

WHITE GENOCIDE CONSPIRACY THEORY

IMPACT: The white genocide conspiracy theory is the belief that immigration by people of color, falling white birth rates, and the promotion of multiculturalism are all part of a deliberate plot to destroy the “white race.” It is espoused by many white nationalist and white supremacist individuals and organizations, who often conflate or combine it with the similar “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory. Several individuals, including Brenton Tarrant, Anders Breivik, and Patrick Crusius have explicitly cited the white genocide conspiracy theory in order to justify their mass killing of people of color and non-Christians.

- In the early 20th century Raphael Lemkin (a Polish lawyer) coined the term “genocide,” motivated both by the mass killings and expulsion of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century and by the mass killings of Jews and other minorities perpetrated by Nazi Germany during World War II. Lemkin defined genocide as “the destruction of a nation or an ethnic group.” **People who cite the white genocide conspiracy theory today incorrectly and dangerously attribute the individual killings of white people to a coordinated effort from people of color to murder and “replace” them.** The FBI hate crime statistics (which are not complete but still provide a snapshot of the state of hate crimes in the United States) report 19 deaths attributed to anti-white bias since 2010. While all of these deaths were tragic, this number does not represent a genocide.
- The genocide that most proponents of the white genocide conspiracy theory warn about is not necessarily violent. They **claim that the “white race” is under threat due to falling birth rates among white women, the continued growth of “mixed race” marriages, and ongoing immigration of black and brown people into Europe and America.** They allege that demographic change will result in white people becoming a minority in the United States in the near future, which they see as a negative development. These demographic changes are generally blamed on the rise of feminism, Cultural Marxist intellectuals, or Jews. For example, at the 2017 Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, VA, the gathered white nationalists chanted “Jews will not replace us” in reference to this theory.
- **Scholars trace the roots of the white genocide conspiracy theory to the era of slavery and white fears of slave rebellion.** However, it wasn’t until the Jim Crow era and the rise of the eugenics movement that people across the United States began to believe that “white America” was under threat.
- In particular, Madison Grant’s 1916 *The Passing of the Great Race* was extremely influential in bringing the theory to the mainstream. Grant, a zoologist who was affiliated with both the Immigration Restriction League and the Eugenics Research Association, asserted that “Nordic” people and the society they supposedly built in America were under threat due to immigration. **American presidents, including Teddy Roosevelt, Warren G. Harding, and Calvin Coolidge, praised, quoted, or referenced the book in public. Adolf Hitler wrote Grant a letter thanking him for the book, claiming it was his “bible.”**
- The **book also rallied many anti-immigrant congressmen, and helped to inspire the passage of two major pieces of anti-immigration legislation:** the Asiatic Barred Zone Act of 1917, which banned “undesirable” immigrants from entering the United States, restricted all immigration from Asia, and imposed a literacy test on immigrants; and the Immigration Act of 1924, which imposed a national origin quotas on immigration.
- In **1978, the white genocide theory “exploded” in popularity again due to the publication of William Luther Pierce’s *The Turner Diaries*, a deeply racist novel that imagines a white supremacist insurgency that culminates in mass genocide of non-whites and “race traitors.”** This book inspired the creation of many white supremacist groups, including The Order, a group named after the main organization in *The Turner Diaries*. One member of The Order was

WHITE GENOCIDE CONSPIRACY THEORY

David Lane, who wrote the influential **White Genocide Manifesto** and the white nationalist creed the **fourteen words**. Lane was eventually sentenced to 190 years in prison for conspiracy, racketeering, and his role in the muRder of Alan Berg, a Jewish radio host.

