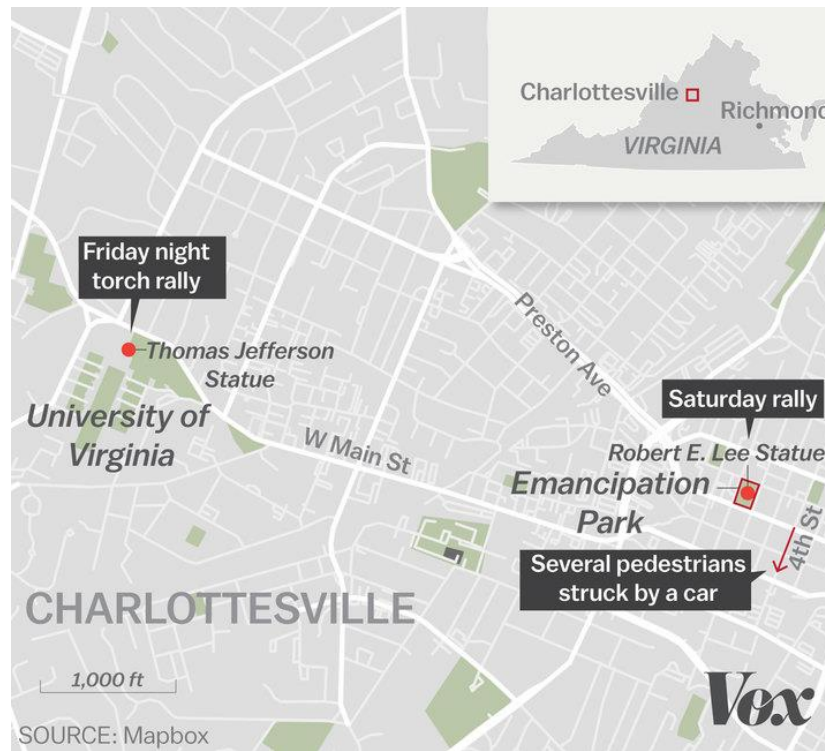
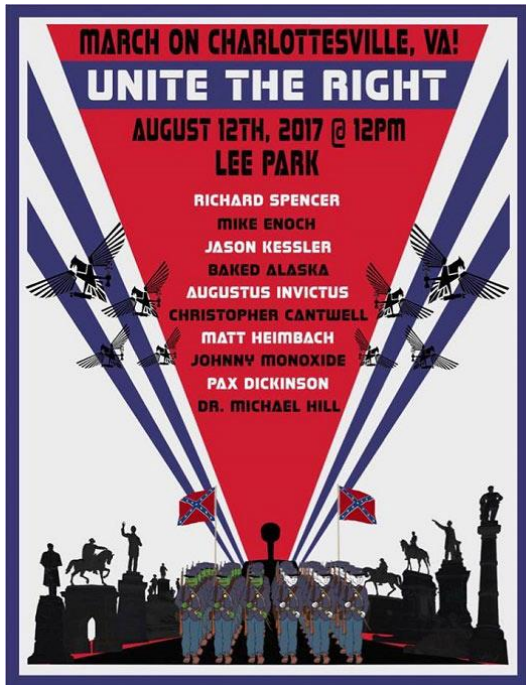


How Charlottesville, Virginia Became a Hashtag Unite the Right Rally - August 12, 2017

