

RECOGNIZING HATE

Dog Whistles and Far-Right Symbols



CONTENTS:

- What are dog whistles?
- Where do dog whistles come from?
- Examples of common symbols used
- Fascist groups and their symbols
- Examples of common phrases
- What to do about dog whistles

Merriam-Webster definition of “Dog Whistles”: A coded message communicated through words or phrases commonly understood by a particular group of people, but not by others. The habit that politicians occasionally have of sending coded messages to a certain group of constituents.

Many years ago, on a hot summer afternoon, I was walking home when a large black truck pulled up in front of me. A man with a shaved head leaned out the window and gave me a nazi salute. Surprised, I continued walking towards his truck hoping to have a conversation, but before I could reach him he took off, tires squealing. I assumed this person was, in fact, a nazi, but why did he slow down for a salute? I was also a nazi at this time, and my clothing made him aware of that.

My choice not to return the salute is what freaked him out, but at the time there were Black people across the street and I didn't want to get beat up by them. Very few nazis these days walk around carrying swastika flags, so how did he know my political affiliation from what I was wearing? With camo pants tucked into combat boots with a t-shirt reading “Deutschland” and long blond hair pulled back into a ponytail, I was sending out enough signals to indicate I might be onboard with nazism while still maintaining plausible deniability. This is the main purpose of dog whistles. This was a while ago for me, and after years of improving my understanding of the world, education, and rehabilitation from my peers I am now actively antifascist. I now write with the hope of using my past experiences to help others understand fascists and recognize fascist signals. With this information, people can better protect themselves and each other. It's important to note that not everyone wearing camo pants or a Germany t-shirt is a nazi. In this zine, I'll be discussing what dog whistles are, how to spot them, and what to do about them.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING:

- <https://rosecityantifa.org> RCA Rose City Antifa 2022
- <https://www.adl.org/hate-symbols> ADL Anti-Defamation League 2022
- <https://www.splcenter.org> SPLC Southern Poverty Law Center 2022
- Stanley, Jason *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them* (Random House, 2018)
- Lavin, Talia. *Culture Warlords: My Journey into the Dark Web of White Supremacy* (Hachette Books, 2020)
- Sunshine, Spencer *40 Ways to Fight Fascists: Street Legal Tactics For Community Activists* (Eberhardt Press in collaboration with Popmob, 2020)

If you have information on fascists or far-right organizing in the Pacific North West, please contact Rose City Antifa (RCA) at tips@rosecityantifa.org . If you have information in a different area, please reference <https://torchantifa.org/chapters> to contact your local antifa chapter.

WHAT ARE DOG WHISTLES?

Dog whistles can refer to specific words and phrases, images that can be worn or displayed, hand signals, and combinations of numbers or letters. It serves to help fascists identify other people who may hold similar political views, be potential allies, and establish common ground. Fascists use dog whistles in the same way that people wear gear from different gangs, sports teams, or subcultures to indicate their affiliations. Aside from indicating political orientation, they are also used like “inside jokes” of far-right culture.

The main purpose of dog whistles is to make other people aware of a person’s political views while still maintaining an exit strategy of plausible deniability. The “plausible deniability” factor is key, as those who are upset by the imagery can be discredited as overreacting. They also work to push the boundaries of what is considered socially acceptable, increase paranoia, and sometimes to get a response out of opposition who would recognize it. Fascists often take pride in being able to “trigger liberals” or incite an ineffective response to what they are wearing or saying. It helps to have a reference (as this zine and other resources are meant to be) to show the people around you that it’s not a matter of “who is offended” but a matter of recognizing this person is a nazi based on what they are doing, such as wearing nazi symbols.

Dog whistles are more successful when they are easily recognized by other people on the right, but brushed off by most other people as a coincidence or a non-issue. Recognizing dog whistles allows people to identify fascists without having to take too many risks or even engage in in-depth conversation.

WHERE DO DOG WHISTLES COME FROM?

Opposition

Dog whistles sometimes come from opposition, such as the Hammerskin logo taken from Pink Floyd's portrayal of fascism in *The Wall*. While this may seem counter-intuitive, many subcultures do the same thing. For example, some protestors use the phrase "soup for my family" after Trump used the phrase while describing protests in 2020.



