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Variation in Extremist Political Violence on the Far-Left and Far-Right in the United States, 1980-2017

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by

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Variation in Extremist Political Violence on the Far-Left and Far-Right in the United States, 1980-2017

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This dissertation is motivated by the question of why certain individuals engage in violence to accomplish their political goals while the vast majority of individuals do not. In three empirical studies, I examine a range of social movements from across the entire left-right political spectrum, considering variation not just across movements but also across individuals and organizations within the same movement. Taking an inductive, ethnographic approach, I develop a conceptualization of the process by which individuals and organizations become radicalized towards violence. The overarching insight offered by this dissertation is that political violence is not simply a product of more "extreme" individual grievances or certain political ideologies but a complex process through which individual experiences come to be aligned with elements from political ideologies in a way that legitimates violence.

Comparing movements from both the far-right and the far-left, I show that violence can become legitimated across a wide spectrum of different ideologies, just in different ways

depending on the beliefs and values of a particular ideology. Then, comparing individuals and organizations within the same movement, I show that there are important commonalities across the political spectrum in terms of what differentiates violent and non-violent adherents who share the same ideology. At a fundamental level, rationales for violence from both the far-right and far-left tend to involve some logic of preemptive self-defense against anticipated violence. At a more nuanced level, my findings point towards several social processes, including the role of identity work and stigma, which appear to be common aspects of radicalization across the political spectrum.

Overall, by examining the range of ways in which violence can come to be rationalized at different ends of the political spectrum and by examining variation within as well as across movements, this dissertation contributes to the perspective that violence is the result of a general set of facilitating conditions, which can arise across the spectrum of political ideologies as opposed to being coupled to the beliefs and values of any particular ideology. [330 words]

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Among the large populations of individuals with political grievances, a minute fraction of individuals choose to engage in violence as a part, or the entirety, of their strategies to accomplish their political aims. To date, there is little consensus among scholars or law enforcement practitioners regarding what formula or pathway explains why certain individuals go to violent lengths to accomplish their political goals, while the vast majority of individuals do not.

For instance, scholars have previously relied on explanations related to individual-level characteristics, particularly towards deviant and criminal careers and dispositions (Victoroff and Kruglanski 2009). At the most micro-level, early psychological explanations focused on highly emotional states, deviant psychology and behavior and social atomization. Silke (1998) has referred to such approaches as "diagnosis at a distance", reflecting a preformed assumption that violent behavior, such as terrorism, is driven by preexisting personality traits such as narcissism, antisocialism and paranoia. Silke argues that, by leading with an assumption as to inherent abnormality of their subjects, practitioners and researchers detrimentally color their findings with psychopathological explanations of behavior. Importantly, these explanations have consistently failed to account for the phenomenon of seemingly well-adjusted, socially integrated and economically privileged domestic terrorists who exhibited no prior psychological disorder (Silke 1998). While this does not discount the role of trauma and development instability in the predisposition of individuals to radicalization, as research continues to demonstrate similarities between childhood and adolescent trauma and violent radicalization (Simi, Sporer and Bubolz 2016), it highlights the necessity of developing theoretical frameworks that are not dependent on narratives of deviance, deprivation or social alienation.

Relatedly, scholars have also sought to explain political violence based on contextual factors, such as levels of deprivation (e.g. Davies, 1962; Gurr, 1970). The key intuition behind this line of research is that extreme political behavior is driven by extreme discontent. For instance, prior research has found positive relationships between levels of economic inequality and political violence (e.g. Sigelman & Simpson, 1977; Park, 1986). However, explanations emphasizing deprivation suffer from two limitations. First, such explanations cannot account for why only certain individuals engage in political violence while the vast majority of those who suffer the same kinds of deprivation pursue nonviolent forms of political activity. Second, explanations emphasizing deprivation cannot account for why, in contexts where high levels of deprivation exist, the ones who actually engage in political violence are frequently not the ones who are most deprived. For instance, there are growing numbers of individuals from privileged, well-educated and often Western backgrounds joining extremist movements such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Peresin and Cervone 2015). Similar patterns of Western-educated, middle-class terrorism can be seen in cases of domestic terrorism within the U.S., such as the University of Chicago, Columbia University and NYU educated left-wing radicals of the 1960s and 1970s (Varon 2004). More generally, participants in U.S. based movements have continuously emerged from a diversity of backgrounds, including those of economic and social privilege (Ekici, Ekici and Mcentire 2009).