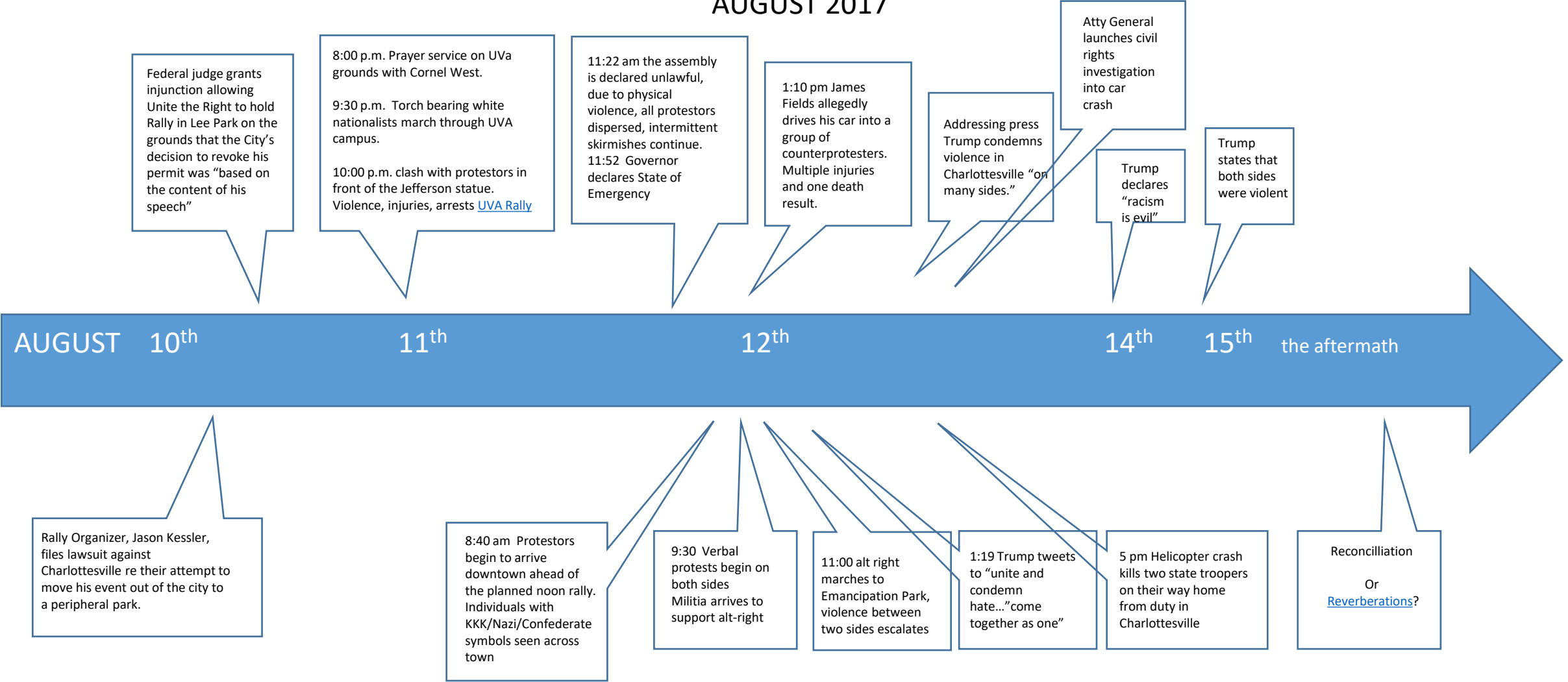


Diane Farineau
CONF 758
George Mason University



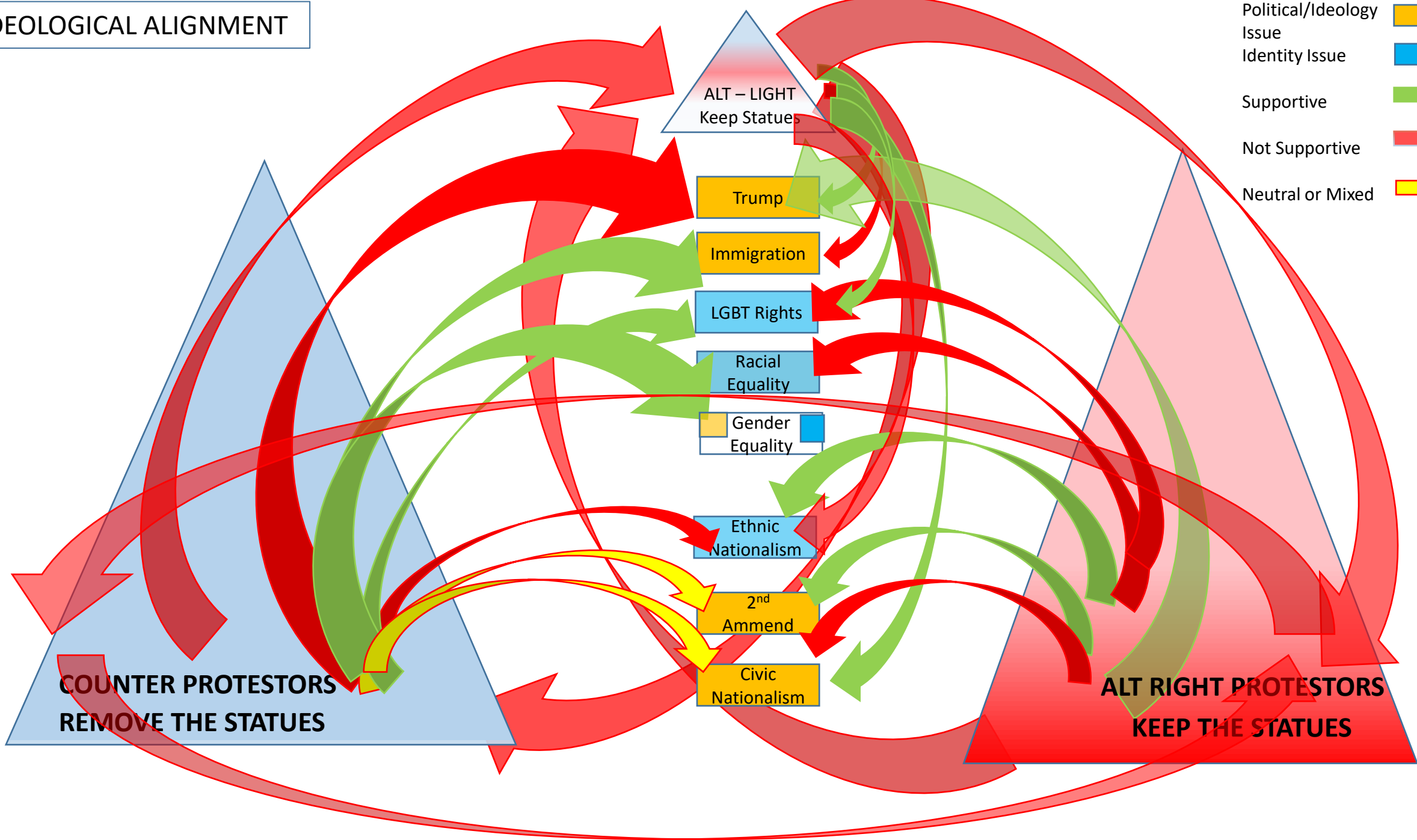
Charlottesville – Confederate Statue Conflict [Timeline](#)

AUGUST 2017



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IDEOLOGICAL ALIGNMENT



- Political/Ideology ■
- Issue ■
- Identity Issue ■
- Supportive ➔
- Not Supportive ➔
- Neutral or Mixed ➔

