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Populist and Anti-Populist Discourse Concerning African-Americans

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Central Park Five Case

Abstract

While much work has been done on discourse and populism in Europe concerning various minority groups, little is understood about how populist ideologies are manifested through discourse in current US political and media discourses concerning African-Americans. Using the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, the present study seeks to uncover such discursive patterns. Based on Wodak's (2015) conception of populism as tied to fear, scapegoating, and 'othering,' the current paper aims to address populist discourse in US (social) media. A collection of diverse online media is employed (news articles, YouTube videos) to analyze the populist discourse of Donald Trump, his supporters, and his anti-populist opponents. Particular attention is paid to (anti) racist discourse concerning African-Americans, primarily the case of the Central Park Five. Specifically, the discursive strategies in these types of discourses are examined in order to explain how populism is structured and manifested in discourse, affording the unique opportunity to further understand the unfolding of populist text and talk in its recent and ongoing stages. Findings indicate that the most prominent discursive strategies that characterize these media, and that manifest populist attitudes are despective lexical choice, legitimation, evasion, and exclusionary rhetoric. This qualitative analysis reveals the subtle ways in which African-Americans are discriminated against through language use and sheds light on (anti) populist ideologies in US media. Additionally, this work tries to fill a gap in exploring resistance discourse (i.e. anti-populist), an understudied area in the critical discourse studies literature.

Keywords: *Populism, Critical Discourse Studies, African-Americans, Central Park Five, Donald Trump*

Populism has been the object of much scholarship in the fields of political science, media and communication studies, linguistics, international studies, and beyond (e.g. Mudde 2010; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013, 2015; Wodak 2015; Moffitt 2016; Casado-Velarde 2019;

Homolar and Scholz 2019). The present study has two primary goals. The first goal is to analyze the populist discourse of Donald Trump, specifically in relation to the case of the Central Park Five, which involved four African-Americans and one Latino being accused of rape (see Section 1.3 for further discussion of the case). While there are many studies on Donald Trump's use of language (e.g. Degani 2016; Lakoff 2016; Sclafani 2018; Homolar and Scholz 2019; Khan et al. 2019), and in particular related to anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant ideologies (e.g. Homolar and Scholz 2019; Khan et al. 2019; among others), less attention has been paid to anti-black racism and Trump's populist discourse concerning African-Americans. The current study aims to fill this gap by analyzing excerpts from the news media as well as interviews. The second main goal of the current analysis is to explore media that display resistance discourse (i.e. anti-populist) against Trump's populist ideologies.

To carry out this investigation, a framework of Critical Discourse Analysis is employed in order to analyze "structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language" and to "investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, constituted, legitimised, and so on, by language use (or in discourse)" (Wodak and Meyer 2009, 10). The data utilized for the present study comprise three video interviews and one newspaper advertisement. The interviews were collected from YouTube and include one interview with Trump and two interviews with members of the Central Park Five. The newspaper advertisement is the initial response from Trump in 1989, soon after the Central Park incident. This article will first provide the necessary background for the analysis, including key theoretical terms, previous research on populism and populist discourse, and details regarding the Central Park Five case. Next, the methodology for the analysis will be discussed, followed by the analysis and results that emerged from the media data. The final section concludes the article and offers avenues for future research.

1. Background

1.1 Theoretical notions: Populism, racism, and ideology

Populism has been defined in various ways, including an emphasis on a distinction between pure people and a corrupt elite (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013), as well as a relation to fearmongering, scapegoating, and representing minorities as 'others' (Wodak 2015). In taking varying positions in the literature together, Casado-Velarde (2019) argues for a common thread that runs among both left-wing and right-wing populist movements:

Dentro de la variedad de espectros políticos que puede asumir el populismo, parece haber una misma idea de fondo: los movimientos populistas nacen y se desarrollan en el caldo de

cultivo de una crisis, frente a un enemigo. Se presentan como respuesta y solución (ahora) a un conjunto de males encarnados en ese enemigo a batir: “los otros,” ya sea la élite (la casta, la oligarquía, el establishment), los inmigrantes que amenazan la identidad patria, los burócratas de la Unión Europea, etc. (Casado-Velarde 2019, 187)¹

It is a combination of Wodak’s (2015) and Casado-Velarde’s (2019) conceptions that will be adopted in the current paper. Populism results from some type of (real or perceived) crisis and takes the position of fighting against an enemy or the ‘other,’ whether that enemy is part of the elite or not (e.g. the oligarchy or immigrants). Specifically, discourse that reflects and perpetuates fear and ‘othering’ will be analyzed in the present analysis, with a primary focus on right-wing populism.