Besides their empirical limitations, perspectives based on individual attributes and contextual deprivation run into the problem of essentially abstracting away from a distinguishing characteristic of violence done for political reasons: that it has to do with some connection between an individual and a collective. The implication of individual-level explanations is essentially that those who engage in political violence would have been prone to other kinds of

violence in general, regardless of their interactions with political movements and organizations. Explanations based on deprivation—while at a seemingly opposite end of the spectrum in terms of level of analysis—are conceptually similar to individual-level explanations in their atomistic approaches to tracing the inception of the idea to engage in political violence. Social factors may play a role in shaping exposure to opportunities and resources. But the key intuition is that the idea for violence as a political solution comes to individuals through the personal experience of deprivation. In this way, both perspectives are common in abstracting away from the role of social interaction.

The limitations of purely individual-level and purely context-level explanations have resulted in growing recognition among scholars that political violence is not appropriately understood as either an individual-level or contextual-level phenomenon. Recent research from scholars such as Crenshaw (2000) and Horgan (2004) have gone to lengths to close the gaps between "disorder" driven explanations and sociological theories, instead looking to the multiple levels at which the psychology of terrorism can be understood. At a broader level, recent research has taken the perspective that political violence arises from a radicalization process—rather than a trait or condition—and arises in an inherently collective and interactional way (Cross and Snow 2011).

Theoretical approach in this dissertation

This dissertation therefore takes the perspective that radicalization of one's beliefs does not occur in a social vacuum but rather through interactions, of both a supportive and oppositional nature. In contrast to perspectives that emphasize the uniqueness of individuals who engage in political violence, I believe that even so-called lone wolves are not ideational islands

unto themselves. In today's social milieu, even the most isolated of individuals are frequently linked through virtual movement spaces that foster radical ideas (Futrell and Simi 2004). At the same time, in contrast to perspectives that emphasize overly general sources of discontent to which many in society are homogeneously exposed, I believe that most radical political spaces are not inherently seedbeds of extreme political violence (Polletta 1999) and that few of even the most militant of movements envision political mass violence on the scale of assassination, bombing, murder or hijacking (della Porta 2006). As stated earlier, ideology alone has given neither scholars nor law enforcement much meaningful predictive power. On the contrary, the targeting of radical groups irrespective of any demonstrable inclinations of towards political violence has done much to threaten free and peaceful political expression in the United States (Cole 2003, Kurzman 2012).

With this dissertation I develop a synthetic approach, focusing on how political violence is shaped by interactions between individual-level experiences, the characteristics of social movement organizations, and the ideational work within social movements, including frames and discourses. By focusing not only on the relationship between the individual and meso-level conditions but also on factors operating at multiple intermediate levels, I seek to identify the interactional conditions through which the radicalization towards extremist political violence occurs. These processes are multifarious and difficult to predict: however, this study aims to clarify the roles of organizational dimensions, biographical characteristics and framing and identity processes in constituting pathways to violent radicalization and how these factors shape extremist political violence.

Within the broad gap in understanding described above, my theoretical approach is in response to several particular challenges faced by recent theories of radicalization within the

collective action and social psychology literatures. First, scholars such as Oberschall (2004) and Goodwin (2006) have advanced theories of the emergence of terrorist violence but, like most prior studies, accomplish this through the use of macro-level conditions such as transformations at the state-level and changes in political context. The use of macro- level conditions to explain processes unfolding at the individual and meso- levels constitutes a significant challenge for scholars of political violence to overcome. Although these theories endeavor to identify the mechanisms and political circumstances in which terrorism is likely to emerge, they are ill-equipped to explain the "how and why" of individual radicalization and subsequent participation in those activities.