ALT - LIGHT
Keep Statues

Trump

Immigration

LGBT Rights

Racial
Equality

Gender
Equality

Ethnic
Nationalism

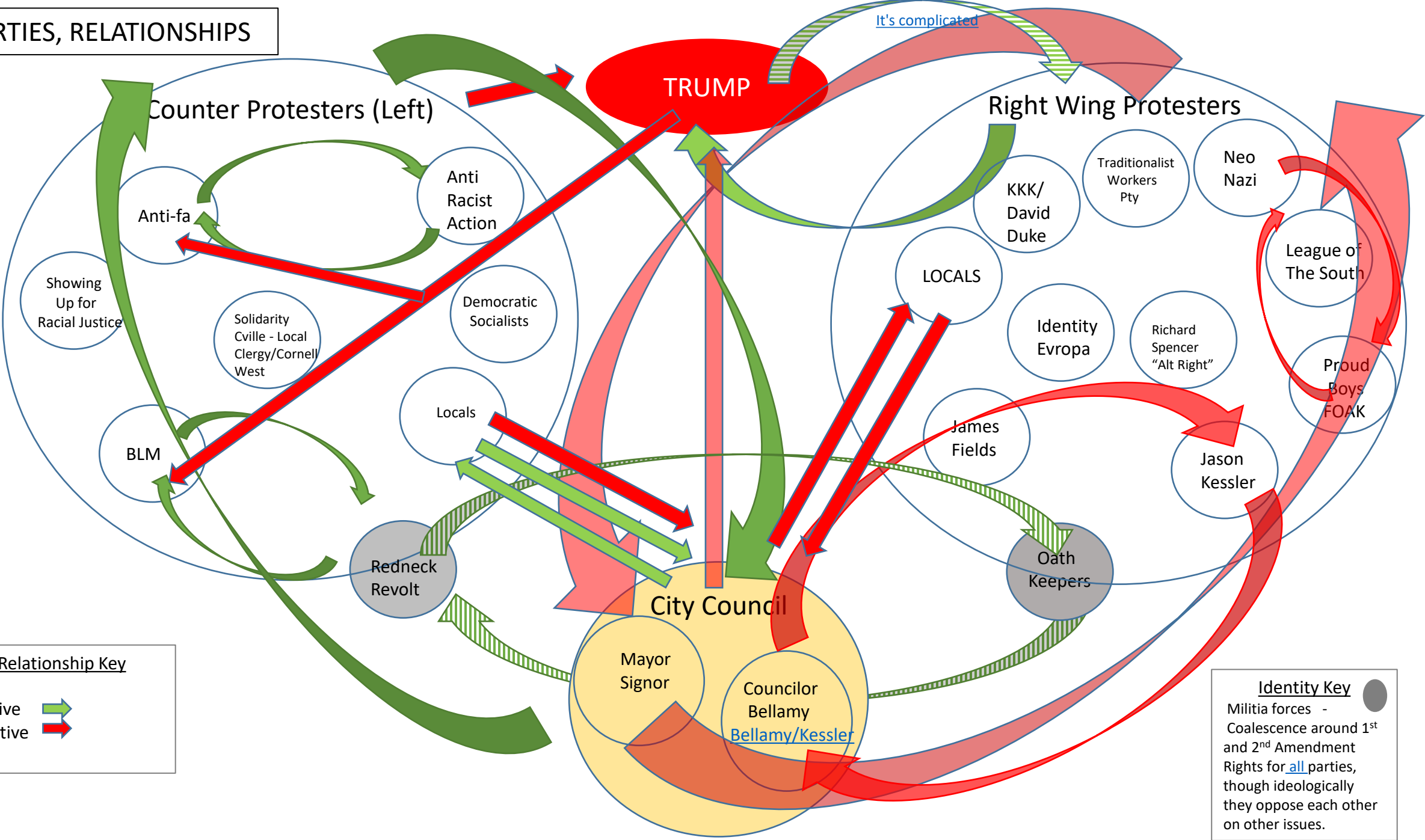
2nd
Ammend

Civic
Nationalism


**COUNTER PROTESTORS
REMOVE THE STATUES**


**ALT RIGHT PROTESTORS
KEEP THE STATUES**

PARTIES, RELATIONSHIPS




Relationship Key

Positive 

Negative 

Identity Key

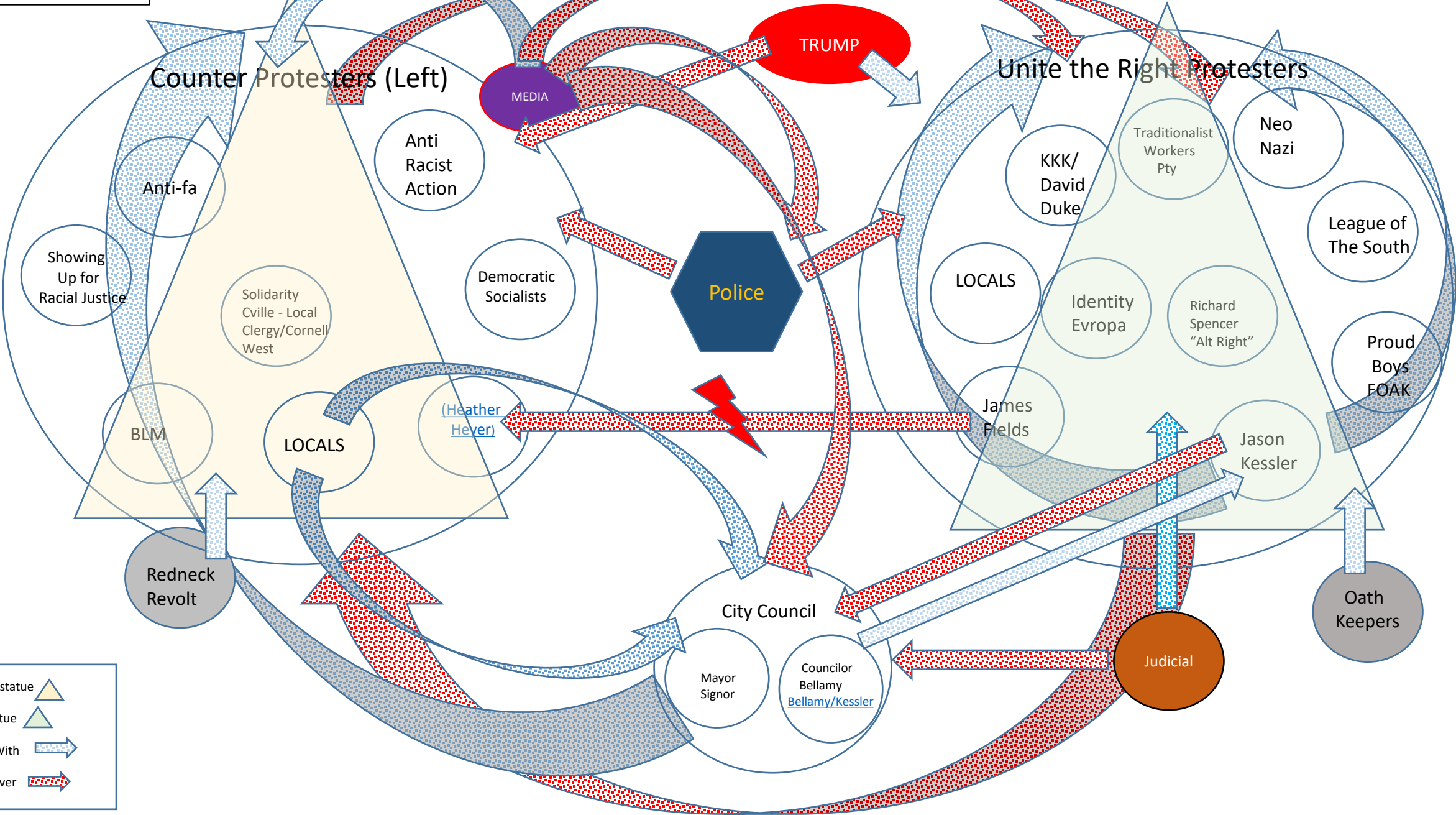
Militia forces - 

Coalescence around 1st and 2nd Amendment Rights for all parties, though ideologically they oppose each other on other issues.

It's complicated

Bellamy/Kessler

PARTIES & POWER



- Remove statue
- Keep statue
- Power With
- Power Over

Why has Charlottesville become ground zero for white supremacy in 2017? And why did this surprise many Charlottesville residents?
Answers are grounded in the legacy of structural and cultural racism, a disparity of wealth and a segregated city – all of which created a “bubble effect” for many white residents.

A tale of two cities.....

Shocked by the events of A12	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Largely liberal, 80% voted for Hilary Clinton• 70% Caucasian of total 45,000 city residents• Home of Thomas Jefferson and Monticello• The University #3 Best Public University, Nine private high schools• White residents w/Bachelors or higher degree (40-44%)• Births to white teenage mothers 5%• Median home price \$281,000• Average Income \$63,918• 13th on Forbes’ list of wealthiest cities in America• Vineyards, Steeplechases, Music Festivals, Country clubs• Superlatives -15 Best places to live in the US and Happiest City in America

Post conflict narrative.....