Prominent figures

One trend on the far-right is to idolize public figures including homicidal individuals. After Dylan Roof murdered 9 people in 2015, nazis began using his bowl haircut as a dog whistle. Other prominent figures include far-right activists like Richard Spencer, who helped spread dog whistles like the okay hand sign and pepe the frog. William Pierce, author of the Turner Diaries, created phrases for other white nationalists to use such as "The Day Of The Rope" (a fictional day referring to when people will be hanged as race traitors for being politicians, reporters, LGBTQ, Jewish, in a relationship with someone of another race, etc). Donald Trump's slogan MAGA (Make America Great Again) is also used by fascists to identify each other.



If you have a close friend or loved one beginning to display these symbols and develop far-right ideology, try to find common ground between yourself and the other person, encourage other hobbies and areas of interest, and avoid debating or confronting them. Please reach out to the following groups for more information on helping your loved one disengage from far-right extremism:

Parents for Peace: <https://www.parents4peace.org> and 1-844-49-PEACE
Life After Hate: <https://www.lifeafterhate.org/exitusa>

Shannon Martinez <https://www.shannonmartinezspeaks.com>

try to play ignorant and pretend that they weren't aware that what they were wearing was problematic. Most people on the left are generally good people who want to see the best in others which can be exploited by fascists. Know that at the very least they will try to gaslight you (gaslighting: A form of psychological manipulation intended to cause the target to question the validity of their experiences and sense of reality) since part of the purpose of dog whistles is plausible deniability and they plan to get off scot-free.

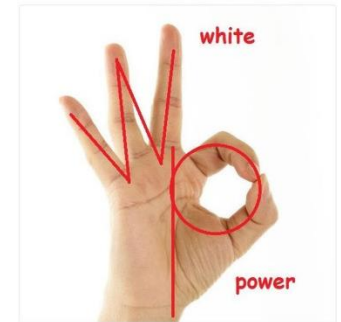
Referencing sources for your conclusion that someone is a nazi is one of the most effective ways to convince people around you when the situation arises. One good resource is the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which has an extensive database of hate symbols online. Another is the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), which has info on various hate groups. This zine is intended to be a starting place for visually recognizing fascism, and not a comprehensive list of hate symbols or organizations. Once you recognize a symbol, you can always look up the name of it on any search engine for more info.

Personally I've learned the most from people willing to call me out on dog whistles, remain firm in their position against fascism, and explain to me why wearing or saying something is problematic. It's up to you to decide whether the person you are talking to is acting in good faith and whether you want to spend your time explaining this to them. Remember that while it's helpful towards their deradicalization to provide historical context to the symbols, you are under no obligation to teach them or to change their minds. In the age of immediate information accessible anywhere, ignorance on their part is a choice. Based on your personal comfort levels and abilities, have a plan in place if your worst suspicions turn out to be correct. If you decide there should be consequences for their views, be sure to follow through, as bluffing only empowers them in future scenarios. Remember, the physical and mental wellbeing of you and your community should be your first priority, educating others comes second.

Appropriation

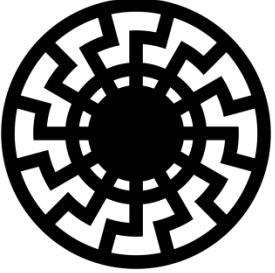




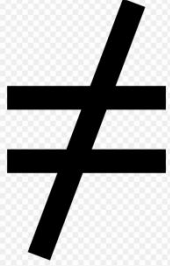
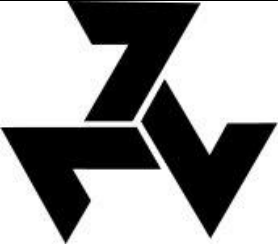

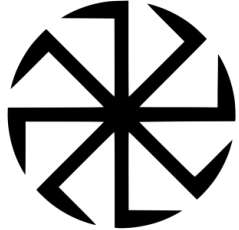



Fascists appropriate everything. From the red in their swastika flag used by Hitler to gain support from those drawn to communism, to Nordic symbols used by Vikings hundreds of years ago, to skinhead culture appropriated by boneheads (racist skinheads) from the Jamaican-influenced British subculture.