My approach follows more closely the approach of Della Porta (1992; 2013) and McCauley and Moskalenko (2011), who have advanced more interactional explanations geared towards the phenomenon of radicalization. Della Porta examines, in particular, the relationship between individual experiences and their political and social environment. She argues that the most critical shift in the process of radicalization is the individual's choice to employ what she refers to as "clandestine" political strategies. Although McCauley and Moskalenko provide a diverse and multifaceted model comprised of multiple pathways of radicalization, these pathways suffer from a number of weaknesses, in particular their lack of empirical grounding and potentially arbitrary delineations between possibly overlapping pathways. Nonetheless, their model presents a step forward in the conceptualization of radicalization processes by recognizing its multifarious manifestations and complexity.

The second challenge faced by theories of radicalization is the tendency to differentiate radicalization processes based on ideological orientation, rather than identify common pathways or processes across movements. For instance, there exist numerous theories focusing on the

phenomenon of Islamic extremist terrorism, both domestically and abroad (Sageman 2004; Dalgaard-Nielsen 2010). Such explanations often place a great deal of emphasis on strain and deprivation based theories, proposing that contextual factors such as poverty, war, social breakdown and meso- and macro-level conflict provide fertile ground for extremist movements. Van Dyke and Soule (2002) present strong evidence for the role of adverse structural changes such as economic contraction and declining agricultural and manufacturing employment but focus on mobilization among militia and patriot organizations.

Overall, one of the difficulties in developing comprehensive theories of violent radicalization is that few scholars have conducted empirical comparative studies on political violence incorporating movements on both the far-left and the far-right. By identifying variation between and within the various forms of movements on both sides of the political spectrum, I hope to identify common features in the conditions for radicalization and escalation to violence. Drawing from the extensive social movements literature that remains profoundly underutilized in understanding violent extremism, my analysis will attend to a range of conditions theorized to facilitate micromobilization, as individuals and organizations within a single movement vary drastically in degrees of violence, sometimes even ranging from pacifistic to militant within the same organizations. By identifying sources of variation at the individual and organizational level, I hope to clarify how radicalization processes shape subsequent violent outcomes.

Data and Methods

The following research employs two primary data sources: the American Terrorism Study and a sample of 21 interviewee respondents across the spectrum of political extremism from far-left to far-right. The American Terrorism Study (ATS) is an ever-evolving dataset first developed by Dr. Brent Smith at the University of Arkansas and expanded with a qualitative

Framing and Identity Database by myself and Dr. David A. Snow. The ATS is comprised of detailed court case records, intelligence files and open source data on 1,247 individual perpetrators associated with federal terrorism cases. The current iteration of the ATS consists of data on 421 terrorism cases involving 68 different groups associated with terrorist and extremist movements. These individuals were linked to 573 planned or completed terrorism incidents. Of these cases, the ATS Framing and Identity Database consists of qualitative data, coded for fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA), on 465 persons from 43 organizations.

The ethnographic data used in these following studies consists of interviews and field observations conducted between August of 2015 and March of 2017. The interviews generally took place subsequent to informal introduction from mutual friends, whether over text message or in-person. All interviews are unstructured and of variable length, as effort was made to ensure that the interview time was scheduled in such a way that it could proceed with minimal time constraints. Sampling was not random, but rather strategic: utilizing a variety of networks and contacts within the activist, subcultural and independent music communities, I sought to identify a fairly diverse assortment of subjects across the spectrum from far-left to far-right with informants also representing less visible extremist movements such as ethnic liberationist movements (black separatism), the men's rights movement and outlaw motorcycle gangs.

