

A close-up photograph of two hands held up, palms facing each other. The hands are painted with horizontal stripes of rainbow colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The left hand has a gold ring on the ring finger and a black peace symbol tattoo on the wrist. The right hand has a black peace symbol tattoo on the wrist. The background is dark and out of focus.

# THE STATE OF HATE INDEX II

ROBERT TYNES

A BARD CENTER  
FOR THE STUDY OF HATE PUBLICATION



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# PREFACE

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Robert Tynes's State of Hate Index (SoHI), released in 2021 by the Bard Center for the Study of Hate, forced us to look at hate not just as a problem in general, or only with specific victims in isolation, but also hate tied to geography. Not surprisingly, SoHI became a useful tool for human rights groups around the country, and for various federal and state agencies concerned with hate.

When state lines are crossed, different legal protections or dangers emerge or dissipate. That was a useful observation at the time SoHI was published, and it was also prescient because nine months later the Supreme Court issued the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (2022) decision, overturning *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992), thereby making abortion access a matter to be decided by individual states. While I understand that some people, frequently inspired by their religious convictions, believe abortion is murder, there's no denying that the *Dobbs* decision, and the restrictive abortion laws that followed in many states, dehumanize women. People with uteruses are now valued more as incubators than as independent human beings who, like men, should be able to control their own bodies, or at least balance their right to control their body with the state's interest in a close-to-term fetus, as *Roe* allowed.

Tynes's updated data sets include hatred against women, and also other important data sets that have become available about police killings of Black people.

While the rankings of the states (based on the likelihood of hate or hate-based violence to occur within them) have not materially changed with the updated statistics used in Tynes's calculations, what the new report makes abundantly clear is that the states where hate is more of a danger are ones where white nationalism is more pronounced.

We are certain that this updated report will, like its predecessor, be a useful tool for those seeking to reduce hate across the country.

And we again thank GS Humane Corp for underwriting this important research, and the Bard publications and communications offices for their help designing and promoting it.





# THE STATE OF HATE INDEX II

(Robert Tynes<sup>1</sup>, Bard College<sup>2</sup>)

“Show me how ruin makes a home out of hip bones . . .”  
–Ocean Vuong, from “A Little Closer to the Edge”

Hate is one of the most prominent social and political problems in the United States in 2023. Since the initial publication of the State of Hate Index (SoHI) in 2021, the inviolability of democratic discourse has only deteriorated. When protestors busted through barricades, assaulted police, broke through windows, and battered their way into the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, egalitarian ideals were usurped by self-serving authoritarian violence. Organizers and participants of the hate-inspired riot included many established extremist groups such as the Oath Keepers, America First, and the Proud Boys. Despite numerous criminal charges against members of the Proud Boys, their membership across the country has increased (Miller and Rivas 2022). We have seen white Christian nationalism emerge from a fringe discussion into a movement that pushes harder and harder for racist hate. Further, the obliteration of a woman’s right to control her own body, thanks to the *Dobbs* decision, is added evidence that hate against women is a reality in America. Conservatives argue that the dismantling of *Roe v. Wade* is about protecting the rights of the unborn. If you assert that claim in a democracy, though, you destroy the right of a woman to have complete sovereignty over her body. That is an act of dehumanization. Even further, violence against people who are transgender and gender nonconforming has increased and spread in America, as well. According to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), at least 38 transgender or gender nonconforming people were killed in 2022 and 59 people in 2021.<sup>3</sup> Put another way, a transgender or gender nonconforming person was killed approximately every six days in 2021. HRC has been tracking transgender or gender nonconforming fatalities since 2013 and calculates that 85 percent of those fatalities are people of color. And the Atlanta spa shooting in 2021, in which eight Asian Americans were killed, underscores how more attention and data are needed to expose the pervasive threat that Asian Americans face in the United States (Constantino 2021).

The State of Hate Index II (SoHI II) is an attempt to capture how hate manifests, as well as how it is prevented and addressed by law, in all 50 US states. SoHI II picks up where SoHI I left off by updating some indicators and adding others in order to suggest when hate might be likely to occur.<sup>4</sup> As with the initial SoHI, SoHI II is intended to function much like Victor Hugo Green’s *Negro Motorist Green Book*. Published in 1936, Green’s guide helped Black Americans traverse the United States more safely amidst Jim Crow laws and other forms of violence and disenfranchisement. The book listed motels, restaurants, and gas stations that were friendly to Blacks—places in which they could take refuge from racist whites while driving across America.<sup>5</sup> Green’s guide is said to have been inspired by the *Jewish Vacation Guide*, which allowed Jewish families to vacation safely in the Catskills despite pervasive antisemitism.<sup>6</sup> Almost 100 years later, we still see widespread, open discrimination and dehumanization throughout the country. Recognizing how that hate can limit those targeted by it, SoHI II is meant to help marginalized groups traverse the United States.

## Introduction

SoHI II argues that state lines matter when it comes to how people are valued. If you are a part of the LGBTQ+ community and cross into Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Oklahoma, South Dakota, or Utah, you will find laws restricting access to healthcare for transgender youth, preventing access to bathrooms, and barring you from high school sports (Human Rights Campaign 2023). Florida's "Don't Say Gay" law (H.B. 1557) prohibits talking about gender identity in kindergarten through third-grade classrooms. Even though Governor Ron DeSantis (R) claims it is about giving parents dominion over their children's minds, he has publicly declared it is really about erasing anyone who is not heteronormative. "Things like woke gender ideology have no place in the schools, period," he said in an interview on Fox News (Laviates 2022).

The Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs* also increased animosity toward women from state to state. The ruling stripped away a woman's constitutional right to have an abortion and empowered states to create harsh regulations to control a woman's body. According to the Guttmacher Institute (2022), 16 states have near-complete bans on abortion, and "even in states where abortion is available, the influx of patients from states with severe restrictions has created lengthy waiting times for the procedure." The *Dobbs* case impacts the health of all women and causes "even greater harm to those already subject to systemic racism and economic injustice" (Fuentes 2023). That includes Black, Latino, and Indigenous women. The negative economic effects of denying abortion care include lower wages, fewer workers, and a decrease in educational attainment for women (Banerjee 2023).

Immigration is framed as a national issue, but it, too, reveals why crossing states lines matters in the United States. In an act of xenophobia, Texas Governor Greg Abbott (R) forced migrants out of his state in 2022, busing them to Washington, DC and Democrat-led states. While Abbott tried to antagonize the Biden administration by expelling migrant men, women, and children from Texas (Lozano 2022), his act of dehumanization had the opposite effect; the states in which the migrants arrived offered safety, not hate. A similar reception welcomed Venezuelan asylum seekers when they arrived in Massachusetts after being tricked into leaving Florida and being dropped off on Martha's Vineyard. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (R) helped engineer the inhumane stunt (Sandoval et al, 2022), which Massachusetts residents readily turned to acts of kindness.

Research by sociologists Bourdieu, Wacquant, and Farage (1994) examined how imagined political boundaries create power hierarchies that increase the likelihood of hate: "The construction of the state monopoly over physical and symbolic violence is inseparable from the construction of the field of struggles of the monopoly over the advantages attached to this monopoly" (pp. 16-17).<sup>7</sup> These constructions also determine who is deemed human. As Bourdieu (2014) has observed: "The political field is the field par excellence for the exercise of symbolic capital; it is a place where to exist, to be, is perceived" (p. 192). The political field, in this case the individual US states, is the arena where hate can arise, as well as dissolve.