Another essential notion to address when discussing discourse concerning minorities, and in this case, African-Americans, in particular, is racism (and racist discourse). Racism in the current paper is defined as a system of social domination based on race/ethnicity (Bonilla-Silva 1997; Van Dijk 2005). That is, racism is not merely a matter of individual prejudicial attitudes or beliefs but is part of the structure of society (Bonilla-Silva 1997). There has been a large body of scholarship dedicated to discourse and racism, particularly in Europe, the US, and Latin America (see, for example, Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000; Wodak and Van Dijk 2000; Casaravilla 2003; Van Dijk 2003, 2009; Curtis et al. 2009; Curtis 2012).

Concerning ideology, I adopt Van Dijk’s (1998, 8) definition as a “shared framework of social beliefs that organize and coordinate the social interpretations and practices of groups and their members, and in particular also power and other relations between groups.” The particular type of discourse analyzed in much previous work has been categorized as *elite* discourse (e.g., Van Dijk 1997, 2003, 2009; Htun 2004; Curtis et al. 2009; Zavala and Zariquiey 2009), which is essentially the spoken or written language used by those who have power (politicians, journalists, professors, etc.) (Van Dijk 2003). Elite discourse is often discussed in contrast to *popular* or everyday discourse used by the working or middle class (Curtis et al. 2009). Van Dijk (2003, 109-110) points out the importance of elite discourse in relation to racism in explaining that the general tendency of racism goes from top to bottom. That is, its root is found among those in power who have access to certain discourses (e.g. the media, politicians, the

¹ “Within the variety of political spectrums that can assume populism, there seems to be a shared underlying idea: populist movements are born and are developed in the breeding ground of a crisis, in the face of an enemy. They are presented as a response and solution (now) to a set of wrongdoings embodied in that enemy to defeat: “the others,” whether it is the elite (the caste, the oligarchy, the establishment), immigrants that threaten homeland identity, bureaucrats of the European Union, etc.” (author’s translation)

upper class), which then spreads to the general society. The current analysis will be concerned with, on the one hand, elite discourse, particularly that used by politicians (i.e. Donald Trump) during interviews and in news articles. On the other hand, popular discourse will also be analyzed by examining resistance discourse to Trump's comments.

1.2 Previous research on populism and populist discourse

Populism is a multifaceted ideology, with much public as well as academic debate over its characteristics, in addition to the existence of both right-wing and left-wing populism (Mudde 2004). For instance, among the general public, some view it as linked to simplistic and emotional discourse addressed toward the desires of the people. Others see populism as related to the creation of opportunistic policies (e.g. lowering taxes before elections) on the part of politicians in order to win over the people/voters (Mudde 2004, 542). Among academics, populism is generally defined in terms of an oppositional relationship between the 'people' and the 'elite,' among numerous other features (Mudde 2004). For instance, Mudde (2004) defines populism as

an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite,' and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people. (Mudde 2004, 543)

With regard to right-wing populism in particular, according to Wodak (2015) it is primarily driven by fear and is manifested by scapegoating the 'Other,' looking for an enemy to blame for a given problem (e.g. immigrants, blacks, Muslims). In terms of discursive strategies, she states the following:

The discursive strategies of 'victim-perpetrator reversal,' 'scapegoating' and the 'construction of conspiracy theories' therefore belong to the necessary 'toolkit' of right-wing populist rhetoric. In short, anybody can potentially be constructed as dangerous 'Other,' should it become expedient for specific strategic and manipulative purposes. (Wodak 2015, 4)

