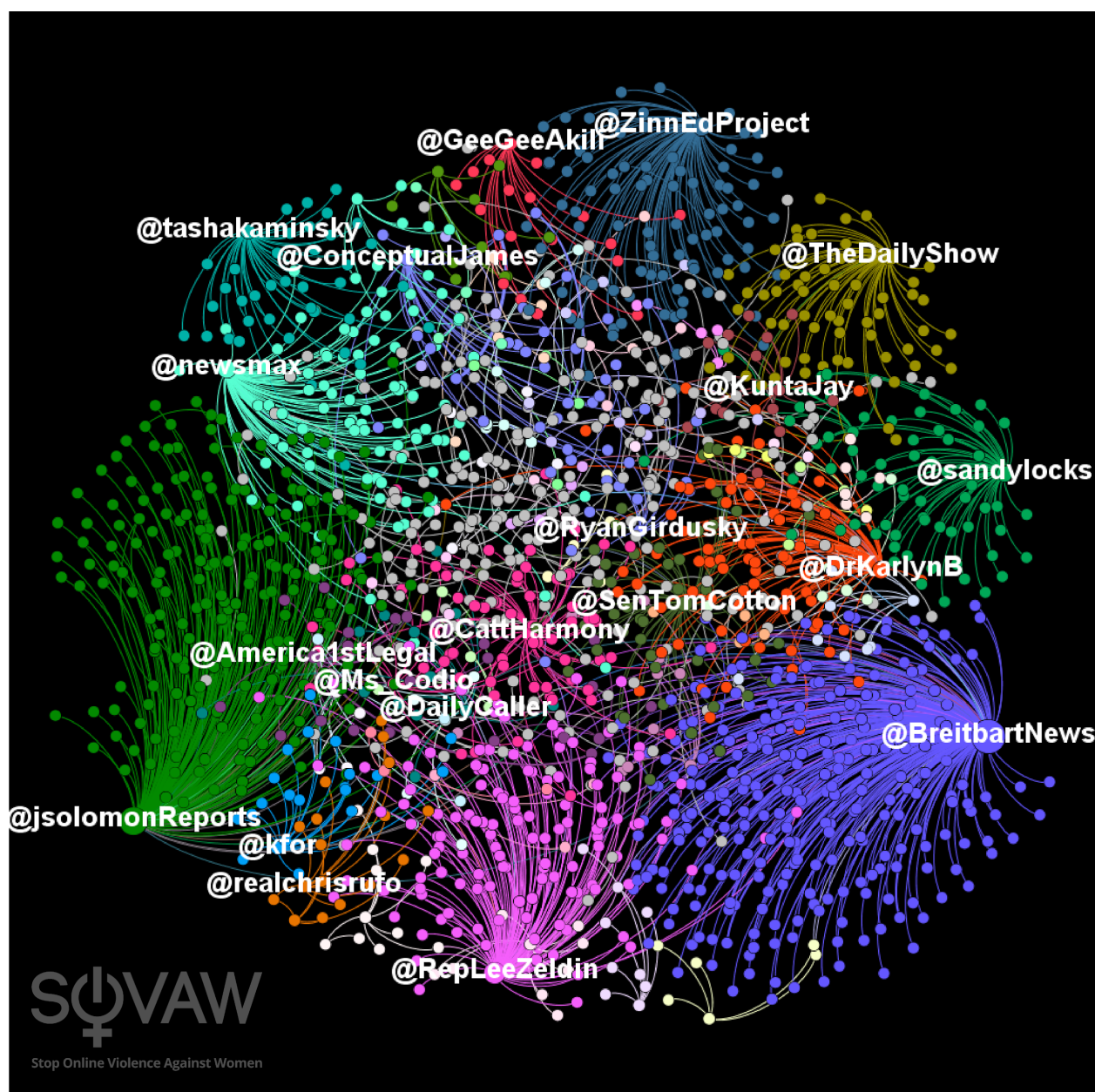


Image 6. Shows a visualization of Critical Race Theory activity on Twitter from May 5 to May 8, 2021

This image includes tweets from Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, @sandylocks, and The Daily Show. While the latter is considered a left-leaning news outlet, the visualization indicates an overwhelming dominance of the conversation by Conservative, anti-CRT outlets aimed at spreading disinformation about CRT's meaning, where it is being taught, and the bills intent on banning it.





Image 7. Shows the retweeted tweets from the two most retweeted accounts in May 2020

By analyzing the Twitter activity in September 2020 and May 2021, we see that the retweeted authors have been known disinformation actors within Conservative politics. We also see that the activity has not been limited to Twitter, but that there appears to be a coordinated effort to create websites that spread disinformation about the academic field of CRT. Over the course of the timeline, the quantitative analysis demonstrates that growing Conservative media coverage helps broadly spread CRT criticisms. Additionally, the former Administration issued the [1776 Commission Report](#) which criticized identity politics and states: “Today, far from a regime of equal natural rights for equal citizens, enforced by the equal application of law, we have moved toward a system of explicit group privilege that, in the name of “social justice,” demands equal results and explicitly sorts citizens into “protected classes” based on race and other demographic categories”. A [1776 Pledge](#) has also been shared that demonstrates that the issue will be used in relation to patriotic propaganda in the next election cycle.



## **FACEBOOK DATA ANALYSIS**

Concurrent with our Twitter data analysis, we collected 40,180 Facebook posts that included the term 'Critical Race Theory' from January 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021 (Image 8). For deeper analysis we randomly selected a subset of 4,018 posts and identified multiple categories for each page responsible for these posts. Each page was put into multiple categories for intersectional analysis (which assesses the impact of converging identities on opportunities, rights, policies, and laws) (For the purpose of this report, we are detailing our findings on Conservative and Black-identified pages.)

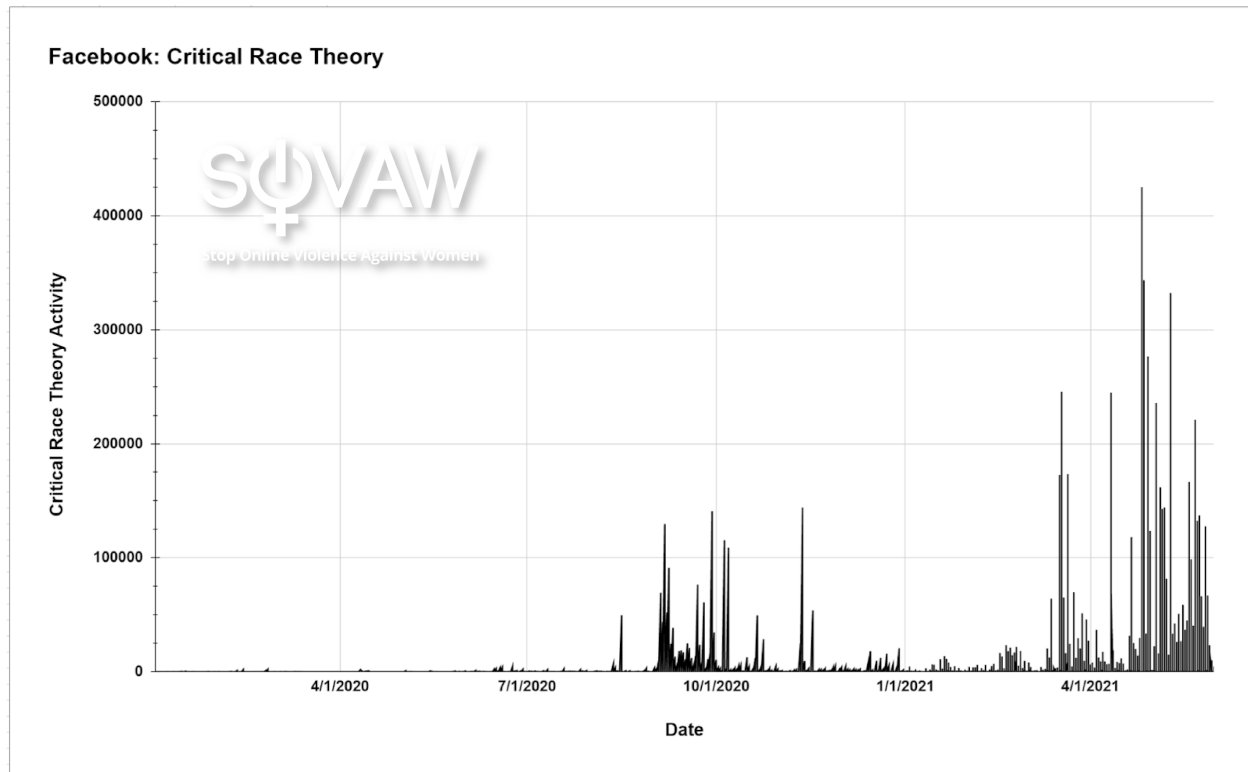


Image 8. Shows the Facebook timeline of activity from January 1, 2020 until May 31, 2021

Below is the timeline of Critical Race Theory posts (by category) that shows that the overwhelming increase in Conservative posts from September to April and May coincide with spikes observed on Twitter (Image 9).

