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**Beyond the Fringe? Radicalisation within the American Far-Right**

**Stephen Vertigans,**

**Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen**

**Abstract**

The concentration within America upon terrorism and Muslims overlooks recent acts of political violence undertaken by the indigenous extreme far right. In this article the rise of the militia and Christian Identity movement in America is explored and the social processes and agents behind the radicalisation of individuals and groups and emergence of political violence examined. It is argued that while the 1995 Oklahoma bombing led to the movement's growing popularity being curtailed, many of the factors behind its rise remain. By exploring the broad range of issues behind the emergence of the contemporary movement the popular perception that support for related groups has been mobilised by materialism is challenged. In some aspects underlying reasons for mobilisation have been exasperated both by the perceived failure of George W. Bush to deliver electoral promises that were supported within the far right movement and conversely the Democrat Party's success in the 2006 mid term elections. Consequently, the home grown "enemy within" remains a threat.

**Introduction**

The nature of terrorism committed by Americans has been transformed during the last 35 years. There has been a shift from left wing revolutionary ideologies associated with the Weather Underground and Symbionese Liberation Army to the militia and racialist movement that emerged during the 1980s and the Pro life activists associated with the Army of God. Militia, patriot and racialist groups within America attracted widespread attention with the bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma by Timothy McVeigh in 1995 that killed 168 people. Although McVeigh is not considered to have been part of a militia group, he was part of the wider movement, sharing discourse, attitudes and behavioural patterns. The selective sharing of ideas and practices and lack of formal ties between McVeigh and militia groups, or unofficial citizens' armies, is reflective of the loose, fluid, interrelationships that exist within the movement and makes distinct classifications difficult. As Van Dyke and Soule stress,

> to separate the patriot/militia movement from other conservative organizations is difficult, as members of different right-wing organizations sometimes work together or attend conferences and rallies together… . On top of this, patriot/militia ideology reflects multiple themes from other conservative organizations and movements (e.g. confrontational anti-abortion, pro-gun, white racist, far right libertarian, and so on).[1]

Estimates about the number of members of militias and Christian Identity, arguably the two largest, frequently interchangeable, strands within the movement vary. In part this is because the secretive nature of individuals' involvement obstructs accessible information and many members belong to more than one group. By 1996, there was at least 858 militia related groups with an estimated membership between 25-50,000 people. The number of members belonging to Christian Identity churches, study groups and political organisations ranged from 2,000 to 50,000.[2] There is however general agreement that the number of militias was most prominent in several midwestern and western states and support rose dramatically between 1993 and 1996. Perceptions were drawn that the government was corrupt, threatening individual freedoms that needed protecting in a manner that recalled the role of citizen soldiers during the American Revolution. The diverse spectrum of issues promoted by the groups and events that have contributed to broader support undermine the belief that materialism was the driving motivation behind the movement. In this paper, the broader movement is examined because it is argued that the reasons for the wider atmosphere of radicalisation help to explain both the emergence of groups and individuals who have emerged from within to undertake violent activity. By examining the social context and role of particular agents and experiences it is argued that a more comprehensive understanding of the growth of the far right, and its ongoing potential threat, can be understood.

**History of the Far Right**

Far right political discourse within America has a number of antecedents and as Petrosino has observed, could even be traced to the origins of white colonization. 'Colonial America linked Christianity to racial purity or Whiteness and heathenism with

racial impurity or non-Whiteness… racial superiority permeated American culture to the point where being American was synonymous with being White'.[3] When those perceptions began to be challenged, predecessors of the contemporary movement formed, beginning with the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner, who were to become better known as the 'Know-Nothings' due to their pledge to secrecy. The Know-Nothings formed out of nativism that stressed the rights of native-born white citizens. Bennett identifies their role in raising perceptions of 'real' American culture and the idealised impression of the country that ostracised 'un-American' behaviour and non Protestant immigrants, in particular the Irish Americans who were at that period the largest minority in the country.[4]

Changing patterns of immigration resulted in racist targets shifting to Jews and Italians in particular.[5] In 1865 the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) formed, developing a blend of racism, patriotism, religion and ritualism in a populist combination that attracted extensive support during different periods. For instance, its early popularity was based upon resentment following defeat in the Civil War and the subsequent freeing of slaves and control of the South by the Northern dominated federal government. The KKK declared its primary objective to be the 'maintenance of the supremacy of the White Race in this Republic'[6] and used terror through arson, whippings, torture, mutilations and lynchings to try and achieve this. Following a political compromise in 1876, protection for blacks in the South was effectively ended and states introduced policies that resulted in legally enforced segregation of blacks and whites. As a consequence the purpose of the KKK was significantly undermined until 1915 when the organisation underwent a revival. Through emphasising 'Americanism' and 'Christian Civilization' and opposing 'alien' groups and cultures, the KKK was positioned as the defender of the 'American

way of life,' meaning 'Anglo-Saxon civilization.' This approach quickly attracted considerable support across the country. The issues connected with the experiences and concerns of communities who had faced crises within farming that created tremendous financial difficulties for farmers, agricultural workers and related businesses. Other people were fearful about the impact of large-scale immigration into cities and the subsequent loss of jobs for whites and dilution of American culture. Membership reached a peak of five million in 1925 but this quickly diminished to an estimated 35,000 by 1930 following a scandal involving one of the main leaders which undermined the organisation's moral stance.

The second revival of the KKK happened during the 1960s in reaction to the emergence of the civil rights movement and associated challenges to segregation, imposition of integrated education and opposition to egalitarian reforms. Membership of the KKK rose, although to a much lower estimate of 55,000. Terror tactics were applied to try scare black people, white activists and supporters from pursuing civil rights and to deter the federal government from pushing through the reforms. However the excessive use of violence and multitude of gruesome killings caused public revulsion and led to a congressional investigation into the Klan.[7] The investigation exposed terrorist activities and financial irregularities because, during the 1920s, leading members were benefiting financially. As a consequence of the revulsion, criminal prosecutions and profiteering the KKK again lost influence which it has not recovered, despite the recent resurgence in far right politics. Instead, more modern, and less anachronistic, groups have emerged. These include the ultraconservative but non-violent John Birch Society from 1958, initially to challenge the rise of communism, and groups like the Minutemen during the 1960s, the Posse Comitatus from the mid 1970s and the Order or Secret Brotherhood in

the early 1980s. During this period, some racist politicians and the adaptation of patriot and far right rhetoric within the Republican Party have been publicly mainstreamed.[8] Collectively these individuals and groups have contributed to a climate of anti-government behaviour and racialist and anti-Semitic rhetoric. Today there are militias, Christian Patriot and neo-Nazi paramilitaries or a combination thereof. Bennett describes the movement as a