Symbols like the "okay" hand sign have attempted to be repurposed by 4-chan to mean "white power" and has since become a dog whistle to white nationalists. Even the original creator of pepe the frog has spoken out against his artwork becoming a symbol on the far right. Dog whistles are no exception and most are borrowed from other cultures.



Fascism is little more than a protection of power and those who already hold it. Fascists look to increase that power by appropriating what draws people to other ideas and stealing those recruiting methods for themselves. This doesn't mean we should let nazis use everything they want to steal! People from all corners and subcultures speaking out against the appropriation of their cultures continue to be some of the most effective in limiting nazis from using them. However, if you choose to wear ruins, skinhead attire, or any other symbols that they have attempted to appropriate, please be conscientious of how you may be viewed by people and ideally make your stance against fascism visibly apparent.

EXAMPLES OF COMMON SYMBOLS USED:

		
Sonnenrad	Celtic Cross	Totenkopf
		
Wolfsangel	Iron Cross	Inequality
		
Triskele	SS Bolts	Kolovrat
		
Fasces	Swastika	Aryan Fist

WHAT TO DO ABOUT DOG WHISTLES

“What, you think everyone who has a swastika tattoo is a nazi?!” –man with swastika tattoo

To tell if someone is a nazi or if they just happen to be wearing a suspicious symbol, treat spotting dog whistles like a bingo game. If the person has a rune necklace, what else are they wearing? Are they pagan, or are they also wearing a Totenkopf belt buckle and NSBM (National Socialist Black Metal) t-shirt? The more dog whistles a person has, the more likely they are to be a nazi. As you become more familiar with spotting dog whistles, you will see differing degrees of plausibility with different symbols. For example, the sonnenrad symbol mentioned earlier is exclusively a nazi symbol, while the iron cross is also used by people in the biker and metal scenes and isn't exclusive to nazis.

Nazis will do whatever they can to escape accountability so trying to get them to admit to using dog whistles is usually a fruitless attempt. You may have an awkward conversation with someone who doesn't know one of the meanings of the symbols they're wearing, in which case you have the opportunity to educate them. When I was a nazi, I had a few conversations with people who saw the iron cross I was wearing and started asking me political questions to gauge my views. Nazis will likely do one of three things: Claim ignorance, try to engage you in debate, or openly embrace the symbol and attack you for calling it out. Be prepared for violence because depending on their involvement in the far right they may resort to the third option and try to intimidate you for saying something.

It helps to know what kind of fascist you're dealing with to anticipate what their response will be. For example, boneheads are likely to respond violently when confronted while internet Nazis are likely to claim ignorance. As a former Hammerskin, Chuck Lee said “With the skinhead thing a lot of the point was to stand out and create conflict. Most of the time people tried to avoid us. When they didn't, there was almost always a fight.” Many other types of fascists are more scared of antifa and public accountability, and will

Blue Lives Matter/ All Lives Matter: These phrases are nothing more than a response to people saying “Black Live Matter” and as way to silence Black voices. Cops can always choose to take off their uniform, while Black people cannot take off their skin or escape the discrimination that comes with it. No one would go to an event to save the rainforests and say that all forests matter. If all lives matter, as racists love to say, then Black lives have to matter. All lives can’t matter until Black lives matter because they are the ones being targeted by police, racist attacks, and everyday discrimination.

TDOTR: The Day of the Rope, a fictional day from the book The Turner Diaries in which race traitors (women who marry non-white men, the press, politicians, LGBTQ people and more) are hanged from lampposts.

6MWE: “Six Million Wasn’t Enough” referring to the number of Jewish people murdered during the holocaust.

It’s okay to be white: While no one is saying it’s not okay to be white, this phrase creates perceived victimhood and is a stepping stone to great replacement.



White Genocide/great replacement: Connected to the racist conspiracy theory that immigration and integration are Jewish plots to water down the “white race.”