Right-wing populism also involves being against multiculturalism (e.g. white nationalism) (Pelinka 2013) and drawing on stereotypes of the (perceived) enemy (Wodak 2015). Crucially, populism involves divisive characteristics such as good *vs* bad, friend *vs* foe, or we *vs* the 'other' (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013; Wodak 2015). Some examples of right-wing populists in the US have been the *Tea Party* and Donald Trump. For instance, setting forth and legitimizing exclusionary policies, such as the Muslim ban, is one of the main populist features of the Trump

administration. Regarding legitimation strategies, Van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999) have proposed four main categories or sub-types of legitimation in discourse:

- Authorization: justification by reference to authority (i.e. person, tradition, custom, or law)
- Moral evaluation: referring to value systems
- Rationalization: referring to knowledge claims or arguments
- Mythopoesis: reference to narratives/stories from the past or future

Thus, populists may appeal to authorities, morals, arguments, or stories in their text and talk to justify and legitimize their perspectives or actions (e.g. Trump's appeal to the authority of prosecutors who were against settling the Central Park Five case).

Moreover, left-wing populist movements also exist (see, for example, Casado-Velarde 2019), with the key distinction being that they are proponents of multiculturalism and internationalism (e.g. the *Occupy* movement) rather than the nationalistic ideology associated with right-wing populists (Wodak 2015). Some examples include the (East) *German Party of Democratic Socialism* and the *Dutch Socialist Party* (Mudde 2004). The current paper will explore right-wing populist discourse in the US, specifically the linguistic practices of Donald Trump. Wodak's (2015) definition of right-wing populism will be adopted for the present analysis. Specifically, this involves ideologies and discourse that reflect fearmongering, 'othering,' and legitimation, as well as scapegoating of perceived enemies. In addition, anti-populist discourse will be examined. Like populism, anti-populism also exists on all parts of the political spectrum (Ostiguy and Roberts 2016). While there is also much discussion on the defining features of anti-populism (e.g. Knight 1998; Stavrakakis 2014, 2018; Ostiguy and Roberts 2016; Stavrakakis et al. 2017; Moffitt 2018), it is outside the scope of the current article to engage in such a debate. I simply define anti-populism in the present analysis as an ideology of resistance to right-wing populism as conceived by Wodak (2015), with the usage of discourse that counters narratives of fear, exclusion, and 'othering.'

1.3 The case of the Central Park Five

In April of 1989, a woman named Trisha Meili, who was jogging in Central Park in New York City, was raped, and beaten (Cobb 2019). The five people accused—Antron McCray, Kevin Richardson, Raymond Santana, Yusef Salaam, and Korey Wise—became known as the Central Park Five. These men (four African-American and one Latino) were wrongfully accused and

sentenced to prison for between five and fifteen years. This conviction occurred due to the confessing of the crime of four of them under police interrogation. However, no physical evidence was found. The person who actually committed the crime, Matias Reyes, came forward many years after the incident (in 2002), and DNA evidence led to the charges against the five being vacated. A settlement was then made in 2014, whereby the five were paid forty-one million dollars (Cobb 2019). After the case was settled, Donald Trump called the settlement a ‘disgrace’ in a 2014 *Daily News* article (Trump 2014).

Referencing the fearmongering of Trump both then and now, Cobb (2019) exhibited anti-populist discourse in his article in *The New Yorker* by stating the following: “Now the man who manipulated the fears of a city is directing a much bigger production,” and “The most dire postscript for the Central Park debacle may be that, thirty years later, Trump is no longer simply fearmongering to manipulate public opinion. He now does so to manipulate public policy.” While this is a fascinating preview of anti-populist discourse around the case, we will analyze in greater detail the language used by members of the Central Park Five below in their opposition to Trump’s words and actions.

2. Methodology

A search on both YouTube and Google for the phrase ‘Trump and Central Park Five’ was utilized as the primary method to discover the data sources for the present investigation. Specifically, this search phrase was employed to carry out a qualitative analysis of how Trump and others talk about the Central Park Five case. Using a critical discourse studies perspective, the following research questions guided the current investigation:

- What discursive strategies are used by Trump and his opponents concerning the Central Park Five case?
- How does lexical choice shed light on the ideologies of the speakers?