> shifting mixture of survivalist loners and self-styled constitutional experts preaching against federal tyranny, of neo-Nazi theorists and Christian Identity ministers, of young white-supremacist toughs and their adult mentors, of fragmentary Klan chapters and fierce tax resisters, of angry travellers on the gun-show circuit and manipulators of the far-Right radio, video and Internet world.[9]

**Movement's Ideologies and Motivations**

Unsurprisingly such a multitude of groups and influences mean that the movement is far from united with divisions over the emphasis on religion, racism, anti-Semitism, levels of cooperation with federal government, tactics, use of violence,[10] separatism and personality clashes. But the groups are disenchanted with mainstream political parties and politicians who they consider do not represent the interests of 'real' Americans. Reference is frequently drawn to the Constitution and the idea of a 'land of the free, the home of the brave' in support of their points. In many instances groups argue that the Constitution is being subverted by the government or question the validity of a number of constitutional amendments. This is particularly noticeable for laws that

guarantee full citizenship for everyone born or naturalised in the U.S. and provide civil rights for minorities.[11]  The changes are widely considered to threaten the inalienable rights of white Americans.  The groups share a number of similar beliefs, including patriotism and the love of country, concern over federal government corruption and the lack of protection for individuals.  They are opposed to increasing restraints upon individualism and threats to basic freedoms as part of greater control for federal government and the role of the United States within international relations.[12]  These similarities are sufficiently widely held to enable the groups to be classified as belonging to a broad movement.

The more militant groups are to varying degrees opposed to the possibilities of a 'New World Order' taking over American sovereignty, anti-gun legislation, and seek to protect the Constitution from Government encroachment, to 'wake up' Americans to what is happening to the country[13] and prepare for conflict through military training and/or survivalist preparations.  Many members are armed but their commitment is mostly restricted to activities like survival training, target practice, recruitment, rallies and marching.  However they are willing to take up arms in defence[14] of what they consider to be their inalienable rights in the tradition of the American Revolution.  For some members their beliefs are implemented and they adopt different lifestyles, refusing to acknowledge national government, pay taxes or use a social security number, destroy marriage licenses and birth certificates, drive without legal license plates or driver's license and live 'off the grid' independently without connection to water, gas and electricity.

The majority of groups hold right wing Christian values, most notably the Christian Identity movement that many militias and racialist groups like the Aryan Nations subscribe to. Christian Identity is heavily influenced by the Anglo-Israelism movement that emerged in Britain during the mid-nineteenth century and argued that the lost tribes of Israel were Anglo-Saxon. This interpretation was used to promote the 'divine right [of Anglo-Saxons] to dominate and colonize the world'.[15] Within the United States, Anglo-Israelism has been adopted to provide theological justification for white supremacy and by extension racism and in particular anti-Semitism.[16] For these Christians, religion provides the interpretative lens through which to view American society and inspires political activism. Racialism and anti-Semitism are prominent across the broad movement although not universal. There are for example some black and Jewish members within militia groups[17] but these are exceptions. Berlot and Lyons suggest that extreme views are 'woven into Patriot narrative, but in many cases it is unconscious and unintentional. In other cases far right activists hide their … views to recruit from, or take over, Patriot and militia groups.'[18] And as Dees notes, many groups downplay racism and anti-Semitism to appeal to a wider audience who may be deterred from associating with an obviously radical ideology.[19] Instead, there is a concentration upon peoples' concerns and sources of anger like taxation, interest rates, regulation of individual rights, immigration, international affairs, affirmative action, rising crime and drug use. Discussions about these factors often identify benefactors of reforms and causal agents for high bank charges, government policies, loss of jobs, murder rates etc., namely Jews, blacks and immigrants. In other words, prejudice within America has become subtler, and focus on biological differences has shifted to government programmes that are seen to favour minority groups and enforce integration.[20] Other groups are more overtly racist, arguing that racism is an innate instinct that cannot be

eradicated. Consequently rather than trying to force integration, some argue separation is essential to ensure the purity of the white race.

For many members, anti-Semitism and sedition have become openly interwoven, notably in the long standing belief about the role of the Zionist Occupational Government (or ZOG). This is considered to be a Jewish organised conspiracy that controls the United Nations, U.S. federal government, financial systems and media. Gallagher comments that 'the uses of religion on the contemporary far right to legitimize racism, anti-Semitism, tax-resistance, other anti-government actions and even terrorist violence shows that religion is widely accepted as a powerful legitimating force.'[21] The use of religion is exemplified by Gordon Kahl, one of the first martyrs of the contemporary far right, who remarked, 'we are engaged in a struggle to the death between the people of the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan'.[22] And this sacralisation of politics contributes to absolutism within the movement. Idealised transcendence and emphasis on the mythical past provide behavioural and attitudinal parameters that prohibit compromise or negotiation.

**Explaining the American Far Right**

To understand why people joined the newly formed groups during the 1980s and 1990s, it is essential to gain an insight into the societal transformations that were occurring at that time. Crothers points out that 'globalization and economies of scale increasingly led to the transformation of the American farming industry from family–to corporate–owned enterprises. This, in turn, led many family farmers to search for explanations for their loss: militia and similar groups provided answers.'[23] Freilich and

Pridemore's research discovered that militia groups were more numerous in states that had experienced higher levels of farm job losses.[24]  However the appeal of far right groups is not restricted to the rural poor or indeed to the poor generally.  Tapia identified that militia and patriot members in New Mexico 'were not economically deprived.'[25] This is supported by Freilich's study that discovered social integration and economic prosperity were not related to the number of groups.[26]  However other studies[27] have emphasised that there is a relationship between economic deprivation and the growth of the militia movement.

Disagreement about the generic trends is likely to be a consequence of the diverse range of supporters that prevents over-generalisation.  For example, urban working class support has been long recognised but today there is a growing realisation about the involvement of people from the middle class within both rural and urban areas. Many of these people have had different experiences from working class members but have also been adversely affected by deteriorating income levels and reducing employment opportunities at a time when many have encountered competition for jobs from blacks who had previously been concentrated within working class occupations.[28]  The American manufacturing base has also been severely reduced by competition from developing nations at a time when immigration into the United States from many of those countries occurred throughout the 1970s and 1980s.  Immigration from South and South East Asia and Central America has contributed to the resentment held by many white Americans, whose contact with the migrants is often infrequent.[29]  Impressions[30] about other ethnic groups have been further ignited by perceptions of 'preferential treatment' that many whites consider apply for minorities.  Sniderman and Piazza suggest, 'preferential treatment excites resentment and anger that other issues of race do not.'[31]

The growth of the movement in the midst of the Clinton Presidency connects with the greater emphasis upon inclusion for racial, ethnic, gender and sexual groups and prominence of Afro-Americans, Jews, Hispanics and women within the administration[32] which when allied to Clinton's sexual indiscretions, further fuelled the anger and resentment many were feeling.