For SoHI II, hate is defined as “the human capacity to define, and then dehumanize or demonize, an ‘other’” (p. 11, Stern 2004). As stressed above, crossing state lines has the potential to humanize or dehumanize—in effect, to determine if you exist or not. SoHI II explores this implication, recognizing how groups of people who are the targets of discrimination experience that kind of dehumanization in their bodies; it has physical and psychological effects. Given that those who have not been persecuted (due to ethnicity, gender, class, etc.) have not had such experiences, they often cannot imagine the problem itself, or conceive of its scope or depth.

## What's New with SoHI II

SoHI II incorporates a total of nine indicators, adding two more to the seven presented in the first SoHI. The new indicators include “Antiabortion Laws” and “Police Killings—Blacks”; both have become even more pertinent to the landscape of hate in America since 2021 when the first SoHI was published. Not only has aggression toward women and Blacks increased, but comprehensive data revealing these unfortunate trends has also become available.<sup>8</sup> As for the other seven indicators, all of them have been updated to reflect the most recent data available for each state and the District of Columbia.<sup>9</sup> The “Violence Against Women” indicator originally had been calculated using data compiled from The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) 2010–2012. (Smith et al. 2017). The NISVS calculates what percentage of the population has experienced sexual violence for women and men. The updated statistics for the “Violence Against Women” indicator for SoHI II are drawn from data produced by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (2023). Domestic violence spans from intimidation to sexual assault.

## Methodology

SoHI II is another attempt to measure the manifestation of hate across the United States. While the original SoHI utilized seven different indicators to construct the rankings, SoHI II expands the number of indicators to nine and updates the seven original indicators. The objective is to include a range of groups more likely to be the target of hate. Researchers often use the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) statistics on hate crimes by state as a proxy for hate in general. The FBI collects yearly data from each state counting hate crimes, from vandalism to assault to murder. However, that data is based on what states self-report, which means states must relay accurate information and classify the same crimes as hate crimes in order to have accurate, consistent information in the data. According to the FBI data, hate crimes increased by almost 1,000 crimes from 2020 to 2021 (Thrush 2023). Even though the FBI statistics are becoming more and more refined, a wide range of variation and underreporting still persists, and under-classification is apparent in the data. As a consequence, the SoHI and SoHI II do not incorporate FBI hate crime numbers.

SoHI II remains grounded in sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's work on embodiment by approaching hate from two angles: embodiment and structure/field. Theories of embodiment, including Bourdieu's, ask how individual experiences in the cultural, social, and political world become ingrained in the physical body (e.g., how experiences of structural racism or sexism become embodied in the individual who experiences them).<sup>10</sup> Bourdieu's theory centers around the term “habitus,” which he defines as “a subjective but not individual system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception,

and action common to all members of the same group or class” (Bourdieu 1977, p. 86). The idea is that the habitus shapes our conceptions (unconsciously) of what has value in culture and society, and consequently, determines how we act in the world. “Embodiment” concerns the way values become physically embodied, such as a person’s spoken language and vernacular, manner of gesturing, and other actions. “Structures,” according to Bourdieu’s theory, give shape from within to the environment in which habitus is produced and reinforce perceptions of value and cultural capital. The habitus thus might appear neutral, but it actually reproduces inequality and subordination. Bourdieu’s theory ultimately allows us to consider the relation between embodiment and experiences of hate.

First, in SoHI II, in line with habitus, data that measured “Embodiment”—in actions and groups—was utilized. Second, “Structure/Field” measures, such as laws and policies, were also incorporated. The US state is the level of analysis, as this is the most comprehensive data across all of the US and the most expansive time frame available based on the existing data. There may be wide variation within those political boundaries, however (e.g., Shasta County, California is sociopolitically different than Berkeley, California). The overall disposition of the state is the main focus, though—one that can be generally deduced from the combination of variables.

### **Embodiment: Actions and Groups**

For SoHI II, embodiment was split into: a) those groups whose actions and identities promote and enact hate (hate groups); and b) those groups whose actions and identities are the target of hate through violence. The “hate groups” data was collected from the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) (2023a) and their determination of hate groups by state. SPLC defines a hate group as “an organization that—based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities—has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics” (SPLC 2020b). The measure for this is “Number of Hate Groups.” Some groups targeted for hate were harder to represent. There are few consistent and comprehensive state-level statistics that track violence against people who are LGBTQ+. Violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) is also still hard to track because of underreporting by the community and victims.<sup>11</sup> The FBI Hate Crimes data does count violence against people who are LGBTQ+ or AAPI, but it is inaccurate and not comparable from state to state. Hate crimes reporting begins at the local level and can be influenced by individual biases. Because of this, protections for people who are LGBTQ+ appear in the Structure/Field measures. There are three groups for whom we have consistent data (women, people who are Jewish, and people perceived as nonwhite). SoHI II uses “Hate Groups By State” (SPLC), “Domestic Violence Against Women” (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2023), “Antisemitic Violence” (Anti-Defamation League 2023), “White Supremacy Violence” (Anti-Defamation League 2023), and “Police Killings—Blacks” (Washington Post 2023).<sup>12</sup>

### **Structure/Field: Laws and Policies**

Laws and policies can provide protection from hate-based violence, in the very least, by instituting social norms (*nomos*) against violence. They are structural elements that raise the cost for anyone who considers harm against an individual or an organization based on their race/ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, and so forth. Laws and policies also create and maintain the narrative necessary to make the norm a seemingly objective reality. The Index draws on four sets of



information. First, Levin (2022) maintains a data set tracking the “General Laws and Policies to the Prevention of Hate.” The data set includes discrimination based on age and housing status in addition to race/ethnicity, gender identity, etc. Second, the Human Rights Campaign (2023) monitors state laws regarding issues such as transgender healthcare, adoption for same-sex couples, antibullying, and anticonversion therapy. This measure is “Laws & Policies LGBTQ.” Third, Giffords Law Center (2023) tracks gun and domestic violence laws nationwide, analyzing how states protect women from gun violence perpetrated by domestic partners. This measure is “Guns and Domestic Violence Laws.” Finally, data for the new indicator, “Antiabortion Laws,” is compiled by the Guttmacher Institute (2023), which tracks proposed and enacted state legislation regulating a woman’s right to choose.

In total there are nine indicators in the Index—five for the Embodiment category plus four for the Structure/Field category (see Table 1). The time frame spans from 2019 to 2022. Analyzing the older and more current data together reveals how, over time, the field of hate has manifested into its current form. This does not mean that similar hate-based events are inevitable in the future. It does reveal, however, to what extent a state is primed for future violence. Each indicator is of equal weight in the Index, but calculating the measure itself in some cases utilized a weighted system (see Appendix A for details). The indicators for SoHI II are proxies for the state of hate and a refinement of SoHI. Together they depict the closest model we have for predicting the potential for violence and dehumanization in a given region in the United States. For each measure, the raw data was recorded state by state. Then, all indicator data was converted into a ranking system: 1–51 (the District of Columbia was included because it is considered a significant territory by the US Census and all the other agencies whose data is included in the index.) The ranking system allows us to see how states compare to one another rather than reflecting the amount of hate or potential for it in any given state—it only describes how each state does in comparison to the others rather than measuring the size of a field of hate in a specific territory. In other words, the 51st rank means that state has the greatest potential for hate-based violence in the US in comparison to the other states, yet even at 51st, a state could be “not so bad” when compared with global data on hate crimes, or hate crimes in another nation, for example. After each measure was converted to a rank, the ranks are added together to generate a composite score. The lowest score translates to the “best” or most hospitable state (i.e., a rank of 1), while the highest score translates to the “worst” or most inhospitable state by comparison (i.e., a rank of 51). For the Index, the lowest composite score is 96 and the highest is 356. The composite scores of the indicators are ranked for the final scale (1–51).