Number of Posts by Date

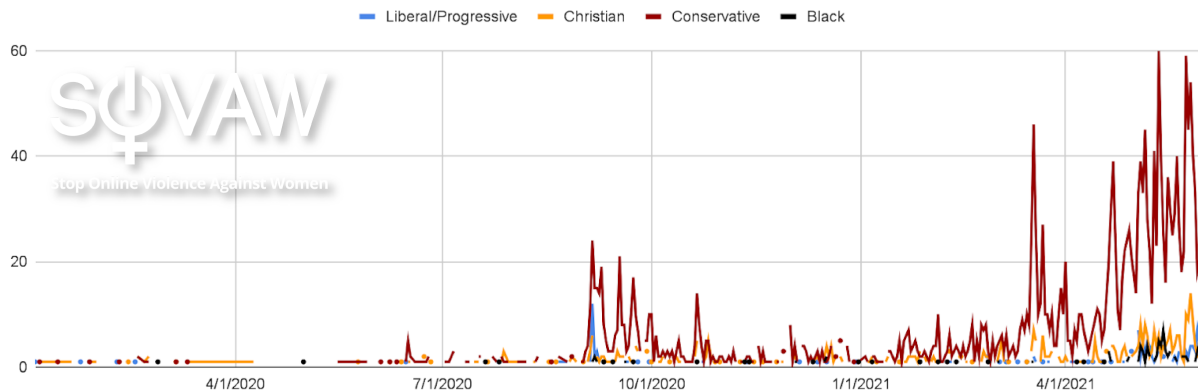


Image 9. Shows the Facebook timeline of activity from January 1, 2020 until May 31, 2021, coded Liberal/Progressive (blue) Christian (yellow), conservative (red), Black identified (Black)

At a high level, it is clear that white Conservative narratives (starting with Christian responses to the Southern Baptist Conference and including Conservative media and high profile individuals), have dominated the Facebook discourse around CRT since early in 2020. We found that Social Justice, Liberal/Progressive, and pages by Black-identified administrators accounted for a small fraction of the total posts on Facebook. By and large, Conservative posts did not include representation from Black Scholars but were much more likely to be shared than posts from Black-identified pages (Image 10):

- **Conservative and Republican pages comprised an overall 69.7% of the pages and 90.8% of the shares.** (Conservative pages, 57.6% of the posts and 83.2% of shares; Republican pages 12.1% of the posts, and 7.6% of the shares).
- **Overall, Social Justice and Liberal/Progressive pages accounted for 8.2% of the posts and 4.6% of the shares.** (Social Justice pages comprised 3.8% of the posts and 1.4% of the shares; Liberal/Progressive pages comprised 3.4% of the posts and 0.9% of the shares; Democratic pages comprised 1% of the posts and 0% of the shares; Libertarian pages comprised 1.4% of the pages and 0.4% of the shares; Black-identified pages comprised 2.8% of the posts and 0.9 % shares.)

## Posts and Likes by Category

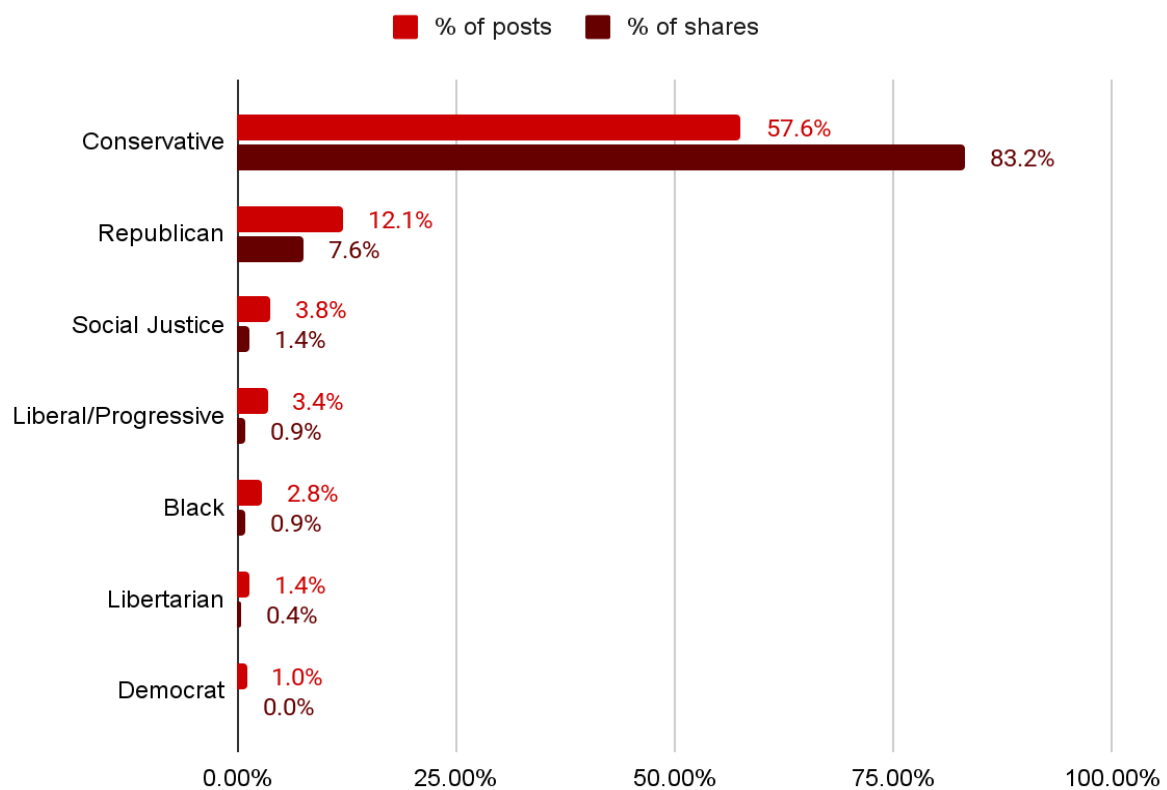


Image 10. Posts and Likes by Category the majority of content is from Conservative and Republican pages)

## Black-Identified FaceBook Pages

Below is the timeline of Critical Race Theory posts that shows that the overwhelming increase of Conservative posts from September 2020 to April and May 2021 coincide with spikes of amplification observed on Twitter (Image 11).

Number of Posts by Date

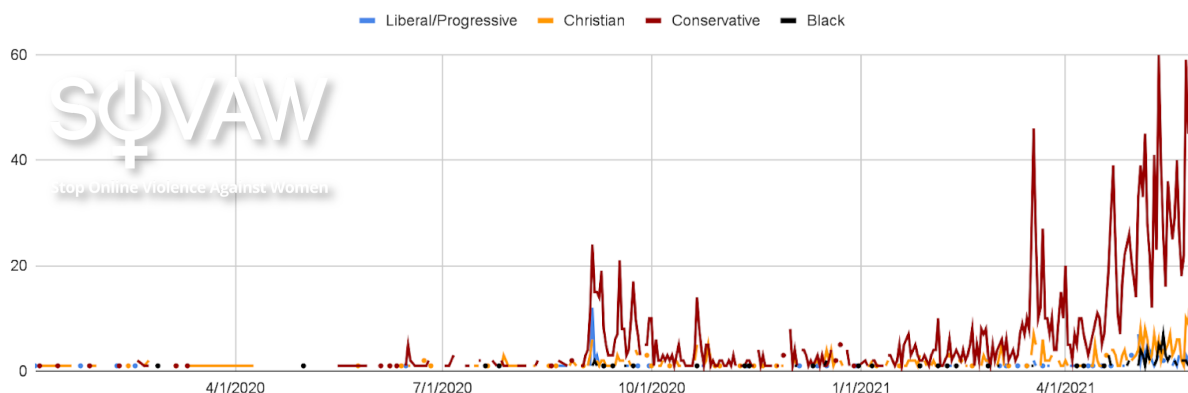


Image 11. (Timeline of Liberal/Progressive (Blue), Christian (Yellow), Conservative (Red) Black (Black) posts of CRT