Beyond the Far-Left and Far-Right: Movement Types

In the course of the dissertation, I will make references to the far-left and far-right but also nuance this discussion by identifying informants, movement members and movement organizations by radical identity. In the course of developing the Framing and Identity Database with Dr. David A. Snow, we identified a means of classifying movements by core grievance and

radical identity, focusing on the avowed objectives of the movements and the frames underpinning their activism. The following table outlines these radical identities:

Table 1.1. Radical Identities by Core Grievance

Radical Identities by Core Grievance	
A = Militia/Patriot	Anti-government, Constitutional legitimacy
B = Environmental	Ecological protection
C = Gangs/Motorcycle clubs	Racial or ethnic solidarity, Hetero-masculine interests
D = Liberation D_1= Nationalist/Revolutionary D_2 = Racial/Ethnic D_3 = Animal	Defense of group(s) specified by organization, Empowerment of allegedly oppressed population
E = Racialist	Advancement or protection of white racial interests
F = Religious F_1 = Muslim/Islamic F_2 = Jewish/Zionist F_3 = Christian	Religiously motivated organizations, based on selective interpretation of scripture or theology

In hopes of facilitating a richer understanding of the differences between these movement types, the following overview outlines the central beliefs, political aims and ideational characteristics of each radical identity. Throughout the analysis, I will utilize these distinctions in hopes of introducing greater nuance to our scholarly understanding of extremism and how differences in their framing strategies, organizational traits and membership characteristics influence the resulting political violence. There is a decided permeability between these categories. In the case of organizations with beliefs overlapping between multiple categories, the individual was classified based on their primary avowed grievances. When possible, all coding of an individual into a radical identity category was based upon statements made by themselves, or in regards to them by a close associate. As such, in some rare instances, there are individuals within the same organization with different ascribed radical identities. One notable example is

the Third Continental Congress, of which most members were self-described patriots and provided constitutionalist and extreme libertarian justification for their actions with the exception of one individual, who remained loyal to his Ku Klux Klan identification in spite of his membership in the militia/patriot organization.

Radical Identity Descriptions and Exemplars

Militia and Patriot Organizations are grouped together on the basis of their common reading of American founding documents, particularly the Constitution of the United States, and their belief that the contemporary incarnation of the federal government is unjust. It is important to note that much of the American patriot or militia movement operates well within the scope of their Constitutional rights and civil liberties. However, those included within this dataset have, at some point, engaged in illegal and violent activity.

Environmental organizations are those primarily concerned with ecological protection and a belief in the primacy of the sanctity of the natural environment over human industrial, agricultural and developmental uses, often identifying with strongly anti-capitalist and sometimes anti-technological values. The most notable of these radical environmentalist organizations is the Earth Liberal Front, a decentralized, leaderless network of often unlinked cells with vastly varying levels of extremism. The vast majority of even the most radical of environmentalist organizations remain explicitly non-violent against persons, with cells often taking meticulous effort to avoid harm to all forms of life in the target vicinity.

Gangs and Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs constitute a unique subset of the represented organizations and individuals in the dataset, as the classified outlaw motorcycle clubs are distinct from many of their peers in holding political grievances, such as racialist or anti-immigrant

views. Although Motorcycle Club activities generally fall outside the realm of political contention and instead on organization-sustaining crimes such as theft, drug trafficking and targeted violence against rival gangs, their inclusion in the dataset is in recognition that many outlaw Motorcycle Clubs have adopted strong allegiances with the far-right, with many individuals in these organizations participating as a form of political contention and activism.

Liberation Movements constitute the second largest category of organizations and individuals in this dataset. These organizations, spanning a range of causes and movements with a variety of grievances, all focus their attention on the liberation of an aggrieved group, including animals.

Nationalist and revolutionary movements are characterized by their engagement in violence in efforts to establish autonomous nations or new regimes of political authority. They may identify as revolutionary or champion themselves as the frontline of defense of an aggrieved ethno-national group, though these extremist organizations may not comprise a majority of the members of these groups nor are they always, or even often, recognized as the official representatives of such ethno-national groups.

Animal Liberation: The distinction between animal liberation groups and environmentalist organizations is a particularly nuanced one. In the process of coding the individuals and organizations in the dataset, it can be observed that animal liberation groups often focus on a particular species or type of animal (e.g. those in scientific captivity) rather than their relationship to the broader ecosystem. For example, the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) routinely engages in the "liberation" of animals raised at fur farms, often resulting in the release

of large numbers of non-native species to the local eco-system. Regardless of the environmental consequences, representatives of the movement often regard these actions as successes.