It is therefore important to avoid over emphasising materialist motivations. For instance, Bob Martin, a member of Aryan Nations, reflects diverse rationale for belonging to the movement when discussing the factors that influenced his involvement, including the economic situation, 'a lot of anti-white legislation' and 'how unfair whites were being treated' in employment and schools. At school he 'was made to be submissive or subject to the majority [blacks]. I knew that wasn't right… . I also watched the city that I grew up in go from the shopping centre of the county … to a slide down into the slums as the blacks became more powerful and had more babies.'[33] The range of support is reflected in Dobratz and Shanks-Meile's research which found that 'the movement tends to be working class but also cuts across classes considerably.'[34] This is supported by earlier studies[35] of the Klan that identified working class, middle class, professional and intelligentsia members and the socio-economic backgrounds of some influential members of the broader movement. For example, William Pierce was formerly a college physics professor, Verne Jay Merrell, an Identity Christian convicted of conspiracy, theft and possession had been employed as a nuclear engineer, and Richard Butler, a central figure within Aryan Nations and wider racialist network until his death in 2004, was previously an aerospace engineer. Concentrating upon materialist factors neglects this wider appeal of groups and the significance of non economic factors that are also central to the mobilisation of far right support. For example, legislation to

restrict hunting and rural land usage was seen to threaten the lifestyles of millions of people and challenged perceptions of the American 'way of life'. In order to understand the breadth of the movement, there is therefore a requirement to examine the context of perceived cultural, economic and political threats[36] that contributed to feelings of alienation and particular events having deep resonance within sections of the American population that intensified opposition and ultimately radicalisation.

**Processes of Radicalisation**

Routes into right wing extremism are frequently multifarious and often involve individuals gradually becoming radicalised as they encounter progressively more militant groups and discourse.

Images of the American Revolution, role of armed citizens, individual freedoms as part of a culture immersed with individualism generally, and Christian and white supremacy are prominent within American society generally and the far right movement in particular. As Mulloy has noted with respect to the militias, identifying the use of history and the values associated with the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights are central to understanding the groups' societal and worldviews.[37] Large numbers of people exposed to these interpretations may become part of the movement but do not become involved in political violence. Some members however undergo a process of further radicalisation that result in them becoming convinced that only violence will awaken the rest of white America to challenge government actions and Zionist conspiracies. These members have often belonged to militias and racialist groups or are part of the broader movement and progress from holding racist, anti-Zionist and

anti-government views to undertaking actions to change the situation. For example, Kronenwetter has detailed how two of the leading 'martyrs', Bob Mathews of the Order (discussed below) and Gordon Kahl of the Posse Comitatus belonged to the John Birch Society before developing more radical views.[38] Mathews and another member of The Order, Ardie McBrearty, were also part of the tax protest movement.[39] Timothy McVeigh's opposition to tax levels was also noticeable during his radicalisation. In some respects this is unsurprising. Within the movement, prominent leaders and groups regularly promote and legitimise criminal behaviour like tax evasion and gun crimes and in particular, the use of violence through various socialising agencies. When these messages are allied to interpretations of American history that are also advanced to justify the use of arms when its legacy is under threat, then a climate is being created in which people become radicalised, in some instances unintentionally. It is therefore within these contexts that people interpret particular events that contribute to their processes of radicalisation.

The individual and collective identities of people who undertake violent activities on behalf of groups or far right ideologies have tended to be influenced by similar factors to those that attract people to the wider movement discussed earlier. Support for the militia and racialist movement has also been influenced by deteriorating economic conditions, particularly in communities reliant upon manufacturing, rising cheap foreign labour and produce, downsizing, relocations and job insecurity.[40] Kronenwetter alludes to the recruitment of 'people who are desperate and lonely. They [far right groups] like to reach them when they are particularly vulnerable', feel victimized and are susceptible to campaigns that identify scapegoats for their woes.[41] However in a manner similar to the preceding discussion about broader support across failing agricultural and

manufacturing bases, there is a danger of over concentrating upon reductionist

explanations about people who are considered to be lonely, consumed by self-hatred or

emotionally and economically deprived. Certainly many people have become radicalised

as a consequence of deteriorating economic conditions but many more people encounter

the same financial constraints and uncertainties but do not join far right groups. Nor does

the chronology of events always neatly follow the commentary. For instance the

economic crisis of the 1980s did not immediately result in a large-scale increase in militia

which occurred during the early 1990s. To reiterate though this is not to ignore, as Van

Dyke and Soule's study shows, a correlation between the decline in manufacturing and

farming opportunities and the number of militia groups within regions.[42] Instead this

suggests greater attention needs to be placed upon the factors that contribute to the

relationship including histories of violent protest within the respective areas, and the

impact of new rules for land usage, hunting restrictions and threatened gun laws etc.


Regular descriptions of convicted 'terrorists,' like McVeigh, Matthews and other

members of The Order, by former friends, family, colleagues and neighbours as decent,

ordinary people are also overlooked. For example, in the aftermath of the Oklahoma

attack, Michel and Herbeck discovered that neighbours of his family home were unable

to believe that 'the quiet, polite, unassuming Tim McVeigh could have had anything to

do with a terror bombing' while a court witness described him as 'a warm, decent,

friendly person.' [43] Mathews' background is also illuminating as he did not match the

stereotypes for right wing militants. He was married with an adopted son, lived next door

to his mother and had a mistress with whom he had a child shortly before his final actions.

In many respects he was an integral, respected member of the community. And while

there were some members within 'The Order' who fit within the stereotype of embittered

loners, dropouts or losers, Flynn and Gerhardt point out that the majority of people had 'abandoned careers, families, and lives filled with promise to follow the cause' and most 'were law-abiding folk who, as their frustration with America's course grew harder to handle, gradually, almost casually, slipped into the world of extremism'.[44]

The movement's broader support base across a range of people who have different socio-economic backgrounds, experiences and abilities indicates that many members are not motivated by materialist factors nor encountering deep personal problems. Instead it is possible to notice a defence of an American way of life and the preservation of its heritage, even amongst the groups who are primarily seen to be playing war games and enjoy the symbols, appearance and authority that their involvement is considered to bring to them.