## State of Hate Index

**Table 1: Indicators by Categories**

Embodiment	Structure/Field
Number of Hate Groups	General Laws & Policies Relating to the Prevention of Hate
Violence Against Women	Laws & Policies LGBTQ
Antisemitic Violence	Guns and Domestic Violence Policies
White Supremacy Violence	Antiabortion Laws
Police Killings–Blacks	

The top five states where hate is least likely to flourish and least likely to lead to violence (in comparison to other US states) are: New York, California, Maryland, Connecticut, and Illinois. This is basically the same group from SoHI and for the top 10, as well. One difference is that New Mexico moved up from a ranking of 16 in SoHI to a ranking of 8 in SoHI II.

The bottom five states where hate is most likely to manifest into violence (in comparison to other US states) are: Idaho, Arkansas, Montana, Oklahoma, and Wyoming. These are the same bottom states as with SoHI, except for Oklahoma, which was 36th in SoHI and is now tied for a ranking of 50th with Wyoming (see Table 2).

Regional patterns reveal a significant number of southern states at the bottom of the rankings (i.e., where hate is most likely to manifest into violence by comparison), and the northeastern states mostly in the top of the rankings (i.e., where hate is least likely to manifest into violence by comparison). The midwest and western states tend to be in the middle and the bottom of the rankings (i.e., where hate may be more likely, or even most likely, to occur or to manifest into violence by comparison). The major difference between SoHI and SoHI II is that there are more southern states at the bottom of the ranking, suggesting polarization (see Table 3).

If we compare political parties—Democrats versus Republicans—we find another striking polarization, with Democrats at the top of the numerical rankings and Republicans filling out towards the bottom of the numerical rankings (see Table 4). This is an even greater polarization than what was seen in SoHI. “Political party in control” is based on the analysis of the State and Legislative Partisan Composition conducted by the National Conference of State Legislatures (2021). The overall state control by party was determined by the composition of the legislative party in control plus the governor’s party. State control by political party for 2021 was utilized as the best depiction of political party influence for the timeframe of SoHI II.

When comparing the “Embodiment” rankings with the “Structure/Field” rankings, we find several different relationships. The bottom of rankings for Embodiment and Structure/Field tend to be similarly aligned, meaning states ranked at the bottom for Embodiment also rank at the bottom for Structure/Field. In other words, harmful laws and policies tend to translate as greater potential for harm. This conclusion is reflected in the data for South Dakota, Idaho, Wyoming, Kentucky, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. The one exception is Ohio, which receives a high ranking on Embodiment (6) (i.e., less likelihood for hate) and a quite poor ranking in Structure/Field (48) (indicating a greater likelihood for hate). We see the same pattern with Florida (E = 8; S/F = 33), Georgia (E = 3; S/F = 34), and Texas (E = 9; S/F = 39). This could be because the discriminatory/harmful policies are fairly new and have not yet had a material effect. Conversely, at the top of the Structure/Field rankings, we see an inverse relationship for several of the states ranked in the top 10 numerically. District of Columbia (E = 45; S/F = 2), Oregon (E = 40; Structure/Field = 3), Nevada (E = 35; S/F = 4), and Colorado (E = 48; S/F = 8) rank low for Embodiment, which may indicate that laws and policies are being created as a response to the embodiment of hate. Further research is needed here in order to draw more nuanced conclusions.

**Table 2: The State of Hate Index**

State	Number of Hate Groups	Violence Against Women	Anti-semitic Violence	White Supremacy Violence	Police Killings-Blacks	General Laws & Policies Relating to the Prevention of Hate	Laws & Policies LGBTQ	Guns and Domestic Violence Laws	Anti-abortion Laws	Total	Overall Rank
New York	10	4	8	10	5	16	8	1	34	96	1
California	8	18	14	21	37	2	1	1	2	104	2
Maryland	12	14	6	15	15	4	18	7	41	132	3
Connecticut	15	34	10	36	4	10	15	5	4	133	4
Illinois	14	19	1	12	22	10	8	1	51	138	5
Massachusetts	17	12	17	40	6	16	8	1	30	147	6
Hawaii	32	40	5	1	39	7	8	5	14	151	7
New Mexico	1	15	18	32	46	4	17	14	10	157	8
New Jersey	4	21	38	25	9	10	8	10	38	163	9
Nevada	34	47	23	11	35	7	1	22	3	183	10
Delaware	51	33	11	28	10	10	18	19	6	186	11
Oregon	25	30	15	43	44	10	1	7	11	186	11
Virginia	23	3	16	30	13	42	21	22	16	186	11
Kansas	5	23	2	22	28	33	27	27	20	187	14
Georgia	20	6	21	3	17	23	42	44	16	192	15
Minnesota	7	13	44	34	25	4	8	14	43	192	15
District of Columbia	50	29	46	16	36	1	1	14	1	194	17
Vermont	37	7	40	51	1	23	1	27	9	196	18
Rhode Island	31	2	43	44	11	16	15	27	20	209	19
Florida	26	31	3	6	23	23	29	42	30	213	20
North Carolina	29	48	4	9	14	35	32	19	24	214	21
Maine	35	36	20	42	20	16	8	35	5	217	22
Louisiana	40	24	36	4	27	16	44	7	28	226	23
Pennsylvania	22	35	12	31	19	48	22	10	30	229	24
Texas	11	16	24	20	21	23	44	22	49	230	25
Michigan	13	25	35	17	8	35	29	40	30	232	26
New Hampshire	47	17	30	49	1	23	18	27	20	232	26
North Dakota	27	1	48	39	16	40	27	27	7	232	26
Colorado	38	26	42	38	43	23	1	14	8	233	29
Utah	2	27	34	46	50	2	29	32	11	233	29
Wisconsin	18	5	39	23	38	30	25	32	26	236	31
Washington	24	45	31	41	41	10	1	10	35	238	32
Nebraska	49	9	47	33	30	23	34	10	11	246	33
Ohio	9	20	13	14	29	48	34	42	37	246	33
Alaska	6	46	25	13	47	35	22	37	16	247	35
Indiana	19	11	32	18	26	32	34	37	39	248	36
Alabama	28	32	33	8	7	42	44	37	19	250	37
Iowa	3	49	41	26	34	16	22	22	39	252	38
Tennessee	46	38	26	7	24	16	44	22	46	269	39
Arizona	39	44	9	24	40	30	38	19	36	279	40
Missouri	33	42	7	19	42	7	41	44	48	283	41
Mississippi	30	37	50	2	18	35	50	44	28	294	42
West Virginia	43	8	28	37	45	35	38	14	47	295	43
Kentucky	16	50	22	27	31	33	37	44	41	301	44
South Carolina	42	41	27	5	12	42	49	40	45	303	45
South Dakota	48	10	51	45	1	42	51	35	20	303	45
Idaho	41	43	29	47	32	42	38	44	27	343	47
Arkansas	36	39	45	29	33	42	33	44	43	344	48
Montana	45	28	49	48	49	48	25	32	24	348	49
Oklahoma	21	51	19	35	48	40	48	44	50	356	50
Wyoming	44	22	37	50	51	51	42	44	15	356	50

**Table 3: State Rankings with Region**

State	Region	Overall Rank
New York	NE	1
California	W	2
Maryland	E	3
Connecticut	NE	4
Illinois	MW	5
Massachusetts	NE	6
Hawaii	FW	7
New Mexico	SW	8
New Jersey	NE	9
Nevada	SW	10
Delaware	E	11
Oregon	NW	11
Virginia	S	11
Kansas	MW	14
Georgia	S	15
Minnesota	MW	15
District of Columbia	E	17
Vermont	NE	18
Rhode Island	E	19
Florida	S	20
North Carolina	S	21
Maine	NE	22
Louisiana	S	23
Pennsylvania	NE	24
Texas	SW	25
Michigan	MW	26
New Hampshire	NE	26
North Dakota	W	26
Colorado	W	29
Utah	W	29
Wisconsin	MW	31
Washington	NW	32
Nebraska	W	33
Ohio	MW	33
Alaska	FN	35
Indiana	MW	36
Alabama	S	37
Iowa	MW	38
Tennessee	S	39
Arizona	SW	40
Missouri	S	41
Mississippi	S	42
West Virginia	S	43
Kentucky	S	44
South Carolina	S	45
South Dakota	W	45
Idaho	W	47
Arkansas	S	48
Montana	W	49
Oklahoma	W	50
Wyoming	S	50