Discourse used in Trump’s 1989 newspaper advertisement and three video interviews from YouTube yielded from the above search phrase was analyzed to answer these questions. For the video data, the speech was first transcribed manually by the author to facilitate analysis. Two examples of populist discourse (Trump’s newspaper advertisement and an interview with Trump) and two examples of anti-populist discourse will be analyzed (two interviews with members of the Central Park Five). The Trump interview took place in Washington, DC, in June 2019, and the brief segment that the YouTube video contains is 28 seconds long. The first

Central Park Five interview, which features Yusef Salaam, took place on MSNBC in 2016. The length of the interview was four minutes and 33 seconds. The second Central Park Five interview appeared on The Breakfast Club in September 2019 and featured both Yusef Salaam and Korey Wise. This interview was more extensive, with a duration of 34 minutes.

Solely the language was considered in the videos rather than both language and visual information (gestures, physical context, etc.). The three videos were selected due to their high number of views as well as their direct relevance to the above research questions. Following Khan et al. (2019), among other discourse studies researchers, the primary concern in the present study was not to obtain a large sample size, but rather to obtain a selective sample that yields analytically useful interpretations (see also Baker 2006 for similar methodological perspectives).

3. Analysis

The populist discourse surrounding the case of the Central Park Five began with Trump's full-page advertisement in various New York newspapers in 1989 (Trump 1989). Before moving on to the more recent media discourse surrounding the case, we will look at the language used in the advertisement as a starting point and provide a relevant context.

3.1 *Trump's 1989 advertisement*

First, the title (and closing statements) of the advertisement is "Bring back the death penalty. Bring back our police," calling for the capital punishment of the suspects (who were minors) and implying that the police are not handling matters in a strict way or a manner that is hard on crime. Specifically, he uses the phrase *law and order* in the opening paragraph in the question "What has happened to law and order?". This is more transparently demonstrated in the following excerpt (1), in which Trump states that "they should be forced to suffer... and executed for their crimes":

- (1) Mayor Koch has stated that hate and rancor should be removed from our hearts. I do not think so. I want to hate these muggers and murderers. They should be forced to suffer and, when they kill, they should be executed for their crimes. They must serve as examples so that others will think long and hard before committing a crime or an act of violence. Yes, Mayor Koch, I want to hate these murderers and I always will. I am not looking to psychoanalyze or understand them, I am looking for punish them.

Another striking element to the above excerpt is the repeated use of the proposition "I want to hate" (also elliptically, "I always will [hate]"), demonstrating the overt and committed hatred of

Trump toward the suspects, despite the fact that it was uncertain whether they had actually committed the crime. Such usage of strong emotions in the discourse is consistent with previous characterizations of populism (Wodak 2015). Furthermore, Trump further perpetuates the link between black people and crime through his racialized lexical choice of *thugs* to describe another event he witnessed in New York: “two cops rushed in, lifted up the thugs and threw them out the door.”

Taken together, the discourse used in this newspaper advertisement demonstrates that Trump is evoking fear of black people and a strong desire for, without having conclusive evidence, the death penalty to be used on the suspects. It also shows his overt pro-police position, and dismissiveness of the reality of police brutality, particularly in the final paragraph of the advertisement:

- (2) Unshackle them from the constant chant of “police brutality” which every petty criminal hurls immediately at an officer who has just risked his or her life to save another’s. We must cease our continuous pandering to the criminal population of this City.

Overall, Trump positions himself in this advertisement as being for the people and common citizens’ security and well-being by calling for increased protection of NYC residents from criminals, but at the same time provoking fear and othering of perceived criminals and those protesting police brutality.

3.2 NBC Interview with Trump

Moving on to the recent discourse surrounding this case, we first turn to an interview clip with Trump from NBC news concerning the Central Park Five (Gregorian 2019). We will examine his more current populist discourse and then analyze some of the anti-populist discourse through some of the responses to Trump, in addition to a recent interview with Yusef Salaam, one of the Five.