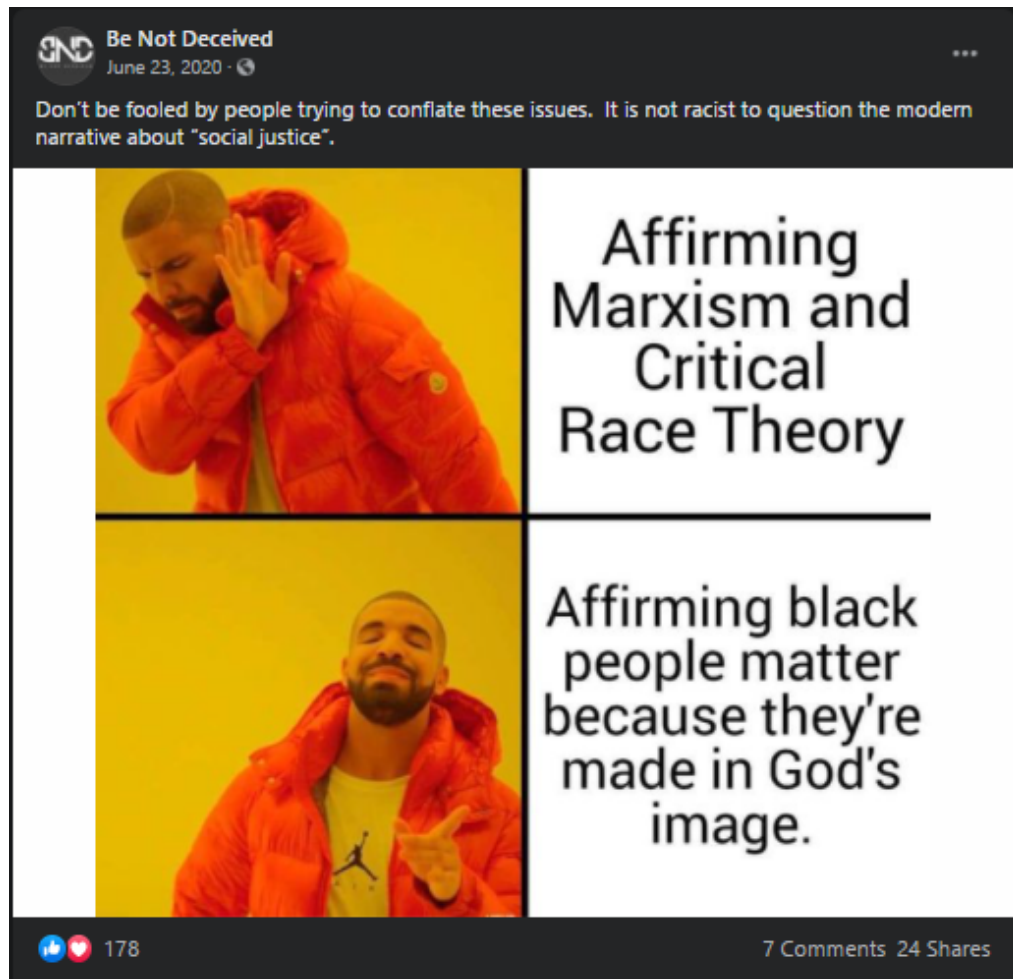
Following is a breakdown of the Black-identified pages and posts analyzed in further detail (Table 1). As you can see, Black Anti-racist and Social Justice pages comprised 32.9% of the posts and 37.25% of the shares while Black Liberal/Progressive pages comprised 6.1% of the posts and 5% of the shares, for an overall total of 39% of the posts and 42.25% of the shares. Additionally, Conservative pages comprised 22% of the posts and 42.5% shares, while Black News, Radio and podcasts comprised 34.2% of the posts and 59.1% of the shares.

(Note: Christian to Conservative, and Social Justice categories are quite diverse in the Black Community so data are not added; news and radio are collapsed.)

Black Pages	# of pages	# of posts	% of pages	% of posts	% of shares	% of likes
	82	112	100.0%	100.0%	100.00%	100.0%
Antiracist/Social Justice	27	31	32.9%	27.7%	37.25%	26.6%
Conservative	18	28	22.0%	25.0%	42.50%	55.4%
News	15	21	18.3%	18.8%	21.93%	7.2%
Radio/Podcast	13	19	15.9%	17.0%	37.17%	48.9%
Christian	9	12	11.0%	10.7%	5.37%	5.8%
Education	8	13	9.8%	11.6%	3.26%	0.8%
Liberal/Progressive	5	6	6.1%	5.4%	5.01%	6.2%
Republican	3	7	3.7%	6.3%	8.05%	9.8%

Table 1. Pages that are administered by Black identified moderator

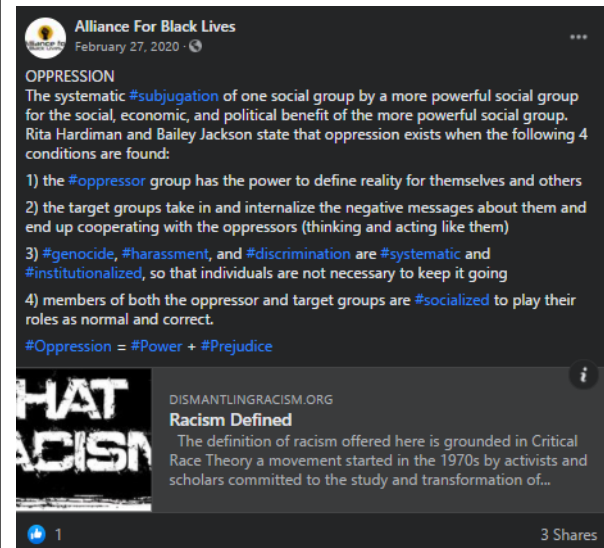
## A Sample of Facebook Posts: Black Identified



June 23, 2020: The sixth post from [Be Not Deceived](#), an Endtime ministry that promotes original Baptist philosophies from 1689 London and has an affiliated podcast by Dawain Atkinson, uses images of the Canadian Rapper Drake to criticize Critical Race Theory.




Christian pages dominate early discourse around CRT, while contemporaneous posts from Black, mostly liberal perspectives don't have nearly the same amount of coverage nor shares. The below example is from Alliance for Black Lives, [February 27, 2021](#).



Posts from [Black Conservatives](#) critical of CRT get more traction and shares than posts supportive of CRT:



## A Sample of Facebook Posts: Christian pages

**Pacific School of Religion**  
January 28, 2020 · 49

Aizaiah Yong will serve as Assistant Professor of Practical Theology and Pastoral Care at Pacific School of Religion (PSR) beginning on July 2020. Rev. Yong will be a great asset on our faculty and deepen our capacity to fulfill our mission. He brings cutting edge academic insight and public scholarship, deep commitment to faith communities, and extensive leadership and advocacy experience. Shaped by the experience of a multiracial, immigrant family, he is clear about the critical importance of academic work that is accountable to specific communities.

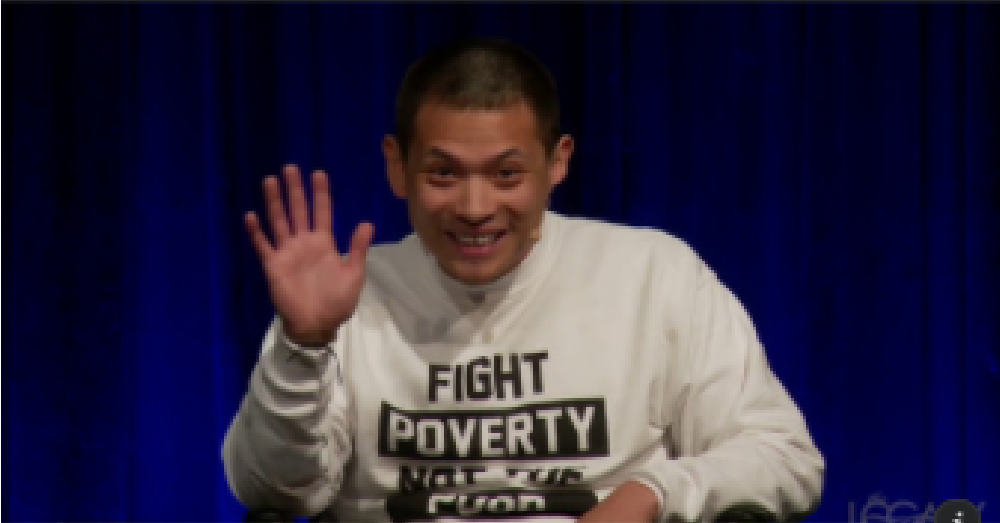
Rev. Aizaiah G. Yong is currently a PhD candidate in Practical Theology at the Claremont School of Theology. He is preparing to defend his dissertation under the working title: "Living in the Compassionate Presence of Life: Spirituality and Care for Multi/racial Experience(s)." In this project, he seeks pathways of healing and liberation for multiracial people at predominantly white institutions. His research stems from his own personal experience living at the intersections of race (he is Hakka Chinese and Chicano) and his work attempts to uncover alternative spiritualities and hidden wisdoms that strengthen and support those who travel between and across racialized worlds.

Aizaiah's vocational passion is to spiritually rooted social engagement that "bears witness to the compassionate presence of life itself." His research interests include postcolonial pastoral theology and care, critical race theory and intersectionality studies, mysticism and spirituality, intercultural dialogue and education, nonviolent social action, and contemplative leadership.





A licensed Pentecostal Christian minister and ordination candidate with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Aizaiah brings a breadth of professional experience in both public and private sectors. He has served as a minister of youth and young adults, non-profit community director, organizational trainer and consultant, and student affairs specialist in intercultural community development.

Aizaiah loves to be in nature with his family, go on traveling adventures (local and abroad), try out new cuisine, and pursue experiences that deepen spirituality and intercultural community.

He and his wife, Nereyda, have two children (Serenity Joy and Valor Amoz) and are expecting their third child to be born this upcoming April.