“A12 violence was imported by outsiders”
“Not *our* Charlottesville”
“Not an ongoing issue, business as usual....”

Not shocked by the events of A12	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20% African American• Second highest cost of living (behind No.Va)• Poverty rate is 26-30%• 6% African American enrollment at UVA• Thomas Jefferson’s complicated history (in spite of his vision for progressive enlightenment he could not build his University without slave labor.)• African American residents w/Bachelors or higher (10-14%)• Births to African American teenage mothers 15%• 20% poverty rate in African American Neighborhoods• African Americans in Charlottesville have suffered from city planner’s gentrification <u>efforts</u> since the Civil War when it was a <u>predominantly</u> African American city with thriving businesses and culture.

Post conflict narrative.....

“Structural, cultural and direct violence has always been part of the African American experience here”
“This IS *our* Charlottesville and the fact that **YOU** cannot see that is a problem for us”

DOCUMENTATION (Individual Slides have references and some additional notes as well)

Slides 2 and 3 outline a piece of the TIMELINE that lead up to the rally in Charlottesville on August 12th. (A12) The decision to discuss the presence of Confederate statues and the possibility of their removal from public parks resulted in lines of division being drawn in the year leading up to the Rally. The A12 rally was not the first, rather it was the most violent in a [series](#) of protests about the statue issue.

Slide 4 identifies some of the issue alignment among groups involved in the conflict. This graphic does not identify all of the connections, but rather a very broad representation of some of the differences and commonalities illustrating that while all groups were able to align on the issue of statue retention or removal, they might not otherwise affiliate. Specifically, individuals affiliating with some Alt Light groups are anti-racist, in theory, at least. Similarly, the issues of First and Second amendment rights crossed both groups. The yellow arrows, in the case of Second Amendment rights identify a mix of support/lack of support (rather than neutrality).

Slide 5 identifies positive and negative relationships. In this case, parties who were actively involved in the conflict on A12 had very polarized feelings about one another, hence I have not identified neutrality. While Redneck Revolt, an armed militia, does not support Oath Keepers, another armed militia, they were both present on A12 to support the right of the two respected sides to protest.

You will note the presence of positive and negative arrows between left leaning locals and city council. A number of citizens who supported removal of the statues were very upset with City Council for granting the permit to Unite the Right organizer Jason Kessler in the first place. This anger has continued and a group of citizens has petitioned to have the entire City Council overturned.

Slide 6 illustrates the parties and power relationships.

Begin with City Council, the origination of the conflict. City Council granted a permit to Jason Kessler to hold a rally in Lee Park. Council later changed their minds and attempted to have the location for his rally moved to a more remote location, but Kessler filed suit (in conjunction with the ACLU) claiming the motivation to relocate was based on denial of his right to free speech. The decision was upheld. City Council therefore, gave Kessler the power to demonstrate in downtown Charlottesville.

Moving counter clockwise

Jason Kessler is a Charlottesville native and alt right blogger who ran for City Council but was defeated by liberal Wes Bellamy. The experience resulted in a personal [feud](#). Kessler issued invitations to the [parties](#) you see in that circle (not comprehensive). While not are frequent bedfellows (e.g. the Proud Boys are anti-Nazi), representing both a broad and a narrow spectrum of conservative viewpoints, they amassed their power the removal of the Confederate statues.

Their protest was over before it began on August 12th, as violence between the broke out prior to the official commencement time, a State of Emergency was declared by the Governor and the police dispersed the crowd.

Subsequent conflict between parties ensued over the next few hours, culminating with James Fields driving his car into a crowd of counter protestors, injuring dozens and killing Heather Heyer (see link on map).

Trump issued a series of tweets demonstrating an equivocation about the violence demonstrated by “both sides” which fueled the alt right demonstrators and angered liberals.

[Media](#) coverage was overwhelming, spreading rapidly across the entire world. There was largely positive media condemning the racist element of the conflict. There was ensuing negative media about the perception of police disengagement with the protestors, overall, and there was also negative media about City Council’s management of the logistics of the protest.