

# Cambridge Elements<sup>≡</sup>

Elements in Applied Social Psychology

edited by

Susan Clayton

*College of Wooster, Ohio*

## HATE SPEECH

Janet B. Ruscher

*Tulane University*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
978-1-009-53467-3 — Hate Speech  
Janet B. Ruscher  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,  
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of  
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781009534673](http://www.cambridge.org/9781009534673)

DOI: 10.1017/9781009534666

© Janet B. Ruscher 2024

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of  
relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place  
without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781009534666

First published 2024

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-1-009-53467-3 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-009-53468-0 Paperback

ISSN 2631-777X (online)

ISSN 2631-7761 (print)

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or  
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this  
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will  
remain, accurate or appropriate.

# Hate Speech

Elements in Applied Social Psychology

DOI: 10.1017/9781009534666  
First published online: November 2024

Janet B. Ruscher  
*Tulane University*

**Author for correspondence:** Janet B. Ruscher, [ruscher@tulane.edu](mailto:ruscher@tulane.edu)

**Abstract:** Hate speech comprises any form of hateful or contemptuous expression that attacks, degrades, or vilifies people based on their social identities. This Element focuses on hate speech targeting social identities that are devalued by a society's dominant groups, and that is likely to evoke, promote, or legitimize harms such violence, discrimination, and oppression. After detailing the ways in which hate speech is expressed (e.g., through derogatory labels, metaphors, offensive imagery), the production of hate speech is explored at the individual level (e.g., prejudiced attitudes), group level (e.g., realistic intergroup threat), and societal level (e.g., hierarchy maintenance; free speech protections). A discussion of the effects of blatant and anonymous hate speech on targets (e.g., anxiety and depression) and nontargets (e.g., stereotype activation; desensitization; fomenting violence) follows. Finally, the effectiveness of mitigation efforts is explored, including use of computer-based technologies, speech codes, confrontation, and counterspeech.

**Keywords:** hate speech, racist language, prejudice, systemic racism, racism

© Janet B. Ruscher 2024

ISBNs: 9781009534673 (HB), 9781009534680 (PB), 9781009534666 (OC)  
ISSNs: 2631-777X (online), 2631-7761 (print)

Contents

1	Introductory Ideas	1
2	Forms of Hate Speech	6
3	Factors Contributing to Hate Speech	16
4	Consequences of Hate Speech	30
5	Mitigation Efforts	41
6	Conclusion	51
	References	54