Within the context of this reference framework, recent events are interpreted and in some instances contribute to the radicalisation of individuals into violent militancy. Vietnam has been frequently cited in the reasons behind people joining left wing militant groups in the late 1960s and 1970s. Conversely it has also been a factor in the mobilisation of people to the far right. As Dees comments, the war 'left millions angry at government and unsure of America's role in the world.'[45] The outcome of the war, desired by the 'red' groups, left many other Americans perturbed with the country's perceived superiority undermined and led to them questioning the validity of wars that were not directly in defence of United States' interests and the nature of international politics. This contributed to some Americans looking more inwardly, at defending their interests rather than those of other nations who were to become increasingly viewed as part of an international conspiracy.

A number of events have also been more explicitly linked to the growth of militancy and contributed to the radicalisation of people who subsequently undertook terror activity. One of the most influential was what has become known as the Ruby Ridge incident involving the Weaver family and federal agents. The incident was to provide legitimacy for concerns about the intentions of the American government against individual freedoms. The Weaver family were part of the far right Christian movement and had chosen to live in a remote setting in Idaho. In 1992 Randy Weaver, the father, supplied an undercover government official from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms with an illegal gun and was arrested. After refusing to work undercover for the Bureau, he was arrested and released on bail. Weaver subsequently failed to appear in court. When the federal marshals came to serve the warrant for Weaver's arrest, a gun fight ensued which resulted in the death of his son, dog and a U.S. Deputy Marshall. After refusing to surrender Weaver and Kevin Harris, a friend, were shot and his wife killed. For the militia and patriot movement, the incident became a tremendous mobilising event that was recognised as the 'first real catalyst in the birth of today's militia movement'[46] and brought together a range of militants with different, often conflicting, perspectives. John Bargerter, a member of the Army of Israel group is reflective of many within the movement, stating that until that point he had not understood

> the kind of fight we were up against—the kind of people we were dealing
> with and how true it really was that our government was corrupt to the point
> of no return. That [the incident] changed my life completely… . That
> changed the whole movement when Gordon Kahl got murdered and Robert

Matthews. But see, those were men that got killed. That's expected…. But when a woman and child got killed, that changed everybody's way of thinking.[47]

In addition to the Ruby Ridge standoff, the militia movement was also energised by the attack in 1993 by federal agents that resulted in the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas catching fire. Seventy six group members were killed, including seventeen children aged under eight years old who became martyrs within the far right movement.[48] Again, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms was involved and as at Ruby Ridge, the conflict was instigated by attempting to serve a warrant. In this instance, the warrant was to be served against the Branch Davidian sect, an offshoot of Seventh-Day Adventist Church, led by Vernon Dean Howell, who changed his name to David Koresh in 1991. Koresh believed he had a divine mission that offered salvation to followers at a time when the world was prophesised to end. After being tipped off about the warrant, the sect prepared for the initial raid which resulted in a gun fight and the death of four federal agents and several Davidians. A second federal attack followed nearly two months later and resulted in the fatal fire, attracting considerable publicity.

Following so quickly after Ruby Ridge, the attack at Waco created tremendous consternation. Sections of the movement, who did not necessarily agree with the Davidians' religious interpretations or lifestyle, were further radicalised by what they considered to be more evidence of the government's intention to disarm people and distanciation from citizens' constitutional rights.[49] As militia member, Brad Alpert, claimed 'The Waco siege really did it for me. The Feds came after these people to get their guns. Who would be next? I knew there was something deeply wrong in

America.'[50] This concern about gun control was further heightened by the Brady Bill which was passed in 1993 and became effective in 1994.[51] Collectively these changes were viewed by many Americans, including the National Rifle Association, who had not previously proactively reacted to the two preceding incidents, to be further signs of the government's desire to ban private ownership of weapons and bureaucratic restraints upon individual liberties. And because the imposed government restrictions were, to a certain extent, the fulfilment of Louis Beam and William Pierce's prophecies, their radical views were given added credibility.[52] These factors are noticeable within explanations for Timothy McVeigh's radicalisation and decision to blow up the Murrah Building on the second anniversary of the Waco incident. John Smith, a psychiatrist who examined McVeigh, believed that while there were a number of disturbing events that influenced his actions 'if there had been no Waco, I don't believe that Tim would have bombed the Murrah Building.'[53] Additionally, Serrano suggests that the Brady Bill and the belief that this was part of a wider attempt to disarm the American people allied to the actions at Ruby Ridge and Waco made McVeigh angry and consider that only violence could challenge the growing federal government and force it to return freedoms to the individual. [54]

It is important to contextualise the centrality of weapons and guns in particular. For many Americans argue, as Crothers reports, 'that US law gives them the right to organize, purchase and use firearms, and enforce the law against agents who behave unconstitutionally.'[55] The use of guns is therefore viewed as a constitutional right that can be traced to the nation's foundation and role of citizen armies. Consequently to take away or threaten that right is viewed as a challenge against the individual, the constitution and the legacy of the American Revolution. And, as Crothers also notes, the

threat to gun ownership needs to be considered alongside the growing fear amongst far right groups about the New World Order: without weapons ordinary citizens would be unable to defend themselves or the constitution against the international threat within the country.[56]


**Socialising Militants**


Within the movement, there is considerable emphasis placed upon recruitment through inter-generational socialisation and the spread of racialist, anti-Semitic, anti-government, pro gun and individual freedom messages. Barkun points out that in the 1990s, the movement was being led by a third generation who had been influenced by their predecessors and were younger, 'better educated, more polished and more adroit in shaping their messages to a sceptical audience.'[57] Use of the media is particularly noticeable with the need for independent methods of communication inspired by the widespread belief that the mainstream media is controlled by Jews. The mainstream media reports on group activities and individuals but is considered opposed to far right ideologies and driven by pro-government and Zionist interests. Groups use radio channels, with talk shows and so called 'hate' jocks prominent,[58] cable stations, newsletters, educational seminars, websites, and emails to initiate contact, provide information, maintain support, mobilise opposition and sell merchandise like publications, clothes and associated paraphernalia. These relatively new forms of communication enable individuals within the same region and across the country to make contact with like-minded people, develop networks, express their opinions and attract support in an effective, fast and expansive manner that is difficult to control.