Racial and Ethnic Liberation organizations are those devoted to the liberation or empowerment of a particular racial or ethnic group perceived to be oppressed and wrongfully marginalized. Included in this categorization are black separatist groups and militant black power organizations. I differentiate these organizations from racialist organizations on the grounds that the latter emphasize either racial hatred of all non-white groups or racial supremacy as their focus. Racial and Ethnic Liberation groups instead identify their goals as the empowerment of one particular group rather than the suppression or elimination of another. While the rhetoric of these organizations may be racist in character, their position in the contemporary political landscape and political aims are distinct from those of the largely white power Racialist organizations.

Racialist organizations can be most simply understood on the basis of their focus on the protection of white racial interests and broader identification with the white power movement (WPM). These organizations range from neo-Nazi groups drawing heavy inspiration from the collective action frames of Hitler's Third Reich, to aggressively nativist pro-American groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. Notably absent from the dataset is many of the most visible and notorious of white power organizations such as the American Nazi Party. Although highly visible and often among the largest of their kind, these groups sustain themselves using largely legal and oftentimes civil strategies of dissent. Of the organizations represented in the following analysis, groups such as the Order, the Ku Klux Klan and the Aryan Nation represent some of the more violent domestic extremist organizations in U.S. history.

Religious Extremists

Despite significant overlap with other movement types, religious extremist movements can be identified based on their core grievances and political aims, which remain primarily in service of religious goals. The Phineas Priesthood can trace its formation to the racialist framing of the biblical tract, but attention to the discourse of its members reveals a primarily Racialist basis for their actions, thereby informing the group's categorization as such. Similarly murky are those organizations founded upon Christian Identity, Creativist or Odinist religious principles. These religious movements combine New Age mysticism, evolutionary and scientific racism and contemporary white power beliefs with either Christianity or European paganism, often reassembling the constituent theological components haphazardly and inconsistently. However, these Racialist religious movements themselves rarely cite spiritual or religious grievance as the basis for their political violence. The organizations categorized as Religious Extremists identify themselves as acting on behalf of a religious agenda, citing scriptural or theological bases for their violence and drawing identity boundaries in terms of believers versus non-believers.

Thus, when overviewing the Religious Extremist organizations responsible for political violence, we arrive at a straightforward categorization scheme from which there are representatives of the three primary religions practiced in the United States: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. These descriptors refer only to the primary religious lineage from which the respective extremist organization draws its inspiration. The organizations represented in the ATS for their involvement in political violence are no less than the most extremist of incarnations of these religions. It is imperative to recognize that these Religious Extremist organizations are largely disavowed by mainstream religious institutions and are in no way representative of the majority of each respective religion's followers.

Of *Jewish* agents of political violence, the most notable organization remains the Jewish Defense League (JDL). Considered a terrorist group in numerous countries, including the United States, the JDL remains one of the most vocal and militant faces of Jewish extremism, often engaging in violent conflict with groups perceived to be threats to Jewish interests such as Palestinian advocacy organizations and groups that are critical of Israel.

Islamic extremism has arguably become the most visible and heavily targeted of "terrorist threats". Islamic extremist terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have maintained near constant visibility on the international political stage due to ongoing campaigns of violence against military, governmental and civilian targets. Because these organizations are international in character and maintain no organizational basis domestically, this particular political extremist movement type is largely absent in the following research, which focuses on those organizations whose operations, recruitment and activism take place in the United States.

Christian extremism is observed in the form of aggressively fundamentalist and fringe interpretations of Christian doctrine, and can be observed in the militantly anti-abortion and homophobic organization the Army of God. In spite of some crossover in the usage of Christian extremist rhetoric on the part of Racialist and Militia/Patriot extremist organizatons, the organizations classified as Christian Extremist engage in activism primarily in service of religious aims. Identification of these religious grievances was accomplished through detailed examination of movement frames, rhetoric and discourses of adherents.

