

The Presence of Hate & the Perception of Others

Number of white nationalist groups active in the U.S. in 2017: **100**

In 2018: **148**

Times by which the number of terrorist attacks by far-right perpetrators in the U.S. rose between 2016 and 2017: **4**

Percentage increase in attacks by far-right groups in Europe over the same period: **43%**

Percentage increase in anti-Semitic incidents in the US between 2015 and 2018: **99%**

Number of Confederate monuments in public spaces in the U.S.: **780**

Number of Confederate monuments removed from public spaces since 2015: **114**

Approximate ratio of immigrants to non-immigrants, as perceived by Americans: **1/3**

The actual approximate ratio of immigrants to non-immigrants in the U.S.: **1/10**

Percentage of American whites who think that white people benefit a great deal or a fair amount from advantages that black people do not have: **46%**

Percentage of Americans who say it is more common now than prior to 2016 to express racist or racially insensitive views: **65%**

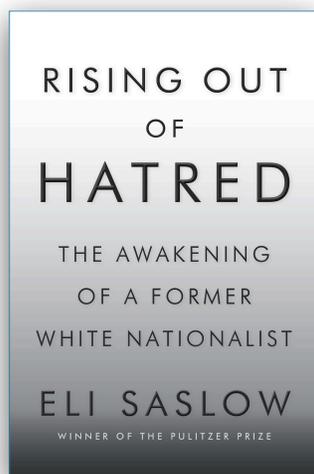
Percentage who say it is more acceptable: **45%**

Percentage of Americans who believe that immigrants present a burden on the country: **34%**

Percentage increase in reported hate crimes in the U.S. in 2013: **17%**

Years in a row that these numbers have risen: **3**

stats linked to sources in online guide:
collegereads.cofc.edu



About the Book

Derek Black grew up at the epicenter of white nationalism. His father founded Stormfront, the largest racist community on the Internet. His godfather, David Duke, was a KKK Grand Wizard. Then he went to college. Derek had been home-schooled by his parents, steeped in the culture of white supremacy, and he had rarely encountered diverse perspectives or direct outrage against his beliefs. At New College of Florida, he continued to broadcast his radio show in secret each morning, living a double life until a classmate uncovered his identity and sent an email to the entire school. The ensuing uproar overtook one of the most liberal colleges in the country. But as Derek started to form meaningful relationships at New College, he also started to question the science, history, and prejudices behind his worldview. In *Rising Out of Hatred*, with great empathy and narrative verve, Eli Saslow asks what Derek's story can tell us about America's increasingly divided nature. [adapted from [publisher website](#)]

Relating to *Rising Out of Hatred*

- ✦ Derek's friend Juan reflects that "For me, the whole point of going to college was letting go of all my hang-ups and assumptions and just meeting people who were different." If you had to describe the "whole point" of your motivations for attending College beyond academic pursuits and career preparation, what would that be?
- ✦ Relationships with others—often created across differences of race, gender, sexuality, and ideology—are central to *Rising out of Hatred*. Reflect upon a relationship of your own that navigated similarly complex territory. How did these relationships inspire personal growth?
- ✦ What makes you most concerned about the current state of our national politics when it comes to lived experiences of race and identity? What makes you most hopeful?
- ✦ Some might argue that Saslow's narrative is anti-Trump. Others might argue that he merely reports how many white nationalists felt empowered by Trump's election. And still others might argue that his account simply identifies how a fringe element in the US has hijacked the political system for their own gain. What role do you think Trump has played in the rise of white nationalist sentiments in America?

Engaging *Rising Out of Hatred*

- ✦ *Rising Out of Hatred* can seem like a book of extremes with a clear divide between hateful, racist ideologies driven by white supremacy on the one hand, and an ethic of love, empathy, and diversity on the other. But Derek's story is rarely so simple. Focusing on these more complicated aspects of Derek's story, which did you find most compelling or troubling, and why?
- ✦ Matthew, who becomes one of Derek's closest friends, finds himself able to relate to Derek by noting that "in some ways, he just has way bigger versions of the same hang-ups we all have," and that the tendency to "define oneself against the other" is a natural human tendency. Do you agree with how Matthew rationalizes his choice to approach Derek with compassion and respect in this case?
- ✦ In the book's introduction, Saslow writes that Derek's story reveals how susceptible the U.S. is to white nationalist and racist beliefs. But, he concludes, Derek's momentous transformation also suggests a more positive pathway forward. After reading Derek's story, do you find yourself as optimistic as Saslow when you arrive at the book's final scene? Why or why not?
- ✦ A recurring theme in *Rising Out of Hatred* relates to the relationship between words and actions. Where in Saslow's account did you find this theme to be most pronounced and significant?

About the Author

Eli Saslow reveals the human stories behind the most divisive issues of our time. Saslow won a 2014 Pulitzer Prize in Explanatory Reporting for a series of stories about food stamps and food insecurity. His stories in *The Washington Post* have been recognized with a George Polk Award, a PEN Literary Award, a James Beard Award, and other honors. Saslow's first book, *Ten Letters: The Stories Americans Tell Their President*, examined President Obama's daily habit of reading ten random letters from Americans. Saslow is a longtime staff writer for *The Washington Post*, and he has reported for 42 states and six countries. A 2004 graduate of Syracuse University, he now lives in Portland, Oregon, with his wife and three children. [adapted from [author website](#)]