**Table 4: State Rankings with Political Party**

State	State and Legislative Partisan Composition	Overall Rank
New York	Democrat	1
California	Democrat	2
Maryland	Split	3
Connecticut	Democrat	4
Illinois	Democrat	5
Massachusetts	Split	6
Hawaii	Democrat	7
New Mexico	Democrat	8
New Jersey	Democrat	9
Nevada	Democrat	10
Delaware	Democrat	11
Oregon	Democrat	11
Virginia	Democrat	11
Kansas	Split	14
Georgia	Republican	15
Minnesota	Split	15
District of Columbia	Democrat	17
Vermont	Split	18
Rhode Island	Democrat	19
Florida	Republican	20
North Carolina	Split	21
Maine	Democrat	22
Louisiana	Split	23
Pennsylvania	Split	24
Texas	Republican	25
Michigan	Split	26
New Hampshire	Republican	26
North Dakota	Republican	26
Colorado	Democrat	29
Utah	Republican	29
Wisconsin	Split	31
Washington	Democrat	32
Nebraska	Republican	33
Ohio	Republican	33
Alaska	Republican	35
Indiana	Republican	36
Alabama	Republican	37
Iowa	Republican	38
Tennessee	Republican	39
Arizona	Republican	40
Missouri	Republican	41
Mississippi	Republican	42
West Virginia	Republican	43
Kentucky	Split	44
South Carolina	Republican	45
South Dakota	Republican	45
Idaho	Republican	47
Arkansas	Republican	48
Montana	Republican	49
Oklahoma	Republican	50
Wyoming	Republican	50



**Table 5: Embodiment and Structure/Field Categories Compared**

State	Embodiment Rank	Structure/Field Rank
California	12	1
District of Columbia	45	2
Oregon	40	3
Nevada	35	4
Connecticut	14	5
Hawaii	19	5
New Mexico	18	7
Colorado	48	8
Delaware	27	9
Massachusetts	9	10
Washington	46	11
New York	1	12
Vermont	28	13
Maine	36	14
New Jersey	11	15
Minnesota	21	16
Maryland	2	17
Illinois	4	17
Utah	41	19
Rhode Island	24	20
Nebraska	43	20
New Hampshire	33	22
Louisiana	24	23
Iowa	36	24
Virginia	6	25
North Dakota	24	25
Kansas	5	27
North Carolina	15	28
Pennsylvania	20	28
Alaska	29	28
Wisconsin	21	31
Arizona	39	32
Florida	8	33
Georgia	3	34
Tennessee	31	35
Montana	51	36
Michigan	12	37
West Virginia	42	37
Texas	9	39
Missouri	32	40
Indiana	16	41
Alabama	17	41
South Dakota	38	43
Idaho	49	44
Wyoming	50	45
Kentucky	34	46
Mississippi	29	47
Ohio	6	48
Arkansas	46	49
South Carolina	23	50
Oklahoma	44	51

## Two Cases: Florida and Texas

Over the past two years, two states—Texas and Florida—were prime movers of hate. Both states fell in the rankings from SoHI to SoHI II. Texas moved from 19 in SoHI to 25 overall in SoHI II. Florida dropped from 9 in SoHI to 20 overall in SoHI II. If we look at the shifts in the Structure/Field category, we see support for the perception that policies and laws are getting worse in Texas and Florida: Texas moved from 27 in the initial SoHI Structure/Field rankings to 39 in SoHI II, while Florida sank from 27 to 33 in Structure/Field for SoHI II.<sup>13</sup>

The main targets of hate in Texas and Florida appeared to be women, people who are transgender, and immigrants. The Texas legislature and governor banned abortion, twice. First, in 2021, they made any abortion after six weeks illegal, and they made it possible for “almost any private citizen to sue abortion providers and others” (Najmabadi 2021). In 2022, the Texas “trigger law” went into effect, which was prepared in anticipation of the *Dobbs* decision. This second abortion law in Texas “criminalizes any attempt by a medical professional to perform, induce or attempt an abortion, making it a second-degree felony. If the pregnancy is successfully aborted, the offense becomes a first-degree felony. Punishment for that could be up to life in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000” (Carpenter 2022). Meanwhile, in Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis (R) signed a bill in 2022 that banned abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy, and then he signed a bill in 2023 that makes it illegal to have an abortion after six weeks. Such restrictions “prohibit abortion before many women even realize they are pregnant” (Chen and Mazzei 2023; Izaguirre 2023).

As for the transgender community, Governor Abbott (R) continued to stoke fear and animosity in Texas by calling for the investigation and prosecution of parents who seek gender-affirming care for their children (Abbott 2022). Even though numerous medical professionals and associations deemed such care as safe and “medically necessary care that can be life-saving for transgender youth” (ACLU 2021), Abbott (2022) framed gender-affirming care as child abuse. Governor DeSantis (R) contributed to enmity against transgender people, praising the Florida state ban of gender-affirming care for minors. DeSantis’s dehumanizing speech likened children receiving such support as “guinea pigs for science experimentation” (Crowder 2023). The Florida governor’s abusive actions extend beyond hateful speech. In 2022, DeSantis signed the Parental Rights in Education Act, also known as the “Don’t Say Gay or Trans Act.” The Florida law makes it illegal for teachers to discuss sexual orientation or gender identity in the classroom up to third grade (Florida Senate 2022a), an effective erasure of people who are LGBTQ+, even including the potential erasure of parents of children in those classrooms. Another law passed in 2022, the Individual Freedom Act, or the Stop Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees (Stop WOKE) Act, also weakens any discourse on discrimination in Florida schools. This law prohibits any instruction that may assign responsibility for hateful actions including racism, sexism, and slavery. The law states: “a person should not be instructed that he or she must feel guilt, anguish or other forms of psychological distress for actions, in which he or she played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex” (Florida Senate 2022b). Basically, the law dictates that teachers should not teach empathy for those who have suffered discrimination.

Finally, as mentioned in the Introduction, Abbott and DeSantis played a nasty game with human beings, shuttling them across the United States to make a political point about immigration. Abbott boasted that the Texas “busing strategy” had moved over 10,000 immigrants out of the

state, forcing them to travel thousands of miles to cities such as New York City, Chicago, and Washington, DC (Office of the Texas Governor 2022). DeSantis supported a scheme that tricked Venezuelan migrants into boarding flights from San Antonio, Texas to Florida, and then to Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.<sup>14</sup> The Venezuelans were lied to, told they would have jobs waiting for them on the east coast. Bexar County Sheriff Javier Salazar of Texas opened an investigation into the DeSantis ploy and denounced it as predatory: "What infuriates me the most is what we have is 48 people here legally—they have every right to be here and they were preyed upon" (Adams 2022).