[YOUTUBE.COM](#)  
**Aizaiah Yong Sermon: The Gospel for the Poor - Legacy LA 2019**  
Elicia Horton teaches from Luke 4:16-20 at Legacy LA 2019. Register for Leg...  
[Learn More](#)


 221  
 8 Comments  20 Shares

**Capstone Report**  
February 14, 2020 · 🌐

Huge.

**Todd Starnes** · February 14, 2020 · 🌐

JUST IN: Hundreds of Southern Baptist pastors and laymen have formed a group to fight back against the leftward lurch of the denomination. The Conservative Baptist Network plans to address the "wokeness" -- citing rise of critical race theory, social justice and the debate over gender roles within some of our denominational entities. This is huge, folks.



TODDSTARNES.COM

**Pastors, Laymen Form Group to Address "Wokeness" of Southern Baptist Convention**

👍❤️ 93      18 Comments 38 Shares

**Concerned Women For America LAC** · February 18, 2020 · 🌐

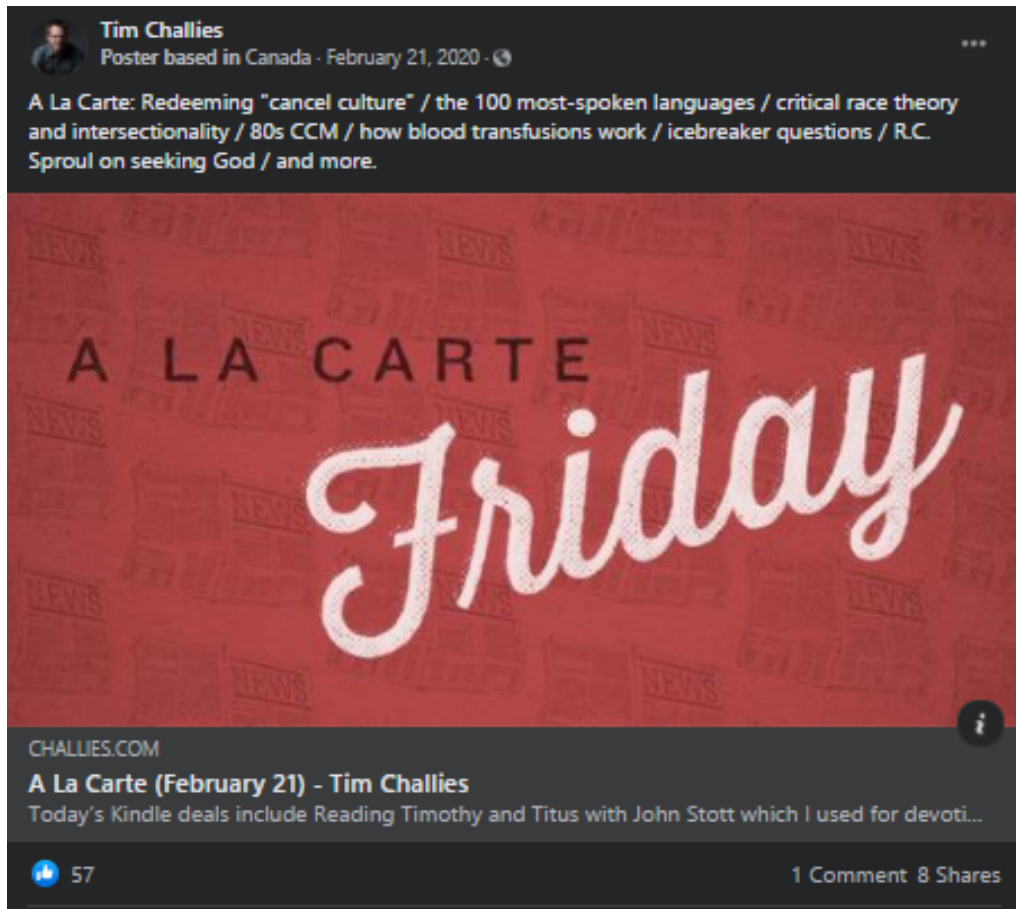
Listen as our President and CEO Penny Young Nance talks about the ERA on American Family Radio  
<http://ow.ly/HEup50yoCC2>



AFR.NET

**Roger Stone Sentencing Backlash, Guest Penny Nance on Equal Rights Amendment, Dr. Alex McFarland on Critical Race Theory**

👍 47      1 Comment 6 Shares



This post links to a [lengthy analysis](#) by white theologian Eric Davis, framing CRT and Intersectionality as antithetical to biblical teachings while referencing the work of Black theologians, and the work of Kimberlé Crenshaw. White atheists are quoted as saying that CRT could be used as a tool to dismantle Christianity:

*"If this were at the height of the New Atheist movement; if I were to design a plan to bring all of Christendom down, how would [I] do it? Make them woke. It will eat itself from the inside. If I were the old-school angry atheist—'let's just throw rocks at the cathedral until it comes down'—I would start making woke pastors and sending them in. They are going to tear everything apart because they are going to make everything about identity, and that's all they talk about."*

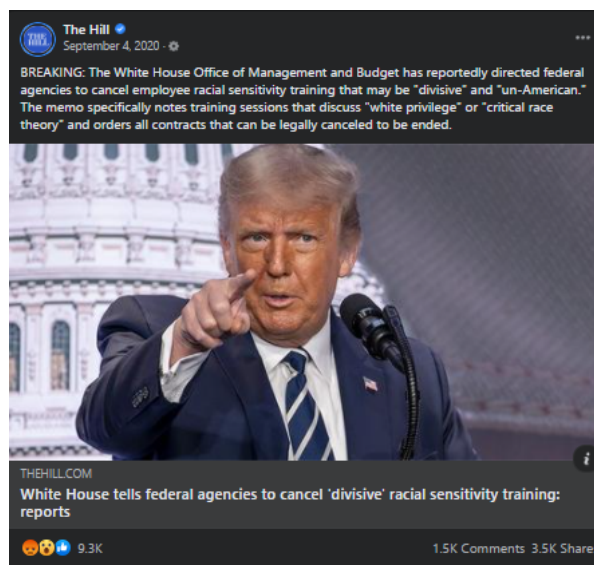
*-Peter Boghossian and James Lindsay*

Below are images and posts that are representative of the initial spikes in CRT activity.

[The first major post](#) comes from Christopher Rufo's interview on Tucker Carlson, amplified by The Heritage Foundation which funded Rufo's 'research' through a fellowship. Speaking directly to the White House, Rufo calls for an executive order to ban CRT in federal training programs. No Black voices or scholars are included or referenced in this analysis (total interactions 9,510).



The [next day](#), news breaks that the Trump administration issues an executive order for federal agencies to cancel racial sensitivity training (total interactions 14,527).



The volume of posts decrease steadily until [March 18](#), following Governor DeSantis's [March 17 press conference](#) announcing \$106 million proposal for Civics Education expressly excluding Critical Race Theory (which he describes as 'unsanctioned narratives' and 'unsubstantiated theories') and proposing a 'citizenship test' for graduating seniors. He frames CRT as ideology, not fact.

For the month of May (during the height of the spread of the CRT), we gathered a subset of posts that were shared for data analysis and visualization.



## A Breakdown of Facebook data: May 1, 2021 to May 31, 2021

Analyzing the activity on Facebook from May 1, 2021 to May 31, 2021 through visualizations (total of 16,769 Facebook posts, 4060 Nodes, 5448 Edges in the visualization), we discovered the most shared links originated from posts shared by public facing Facebook pages (Image 12).