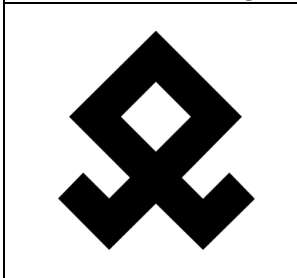

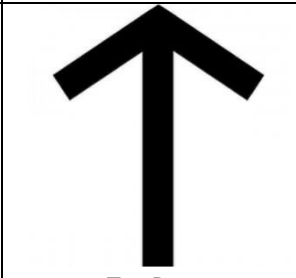
WPWW: White Pride World Wide

GTKRWN: Gas the Kikes, Race War Now

RAHOWA: Racial Holy War

RWDS: Right Wing Death Squad

Blood and Soil: A reference to race and nationality from Nazi Germany

		
Confederate Flag	Kekistan	Flash and Circle
		
Othala Rune	Pepe the Frog	Tyr Rune

FASCIST GROUPS:

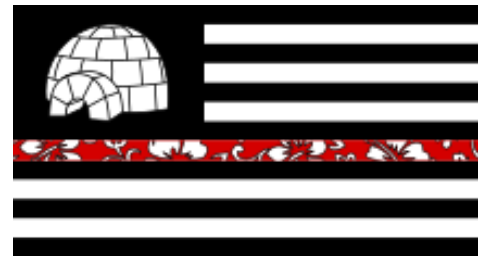
Hammerskins: A racist skinhead group, aka boneheads. The feeder group is known as Crew 38 (38 for “Crossed Hammers”). Hammerskins focus mostly on spreading racist music, but they also engage in street fighting and targeted attacks. Hammerskin Nation is considered one of the most violent racist skinhead groups in the US. They use a hand sign of crossed arms with fists to represent the crossed hammers.



Proud Boys: A group of western chauvinists founded by Gavin McInnes in 2016. Although the Proud Boys aren't explicitly white supremacist, their emphasis on the "western" values and culture is a thinly veiled substitute for "White" values and culture and is used to deflect accusations of racism. Their ideology can be considered a form of proto-fascism as it contains elements of ultra-nationalism, traditionalism, misogyny, and social Darwinism. Their membership has different levels and members are encouraged to participate in street brawls. Level 1 is to exclaim "I am a proud western chauvinist and I refuse to apologize for creating the modern world." Level two is to recite 5 cereal brands while other members perform a "beat in." Level 3 is to get a tattoo of "PROUD BOY," and level 4 is to engage in violence for their cause, usually against LGBTQ or antifascists. They use the acronyms POYB (Proud of Your Boy) and FAFO (Fuck Around and Find Out) and can be spotted in black and yellow Fred Perry polo shirts, or other clothes with the black/yellow color combination. They also use the "okay" hand sign on a regular basis.



Boogaloo Bois: A loose movement of accelerationists advocating for a second civil war or second American revolution, which they refer to as "the boogaloo." Variations on this phrase include the boog, big igloo, and big luau, from which comes their habit of wearing Hawaiian shirts to identify each other. They are also often spotted in para-military gear and carrying guns.



EXAMPLES OF DOG WHISTLES AS PHRASES:

14/88: A reference to the 14 words "we must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children" coined by David Lane. 88 Represents the 8th letter of the alphabet, HH or "Heil Hitler." Variations include H8 and 83 "Heil Christ."

Qanon: A loose association of conspiracy theorists who believe in a shadow government run by elites ((i.e. Jewish people)) who participate in satanic child sex trafficking. These conspiracy theorists gain recruits by claiming to fight against this cabal of satanic child sex traffickers, as well as using other hot-button issues which imitate much older anti-Semitic conspiracies.



Three Percenters: This movement was created in 2008 with the false claim that only 3% of American forces fought the British in the revolutionary war, and therefore it would take only 3% of the population to overthrow the current US government. They are a far-right militia movement of anti-government extremists focused on gun ownership.



European Kindred: A prison and street gang in Oregon convicted of multiple murders, weapon smuggling, and dog fighting. They are more focused on gang activity than politics, but are still a threat. They use the letters "EK" and the corresponding numbers 511.



Aryan Brotherhood: one of the most powerful prison gangs, they are primarily motivated by money and gang activities and will occasionally ally with other non-white gangs for this purpose. Dog whistles include clovers, the letters "AB" and the numbers 666 and 12.



Patriot Prayer: A far-right Christian Fundamentalist group founded in 2016 by Joey Gibson. Other fascist organizations use rallies hosted by Patriot Prayer to recruit into their own ranks. Dog whistles include images and rhetoric of patriotism, "free speech," and religious traditionalism.