## **On the Rise: Hate Against Women**

Women, as a social group, are being increasingly disempowered and abused in the United States because they are women. They are being stripped of their human right to bodily autonomy in numerous states. According to the United Nations Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and practice, "women's human rights include the rights to equality, to dignity, autonomy, information and bodily integrity and respect for private life and the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, without discrimination; as well as the right to freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment."<sup>15</sup> Yet by the end of 2022, 12 states had legal restrictions of abortion (Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and West Virginia) and four states had total bans (Arizona, Indiana, Utah and Wyoming) (Nash and Ephross 2022). In the SoHI II, these states account for a large portion of states ranked numerically at the bottom of the index. By mid-2023, five more states had also banned abortion at some point in a pregnancy and three more were moving towards restrictions (Nash and Guarnieri 2023). The result is that women with complicated pregnancies in these states become much more vulnerable, and this is especially true for Black and Latino women and the poor (Banerjee 2023). The intersectionality of the problem translates into a potential for higher maternal mortality rates, which are already high in the United States compared to other industrialized countries. As one doctor in Texas remarked: "The situation here is very dire and extreme. We are already hearing a lot of haunting and traumatic stories" (Tuma 2023). While these points might be framed as unintended consequences by antiabortion activists, some lawmakers are intentionally attacking women's lives. In South Carolina, a bill was proposed that included the death penalty as punishment for any woman who had an abortion in the state (Rowles 2023).

Hate against women is not a one-issue problem, though. Domestic violence rates demonstrate that it is a systemic, gendered problem.<sup>16</sup> According to the Center for American Progress, "Every month, an average of 57 women are killed with a firearm by an intimate partner" (Edmund 2022, p.). That equals almost 700 women per year on average. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (2020), one (1) in four (4) women experience domestic violence as compared to one (1) in ten (10) men, and one (1) in five (5) female victims receive medical attention for domestic abuse as compared one (1) in twenty (20) males. And guns make domestic violence even deadlier: "An abusive partner's access to a firearm . . . [makes] it five times more likely that a woman will be killed" (Giffords Law Center 2023). Clearly, women are affected disproportionately. Despite these facts, laws punishing domestic violence involving guns are sparse, ignoring the reality of gendered violence.

**Table 6: Hate Against Women Rankings**

State	Violence Against Women	Femicide	Domestic Violence Laws	Antiabortion Laws	Hate Against Women Rank
California	18	14	1	2	1
Nebraska	9	10	10	11	2
New York	4	2	1	34	3
District of Columbia	29	NA	14	1	4
Massachusetts	12	1	1	30	5
Rhode Island	2	5	27	20	6
Connecticut	34	13	5	4	7
Vermont	7	20	27	9	8
Oregon	30	19	7	11	9
Delaware	33	11	19	6	10
Hawaii	40	12	5	14	11
New Jersey	21	4	10	38	12
North Dakota	1	39	27	7	13
Minnesota	13	7	14	43	14
Illinois	19	8	1	51	15
Utah	27	9	32	11	15
Virginia	3	38	22	16	15
Pennsylvania	35	6	10	30	18
Colorado	26	35	14	8	19
Maryland	14	22	7	41	20
New Mexico	15	46	14	10	21
Georgia	6	21	44	16	22
Alabama	32	NS	37	19	23
South Dakota	10	23	35	20	23
New Hampshire	17	26	27	20	25
Maine	36	15	35	5	26
Wisconsin	5	30	32	26	27
West Virginia	8	25	14	47	28
Kansas	23	30	27	20	29
Florida	31	NS	42	30	30
Louisiana	24	44	7	28	30
Washington	45	17	10	35	32
North Carolina	48	17	19	24	33
Wyoming	22	28	44	15	34
Iowa	49	2	22	39	35
Indiana	11	27	37	39	36
Nevada	47	42	22	3	36
Ohio	20	16	42	37	38
Montana	28	32	32	24	39
Michigan	25	29	40	30	40
Texas	16	37	22	49	40
Arizona	44	33	19	36	42
Idaho	43	24	44	27	43
Mississippi	37	34	44	28	44
Alaska	46	48	37	16	45
Tennessee	38	41	22	46	45
South Carolina	41	40	40	45	47
Arkansas	39	45	44	43	48
Kentucky	50	36	44	41	48
Missouri	42	43	44	48	50
Oklahoma	51	47	44	50	51

In an attempt to capture how hate against women appears in the 50 states, three of the indicators from SoHI II—"Violence Against Women," "Domestic Violence Laws" and "Antiabortion Laws"—were combined with an indicator for "Femicide." Data for "Femicide" was pulled from the "When Men Murder Women" reports produced by the Violence Policy Center (2020–22). The Violence Policy Center analyzes murder rates for women in the United States by state. The "Femicide" indicator addresses the extreme version of hate against women in SoHI II, incorporating the significant role gender plays with regard to murder: "Compared to a man, a woman is far more likely to be killed by her spouse, an intimate acquaintance, or a family member than by a stranger" (p. 5, Violence Policy Center 2020, p. 5). "Femicide" was not included in the overall SoHI II rankings as two states do not contribute data on femicide (Alabama and Florida), and the District of Columbia is not included in the Violence Policy Center analysis. Nevertheless, adding in "Femicide" to the Hate Against Women ranking (see Table 6) helps to provide another factor in a rough sketch of problem states for women (See Table 6).

Similar to the overall SoHI II rankings, many of the bottom states rank low when it comes to dehumanizing women. The worst states include: Texas, Arizona, Idaho, Mississippi, Alaska, Tennessee, South Carolina, Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, and Oklahoma. It is also worth noticing that Florida ranks 30 without data for "Femicide" and Alabama ranks 23. If we did have data to include for "Femicide," both of the states would drop even further in the rankings. Some of the less dangerous states and districts for women, based on the rankings, are: California, Nebraska, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, and Oregon.

## **On the Rise: White Christian Nationalism**

When SoHI was published in 2021, white Christian nationalism was seeping more and more into the popular discourse of what America should be, especially for conservative Republicans. By 2022, polling by Rouse and Telhami (2022) showed that 61 percent of Republicans were in favor of making the United States a Christian nation, compared to 17 percent of Democrats who would support such a position. In Montana, state politics shifted toward white Christian nationalism, in part, thanks to Republican Governor Greg Gianforte and his donations to conservative Christian causes (Streep 2023). Republican members of Congress, such as Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Paul Gosar of Arizona, boosted the message even louder. Greene started selling "Proud Christian Nationalist" t-shirts through her Instagram account.<sup>17</sup> Gosar supported and posted on Gab, a fringe social media platform that founder Andrew Torba designed to be the premiere space for white Christian nationalist discourse. Gab also boasted that it was generating a "Parallel Economy for the Glory of God." Torba produced regular writings on Gab News, extolling why it is imperative that America become a Christian nation, pushing so far as to pronounce: "Now is the time for Christians to not only start hating evil again, but actively waging spiritual warfare against it" (Torba 2023). In the post, Torba attached the descriptor of evil to members of the transgender community and to "money changers," a common antisemitic trope used to attack members of the Jewish community.

The arguments and urgency for why America should be a white Christian nation were not merely modern, histrionic babblings of politicians, though. The abusive rhetoric and policy decisions were the outcome of centuries of false narratives about what makes an American an American. Research by Gorski and Perry (2022) exposed the ever-present, deep story that white Christian nationalists



repeatedly point to for justification for their cause. They claim that America was created by “traditional” Christians, for Christians, and ordained by a Christian God to be ruled according to Christian ideology. “But this story is a myth,” said Gorski and Perry. “The religious views of the Founders ranged widely: from atheism through deism and Unitarianism to Congregationalism, Baptism, and even Roman Catholicism. The Declaration and the Constitution drew on various influences, including classical liberalism (e.g. Locke) and civic republicanism (e.g., Machiavelli)” (p. 5).