Conclusion and outline of chapters

Taken as a whole, this dissertation furthers scholarly understanding of the internal processes of extremist movements and organizations in terms of how and what violence is

committed in service of the movement's political aims. The overarching thesis that arises from my analysis is that there are no inherent characteristics to any belief system or ideology conducive to violent radicalization. Although much of the extant knowledge and discussion of extremist organizations focuses on the role of ideology in shaping the violence of a movement or movement organization, I find – consistent with the reasoning behind classifying movements as far-left or far-right - that the same ideological characteristics are often present across entire movements, often with shared values. Therefore, ideology provides little explanatory value for understanding what accounts for variation in the political violence enacted by extremist movements, and even less insight into how extremist radicalization takes place and its consequences.

Instead, I argue that the accenting and emphasizing of particular elements of any belief system is what facilitates radicalization. I show that this is accomplished through framing activities within movements and within certain movement organizations that emphasize the necessity of violence to accomplishing a movement's political goals. While these collective framing tasks are available to movements of any ideology, my research sheds light on the particular framing strategies favored by extremist organizations. The usefulness of this course of analysis is reinforced by this study's extensive comparative approach drawing from a range of qualitative and quantitative data sources on individuals, organizations and movements from all areas of the political spectrum, ranging from the self-described "pacifist" far-left to the violent hate groups of the far-right. Overall, I hope that, by examining the phenomenon from a grounded perspective, my research helps to eschew stereotyped presumptions, particularly those ascribed in popular media and rhetoric to the various extremist ideologies represented in domestic terrorism cases.

The following chapters develop my approach to understanding radicalization at three levels of analysis. First, I examine political violence at the national, meso-level wherein I analyze the facilitative conditions for the enactment of violence across all movement types. Second, I analyze political violence comparatively by comparing and contrasting identity work and frames within the far-left and far-right to identify sources of variation in the degree and types of violence associated with the two broader movement types, focusing on the key collective action framing strategies underlying the political violence of the two respective movement types and their role in shaping the character of their violent activism. Finally, I examine micromobilization processes such as identity work, framing and recruitment strategies at the organization level to provide insight into sources of variation in violent activity among organizations within the same movements on the far-left and far-right respectively, finding similarities between the most violent organizations across movement types.

CHAPTER 2. FACILITATIVE CONDITIONS FOR DOMESTIC TERRORISM: EXTREMIST POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN THE UNITED STATES, 1980-2012

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Dating to at least September 11, 2001, there has been an increasing volume of scholarly work on extremist political phenomena variously referred to as radicalism, extremist political violence, and/or terrorism. Much of this scholarly work has sought to account for the occurrence of such extremist phenomenon by focusing on either the more macroscopic facilitative conditions, such as economic distress (e.g. unemployment and poverty) and non-democratic governance, or on the precursors and correlates of radicalization of individuals into perpetrators of political violence. Far less attention has been given to the combination and interaction of these factors, with striking neglect of the more meso-level factors, such as organizational structure and dynamics. Additionally, most studies of extremist political groups and associated violence have focused on either the far-left (Liddick 2006; Eagan 1996) or far-right (Van Dyke and Soule 2002; Cunningham and Phillips 2007), thereby glossing over the question of whether there are noteworthy differences or similarities in the facilitative conditions underlying political extremist violence across the political spectrum. Our aim in this is paper to shed empirical and theoretical light on these oversights by attempting to identify and clarify the distinct configurations of facilitative conditions conducive to extremist political violence against property and persons on both the far-left and far-right. We pursue this twofold objective by drawing on data aggregated

by the American Terrorism Study (ATS) for the years 1980 to 2012. The ATS is a comprehensive case-oriented database of all known U.S.-based domestic terrorist and violent extremist incidents and persons from roughly 1980 to the present.

We proceed by first reviewing relevant prior research and theorization on extremist political violence and identifying the oversights we seek to illuminate. We then consider the conceptualization of violent extremism and terrorism in the context of our data. Next we discuss our case selection, coding strategies and the fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analytical procedures we employ. We then present the results of multiple rounds of our fuzzy-set analyses (fsQCA) alongside a more complete discussion of our detailed case analysis. Finally, we highlight the theoretical, empirical, and policy implications of our findings.