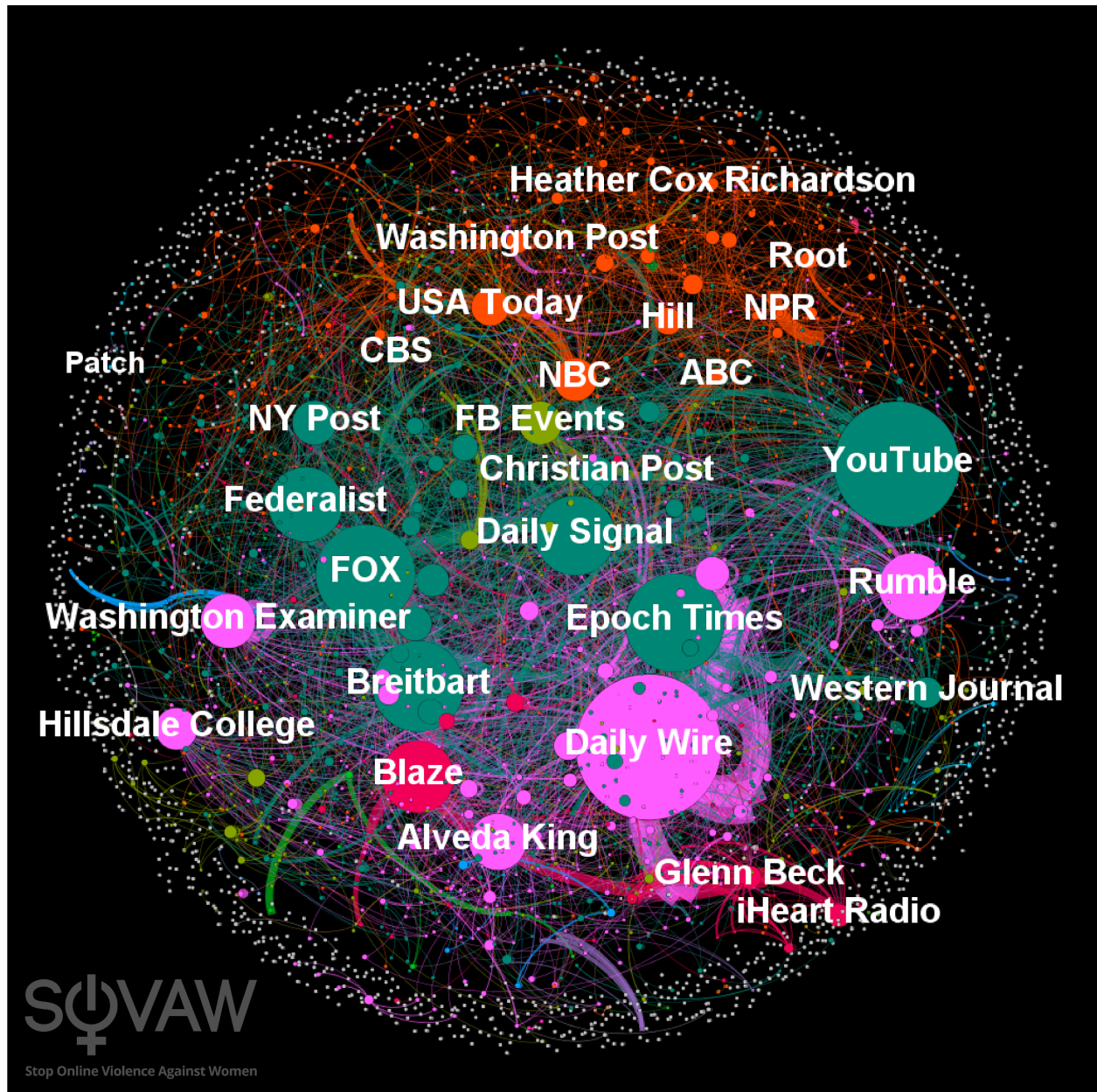


Image 12. (Most shared links of 16,769 Facebook post featuring CRT)

The visualization (i.e. network diagram) depicts the difference in interwoven connections (shared communities, pages, and individuals) and the spread of information, including disinformation. The nodes display the interconnected ecosystems that commonly share similar

content, ideologies and media sources. The more frequent the content from the main source is shared, the larger the node.

For the month of May (high peak sharing of CRT content) we focused on the media outlets, media, and political personalities' content that were shared (Image 13).

### Posts by Media Outlet

Media outlets are color coded according to a bias rating from [Media Bias/ Fact Check](#).

Outlets in red have right bias (Note: in this report they can be referenced as Conservative)

Outlets in blue have center-left bias (Note: in this report they can be referenced as Left-Leaning)

Outlets in green have least bias

Outlets in gray haven't been categorized by Media Bias/ Fact Check.

May 2021 CRT Facebook Posts by Media Outlet Source

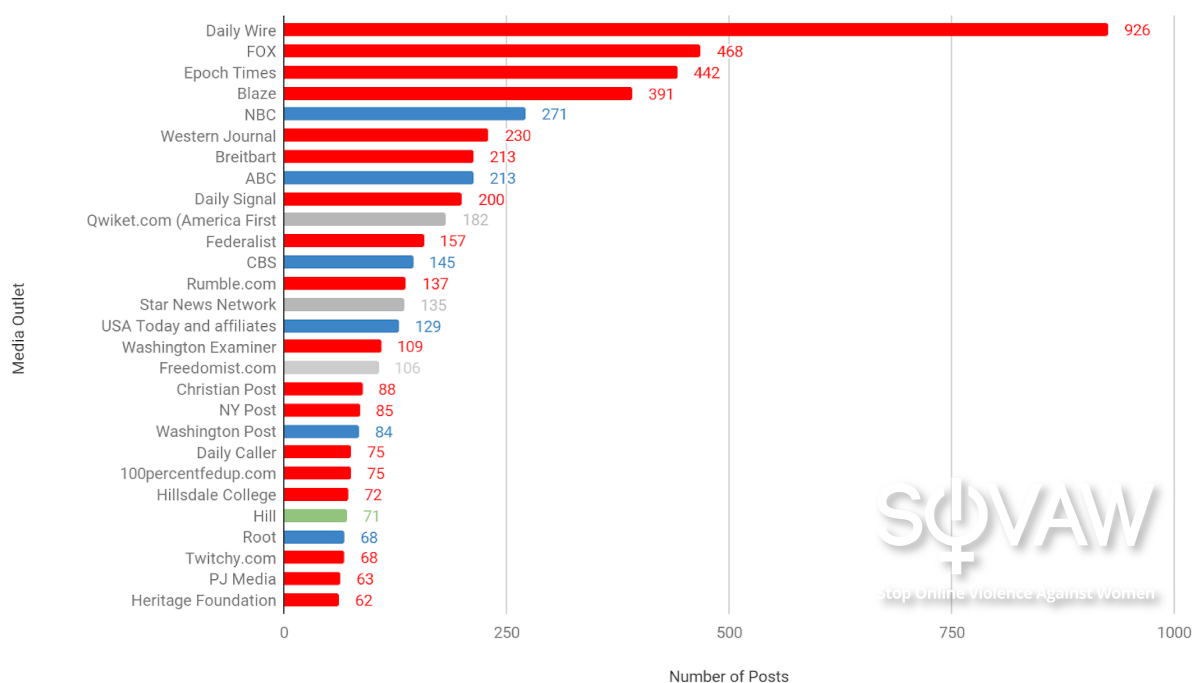


Image 13. (# of shares listed by sources of CRT content for the month of May)

Each of these 28 media sources had the listed number of Facebook posts referencing Critical Race Theory in the month of May 2021. The highest number of shares are from the Daily Wire (926), followed by FOX (468), and Epoch times (442). Although YouTube is indicated as neutral by Media Bias/Fact Check, YouTube was highly woven into the conservative media ecosystem, as indicated previously in Image 12. Data and Society [reported](#) that conservative or alternative media have continued to use YouTube to distribute their content through their channels.

*“Alternative Influence: Broadcasting the Reactionary Right on YouTube presents data from approximately 65 political influencers across 81 channels to identify the “Alternative Influence Network (AIN)”;* an alternative media system that adopts the techniques of brand influencers to build audiences and “sell” them political ideology.”

May 2021 CRT Facebook Source Post Cumulative Interactions from Network Diagram

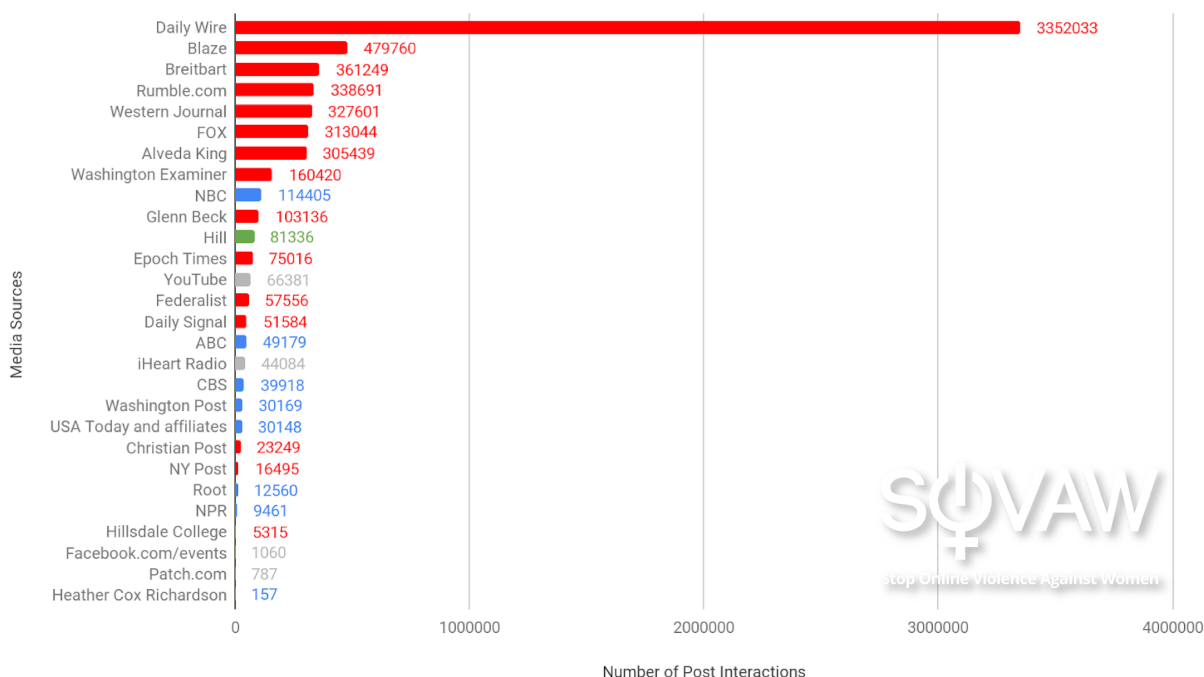


Image 14. (Total interactions of posts on CRT for the month of May)

The CRT Facebook posts referencing sources with right media bias had significantly more interactions than those referencing content from sources with center-left media bias. The top 10 sources with the most interactions are predominantly from Conservative media. The Daily Wire had the most interactions at 3,352,033, followed by Blaze, Breitbart, Rumble, Western Journal, and FOX, then Alveda King, the sole conservative Black Identified media personality. The left-leaning content started at 114,405 interactions for NBC, followed by ABC, CBS, Washington Post, USA Today, The Root, and NPR. The Hill, with the least bias, had 81,336 interactions.