Wolves of Vinland: This Northwest group has heavy folkish influences and stresses Asatru or Paganism, including animal sacrifices and blood rituals in the woods. They use a lot of runes and Nordic imagery to promote white supremacy and misogyny. Operation Werewolf is the recruiting tool and feeder group to Wolves of Vinland. They can be spotted with Celtic and Nordic imagery, runes, and wolf back patches.



Krude Rude Brood: A street gang in Oregon. They work with European Kindred and Gypsy Jokers and are responsible for property theft, murder, torture, and meth trafficking. They use the phrases “Love is Law” and “We Never Sleep,” and tag nearby areas with “brood” or “KRB.”



Gypsy Jokers: A one percenter motorcycle club with white supremacist sympathies who are known to traffic drugs and engage in low level organized crime. They wear motorcycle gear adorned with nazi symbols and a back patch that says “Gypsy Jokers.”



National Socialist Movement: Members of this organization like to dress up as nazis, and often wear button-down brown or black shirts with black pants. Although they changed their logo in 2016 to include an othala ruin rather than a swastika, they still enjoy wearing and displaying swastikas.



American Guard: The crossed meat cleavers in this group’s logo come from “Bill the Butcher” in the movie *Gangs of New York* where the character and his gang attack immigrants.



American Identity Movement: Previously known as Identity Evropa until 2019, the American Identity Movement disbanded in 2020.



Traditionalist Worker Party: Founded by Mathew Heimbach and active from 2013 until 2018, the Traditionalist Worker Party had a third position approach to fascism. Third position blends fascist ideas of ultra-nationalism and antisemitism with leftist ideas of communism, anarchism, feminism, or environmentalism. This may sound counter-intuitive or nonsensical, but remember that the NSDAP (the original nazi party of Germany) also blended fascism with leftist talking points to gain recruits



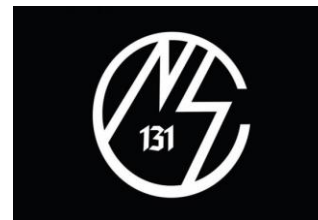
White Aryan Resistance: Founded in 1983 by Tom Metzger, who was also a Grand Dragon of the KKK for the state of California. WAR was a larger organizing force between several racist skinhead gangs. It was eventually dismantled after a series of lawsuits and high-profile criminal charges, but people may still have tattoos or other symbols relating to the network.



Patriot Front: A white nationalist group mostly focused on using patriotic imagery and rhetoric spread propaganda and recruit. The group broke off from Vanguard America in 2017 after the deadly Charlottesville rally in Virginia. They care about primarily about public image. Their style involves patriotic designs including red white and blue, fasces, khaki pants and white masks with matching shirts, and the US flag.



National Socialist Club: Also known as the 131 crew (Anti-Communist Action), the National Socialist Club is made up of small cells throughout the US and Europe.



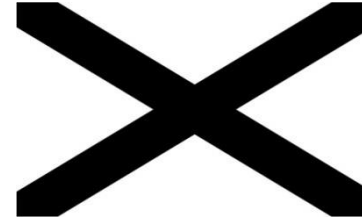
Atomwaffen Division: Also known as the National Socialist Order, Atomwaffen is an accelerationist (accelerating towards a race war in which they hope to overthrow the current government and society and replace it with a fascist order) nazi group responsible for several murders. Their symbols include the radioactive symbol, skull mask, and flecktarn (a German camo pattern similar to the “peas” pattern from WW2).



Ku Klux Klan: a white supremacist organization. They use the number 311 to represent 3 Ks, which is the 11th letter of the alphabet. Their iconic robes have become so recognizable they may no longer count as a dog whistle. They also use the blood drop cross and variations on the blood drop cross including just the blood drop, and the confederate flag.



League of the South: Recognizable by their southern nationalist flag, which looks like a black and white version of the confederate flag, they are a white nationalist and neo-confederate organization.



The Base: An accelerationist paramilitary nazi group formed by Rinaldo Nazzaro in 2018. They have similar aesthetics to Atomwaffen, but a different logo.



Aryan Nations: A white supremacist Christian Identity group founded in the 1970s.