Such methods of communication have contributed to what Norman Olson, the former leader of the Michigan militia, considered as 'a phenomenon of informed Americans now waking up.[59] This emphasis on 'waking up Americans' is found within a lot of far right publications and justification for actions. Recent technological developments offer contemporary right wing groups considerably greater communicative potential than previous generations of militants. Today, supporters are able both to actively participate within groups or are 'virtually' involved within a passive, complicit capacity maintained through information technology.[60]

Recruitment also occurs through gun shows, training camps, rallies[61] and churches associated with Christian Identity. Timothy McVeigh was one notable attendee at gun shows where he often sold weapons. People attend these settings because they already subscribe to aspects of the far right ideologies, namely interest in guns and/or racialist religion. Consequently progression into the movement would be a gradual step and not a radical shift in individual consciousness. Singular has argued that television evangelicals, while being portrayed as sincere and decent people, have contributed to the climate of hatred through being 'bitterly judgmental, exclusive, and divisive'.[62] Prisons have also been targeted by racialist groups who look to recruit white inmates on their release who may be attracted to radical discourse that helps explain their predicament. This is exemplified by the Aryan Nations who described white convicts as 'prisoners of war' who are held by ZOG and their approach is considered to have been fairly successful in attracting new support during the 1990s.[63]

Books, pamphlets, videos and dvds are also popular methods of communicating and attracting support while a glance at some links within leading racialist groups'

websites identifies the prominence of white movement music, espousing racist lyrics. At present the highest profiled group is Prussian Blue, a duet consisting of two thirteen year old sisters. The most notorious book to be written within the movement is *The Turner Diaries* written by William Pierce under the pseudonym Andrew MacDonald.[64] The novel narrates a series of events beginning with the criminalisation of the ownership of firearms that results in a race war that ends in an all-white America. Details about how to assassinate government officials, leading personalities for propaganda purposes and attacking strategic government, industrial and commercial sites are included. Since publication, the book has sold over 200,000 copies and has been linked to the actions of both Bob Matthews and Timothy McVeigh who was an enthusiastic supporter of the book.[65] Both were also influenced by newspaper coverage of crises in America. McVeigh is also reported to have collected videotapes depicting the Waco tragedy. The Oklahoma bombing has striking similarities to an account within the novel of an attack on a federal building by white supremacists and a similar ammonium nitrate fertiliser and fuel oil mixture in a truck bomb were used. And radicals have tried to use the popular media to try to attract support or justify their actions. For example, in the aftermath of the attack, Michel and Herbeck highlight how McVeigh was concerned that he would not be given a fair hearing, and sought to use the media to try to explain his reasons for committing the attack.[66]

Although examples of parents being instrumental in the radicalisation of members of the existing generation of far right and who committed acts of terrorism are limited, there is considerable evidence that the recruitment of a new generation, especially children, is pursued through a number of sources. Comics and children's original stories and adaptations of classics, expressing segregation and attacking blacks, Jew and

homosexuals have been published by groups like National Vanguard, while recruitment campaigns are regularly directed at schools.[67]  The Aryan Nations, under the leadership of Richard Butler, established its own school for white children.  In the school children were taught the "four 'R's: readin', ritin', rithmetic', and race".[68]  Families who choose to 'live off the grid' will often either teach their children themselves or will establish small learning centres with like-minded neighbours rather than risk them being taught opposing views.  Instead children are taught basic learning skills and their parents' or wider networks' interpretations of history and American society.  In other words, parents will seek to teach their children their own norms and values.  Within American society more generally, children are taught about history that is embedded with stories that emphasise the violent roots of the nation, armed struggle by citizens, rebellion, the role of the early white settlers and the importance of Christian religion and the long standing significance of multi-culturalism is overlooked: aspects that the far right groups connect into.[69]

    The role of peers has been instrumental within a range of different groups commencing with the Posse Comitatus during the 1970s and 1980s.  Informal networks of friendships have provided the framework for both recruitment and solidarity, attracting members both for ideological purposes and by the social bonds that exist within the groups.  Despite the vast amount of resources and impressive array of technologies utilised in the pursuit of attracting support, as Frielich and Pridemore (2005: 530) suggest, 'the most effective recruitment technique is via informal social networks with friends recruiting friends.'[70]  And as with other militant groups, peers also provided deep social bondings.  For instance, Juergensmeyer refers to the 'friendship between Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols… was so tight and time-consuming that Nichol's wife became jealous.'[71]

Across the far right, there has been considered variation within socialising processes. Members have been mobilised by a range of socialising agents like family, friends, religious organisation and work relationships found within the movement. Many people become militants gradually. Mathews' radicalisation is indicative of many, highlighting convoluted routes into extremism. Kronenwetter observed, he was influenced around the ages of eleven and twelve by the John Birch Society and a fear of communism and, by extension, international threats and conspiracies.[72] Through informal associations, he shared views and experiences and became interested in firearms and survivalism. He also began to read right wing material, was influenced by the literature and tax protests of the Arizona patriot Marvin Cooley and was convicted for tax related misdemeanour charges. The inactivity of other groups, at a time when Mathews became increasingly concerned about the role of the government and impact of rising group consciousness and rights of blacks, women and gays, contributed to his motivation to undertake actions to safeguard the nation for America's white children who he believed would be discriminated against.[73] Similar altruistic reasoning was also provided by McVeigh when explaining that the Oklahoma attack was not 'for personal gain… . I did it for the larger good.'[74]

**Far Right Radicalisation in the Future**

The potential threat within the movement seems to have diminished since the 1995 Oklahoma bombing. Most militia and patriot groups were shocked by the bombing and quickly sought to condemn and distance themselves from the attack. However the movement was damaged by association and has become under greater government, media

and general public scrutiny. Far right groups have also been weakened by the legal actions undertaken by the Southern Poverty Law Centre on behalf of clients who have been victims of racist attacks.[75] A number of cases have resulted in the victims receiving settlements and damages of millions of dollars which have bankrupted groups and severely hindered others. The presidency of George W. Bush was initially considered to be more sympathetic to right wing and religious issues, contributed to a strengthening of republican policies that connect with the militia and patriot movement and has inflamed the far right considerably less than the Clinton administration. There are also signs that federal agents have learnt from the Ruby Ridge and Waco incidents and have adopted less aggressive stances when dealing with potentially similar scenarios. As a consequence there have been less emotively mobilising events since the Murrah building bomb. There are also signs that American intelligence about, and infiltration of, the groups has improved markedly.