In the 2016 interview excerpt, a reporter asks Trump the following question: “Mr. President, will you apologize to the Central Park Five? They’ve been exonerated, there have been videos and movies shown about the case and you came out with a full-page advertisement saying that they should die, that they should have the death penalty.” In his response in (3), Trump avoids giving a direct answer, and in the end refuses to apologize:

- (3) Why do you bring that question up now? It’s an interesting time to bring it up, uh, you have people on both sides of that, they admitted their guilt. If you look at Linda

Fairstein and if you look at some of the prosecutors, uh they think that the city should never have settled that case. So, we'll leave it at that... (Gregorian 2019, 0:13)

By answering the question with another question, Trump immediately shows his hesitation, evasiveness, and lack of desire to engage in the main issue. As we see from the response, without stating directly, Trump implies which side he is on by affirming that “they admitted their guilt” and also by appealing to prosecutors who were against the settlement of the case. In using this proposition, in conjunction with “you have people on both sides,” he further attempts to legitimize his past actions (calling for the death penalty) and his current position. Finally, there is no apology given in the response. Instead, Trump closes by saying “we’ll leave it at that,” further evading the initial question.

3.3 Interview with one of the Central Park Five: Yusef Salaam

In a 2016 MSNBC clip, Chris Hayes speaks with Yusef Salaam, one of the five men wrongfully convicted in the Central Park Five case (Hayes 2016). It begins with Salaam talking about his general experience serving time in prison as an adolescent, stating that “it was the most horrific event I could have ever imagined.” Then, speaking of the actions of Donald Trump, specifically the newspaper advertisement, he states the following:

- (4) This blight, this, this, this ad, this, this this thing that he did to us, calling for the reinstatement of the death penalty, I always think that had this been the 1950s we would have become modern day Emmett Tills (sic) (Hayes 2016, 3:37)

By using the word *blight*, Salaam draws attention to the seriousness of Trump’s actions against the Central Park Five, the severely detrimental effects on their lives. Secondly, the use of active voice for “he *did* to us” emphasizes and specifies the subject [Trump] and his agentive role in this blight. Compare this to a passivization of the same statement (e.g. “that *was done* to us”), which would have the opposite effect of downplaying the agent. Lastly, we see a comparison to the 1950s case of Emmett Till.² Salaam asserts that had Trump’s advertisement been published at an earlier time in US history, the Central Park Five would have certainly been abducted and murdered. By using the lexical choice and person-reference *Emmett Till*, Salaam is highlighting the horror, brutality, and violence of the Emmett Till case and making a comparison to the

² Emmett Till was a 14-year old African-American boy from Chicago who, accused of whistling at a white woman cashier at a grocery store, was abducted and brutally murdered (beat and shot in the head) in 1955. The two men who murdered him were acquitted.

potential consequences of the Central Park Five suspects. Specifically, he states the intention of Trump for someone to abduct and hang them, labelling this type of “justice” as *sick*:

- (5) By Donald Trump taking out this ad, what I subs- what I, what I think is that he was really calling to see if there was somebody from the darker enclaves of society, that would kick in our doors, drag us from our homes, and hang us from trees in Central Park, that’s the kind of, sick type of justice that they were looking for... (Hayes 2016, 4:03)

Further highlighting the case from the perspective of the suspects, Salaam expresses his fears and worries induced by Trump, and how Trump’s intention was clearly hatred and fearmongering. Salaam references the intended effect of the statements made by Trump after taking out the advertisement by stating the following:

- (6) [...] he [Trump] said that he wanted to hate us, he wanted us to be afraid, and by us, he was talking directly about the Central Park Five, but he was talking about also, the black and brown people that we look at that are being shot down, um, all around the country today (Hayes 2016, 4:48)

We also see from the above example Salaam’s connection with the broader minority communities in the US, and how Trump’s populist ideologies of fearmongering and hatred extend beyond the Central Park Five case into the present day for black and brown people nationwide.³ Salaam also expresses his more recent fears upon discussing Trump’s desire to be a law and order president and to bring back unjust policies and practices (e.g. “stop and frisk in NYC”): “I’m scared for my life.” Moreover, we see additional resistance discourse against Trump with the lexical choice of the verb phrase *push away* and an expression of solidarity with those affected by Trump with the first-person plural pronoun *we*: “We need to push far, far away, from him.” Finally, to close the discussion, the interviewer elicits Salaam’s feelings on Trump’s unapologetic stance, where Salaam wants an apology, but highly doubts it will ever happen:

- (7) Hayes: Do you feel he owes you an apology?
Salaam: I feel he owes us an apology; do I feel like we will ever get it? I think if I held my breath and waited for him to give us an apology, I would probably pass out and turn blue in the face (Hayes 2016, 6:13)

³ Recall from the Introduction that ‘ideology’ is used in the sense of Van Dijk (1998, 8): a “shared framework of social beliefs that organize and coordinate the social interpretations and practices of groups and their members, and in particular also power and other relations between groups.”

3.4 *An interview with Korey Wise and Yusef Salaam*

The next interview was one on the Breakfast Club, which featured Yusef Salaam as well as one other of the Central Park Five, Korey Wise (The Breakfast Club 2019). This was a more extended interview, and we get a much more detailed picture of the perspectives of the Central Park Five. They further discuss Trump's 1989 advertisement, as well as topics such as the criminalization of black men, white supremacy, and their receiving of hate mail while they were in prison.

Speaking of the advertisement, Angela Yee (one of the other commentators) argues that it should have been illegal to take out an advertisement of that nature in the first place and underscores the fact that Trump did not apologize:

- (8) [...] those ads that Donald Trump took out also harmed the whole situation, like that should have been illegal, of him asking them to bring back the death penalty and, you know, he still hasn't admitted he was wrong... (The Breakfast Club 2019, 1:38)

Yusef and Korey responded by addressing the criminalization of black men upon highlighting that the 1989 advertisement was taken out only two weeks after the incident and before a trial even took place, pointing to Trump's (and others) views that the Central Park Five "look like rapists:"

- (9) Yusef: ...you know what's crazy about that, right? This ad... this ad was taken out 2 weeks after we were accused. We weren't even, we weren't, we hadn't even gone to trial yet, and so they looked at us and said 'oh yeah Korey looks like... a rapist, Yusef looks like a rapist, Antron, Kevin, Raymond,' you know what I'm saying...?

Lenard McKelvey (known as Charlamagne tha God): What does a rapist look like? A black man?

Yusef: A black man, a black man. A person with this skin color, if they're accused, they're not, they're not accused, they're actually the culprit... and that's the biggest problem of the criminal justice system, they look at people and automatically cast judgement [...] you know what the real law is, the real law is white supremacy, white male dominance (The Breakfast Club 2019, 1:52)

In the discourse shown above, Yusef and Lenard are fighting against the ideology of what a rapist looks like (*a black man*) and they are highlighting the serious problem of the criminal

justice system in the US, including a strong statement by Salaam about the dominance of white supremacy (“the real law is white supremacy”).

Besides, Korey interpreted the advertisement as “a bounty” on the Central Park Five:

- (10) Salaam (addressing Korey): one day recently, you said, this right here [the ad] was Donald Trump placing a bounty on our heads (The Breakfast Club 2019, 6:15)

The lexical choice *bounty* further emphasizes the anti-populist ideologies that Trump was creating a serious threat and was very intentional about finding and killing the Central Park Five. Additional indications of threats, specifically threats toward Korey, are given by Salaam who references the horrific journalistic comments of Pat Buchanan. This represents populist discourse of someone who believes that the Central Park Five are a threat, and therefore issues death threats:

- (11) Pat Buchanan started writing about Korey in the papers... he said let’s take the eldest one and hang him from a tree in Central Park... (The Breakfast Club 2019, 2:47)

Moreover, in (12), we observe anti-populist discourse with Salaam’s use of the word *evil* to describe the manipulation and deception of Linda Fairstein and the others involved via the media:

- (12) You look at a person like Linda Fairstein, and you realize... she, Elizabeth Lederer, the officers that were involved, the media that that wrote the story in a way that made sure that the public opinion was swayed to make sure we got convicted, all of those people, were working for evil... (The Breakfast Club 2019, 32:07)

