

# Modern Racism: How Patriot Front Utilizes Internet Presence to Recruit Members Nationwide

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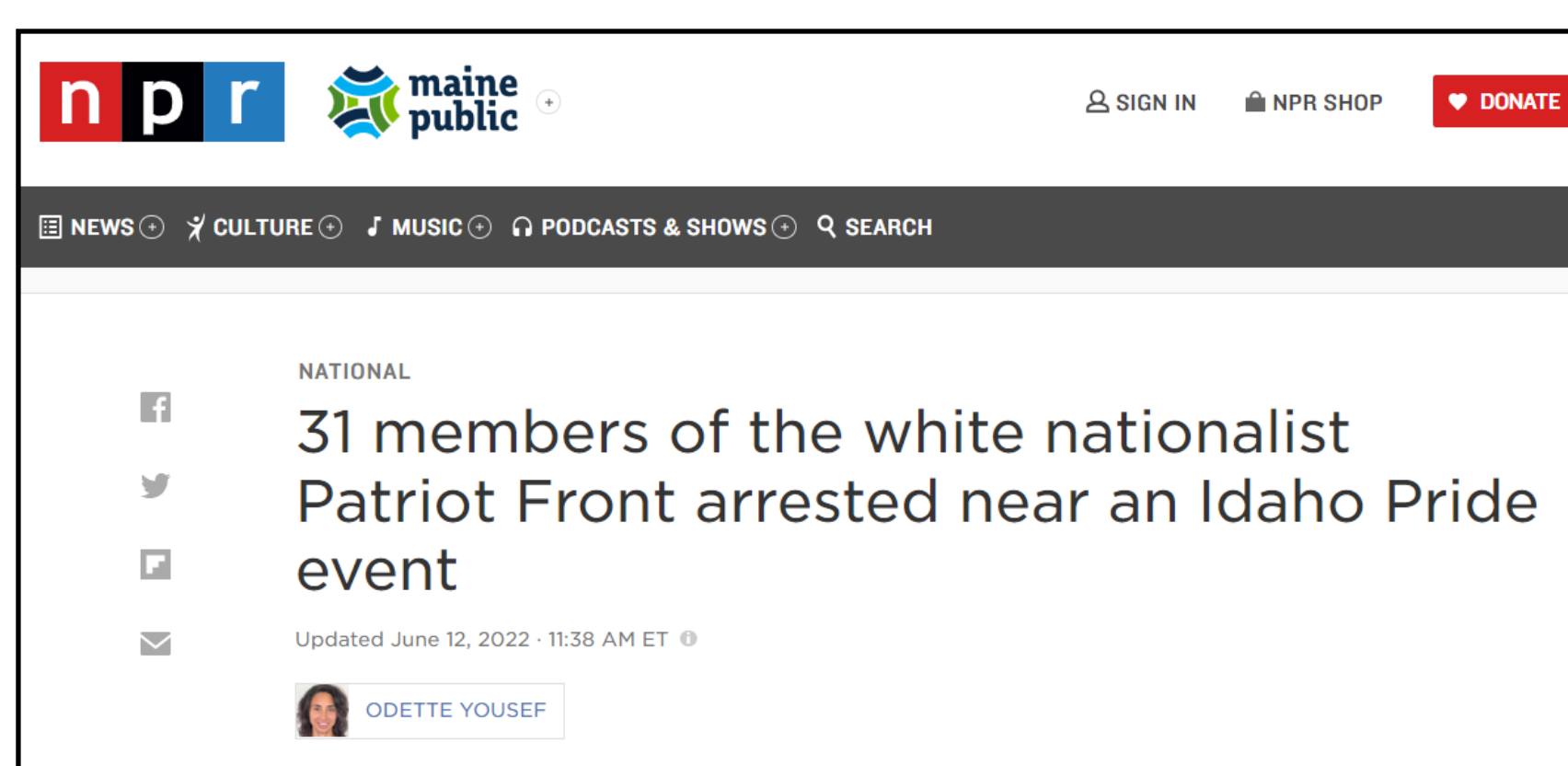
## INTRODUCTION

### How do hate groups recruit members?

- Protests/Public demonstrations
- Having an online presence

### Organizing Modern Racism

- Use of technology/online presence
- “Education, participation, invocation, indictment” (McNamee 2010)



- Key word choices: “White Nationalist” “Heritage” “Cultural independence”



### Patriot Front

- White supremacist group
- Founded in 2017 in Texas by Thomas Rousseau
- 188% increase in white supremacy propaganda in 2020, 80% from Patriot Front (Anti-Defamation League 2020)

## METHODOLOGY

### Google Trends

- First, I investigate Google search interest in “Patriot Front” and “Reclaim America”
- I mapped Google search interest nationally and with reference to major protest events organized by Patriot Front

### Website Traffic

- Second, I examine site traffic for Patriotfront.us which is the webpage hosted by Patriot Front

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Framing Theory

- Framing theory highlights the presentation and assignment of meaning to a cause that resonates with the beliefs, feelings, and desires of prospective members (Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988; Phadke 2018)

- Organizations such as Patriot Front frame grievances by using language, narratives, and symbols that align with the views of recruits

### Resonance of Frames and Protests

- Frames resonate because a segment of people find them convincing and familiar (McCammon 2013; McDonnell 2017)
- Based on the theory, Patriot Front uses slogans such as “Reclaim America” to align with the worldviews of potential members
- Witnessing or learning of Patriot Front activism may lead to interest and pursuit of joining



## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### Key Insights

- Activism typically leads to greater online presence
  - Protests increase search interest for Patriot Front
- ### Implications

- Hate groups have adapted alongside the internet
- Legal authorities must begin to focus on fighting online organizing by white supremacist groups
- Racism and white supremacy evolve with society

## RESULTS

- Relationship between protests and online presence
- Protests/demonstrations typically increase Google searches for “Patriot Front” and “Reclaim America”
- Increase in activism, regardless of location, and increased website traffic