But while the far right movement has reduced in significance, this is not unusual within American history where, as the earlier discussion showed, levels of popularity have fluctuated. The history of the United States is also important for the far right, providing legitimacy and the source of the parameters for racial inequality, pride and the benchmark by which contemporary federal government actions and policies are to be measured and if necessary corrected. By comparison, the far right compares its relative marginalisation to earlier generations when groups like the KKK remained regionally and nationally politically influential amidst impressions of a bygone American golden age. During the 1950s the emphasis was upon communist threats and which Kaplan argues considered 'America as imperilled but intrinsically good…. The new world which would emerge [following defeat of the communists] would be nothing but a purified version of

the contemporary American state.'[76]  Instead the far right became marginalised and witnessed 'the processes of immigration, integration and eventually multiculturalism [which] gained momentum and the state was irrevocably hostile to the "remnant"of "real Americans."'[77]

Yet since the watershed period of the mid 1990s, many immoderate ideas have become incorporated within mainstream political ideologies and it is claimed that militants have penetrated the US military.[78]  The atmosphere in which more extreme discourse could flourish has been reinforced by the rhetoric of the Bush administration.[79]  But simultaneously, opinion polls and heavy defeats in the 2006 mid term elections show Bush's popularity steadily decreasing.  Republicans have also failed to deliver the conservative revolution they promised would diminish the role of government into an 'ownership society.'  Nor has there been a significant change in employment practice that would have undermined claims of discrimination against white people.  Opinion polls[80] throughout 2006 reflected growing unpopularity of Bush and the Republican Party over a range of issues including the war in Iraq, economic slowdown in some states, especially in the Midwest, property prices, healthcare costs, corruption, sex scandals and immigration.

The perceived failure of the Bush administration both within America and international affairs could help re-mobilise far right opposition.  For example, the crisis in Iraq is causing a re-evaluation of American international policy that is similar to reactions to the war in Vietnam which proved instrumental in changing perceptions within the far right about the role of America in global relations.  And the inability of government to deliver manifesto commitments, deliver reforms and overturn legislation like gay

marriages and right to abortion could further disillusion sections of the population and contribute to them deciding that only more radical alternatives could deliver the changes they consider are required.  This dissatisfaction has been long standing.  Even in the emotive aftermath of the Oklahoma bombing, studies showed that a significant minority of people across demographic categories expressed antigovernment sentiments support and feared encroaching threats to 'personal rights and freedoms'.[81]  Today concerns include the nature of international capitalism, consequences of globalisation within America, the decline of industry and federal policies that are restricting employment prospects for whites, illegal immigration and the rights of individuals, in particular restraint on the ownership and use of weapons connect with radical discourse.  Indeed polls and chat rooms have shown how many people who supported Bush in the past are now more critical and within the far right, there is considerable contempt.[82]  As a consequence of these different factors a threat from the far right remains.[83]  In 2005, the US Marshalls' Service chief inspector, Geoff Shank, highlighted both the challenge and the relative neglect of the threat when claiming that 'Not a lot of attention is being paid to this, because everyone is concerned about the guy in a turban.  But there are still plenty of angry, Midwestern white guys out there… .'[84]

Whilst the overwhelming majority of survivalists live remotely at least in part to restrict contact with state agencies, the long term consequences of children being socialised within anti-government families and communities has yet to be established.  And in reaction to the legal impositions, betrayals and prosecutions resulting from penetration from federal agents, some groups have become isolated cells, distanced from the broader hierarchical militia, harder to identify, trace and ultimately prevent from committing actions.  The Oklahoma bombing is widely considered to have been

detrimental to the far right movement and it seems unlikely that a group wanting to mobilise support will not have learnt from the contraction post 1995. This does not mean that groups will not commit terror attacks. There are signs that some groups have adopted more populist issues to promote and developed links with other groups, for example the anti-abortion movement, in the wake of Oklahoma. Ironically as Barkun points out, the outcome of the bombing has been to help the radical right to move 'toward the mainstream, supplying it with a kind of media access it never previously enjoyed and attributing to it a power about which it had only fantasized.'[85]

Although Barkun's assessment may have over emphasised the movement's levels of influence, there is little doubt that mainstreaming of some concepts and practices has occurred. Alongside this approach, a number of groups continue to accumulate vast reserves of weapons and some have been found guilty of planning terrorist attacks. For example, three anti-government militia members were arrested in 2002 for planning what officials believed was 'one of the most audacious domestic terrorist plots since the 1995 Oklahoma bombing'[86] while a white supremacist has recently been convicted of attempting to acquire nerve gas and plastic explosives[87]. In total, since 1995, the Southern Poverty Law Centre has identified sixty planned or thwarted terror attacks from white supremacists and militias[88]. And the multitude of militia, patriot and neo Nazi groups, amidst the fragmented far right movement, creates tremendous competition for recruiting members and contributes to rapid shifts in allegiances and discoursive transformations. Groups have to try to offer something different, linked to ideologies, group activities, location etc. Within this competitive arena, some groups may choose to emphasise the constraints imposed by other groups and opt for greater activism in a manner similar to Mathews and McVeigh.

**Conclusion**

Political extremism in the United States is a consequence of a multitude of factors that cannot simply be related to materialism. Racist and racialist rhetoric remains vehemently opposed to equality for different ethnic minorities, immigration and Jewish conspiracies with language and symbols utilised that can be traced throughout the history of the United States. Association with the past is also noticeable within the anti federal government stance adopted by militia and patriot groups who became prominent through the activities of 'martyrs' who subsequently become revered, in the 1980s and 1990s, in part to defend the rights of Americans and the constitution from the actions of the United States government. Historical frames of reference provide the parameters of acceptable levels of government penetration and individualism while also providing examples of racism, armed violence and rebellion that can help mobilise support. The far right is utilising the popular history of America that is disseminated within mainstream society.

The racialisation of politics and religion by prominent Republican politicians and leading religious figures and perceptions of declining morality associated most strongly with the Clinton administration and more recently the Republican Party also contributed to growing popularity. In other words, popular and political discourse allied to sexual and ethical behaviour of politicians and mainstream celebrities has contributed to a more radical climate within sections of the population who are also facing perceived restraints upon their behaviour. When economic concerns and feelings of restrictions upon opportunities for whites are added to this volatile mix of issues and environments, more people have become radicalised within the broad far right movement. These issues and

contexts are strengthening the rigidity of the discourse and further negating any likelihood of compromise.  And for a number of people within that movement, the process of radicalisation has ended in them undertaking acts of terrorism because their experiences led them to conclude such actions were justified.  Today, political, economic and social conditions continue to radicalise sections within the movement that is likely to result in further acts of political violence.

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**Notes**

[1] Van Dyke, N. and Soule, S. "Structural Social Change and the Mobilizing Effect of Threat: Explaining Levels of Patriot and Militia Organizing in the United States", *Social Problems*, 49/4 (2002), p.502.

[2] Discussed in Barkun, M. *Religion and the Racist Right: The Origins of the Christian Identity Movement* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), Crothers, L. "The Cultural Foundations of the Modern Militia", *New Political Science*. 24/2 (2002), and Hoffman, B. *Inside Terrorism* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1998).

[3] Petrosino, C. "Connecting the Past to the Future", *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 15/1 (1999), p.26.

[4] Bennett, D. *The Party of Fear: the American Far Right from Nativism to the Militia Movement*. 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage, 1995).