May 2021 Average Interactions Per CRT Facebook Post Source from Network Diagram

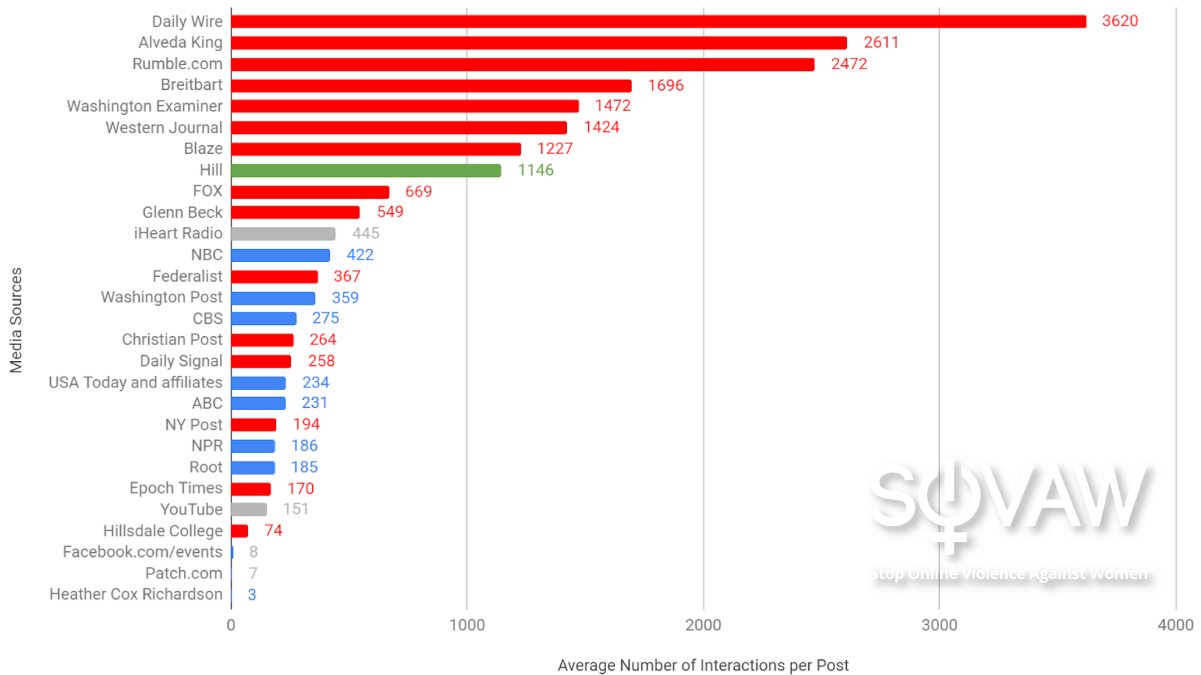


Image 15. (Average Media outlet post interactions on CRT for the month of May)

Right-wing media sources had higher than average interactions per CRT Facebook post (Image 15). The media sources and personality posts were from predominantly conservative media, with the top 5 being the Daily Wire (3620), Alveda King (2611), Rumble (2472), Breitbart (1696), and Washington Examiner (1472). There were no left leaning media among the top 10 of the average shares. The Hill, the only source with zero-leaning bias, averaged only 1146 interactions.

**Sources of CRT content that was posted an average of two or more times per day in the month of May.**

May 2021 CRT Facebook Posts by Media Outlet Source

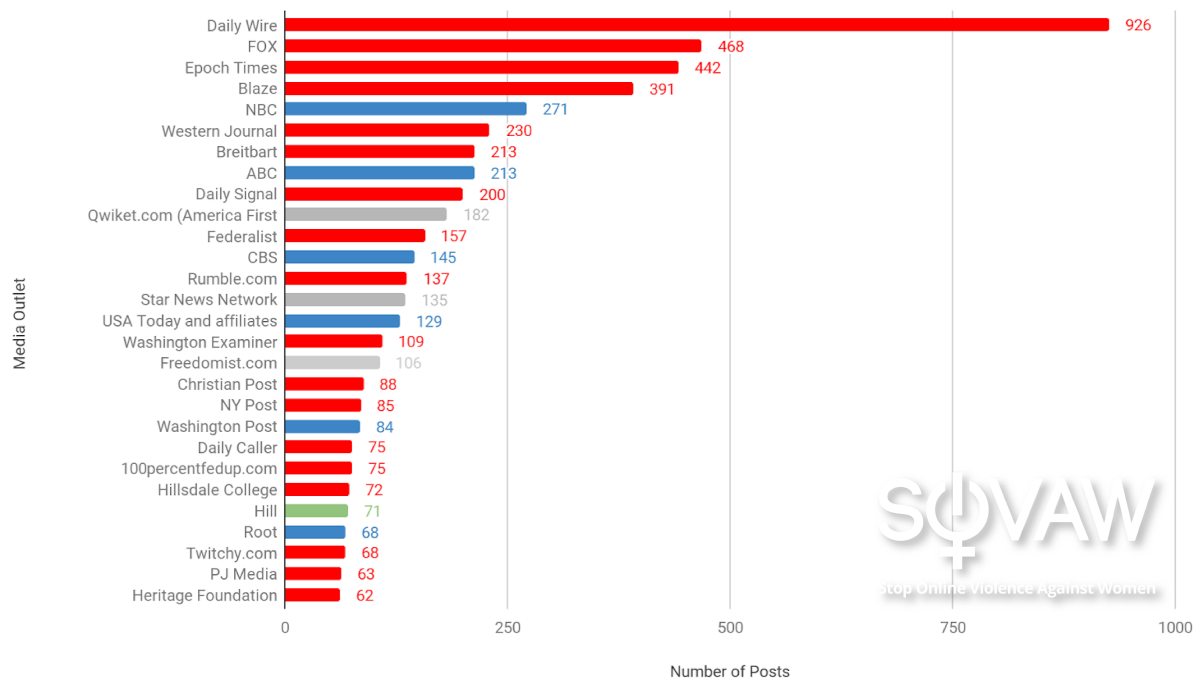


Image 16. (media outlets that were the source of an average of two or more CRT posts per day in the month of May)

28 Media outlets had content shared two or more times on Facebook referencing CRT in May, 2021 (Image 16). Daily Wire continues to lead at 926 shares, followed by FOX (468), Epoch Times (442), and Blaze (391) as Conservative media sources. NBC News (271), a left-leaning media source, was among the top five. The Hill (71) falls down on the shares as a neutral source next to The Root, which is the only Black Media source at 68.



## May 2021 Cumulative CRT Post Interactions by Media Outlet

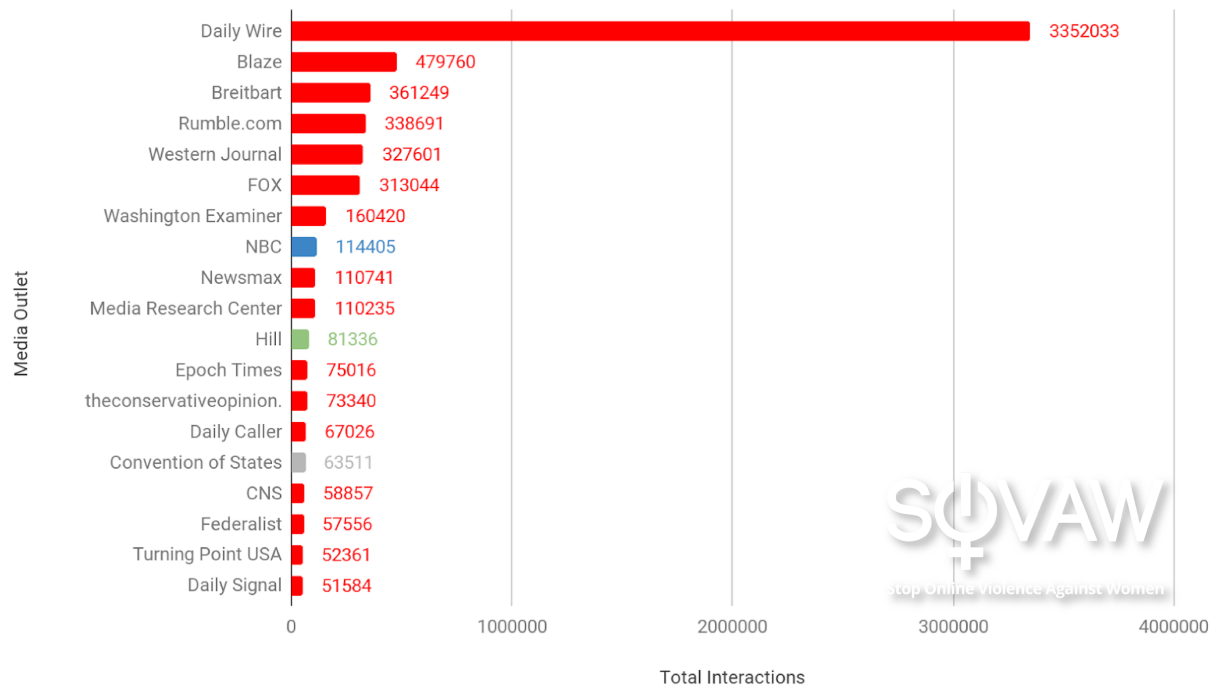


Image 17. (CRT Facebook posts cumulative interactions.)