Salaam describes such deceptive words and actions as evil, thus discursively resisting the narrative of scapegoating and othering of the Central Park Five on the part of authorities and media presenting the case. Such opposition to right-wing populism can be viewed as anti-populist discourse, as defined in Section 1.2. Finally, in (13), we find a reference to discourse indicating a denial of Trump’s wrongdoings, mainly when Salaam addresses his conversations with others concerning the case:

- (13) To this day, I’m telling people about Donald Trump, and they’re like... ‘nah, he’s not like that’ (The Breakfast Club 2019, 30:00)

From this comment, we see that there continues to be a denial of Trump’s populist rhetoric and actions, a strategy used by many to support him.

4. Discussion and conclusion

Starting with Trump's 1989 advertisement, populist discursive strategies were evident (fearmongering, legitimation, and othering). We saw the construction of blacks as the 'Other' as well as the provoking of the fear of black people. We also observed evidence of odious ideologies with the lexical choice *hate* in the repeated instances of the proposition "I want to hate." Additionally, in claiming to protect the security of the common people, Trump called for *law and order*, specifically to bring back the death penalty.

In the 2016 interview, Trump remains on the side of the prosecutors and refuses to apologize for calling for the Central Park Five to be killed in his 1989 advertisement. He displays evasion by asking the interview the motivation for raising the issue and hesitation to answer directly. Trump maintains his position of "law and order" by appealing to prosecutors, and his refusal to apologize suggests that he believes that the Central Park Five are still the enemies.

In terms of anti-populism, I analyzed discourse from members of the Central Park Five in response to Trump's actions and rhetoric. A common theme from the first interview (with Yusef Salaam) was resistance against Trump's fearmongering and injustice-oriented practices and policies (e.g. *stop and frisk*). Salaam used active voice several times to emphasize the agency of Trump in committing the horrific actions and linguistic practices (e.g. "He did this to us; he said that he wanted to hate us"). Further, by referring to Emmett Till, Salaam underscores the seriousness and brutal, violent threats that the Central Park Five received. This was particularly in relation to Trump calling for the death penalty. Moreover, the lexical choice of *sick*, in reference to the type of justice that Trump and others were looking for, emphasizes Salaam's anti-populist perspective, one that resists fearmongering, fabricating enemies and threats, and using the Central Park Five as scapegoats (Wodak 2015).

In the final interview analyzed, a common theme, parallel to what was discussed above, was the criminalization and othering of black men (e.g. rapists look like black men) and the consequential scapegoating (black men are not accused, they are the culprit). We also saw a more general anti-populist and anti-racist view from Salaam when describing the criminal justice system ("that's the biggest problem of the criminal justice system, they look at people and automatically cast judgement [...] you know what the real law is, the real law is white supremacy, white male dominance"). Additionally, the lexical choice *bounty* underscores the perspective of the Central Park Five that the discourse used in Trump's advertisement was really a death threat to the Central Park Five. These threats are further specified as being against Korey Wise by exposing the journalistic discourse of Pat Buchanan, which is a reference

to explicitly racist discourse (“he said let’s take the eldest one and hang him from a tree in Central Park”). Overall, what the media and journalists did to deceive the public was characterized by Salaam as “working for evil,” a strong anti-populist lexical choice.

The present critical discourse analysis has begun to uncover both populist and anti-populist ideologies as manifested in discourse in the media regarding the case of the Central Park Five, primarily highlighting the populist (and, more specifically, racist) discourse of Donald Trump and the anti-populist talk of the Central Park Five themselves. We observed discursive strategies of fearmongering, legitimation, and evasion, among others, which revealed populist and racist ideologies exhibited by Donald Trump. Resistance discourse was also apparent by means of lexical choice, active voice, opposition to fearmongering, and anti-criminalization discourse. Future investigations would benefit from a more diverse data set in terms of resource (e.g. Tweets, online comments, additional news sources, etc.) and in terms of genre (e.g. everyday discourse). This will take us further in our commitment to promote social and political change as a part of critical discourse studies.

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