Ignoring this reality of the religious and ideological diversity of the past, today's white Christian nationalists amp up frustrations in the general population in order to mobilize for the creation of a Christian God nation. But it is not a peaceful movement. Violence is embedded in the white Christian nationalist ideology: “The general principle is this: white men must sometimes exercise righteous violence to defend (their) freedom and maintain social (and racial order). It is freedom for ‘us’ and authoritarian social order for ‘them’” (Gorski and Perry 2022, p. 7). It is a “righteous violence” (p. 94). Instead of a sense of increasing equality and fairness, white Christian nationalists today are guided by fear, threat, and the drive to be on top. “White Christian nationalists sincerely believe that whites and Christians are the most persecuted groups in America. Consequently, they view efforts to expand access to the democratic process—such as removing obstacles to voter participation—as an existential threat to their political party” (p. 8).

The white Christian nationalist movement is also propelled by authors such as Stephen Wolfe (2022), who offers one of the more extremist rationales for why (white) Christian nationalism is an imperative for America. His text, *The Case for Christian Nationalism*, has become a supporting treatise for many on the far right for why hierarchy and Christian-based patriarchy is good and morally justified. The household, Wolfe argues, is the essential unit from which to build a righteous and inegalitarian nation governed by men: “The wife is subject to her husband, children to their parents, and citizens to their civil rulers” (p. 68). It is only natural that men should create Christian governments, and only natural that violence will be needed for this creation, says Wolfe. Therefore, men should train in “martial virtues,” and should be required to train to fight, in order to support the Christian nation and to realize their “masculine excellence” (p. 76).

Even though Wolfe's authoritarian ramblings may seem like an outlier position, for more than 50 years the ultraconservative John Birch Society has pushed for this worldview. Founded in 1958, the John Birch Society was built upon ideologies of racism and exclusion of all other religious positions: “Birch leaders looked to activists who had fought for immigration restriction, opposed the teaching of evolution in schools, and promoted the Ku Klux Klan's anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish, and anti-Black activism” (Dallek 2022, p. 13). For decades, the John Birch Society remained a slow murmur underneath American politics, but it resurfaced rather strongly in the 2010s and “helped seed Trumpism” (p. 15). Political scientists Weiner and Zellman (2022) tested what impact white nationalists might have on American politics, utilizing the John Birch Society's Freedom Index as a measure for radical conservatism. They found that, in the American South, “white nationalist mobilization substantially and significantly influences more radically conservative electoral outcomes” (p. 13).

In order to tease out how white Christian nationalism might be embedded in the SoHI II, the John Birch Society ratings of members of the 117th US Congress (2021–22) were tallied by state and then compared to the overall SoHI II rankings along with political party (John Birch Society 2023). The

point was to set aside the assumption that the Republican party is grounded in white Christian nationalist ideologies.<sup>18</sup> The hypothesis: If the John Birch Society increases their rating of a member of the US Congress, then there will be an increase in the likelihood that the policies in that state align with white Christian nationalist ideologies.<sup>19</sup>

What is most apparent, and as expected, is that the John Birch Society rankings of federal officials heavily align with Republican state policymakers. Further, by comparison, the John Birch Society “favorable” rankings are congruent with the bottom of the SoHI II rankings (i.e., where the John Birch Society finds a location favorable, SoHI II finds it to be a place where hate is more or most likely to occur). This conclusion supports the findings of Weiner and Zellman (2022), which reveal that white Christian nationalism not only parallels the Republican party, but that it fits into a pattern of hate. The top most “favorable” states for the John Birch Society—Oklahoma, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Tennessee—are also some of the lowest-ranked states in our study with the highest capacity for hate, with white Christian nationalism as a contributing factor.

## Conclusion

The shift from SoHI to SoHI II might seem bleak. Hate appears to have intensified in the United States, and the Republican party now openly embraces and asserts ideologies of racism, patriarchy, and antidemocracy. As *Guardian* columnist Robert Reich has stated, “we have a Republican party, which is careening at high velocity toward authoritarianism. OK, fascism” (Reich 2023). As an example, in April 2023, three Tennessee state legislators faced expulsion from the Tennessee House of Representatives—Gloria Jones, Justin Jones, and Justin Pearson. Two of the three were voted out by the Republican supermajority, and the third lawmaker missed expulsion by one vote. Justin Jones and Justin Pearson are Black, and Gloria Johnson is a white woman. The three faced sanctions from their colleagues because they protested for gun reform on the House floor, breaking House decorum rules. The ousting was seen as unjust by many and resulted in immediate public criticism and protest, especially for the blatant racism. When asked why she was not ousted from the House, Gloria Johnson replied: “Well, I think it’s pretty clear. I’m a 60-year-old white woman, and they are two young Black men” (Dirks 2023). If we look at the Tennessee rankings in SoHI and SoHI II, we see a significant shift that mirrors the racist and antidemocratic actions in the Tennessee House. Tennessee fell from 23 in SoHI to 39 in SoHI II.

Despite the worrisome data for the state of hate in the second iteration of the Index, there are positive, progressive actions denying hate a totality in America. The two Tennessee lawmakers were rather quickly reinstated to their House seats (Cochrane 2023). In Nebraska, state senator Machaela Cavanaugh filibustered for months an antitransgender bill (Shapiro 2023), legislation “that would ban gender-affirming care for trans youth under the age of 19” (Specter 2023). In both instances, policymakers recognized that they play a large part in stopping hate and harm. As the SoHI II affirms, laws and policies can rile up hate or can deflate its potential for destruction. Hopefully, more and more United States politicians will recognize that, in an egalitarian society, it is their obligation to address and prevent hate in any form that it takes—whether it is against Asian Americans, Blacks, women, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, immigrants, or LGBTQ+ folk.

**Table 7: White Christian Nationalism Rankings**

State	State and Legislative Partisan Composition	Overall Rank	John Birch Rank
Oklahoma	Republican	50	1
Idaho	Republican	47	2
North Dakota	Republican	26	3
South Dakota	Republican	45	4
Tennessee	Republican	39	5
Utah	Republican	29	6
Alabama	Republican	37	7
Louisiana	Split	23	8
Nebraska	Republican	33	9
Kentucky	Split	44	10
Arkansas	Republican	48	11
South Carolina	Republican	45	12
Kansas	Split	14	13
Wyoming	Republican	50	14
Missouri	Republican	41	15
Mississippi	Republican	42	16
Alaska	Republican	35	17
Texas	Republican	25	18
Iowa	Republican	38	19
District of Columbia	Democrat	17	20
Florida	Republican	20	21
North Carolina	Split	21	22
Indiana	Republican	36	23
Wisconsin	Split	31	24
Montana	Republican	49	25
Georgia	Republican	15	26
West Virginia	Republican	43	27
Ohio	Republican	33	28
Pennsylvania	Split	24	29
Arizona	Republican	40	30
Minnesota	Split	15	31
Colorado	Democrat	29	32
Michigan	Split	26	32
Virginia	Democrat	11	34
New York	Democrat	1	35
Illinois	Democrat	5	36
New Mexico	Democrat	8	37
Washington	Democrat	32	38
New Jersey	Democrat	9	39
California	Democrat	2	40
Nevada	Democrat	10	41
Oregon	Democrat	11	42
Maryland	Split	3	43
Vermont	Split	18	44
Maine	Democrat	22	45
Massachusetts	Split	6	46
Connecticut	Democrat	4	47
Delaware	Democrat	11	47
Hawaii	Democrat	7	47
New Hampshire	Republican	26	47
Rhode Island	Democrat	19	47