Facebook posts from conservative outlets had significantly more cumulative post interactions based on the same content shared two or more times a day (Image 17). Among the Top 10 sources of cumulative interactions, only one came from a left-biased media source (NBC News, 114,405).

## May 2021 Average Interactions per CRT Facebook Post by Media Outlet

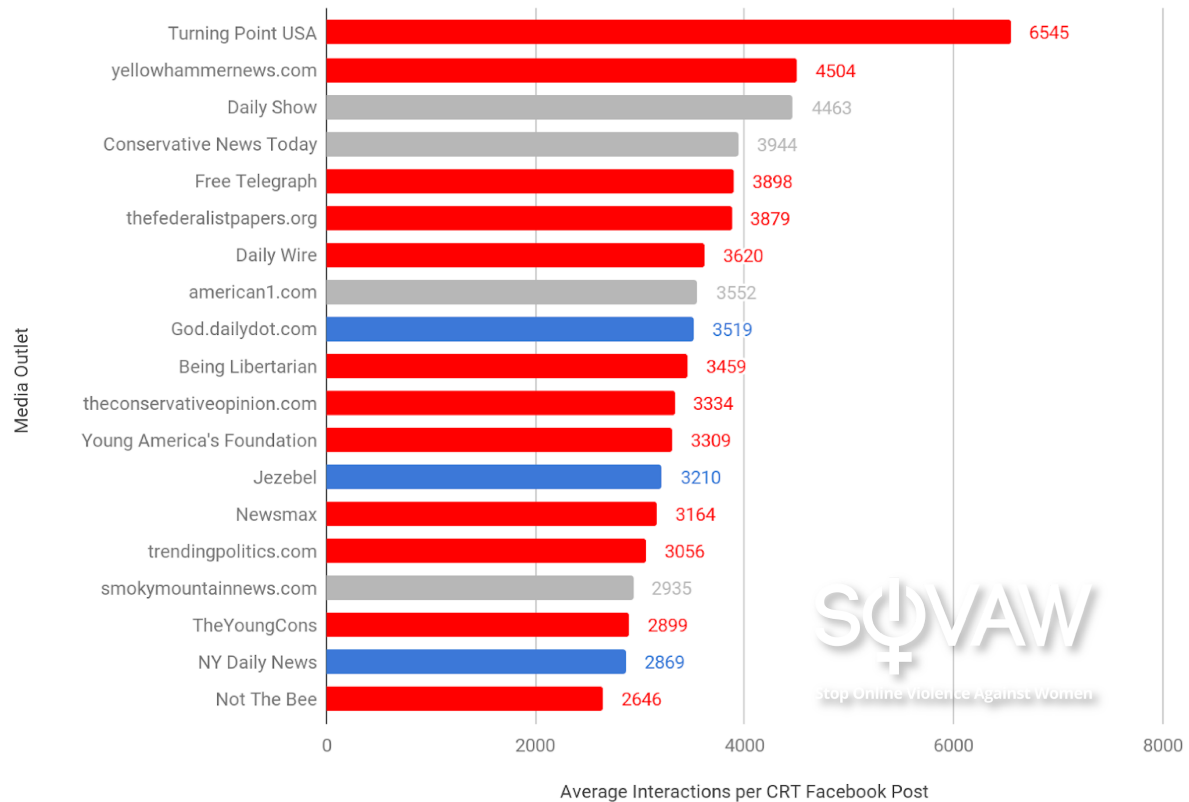


Image 18. (Average interactions for CRT posts per media sources)

Facebook posts referencing content from outlets with right media bias average more interactions per post (Image 18). Media Bias/Fact Check indicated which outlets were assessed as factual in addition to right, center left, non-bias, or uncategorized. Turning Point USA has the highest average interactions (6545), right bias and low factual assessment; Jezebel (3210), center-left biased and high factual assessment. Daily Wire (3620), right biased, and mixed factual assessment; and, Being Libertarian (3459), right biased and mostly factual assessment.

### Posts by Media Personality

Media personalities are color coded according to ideology.

People in red post anti-CRT content

People in blue post pro-CRT content

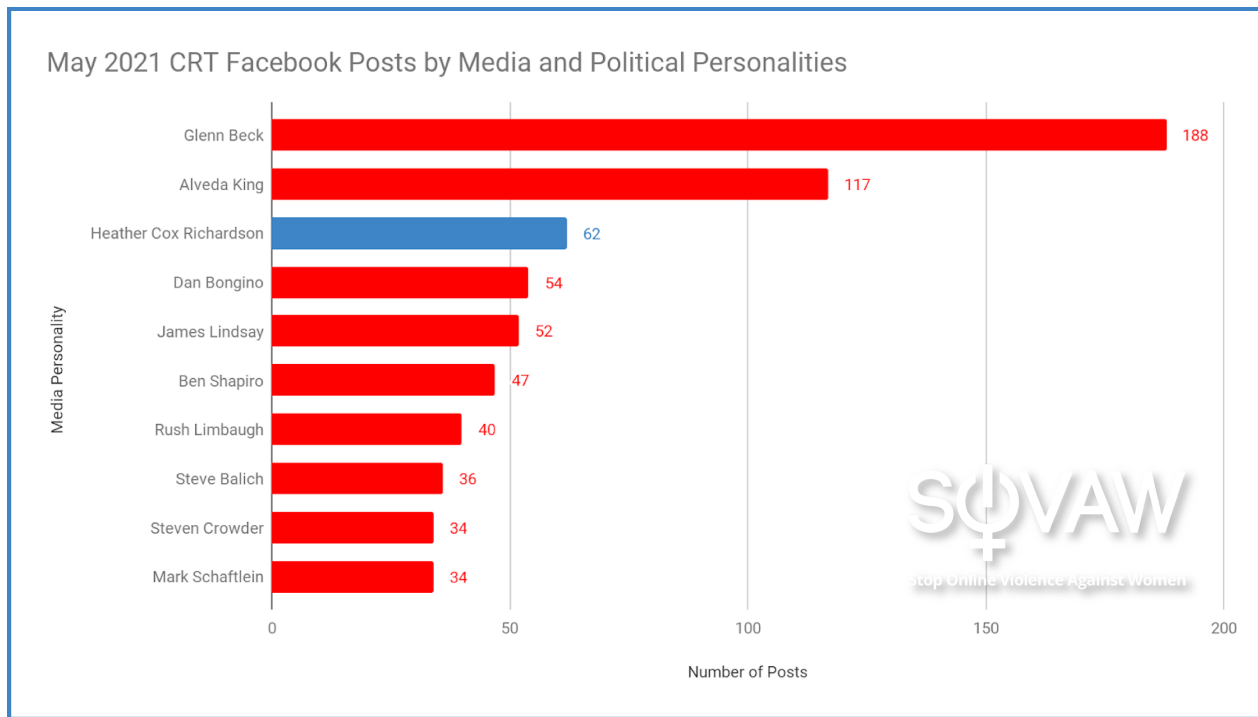


Image 19. (Media and Political personalities cumulative inter, month of May)

In May, 2021, CRT content from 10 media and political personalities were shared; Glenn Beck leads with a total of 188 posts, Alveda King is the only Black identified personality with 117, and Heather Cox Richardson (62) is the sole left leaning source (Image 19).