- The **white genocide conspiracy theory is similar to the “great replacement” conspiracy theory**, which originated in France. In recent years the two have frequently been conflated, especially in online alt-right and white supremacist circles. The great replacement conspiracy theory has roots in French colonialism and anti-Semitism, but **the actual term “the great replacement” was coined in a 2012 book by Renaud Camus, in which he argues that Europe is being “reverse colonized” by non-white immigrants. Both theories have been propagated by white supremacists of all nationalities.**
- On March 15, 2019, **Brenton Tarrant, a 28-year-old white Australian man, attacked two mosques in Ōtautahi/Christchurch, Aotearoa/New Zealand killing 51 Muslims. Tarrant explicitly referenced the white genocide conspiracy theory in his manifesto** entitled: “The Great Replacement.”
- In his manifesto, **Tarrant cites Anders Breivik as the inspiration for his attack. Breivik is a Norwegian terrorist and white supremacist who in 2011 murdered 77 people, 55 of whom were under the age of 20.** Before his attack Breivik published a manifesto, “A European Declaration of Independence,” claiming that “what is happening to the indigenous peoples of Western Europe and our cultures amounts to a merciless and bloody genocide.” This so-called genocide is largely blamed on Muslims, whom Breivik describes as “wild animals.” He calls on European armies to engage in coups d’état in order to end multiculturalism, and for the deportation of all Muslims from Europe who refuse to “assimilate” (i.e. convert to Christianity, change their names, stop speaking their mother tongues, and have only two children).
- **Tarrant’s manifesto also references American mass murderer Dylan Roof. In June 2015 Roof killed nine African Americans while they were attending a bible study** at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Alluding to fears of white genocide, Roof states, “It is far from being too late for America or Europe. I believe that even if we made up only 30 percent of the population we could take it back completely. But by no means should we wait any longer to take drastic action.”
- In August 2019 Patrick Crusius murdered 22 people and injured 24 others in a shooting in Texas. Crusius drove eleven hours to the border town of El Paso with the intention of targeting Mexicans and halting what he called the “Hispanic invasion of Texas.” **Crusius posted a manifesto online shortly before his attack, titled “An Inconvenient Truth,” in which he expressed support for Tarrant, claimed that the book *The Great Replacement* had inspired him to target Hispanic people,** and stated, “I am simply defending my country from cultural and ethnic replacement brought on by an invasion.”
- **U.S. President Donald Trump has invoked the rhetoric of the white genocide theory** when, for example, in 2018 **he called Central American migrants “an invasion” in order to justify his family separation policy at the southern border.** In February 2019, Trump ran some 2,200 ads on Facebook with the text “We have an INVASION! So we are BUILDING THE WALL to STOP IT. Dems will sue us. But we want a SAFE COUNTRY! It’s CRITICAL that we STOP THE INVASION.” These ads received approximately 2.2 million views in total. In 2016, **Trump retweeted content from an account with the Twitter handle “@WhiteGenocideTM.”**
- Subscribers to white genocide conspiracy theory do not define whiteness as simply having pale skin, but people who fit a particular profile of Euro-American heritage and Christian identity. Jews and

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WHITE GENOCIDE CONSPIRACY THEORY

Muslims are excluded from “whiteness,” regardless of their skin tone, and are persecuted as such. Muslim immigrants from countries such as Syria and Iraq are especially reviled by white genocide believers.

- The **white genocide conspiracy theory has also been rhetorically used among Afrikaners, who are white South Africans and descendants of Western European (particularly Dutch) colonizers** who settled in the Eastern Cape beginning in the 17th century. In March 2018, representatives of AfriForum, a white nationalist Afrikaner group, claimed that white farmers were being murdered on an average of one murder every five days, and that police were not taking sufficient action. The Afrikaans singer Steve Hofmeyr posted these claims on his Facebook page in 2013, although the post has since been removed. In August 2018 President Trump tweeted about “large scale killing of farmers” after reportedly watching Tucker Carlson discuss the conspiracy theory on a Fox News segment. British far-right media personality Katie Hopkins has also promoted the white genocide conspiracy theory on multiple occasions. The claim that white Afrikaans farmers are being mass murdered has been debunked.

Bridge Initiative Factsheet