[5] For further detail see Bennett (note 4), Kronenwetter, M. *United They Hate: White Supremacist Groups in America* (New York: Walker & Company, 1992) and Sonder, B. *The Militia Movement* (New York: Franklin Watts, 2000).

[6] KKK quoted in Kronenwetter (note 5) p.25.

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[7] For further details see Kronenwetter (note 5) and Landau, E. 1993. *The White Power Movement: America's Racist Hate Group* (Brookfield, Connecticut: The Millbrook Press, 1993).

[8] Electoral politicians like George Wallace during the 1960s and early 1970s, David Duke in the 1980s and 1990s and to a lesser extent 'Christian Right' politicians like Pat Robertson and nationalist ultra-conservatives such as Pat Buchanan have attracted reasonable levels of democratic support and contributed to racism and patriotism becoming further entrenched within American populist politics. Utilising the racial divide for political gain has also been noticeable within recent Presidential campaigns by Reagan, Bush both Senior and Junior. For example, Diamond, S. *Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States* (New York: Guilford Press, 1995) and Guillory, F. 1992. "David Duke in Southern Context" in Rose, D. (ed) *The Emergence of David Duke and the Politics of Race* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1992) have focussed on the way that George Bush Senior played on white fears about black rapists and murderers and affirmative action and job losses. Some commentators have also referred to the reluctance of Reagan and Bush Senior to enforce existing civil rights laws.

[9] Bennett (note 4) p.429.

[10] For example, most militias tend to consider violence to be legitimate only when used for defensive purposes and there was widespread condemnation of the Oklahoma bombing. Discussed in Karl. J. *The Right to Bear Arms: The Rise of America's New Militias* (New York: Harper Paperbacks, 1995).

[11] For further details see Bushart, H., Craig, J. and Barnes, M. *Soldiers of God: White Supremacists and their Holy War for America* (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1998) and Sonder (note 5).

[12] For further details see Crothers (note 2), Telfair Sharpe, T. "The Identity Christian Movement: Ideology of Domestic Terrorism", *Journal of Black Studies* 30/4 (2000), and Van Dyke and Soule (note 1).

[13] Discussed by Mulloy, D. "Conversing with the Dead: The Militia Movement and American History," *Journal of American Studies* 38/3 (2004).

[14] John Trochmann co founder of the largest, influential Militia of Montana, describes the militia as being 'like a giant neighbourhood watch' (quoted in Karl (note 10) p.8).

[15] Zeskind, L. *The "Christian Identity" Movement: Analyzing its Theological Rationalization for Racist and Anti-Semitic Violence* (Atlanta: Center for Democratic Renewal, 1986), p.19.

[16] Further details can be found in Aho, J. *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), Barkun (note 2), Bushart et al (note 11), Dees, M. *Gathering Storm: America's Militia Threat* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), Dobratz, B. and Shanks-Meile, S. *The White Separatist Movement in the United States* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000), Kaplan, S. "Right Wing Violence in North America" in Bjørgo, T. (ed) *Terror from the Extreme Right* (London: Frank Cass, 1995) and Telfair Sharpe (note 12).

[17] Discussed in Kaplan (note 16) and Karl (note 10).

[18] Berlot, C. and Lyons, M. *Right-Wing Populism in America* (New York: The Guildford Press, 2000) p.296.

[19] Dees reference (note 16).

[20] Discussed by Kluegel, J. and Bobo, L. "Opposition to Race-Targeting", *American Sociological Review* 58 (1993) and Schuman, H., Steeh, C. and Bobo, L. *Racial Attitudes in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1985).

[21] Gallagher, E. "God and Country: Revolution as a Religious Imperative on the Radical Right", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9/3 (1997) p.76.

[22] Kahl is quoted in Corcoran, J. *Bitter Harvest: The Birth of Paramilitary Terrorism in the Heartland* (New York: Penguin, 1995) p.153.

[23] Crothers (note 2) p.230.

[24] Freilich, J and Pridemore, W. "A Re-assessment of State-level Covariates of Militia Groups", *Behavioural Sciences and Law* 23 (2005).

[25] Tapia, A. *Structural Response to Y2K* (Ph.D. Dissertation: Graduate School of the University of New Mexico, 2000) p.315.

[26] Freilich, J. *American Militias: State-level variation in militia activities*. (New York: FLB, 2003).

[27] For example, see Churchill, R. *The Highest and Holiest Duty of Freemen: Revolutionary libertarianism in American History* (Ph.D Dissertation, History Department: Rutgers University, 2001) and Van Dyke and Soule (note 1) for further details.

[28] Further details can be found in Berlet and Lyons (note 18), Ezekiel, R. *The Racist Mind: Portraits of American Neo-Nazis and Klansmen* (New York: Viking/Penguin, 1995) and Wellman, D. *Portraits of White Racism* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1993).

[29] Discussed by Gibson, J. *Warrior Dreams* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994).

[30] See for example Miller at al's (1993) study into perceptions of government, blacks and prejudice, reported in Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (note 16).

[31] Sniderman, P. and Piazza, T. *The Scar of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993) p.112.

[32] Points raised by Singular, S. *The Uncivil War: The Rise of Hate, Violence, and Terrorism in America* (Beverly Hills: New Millennium Press, 2001).

[33] Martin is in discussion with Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (note 16) p.24.

[34] Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (note 16) p.27. The study also found that a third of respondents mentioned belonged to the middle class (ibid.) p.269.

[35] For further details, see Goldberg, R. *Grassroots Resistance: Social Movements in Twentieth Century America* (Belmont: Wandsworth, 1991), Mintz, F. *The Liberty Lobby and the American Right: Race, Conspiracy, and Culture* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), Moore, L. *Citizen Klansmen* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), Vander Zanden, J. "The Klan Revival", *American Journal of Sociology* 65, (1960).

[36] For example Dees (note 16) argues that militia groups have tended to be more successful when recruiting middle and working classes who feel economically and politically threatened.

[37] Mulloy (note 13).

[38] Kronenwetter (note 5).

[39] Points raised by Levitas, D. *The Terrorist Next Door: The Militia Movement and the Radical Right* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2002).

[40] For further details see Dees (note 16) and Sonder (note 5).

[41] Kronenwetter (note 5) p.86.

[42] Van Dyke and Soule (note 1).

[43] Michel, L. and Herbeck, D. *American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing* (New York: Regan Books. 2001) p.xii and p.346 respectively.

[44] Flynn, K. and Gerhardt, G. *The Silent Brotherhood: Inside America's Racist Underground* (New York: The Free Press 1989) p.6.

[45] Dees (note 16) p.75.