## May 2021 Cumulative CRT Post Interactions by Media and Political Personalities

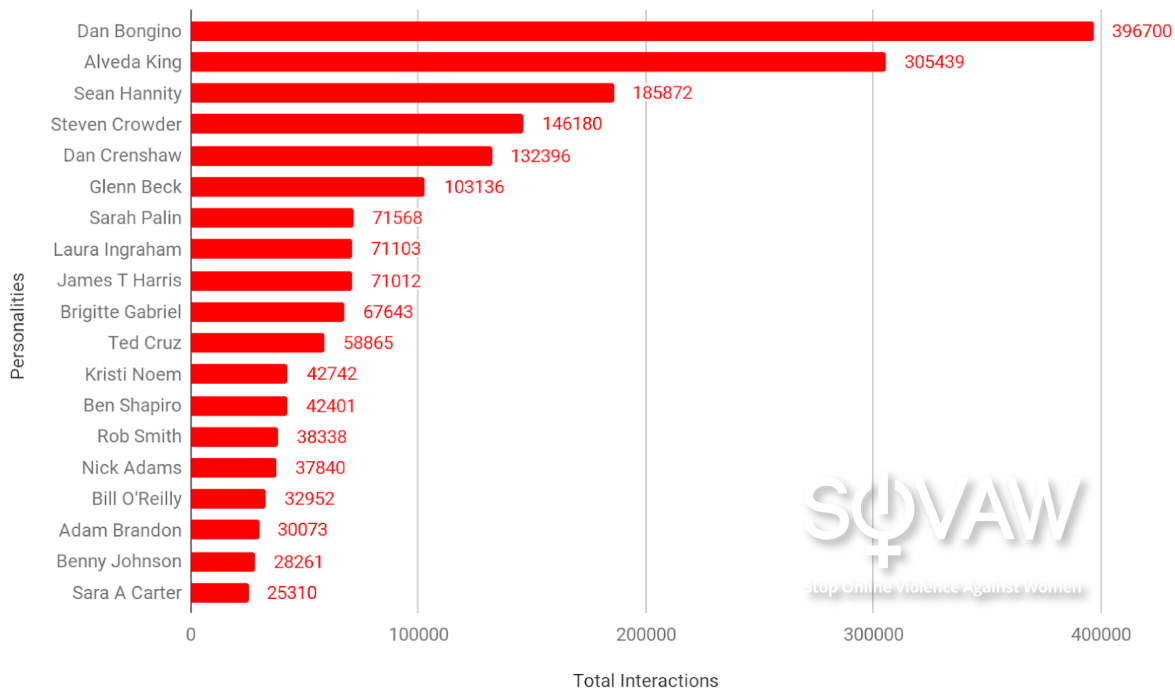


Image 20. (# Cumulative interactions of media and political personalities on CRT, in a Month)

19 media and political personalities had at least 25,000 post interactions on posts referencing CRT in May, 2021, all of them posting anti-CRT content (Image 20). Dan Bongino had the highest number of interactions (396,700) followed by Alveda King (305,439). The list of personalities included Ben Shapiro, Bill O'Reilly, Sarah Palin, and politicians like Ted Cruz.

## May 2021 Average Interactions per CRT Facebook Post by Media and Political Personalities

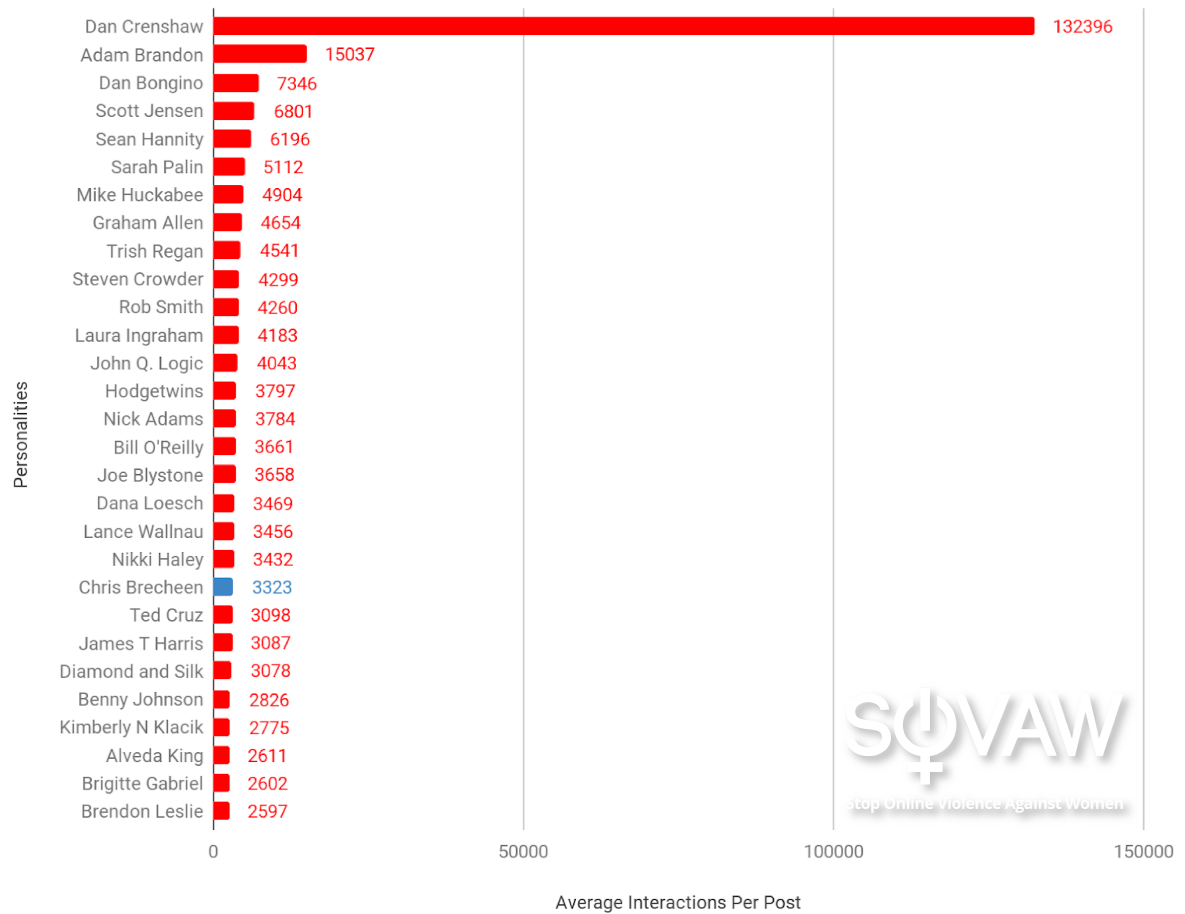


Image 21. (Media outlets sharing two posts a day on CRT)

29 media personalities had an average of 2,500 interactions per CRT post (Image 21). Only one set of posts (Chris Brecheen, 3,323) represented interactions with pro-CRT content, while Conservative Rep. Dan Crenshaw had 132,396.

## CONCLUSION

The depiction of tweets and posts highlight an important and troubling trend: Conservative media and organizations have dominated and controlled the discourse and disinformation around CRT to an alarming degree on key social networks. There is a void of Black voices and scholarship in these narratives. More importantly, the mainstream media in the U.S. have taken a backseat and rather than taking a proactive, essential stance based on data and fact, are simply perpetuating and amplifying the anti-CRT discourse. In turn, they are unwillingly or perhaps unintentionally helping to drive disinformation, discrimination, and marginalization of Black Scholarship, while hiding the truth about the Black American experience in reference to CRT. Without a significant shift in discourse and approach, we are stuck in an endless loop of rhetoric and untruths within a loosely-veiled political agenda, a loop that will not end well for Black Americans and for the Nation overall.

Media outlets, organizations, and political personalities that are focused on pro-CRT narratives are getting very little expression on the platforms. Conversely, Conservative media outlets, organizations, and political personalities have consistently had the most interactions on the platforms. What's more, discussion of CRT by Black-identified pages average roughly half of the interactions of both of these silos, reinforcing that media outlets are not commonly outlets speaking directly to Black scholars nor reaching the Black community, leaving Conservative, anti-CRT commentator Alveda King as the driving voice in the Black community.

SOVAW has looked at 10% of over 40,000 pieces of content on Facebook, and over a year of tweets focused on CRT. The media content that is shared over both platforms is predominantly Conservative, which indicates that there is a Conservative bias with regard to content that targets Black identity in addition includes low factual content.

If disinformation around CRT is to be effectively addressed, strategic silence is not an adequate or acceptable strategy.

SOVAW will be continuing to collect this data and assessing the media distribution for our full report.

**NOTE TO MEDIA OUTLETS:** This report, compiled by SOVAW's research and data team (comprising Amy Ruckes and Bitsy Bentley), is an interim data analysis and visualization of the public debate surrounding Critical Race Theory (CRT) and the 1619 Project. It highlights key findings pulled from direct reports to SOVAW, as well as a year's worth of public data from Twitter that reveal when CRT was amplified. The data herein also represent a 10% subset of over 40,000 posts on Facebook.



## LIMITED REFERENCES

**Appendix:** [SOVAW: Critical Race Theory Methodology](#)

[A Lesson on Critical Race Theory](#), American Bar Association, January 11, 2021

[Biden overrides Trump orders on diversity training](#), Federal Times, January 20, 2021

[What Is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack?](#), Education Week, May 18, 2021

[Right-wing “critical race theory” attacks are supercharging a racist movement to undo decades of civil rights advancement](#), Media Matters for America, June 17, 2021

Media Bias/Fact Check (MBFC) is an independent website that rates the bias, factual accuracy, and credibility of media sources. Media Bias/Fact Check determines the bias of media sources and the level of overall factual reporting through a combination of objective measures and subjective analysis using our stated methodology.

Alternative Influence: Broadcasting the Reactionary Right on YouTube, Data and Society, September 2018