



## 1.1 Dog whistle politics

### Key building blocks

The most important insight is that powerful elites use racism to achieve their economic agenda.

This requires that you understand:

- The role of government in creating **shared** prosperity (often referred to as New Deal liberalism), and hostility toward this from powerful elites
- Dog whistle politics as a way to mobilize racial resentment while pretending to honor racial equality

Sample questions	Potential answers
GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN CREATING SHARED PROSPERITY: THE NEW DEAL	
<p>1. The video mentions three key economic roles for government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulating corporations</li> <li>• Creating ladders of upward mobility</li> <li>• Ensuring economic winners pay their fair share</li> </ul> <p>What are some examples of each of these important government duties?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulating corporations: workplace safety laws, ensuring a level playing field for union organizing, and laws protecting the environment</li> <li>• Ladders of upward mobility: good schools, home loans, affordable universities, access to health care</li> <li>• Economic winners pay their fair share: corporate taxes, higher individual tax rates on the wealthy</li> </ul>

2. Goldwater wanted to return the government to mainly working for the wealthy. Why might the wealthy oppose the New Deal economic roles taken on by government?

- Regulating corporations: the wealthy often own and/or run the corporations and want to maximize corporate profit, even if this comes at the expense of workers and the environment
- Ladders of upward mobility: the 1% often don't need the protections of government—they don't need strong unions, good public schools, affordable healthcare, or a clean environment for all. Their wealth typically allows them to buy what they need for themselves and their families
- Pay their fair share: the wealthy often oppose paying taxes, especially when they tell themselves they made it on their own and feel they owe little to the rest of society

#### DOG WHISTLE POLITICS AS A WAY TO MOBILIZE RACIAL RESENTMENT WHILE SEEMING TO HONOR RACIAL EQUALITY

1. The journalist Robert Novak describes the civil rights movement as a “racial crisis.” From whose perspective? Why did they see it this way?

From the point of view of White people, especially in the South. Their world, in which White people were obviously the dominant race, was being challenged as unjust and immoral. Some could see the justice of the civil rights protests. Many could not

2. Why didn't Goldwater simply straight-up endorse White supremacy as a campaign strategy?

Because the civil rights movement was succeeding. It was upending the previous racial order—including by making naked endorsements of White supremacy seem backward and immoral. By the mid-1960s, no politician on the national stage, and increasingly not even in the South, could say plainly they supported White supremacy

3. So how did Goldwater both take advantage of rising White

He stoked racial resentment using code. The code allowed him to oppose civil rights, for

<p>anxiety, and yet not violate the new prohibition on plain support for White supremacy?</p>	<p>instance by denouncing civil rights demonstrators as threatening law and order. And at the same time, he could pretend he wasn't talking about racial justice at all, just about crime.</p>
<p>4. Can you recall how the video defines "dog whistle politics"? What is the role of code in dog whistle politics?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dog Whistle Politics: "It allows politicians to promote social hatreds, especially but not only racism, while pretending they honor equality"</li> <li>• The code allows the politicians to promote social hatreds, for instance by talking about "thugs" or "welfare queens" or "illegals." And then the code offers them cover, and allows the politicians to deny that they are promoting racism, and to claim instead that they are not racist at all.</li> </ul>
<p>5. The definition talks about politicians promoting "social hatreds." Can you think of examples beyond racism?</p> <p>Have you heard dog whistles that trigger stereotypes about gender? Or that seem designed to ignite fear toward transgender people? How about regarding immigrants? Or different religions?</p>	

### Dog whistles mentioned

- Law and order