## NOTES

- 1 Robert Tynes, PhD, is a political scientist who researches political violence, child soldiers, online activism, and African politics. He is the director of College-in-Prison Operations and site director for the Bard Prison Initiative.
- 2 The Bard Center for the Study of Hate supported this project from conceptualization to print (and secured a grant to underwrite the work from GS Humane Corp). Thank you to Hannah Henry, who helped with research, and to Kenneth Stern and Maria Simpson, who provided invaluable feedback throughout the project. Finally, thank you to the crew at Bard publications: Mary Smith, Audrey Golden, and Kenneth Treadway.
- 3 2021 report published in 2022. HRC states that this is what they could uncover, and it is an undercount.
- 4 SoHI also includes the District of Columbia.
- 5 Victor H. Green (1937–1962). *The Negro Motorist Green Book* (Vol. 1–20). New York, New York: Victor H. Green & Company.
- 6 Candacy Taylor (2016). “The Roots of Route 66.” *The Atlantic*, 3 November 2016. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/11/the-roots-of-route-66/506255/>; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2022/04/03/jewish-vacation-guide-green-book/>
- 7 In this quote, the Bourdieu, Wacquant, and Farage (1994) reference to states pertains to countries. Nevertheless, the same phenomenon is applicable to the federal system of states in America.
- 8 Notably, the increasing bans on abortion across the United States and the iconic trial that affirmed that police Officer Derek Chauvin unjustly murdered George Floyd (Guttmacher 2022; Senter and Dewan 2022).
- 9 For details about each variable, including how the ranking was calculated and timeframe, see Appendix A.
- 10 Theories of embodiment have become popular for discussing subjects’ relationship to legal structures and to society more broadly.
- 11 See Yam (2021) regarding underreporting by the AAPI community; Stop AAPI Hate (2021) started tracking incidences of hate against AAPI in March 2020. The “2020–2021 National Report” offers detailed data on types of discrimination, sites of discrimination, and a list of some of the top states by number of incidents. Stop AAPI Hate (2023) offers much more data since its 2021 report, exposing how hate against members of the AAPI community is pervasive in the US. Nevertheless, “it is not a nationally-representative sample” (Yellow Horse et al 2023).
- 12 All the variables used for the SoHI II are discussed in greater detail in Appendix A.
- 13 In May of 2023, the NAACP deemed the political environment in Florida so threatening that it issued a travel advisory, stating: “Florida is openly hostile toward African Americans, people of color and LGBTQ+ individuals. Before traveling to Florida, please understand that the state of Florida devalues and marginalizes the contributions of, and the challenges faced by African Americans and other communities of color” (NAACP 2023).
- 14 Note that it was a Florida governor who used state finances to move migrants in Texas to Florida, and then to Massachusetts.
- 15 While international human rights laws address these specific rights, access to these human rights in the international context is often limited, and in the domestic context, broader human rights protections are often provided by state law rather than federal law. As such, states can enact laws that restrict certain internationally recognized human rights without violating federal

- law in the United States. See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Women/WG/WomensAutonomyEqualityReproductiveHealth.pdf>.
- 16 Domestic violence is defined as “the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another. It includes physical violence, sexual violence, threats, economic, and emotional/psychological abuse National Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2022).
  - 17 See Instagram account @realmajoriegreene: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CgfyNqpNjbb/?hl=en>
  - 18 Weiner and Zellman do not highlight the “Christian” aspect of white nationalism and its connections to the Republican party and John Birch Society. That connection is, however, an implicit facet of white nationalism in America, and it is prominently displayed on the splash page for the John Birch Society website (<https://jbs.org>): “Less government, more responsibility, and — with God’s help — a better world.”
  - 19 See Table 7. Note that in Table 7, “Political Party” refers to state senators, representatives, and governors, whereas the John Birch Society rankings refer to federal senators and representatives.
  - 20 A correlation matrix was run for the variables of Number of Hate Groups, Violence Against Women, Anti-Semitic Violence and White Supremacy Violence in the original SoHI, checking for multicollinearity. No significant collinearity was found.
  - 21 See “Information” for “Incidents” on ADL H.E.A.T. Map webpage (ADL 2023).

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## APPENDIX A: FURTHER NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

### 1. Variables for the SoHI II

Variables for the SoHI II were chosen based on reliability, accuracy, and timeframe. There is no definitive dataset for hate-based actions. The SoHI II is an attempt to build toward greater precision. For now, the state level of analysis held the most reliable statistics across categories. The timeframe for the variables collectively spans 2015–23. Each variable itself has a different timeframe based on the data available. Because of this, the study focuses on depicting the general field of hate during this decade rather than drawing year-to-year causal connections. Also, not all groups that are discriminated against could be represented equally. As highlighted in the conclusion, groups such as Asian Americans are represented in the data in general, which is not optimal for understanding a serious and long-standing problems of hate in the United States. Nevertheless, Asian Americans are considered a part of SoHI II in the variable of "General Laws & Policies Relating to the Prevention of Hate." The following includes each variable and a description of how the data was gathered and processed for use in SoHI II. District of Columbia is included with the states in recognition of its near-state status.

#### **Number of Hate Groups<sup>20</sup>**

The "Number of Hate Groups" variable is drawn from the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) database (2023) on hate groups in the United States as of 2018. SPLC (2020) defines a hate group as "an organization that—based on its official statements or principles, the statements of its leaders, or its activities—has beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable characteristics." The raw number of hate groups per state is divided by the population for that state in 2020 (US Census Bureau 2023). The ratio is then used for the state rankings, with the state ranked 1 having the lowest percentage and 51 having the highest percentage.

#### **Violence Against Women**

The "Violence Against Women" variable is drawn from data compiled by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) (2023). This is the same variable from the first SoHI, but the data source is new and thus is more up to date. NCADV (2020) defines domestic violence as: "the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another. It includes physical violence, sexual violence, threats, and emotional abuse." The Coalition tracks the

percentage of women who have experienced abuse by state. Percentages for the District of Columbia are not tracked, so a mean was used, which was higher compared to SoHI. As a consequence, the DC number is a bit inflated from what is actually occurring.

### **Antisemitic Violence**

The “Antisemitic Violence” variable is calculated from research conducted by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) (2023). The data spans from 2019–23. ADL counts number of incidents by state, defining incidents as: “Criminal and non-criminal incidents of harassment, vandalism, and assault or other violence that: 1) include circumstances indicating anti-Jewish animus on the part of the perpetrator; or 2) result in Jewish individuals or organizations being victimized due to their Jewish or perceived Jewish identity.” The SoHI II uses the raw incident count per state, divided by the Jewish population for that state (Sheskin and Dashefsky 2021). The ratio helps reveal the impact on the Jewish population. The higher the percentage, the greater the effect of hate. States are then ranked by percentage, with the state ranked 1 having the lowest percentage of hate and 51 having the highest percentage.

### **White Supremacy Violence**

The “White Supremacy Violence” variable is calculated from research conducted by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) (2023). The data spans from 2019–22. The ADL counts number of events and propaganda incidents by state. White supremacist events are defined as: “Public and private events in the U.S. organized or attended by white supremacists, including rallies and protests, counter-protests, white power music events, flash mob demonstrations, hate group meetings and more.” White supremacist propaganda is defined as: “Incidents of white supremacist propaganda distribution, including flyers, handbills, posters, stickers, leaflets, and banners.” White supremacist graffiti is not included. Information on these incidents comes from media, law enforcement, and constituent reporting, as well as direct observations of extremist social media.<sup>21</sup> The SoHI uses the raw incident count per state, divided by the Black population for that state (US Census Bureau 2023). The Black population statistic was chosen as a proxy for minority-impacted groups in the state. This is not to say that the hate generated by white supremacy violence is not harming other minority groups, as well. Statistics on Black populations tended to be the most reliable for minority groups, and therefore more accurate for use in analysis. The higher the percentage, the greater the effect of hate. States are then ranked by percentage, with the state ranked 1 having the lowest percentage of hate and 51 having the highest percentage.