CONCEPTUALIZING AND EXPLAINING POLITICAL EXTREMISM

Defining Extremism

There are few terms in the contemporary political landscape more contentious than "terrorism". In recognition of the politically loaded and often interested manner in which the label of "terrorism" is deployed, we proceed cautiously with a broad definition, while supplementing it with nuance provided by prior scholarship on political violence. The dataset utilized in this study, the American Terrorism Study (ATS), consists of over 700 individuals indicted for terrorism-related offenses in federal courts. We utilize the FBI's operational definition of terrorism in constructing this dataset of organizations from the population of federally prosecuted domestic terrorism provided by the Department of Justice (DOJ). Thus, our dataset employs the FBI's definition of terrorism as "the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any

segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives."We think it is sufficiently broad while still capturing the character of clandestine political violence as an extreme form of political or social communication. Goodwin (2006) refines the concept of terrorism in two respects, first clarifying it as political violence enacted by non-state actors, and defining terrorism as "the strategic use of violence and threats of violence by an oppositional political group against civilians or noncombatants, and is usually intended to influence several audiences" (pp. 2028).

Alongside a working definition of "terrorism", the dataset is informed by the definition of radicalism advanced by Cross and Snow (2011). Drawing on their work in both left- and right-wing social movements, we utilize their definition of "a radical [as] a social movement activist who embraces direct action and high-risk options, often including violence against others, to achieve a stated goal". The definition of risk, in this context, is determined by contemporary local standards, but is assumed to include a degree of illegality" (Cross and Snow 2011). Consistent with prior conceptualizations (McAdam 1986; della Porta 1988), we treat the enactment of political violence against both property and persons as a form of high-risk political engagement. While we do not suggest that radicalism and extremism are interchangeable, we suggest that extremism exists at the poles of the spectrum of radical contentious political behavior. Within this spectrum, we may observe a range of phenomena from peaceful radicalism, to state-sanctioned or non-transgressive forms of political violence such as that enacted by police, to the mass violence enacted by non-state actors to further their political objectives. These forms of political violence occur within such an expansive range of contexts and circumstances that scholars are faced with a substantial challenge to explain theirts occurrence. We turn our attention now to some of these explanatory theories and models.

Explaining and Theorizing Extremist Political Violence

Prior perspectives on the sources of extremist political violence have primarily emphasized mechanisms at two major levels of analysis: the individual and the group. On one end of the spectrum, prior research has highlighted factors such as personal victimization experiences, gradual escalation, and personal connections to radical individuals as potential explanations for why certain individuals make the transition to radical beliefs and behavior (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2009). Other explanations at the individual level have focused on factors such as social isolation, psychopathology, and deviancy (Craig 2002), which are consistent with attention to the so-called "lone wolf" model of terrorism (McCauley and Moskalenko 2011; Spaaij 2011).

On the other end of the spectrum, research has highlighted factors at various group levels—from small groups up to nations—to explain why certain groups are more prone to radical behavior than others. For instance, prior research at more macro levels has traced the emergence of radicalism to factors such as poverty, welfare policies, regime repressiveness, economic restructuring, and the emergence of certain kinds of political parties (Weinberg 1991; Burgoon 2006; Piazza 2011; Muller 1985; Van Dyke & Soule, 2002). At more micro levels, prior research has highlighted factors such as group isolation, threat, pressure for conformity, and competition with other collectives as mechanisms behind the emergence of radical behavior (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2009).

However, prior perspectives focusing on factors at the individual and group levels have been subject to two limitations: 1) they do not explain how circumstances in society and individual experiences come to be interpreted in a way that makes radical political behavior a relevant course of action, and 2) they do not explain why there would be variation in radical behavior among individuals exposed to the same circumstances. A common theme among

individual-level perspectives, for instance, is attempting to account for the cost-benefit calculus that would lead individuals to conclude that a risky or self-sacrificial course of action is the most desirable available option. For instance, prior research has highlighted the role of extreme personal obligation, group norm enforcement, group pressures for conformity, and gradually-escalating self-justification as mechanisms that increase the perceived cost of not engaging in radical behavior or decrease the perceived cost of engaging in it (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2009). But as this research points out, even the most direct, individually-experienced stimuli, such as personal victimization, do not in and of themselves present individuals with clear repertoires of responses consisting of radical political behavior. Individual experiences must be framed in connection with well-articulated and shared group grievances for individuals to make the leap from initial stimuli to the very particular perception of choice alternatives that includes radical behavior (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2009).