[46] Sonder (note 5) p.45.

[47] Bargerter interviewed by Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (note 16) p.207.

[48] For further details see Crothers (note 2) and Levitas (note 39).

[49] Discussed in Berlot and Lyons (note 18).

[50] Alpert was interviewed by Karl (note 10) p.32.

[51] The Bill imposed a five day waiting period for people buying handguns and required enquiries into the purchaser's background. Some semiautomatic guns were banned shortly afterwards, discussed in Karl (note 10), Levitas (note 39).

[52] Point raised by Dees (note 16).

[53] Smith is quoted in Michel and Herbeck (note 43) p.289 who also report upon the tremendous anger that McVeigh felt whilst watching events unfold on television and noticeable intensified hatred for the government. McVeigh had visited the site earlier in the siege.

[54] Serrano, R. *One of Ours: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1998). However as Barkun (note 2) points out, there is also a suggestion that the timing was also influenced by the execution on that day of Richard Snell and 'martyr' for racially motivated murder.

[55] Crothers (note 2) p.228.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Barkun (note 2)

[58] Major concerns about the impact of talk shows were raised following the killing of the radio host, Alan Berg, by The Order. It is believed that the attack was a reaction to Berg's denunciation of the racialist movement. Following the death of Berg, there is greater awareness amongst both law enforcement agencies and far right groups about the potential effect that this provocative medium may have upon listeners. Kaplan, J. "The

Context of American Millenarian Revolutionary Theology: The Case of the 'Identity Christian' Church of Israel", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5/1 (1993) has identified the impact of television and radio talk shows in the 1980s which provided radical right wing ideologues with widespread media coverage that was otherwise being denied them.

[59] Olson is quoted during his testimony before Senate Subcommittee on the Judiciary. *The Militia Movement in the United States: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Terrorism, technology and Government Information.* 194th Congress, 1st session, 15 June, (1995).

[60] Discussed by Bushart et al. (note 11), Crothers (note 2), Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (note 16) and Mulloy (note 13).

[61] Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (note 16) point out that rallies are useful for attracting both support and media attention.

[62] Singular (note 32) p.42.

[63] Points raised by Bushart (note 11), Kronenwetter (note 5) and Landau (note 7).

[64] MacDonald, A. *The Turner Diaries* (Arlington, VA: The National Alliance/National Vanguard Books, 1985).

[65] For further details see Flynn and Gerhardt (note 44), Gallagher 1997 (note 21), Juergensmeyer, M. *Terror in the Mind of God* (London: University of California Press, 2003), Levitas (note 39), Michel and Herbeck (note 43).

[66] Michel and Herbeck (note 53).

[67] Points raised by Bushart et al. (note 11) and Potok, M. "The Year in Hate", *Southern Poverty Law Centre.* http://www.splcenter.org/intel/intelreport/article.jsp?aid=627 (2006).

[68] School aims are quoted in Singular (note 32) p.16.

[69] Points raised by Karl (note 10), Kronenwetter (note 5), Sonder (note 5).

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[70] Freilich and Pridemore (note 24) p.530.

[71] Juergensmeyer (note 65) p.206.

[72] Kronenwetter (note 5).

[73] Points raised by Flynn and Gerhardt (note 44) and Levitas (note 39).

[74] McVeigh is quoted in Michel and Herbeck (note 53) p.382.

[75] Discussed by Kaplan (note 16).

[76] Kaplan (note 16) p.87.

[77] Kaplan (ibid). Similar points are also raised by Bennett, D. *The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movement to the New Right in American History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

[78] Reported in Southern Poverty Law Center, "Extremists in the Military," *Intelligence Report*. Available at http://www.splcenter.org/intel/intelreport/article.jsp?aid=664.

[79] For example, despite widespread criticism of Bush amongst the far right, some support can still be found amidst a belief that the President does not 'really care about the Blacks and other non-Whites', although there was widespread anger about Bush's relations with Israel and Jews (www.stormfront.org.forum/showthread.php?t=333393&page=5) last accessed 8 November 2006.

[80] Further details about the election outcome and preceding polls can be found at BBC News, "US mid-terms: Key Issues," http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/5386106.stm (last accessed 8 November 2006), The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Bush Approval Falls to 30%," (15 March 2006), http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=271 (last accessed 6 November 2006), The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Beyond Red vs Blue: value Divides within the Party Coalitions" http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=946 (last accessed 6 November 2006),

Schifferes, S. "Domestic Issues Swing it for the Democrats," *BBC News*,

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/6126176.stm (last accessed 9 November 2006).

[81] Studies are discussed in Barkun (note 2), p.276.

[82] Within militant websites there is vitriolic denunciation of the President across a variety

of issues. For example, in the popular white nationalist website Stormfront.org, there

was a forum discussing support for Bush immediately prior to the mid term elections.

Members claimed that the 'Republicans had betrayed the whites'

(www.stormfront.org.forum/showthread.php?t=333393&page=6), and Bush 'was one of

the biggest sell-out traitors our race has ever seen'

(www.stormfront.org.forum/showthread.php?t=333393&page=5) who had allowed

millions of immigrants into America and 'advanced the globalist agenda more than any

of the traitors before him' and should be subjected to the death penalty

(www.stormfront.org.forum/showthread.php?t=333393&page=15). Members argued

against voting to avoid providing legitimacy to the government and while it was clear that

some voted in 2004 for Bush to prevent Kerry assuming power or to safeguard firearms

rights, it was felt that this was no longer sufficient reason to vote. With regard to the

latter point, one respondent suggested that 'if we keep supporting presidents for this sole

point only, it won't be long before we need our firearms to survive'

www.stormfront.org.forum/showthread.php?t=333393&page=3. All websites last

accessed on 9 November 2006.

[83] Between 2000 and 2005 the number of hate groups has increased by 33 per cent (Potok

note 67) although this is at least in part because of divisions and the loss of some

previously popular groups' credibility resulting in fractures and more new groups

forming in their place.

[84] Shank is quoted in Croft, S. *Culture, Crisis and America's War on Terror* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[85] Barkun (note 2) p.290.

[86] Gold, S. "Case Yields Chilling Signs of Domestic Terror Plot", *Los Angeles Times*. At http://www.commondreams.org/headlines04/0107-03.htm) (2004).

[87] Cases provided by Croft (note 84) and Potok (note 66).

[88] Blejwas, B. Griggs, A. and Potok, M**. "**Terror From the Right: Almost 60 terrorist plots uncovered in the U.S", *Southern Poverty Law Centre*. At http://www.splcenter.org/intel/intelreport/article.jsp?aid=549 (2005).  Last accessed on 10 November 2006.