### **Police Killings—Blacks**

The “Police Killings—Blacks” variable is composed of data drawn from the *Washington Post* Police Shootings Database, spanning from January 1, 2015 to January 5, 2023. The data is assembled from “local news reports, collecting information from law enforcement websites and social media, and monitoring independent databases such as *Fatal Encounters* and the now-defunct Killed by Police project . . . [and] additional reporting [by the *Post*]” (Washington Post 2023). For SoHI II, the raw number of killings for each state is then divided by the Black population for that state (US Census Bureau 2023). States are then ranked by percentage, with the state ranked 1 having the lowest hate percentage and 51 having the highest hate percentage.



### **General Laws & Policies Relating to the Prevention of Hate**

“General Laws & Policies” data is culled from Levin et al (2022). These researchers list the hate-crime statutes that exist in each state, coding the list as either “yes” or “no” to identify whether a particular state has a specific hate-crime statute in place. There are ten categories of statutes: Race/Religion/Ethnicity, Gender, Gender Identity, Age, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Homelessness, First Responders/Police, and Interference with Religious Services. The SoHI II utilizes eight of the 10 categories, leaving out Political Affiliation and First Responders/Police. Laws that are more specific and exacting receive a higher weight. The categories are converted from dichotomous scores (0 = no; 1 = yes) into weighted scores to account for greater discernment on the part of the state, meaning that some laws and policies are more widely accepted nationally and less likely to face public protest. For instance, Race/Religion/Ethnicity is weighted as 1 whereas Gender Identity, which is more highly contested publicly, is weighted as 3. The weighted scores are added together across categories for each state to produce a raw weighted score. The overall rank is determined as the higher the raw weighted score, the greater the protections against hate. For example, District of Columbia had a raw score of 13 and an overall rank of 1 (the greatest level of protections), whereas Wyoming had a raw score of 0 and overall rank of 51.

### **Laws & Policies LGBTQ+**

“Laws & Policies LGBTQ+” data is tallied from the Human Rights Campaign’s (HRC) (2023) maps on state laws and policies as of 2023. HRC tracks laws and policies protecting people who identify as LGBTQ+. States are coded according to multiple types of antidiscrimination laws and policies. The SoHI II incorporates the following ten HRC categories: Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills, Discrimination in Child Welfare Services, Anti-Conversion Therapy, Gender Marker Updates on Identification Documents, Transgender Healthcare, Education, School Anti-Bullying, Public Accommodations, Employment, and Housing. For SoHI II, there are two new categories: Anti-LGBTQ Bills & Laws and Discrimination in Child Welfare. Note that some of the categories are coded from -1 to 2. The negative coding is for laws or policies that discriminate. For example, in Alabama, there are state bills and laws intended to exclude the LGBTQ+ community, so it is coded as -2. Conversely, California has safeguards in place to protect the LGBTQ+ community in the workplace. Hence, California is coded as “2” for Employment. The composite score for the nine categories is totaled for a raw score. The raw score is converted to an overall rank for Laws & Policies LGBTQ+ with 1 being the best score and 51 being the worst score.

### **Guns and Domestic Violence Policies**

The “Guns and Domestic Violence Policies” variable is an attempt to measure protections for women against hate, specifically from their domestic partners. Data for this variable is drawn from a new source for SoHI II: The Giffords Law Center (2023). The Giffords Laws Center tracks legislation state-by-state and the following categories were used for SoHI II: Domestic Violence Misdemeanor Prohibition, Firearm Relinquishment for Domestic Violence Misdemeanors, Law Requiring Reporting of Domestic Violence Misdemeanors to NICS, Firearm Prohibition for Orders After Notice and a Hearing, Firearm Prohibition for Ex Parte Orders, Firearm Relinquishment Requirement, and Prohibits Dating Partners Subject to Protective Orders & Prohibits Dating Partners Convicted of Domestic Violence Misdemeanors. This includes legislation up to March 2023. The Giffords “yes/no/partial” coding was converted to a “1/0/0.5” number in order recognize the Giffords’ non-dichotomous coding that gives weight to “partial” protections. The total for all categories was totaled with the highest number equaling the greatest protection for women. Massachusetts, Hawaii, California, and New York had a raw score of 8, which made them tied for the greatest protections and an overall SoHI II rank of 1.

### **Antiabortion Laws**

The “Antiabortion Laws” variable attempts to capture the degree of hate toward women by state. The Guttmacher Institute (2023a) tracks state legislation regarding abortion. SoHI II uses the Guttmacher data that covers 2019–22. Categories pulled from Guttmacher are: Abortion Banned After 12 Weeks LMP, Abortion Due to Genetic Anomaly Banned, All or Most Abortions Banned, Bans Abortion by Establishing Fetal Personhood, Criminalizes Abortion for Women or Providers, Postviability Abortion Restricted, Abortion Method Banned, Partial-Birth Abortion Banned, Regulates Clinic Access, Admitting Privileges Required for Abortion Providers, Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers, Allows Refusal by Medical Providers, Fetal Tissue Donation and Research Restricted, Abortion Coverage Restricted in Medicaid, Abortion Coverage Restricted in Private Health Plans, Counseling Includes Inaccurate Information on Breast Cancer, Counseling Includes Inaccurate Information on Mental Health Outcomes, Counseling Includes Inaccurate Information on Risks, Counseling Includes Misleading Information on Fetal Pain, Counseling Includes Inappropriate Information on Fetal Survival, Counseling on Fetal Personhood Required, Counseling on the Potential to Reverse a Medication Abortion, Two Trips Required for Abortion, Bans the Use of Medication Abortion, Prohibits Telemedicine for Medication Abortion, Requires Use of Outdated FDA Label Protocol, Requires Parental Consent for Abortion, Requires Parental Notice for Abortion, Prohibiting an Adult from Helping a Minor Access Abortion, Requires Women to Provide Proof of Age, State Facilities and Employees Barred from Providing Abortion, Weakens Abortion Protections in State Constitution, Requirements for Infant Born Alive, Restricts Access to Medication Abortion, Requires Tissue from Abortion for Statutory Rape Investigation, Limits Abortion Training Opportunities, Abortion Reporting Specific to Minors and Requires Abortion Reporting. Each category was coded numerically as: 1 if an antiabortion law reflecting one of the above categories was introduced, 2 if one was enacted, and -1 if one was vetoed. The numbers were totaled and ranked, with the highest raw score equaling the worst environment for women.

## **2. Other Variables**

### **State and Legislative Partisan Composition**

The “State and Legislative Partisan Composition” variable considers the overall party control of the state as determined by the legislative controlling party, plus the governor controlling party. The timeframe spans 2019–21, looking at the general trend for those three years. Data is drawn from research by the National Conference of State Legislatures (2021).

### **Hate Against Women**

The “Hate Against Women” variable utilizes three of the indicators from SoHI II—“Violence Against Women,” “Domestic Violence Laws,” and “Anti-abortion Laws”—and then adds an indicator for “Femicide.” Data for “Femicide” was pulled from the “When Men Murder Women” reports produced by the Violence Policy Center (2020–22). The data spans the years of 2018–20 and consists of homicide rates per 1,000 people. Two states did not contribute data on femicide (Alabama and Florida), and the District of Columbia is not tracked. Consequently, these three entries had raw scores of zero, which means their overall rankings are potentially better with regards to “Hate Against Women” by virtue of a lack of data alone, rather than a score that would substantively give the state a lower numerical ranking.

Protests against Verity Baptist pastor Roger Jimenez’s positive comments about the Pulse nightclub shooting. Shutterstock photo by Chris Allan

### White Christian Nationalism

Data for the “White Christian Nationalism” variable was drawn from the John Birch Society (2023) ratings of members of the 117th US Congress (2021-22). An average of the ratings for each state was calculated, and then the averages for all states were ranked by state and compared to the overall SoH II rankings. The John Birch Society rankings were also compared to “State and Legislative Partisan Composition” as calculated in Table 4.







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