



BIOGRAPHY

Christian Picciolini is an award-winning television producer, a public speaker, author, peace advocate, and a former violent extremist. His life's work since disengaging from extremism bears witness to an ongoing and profound need to atone for a grisly past and urgency to make something of his time on this planet by contributing to the greater good.

After leaving the violent hate movement he helped create during his youth, he began the painstaking process of rebuilding his life and making amends. While working for IBM, Christian earned a degree in international relations from DePaul University and later began his own global media and counter-extremism consulting firm.

He currently leads the Free Radicals Project, a global network of extremism preventionists who are helping people exit hate movements and other violence-based ideologies around the globe.

FACTOIDS

NAME: Picciolini is pronounced PEACH-O-LEE-NEE (like a peach!)

HOME: Chicago, IL USA

AGE: 45

QUICK FACTS:

- **Author**, *BREAKING HATE: Confronting the New Culture of Extremism* (Hachette, 2020) and *WHITE AMERICAN YOUTH: My Descent into America's Most Violent Hate Movement—and How I Got Out* (Hachette, 2018).
- **Founder**, **FREE RADICALS PROJECT**: Christian founded the anti-hate nonprofit in 2017.
- Christian premiered his documentary series, *Breaking Hate*, on MSNBC in August 2018. He has personally helped over 300 people disengage from violent extremism from all over the world. He continues to work with people from all backgrounds and walks of life.
- **Emmy Award Winner, 2016**: Christian won a Regional Chicago/Midwest Emmy Award for producing and directing a PSA called, "There is life after hate."
- Christian is a **TEDx speaker** (Denver, 2017), and has spoken all over the globe, in some of the world's most prestigious institutions.

In 2016, Christian won an Emmy Award for his role directing and producing an anti-hate advertising campaign aimed at helping youth disengage from white-supremacist groups. He has worked as an adjunct professor at the college level and is a frequent commentator on national news.

Christian's 2018 memoir, *WHITE AMERICAN YOUTH*, details his involvement and eventual exit from the early American white-supremacist skinhead movement. His second book, *BREAKING HATE: CONFRONTING THE NEW CULTURE OF EXTREMISM* is published by Hachette Books in 2020 and showcases his disengagement process.

PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

- * MSNBC 'Breaking Hate' * CBS 60 Minutes * Face the Nation * CNN * Time Magazine * NPR * CNN International *
- * Showtime's 'Dark Net' * The Politics of Hate (documentary) * CNN Tech * BBC * Times of Israel * Wall Street Journal *
- * VICE * DemocracyNow! * Full Frontal w/ Samantha Bee * CBS Evening News w/ Scott Pelley *
- * 'I Love You, America!' w/ Sarah Silverman * NowThis! * Upworthy * BEME * Chicago Magazine * Adam Carolla Show * Salon *
- * Reveal on NPR * Newsweek * Business Insider * Chicago Tonight * NY Times * Washington Post * CSPAN2 Book TV *
- * 360 w/ Anderson Cooper * USA Today * Vox * Al Jazeera America * Glenn Beck *

HIGHLIGHTS

- * Author, *BREAKING HATE: Confronting the New Culture of Extremism* (Hachette, 2020) and *WHITE AMERICAN YOUTH* (Hachette, 2018) *
- * Emmy Award winner (2016) * TEDxMileHigh speaker (2016) * Geneva Peace Talk at United Nations Genève (Geneva, Switzerland) *
- * U.S. Congressional Testimony (2019) * Speaker at global events hosted by the U.S. Department of State, White House/National Security Council, U.S. Department of Justice, FBI, U.S. Embassies * UNCHARTED: The Berkeley Festival of Ideas *
- * Summit Against Violent Extremism (Dublin, Ireland) * West Point Military Academy keynote speaker *
- * Featured in his MSNBC documentary series 'Breaking Hate' (2018) | Showtime 'Dark Net' | 'The Politics of Hate' documentary *

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BREAKING HATE

CONFRONTING THE NEW CULTURE OF EXTREMISM

DESCRIPTION

A stunning exploration of how to heal a nation reeling from extremist violence from a viral TED speaker and onetime white-supremacist leader who now work as a peace activist disengaging hateful radicals.

At fourteen, Christian Picciolini was recruited by a now notorious skinhead leader and encouraged to fight with the movement to "protect the white race from extinction." Soon, he had become an expert in racist ideology, a neo-Nazi terror who roamed the neighborhood, quick to throw fists. By the time he left the movement years later and was able to see clearly for the first time, Picciolini found that his life was in shambles and the nation around him was coming apart.

Told with startling intimacy and compassion, *BREAKING HATE* is the inside story of how extremists have taken the reins of our political discourse and a guide to how everyday Americans can win it back. The forces pushing to polarize and radicalize us are many--from fake news to coded language to Russian trolls to a White House that often aims to inflame rather than to heal. Increasingly, the information with which we construct our world views is segregated by social media stars and advertisers with murky motives to validate our worst impulses. As Picciolini demonstrates, our modern world systematically normalizes extremism in such a way that we grow blind to it, only recognizing it in the wake of tragedy. Drawing on profiles of extremists that he works to free from violent ideology and on his own painful history leading and then escaping from an infamous neo-Nazi group, *BREAKING HATE* explains why terrorism and violence have come to characterize our daily lives and why that doesn't need to be the case.

KEY SELLING POINTS

MASSIVELY IN-DEMAND

With white-supremacist rallies — from Charlottesville to Berkeley to Boston — drawing the ire of the nation, Picciolini has emerged as the subject matter expert who can unpack the dangerous psychology of the white power movement, appearing on 'I Love You, America' with Sarah Silverman, CBS 60 Minutes and Face the Nation, NPR's Here & Now, and Samantha Bee's show 'Full Frontal.'

OUTSPOKEN LIGHTNING ROD AGAINST TRUMP

Picciolini minces no words in discussing those who aid racist violence. When Trump withdrew a Department of Homeland Security grant that had been awarded to Picciolini's nonprofit to help fight hate groups, he criticized the president and his criticism was covered extensively by the New York Times, Huffington Post, and CBS.

CREATOR AND STAR OF MSNBC DOCUMENTARY

MSNBC aired Picciolini's documentary special 'Breaking Hate' where he disengages white supremacists and grapples with the legacy of the white-power movement in America.

MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA-SAVVY AUTHOR

Picciolini has worked in media for over a decade, as evidenced by his Emmy win and his recent media campaigns for Free Radicals Project.

BREAKING HATE

CONFRONTING THE
NEW CULTURE OF EXTREMISM

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI

Author of *White American Youth*

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