As a consequence, prior perspectives are limited in explaining variation in radical behavior among individuals exposed to the same circumstances. Research on macro-level factors is capable of explaining why in aggregate, certain nations or groups have higher incidences of radical behavior than others (Weinberg 1991; Burgoon 2006; Piazza 2011; Muller 1985; Van Dyke & Soule, 2002). But within these aggregate levels of analysis, the incidence of radical behavior is unlikely to be randomly distributed among individual members. Prior policy discussions have often depicted the emergence of radicalism using the "conveyor belt" imagery. By sympathizing with and participating in low-level, legal, non-violent activities associated with a cause, individuals are thought to take the first step on the path towards increased receptiveness to more extreme beliefs and behaviors. However, there are likely to be systematic reasons why some individuals make the leap to violent courses of action while others within the same risk sets

adopt non-violent activist approaches in response to the same grievances. As research has suggested, the intention to engage in activism is a distinct construct from the intention to engage in radicalism (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009). Even if it is the case that most individuals who express intentions to engage in radical behavior have previously engaged in activism, the overwhelming majority of individuals who have engaged in activism do not go on to engage in radical behavior. In other words, low-level activism is not necessary, and certainly not sufficient, as a condition for radicalism.

Studies of participation in social movements and protest, for instance, do not support the supposition that participants engaged in peaceful and non-transgressive approaches to political challenge readily transition into transgressive forms of protest. Scholars find extensive variation within movements and movement organizations as to the proclivity of individual participants to high-risk protest (McAdam 1986; Klandermans and Oegma 1987). Additionally, research suggests that movement organizations do not exhibit a general tendency for monotonic escalation towards violence but, instead, ebb and flow in their levels of political engagement (Crenshaw 2001). Prior perspectives emphasizing grievances or other factors affecting the cost-benefit calculus of radical behavior at the individual and group levels are therefore limited in accounting for why individuals exposed to the same apparent circumstances are neither uniform nor monotonically escalating in the propensities for radical behavior.

To better explain this variation, we turn to a set of previously unexplored mechanisms at a different level of analysis and situated at a different stage of the decision process from prior perspectives. Specifically, we focus on the role of framing at the level of movement organizations (e.g. Benford & Snow, 2000). Prior perspectives have emphasized the stage of the decision process where individuals are thought to weigh the costs and benefits of radical

behavior relative to other courses of action. In contrast, the process of framing deals with the earlier stage at which ambiguous happenings in the world and everyday life come to be bracketed into a meaningful collection of actors and interests (Goffman, 1974). The process of framing is important for addressing the limitations of prior perspectives on radical behavior because it deals directly with the question of why the same set of circumstances can potentially be interpreted in different ways and consequently present individuals with different repertoires of action from which to choose.

For instance, prior research has examined the framing process to address similar limitations in the understanding of social movement participation (e.g. Snow et al., 1986). As in the present understanding of radical behavior, the early literature on social movement participation neglected the problem of equivocality in the circumstances thought to spark social movements. As Snow et al. (1986) argued, the process by which individual interpretations of interests, values, and attributions come to be aligned with the goals and ideologies of a social movement organization is an important micromechanism for understanding variation in mobilization. In a similar way, an understanding of frame alignment has the potential to explain why individuals exposed to a common set of circumstances may come to interpret it differently, leading some to view radical behavior as the only acceptable option while most others perceive a range of non-violent activism behaviors as acceptable. However, prior research has not considered the role of framing in explaining radicalism.

Facilitative Conditions

In this study, our primary focus is on the role of *frame crystallization* (Snow, Vliegenhart, and Corrigall-Brown 2007). Within any organization or movement, there may be a multitude of competing understandings of what the meaningful problems and solutions are with

respect to some set of precipitating circumstances and, therefore, potentially a great deal of variance in the extent to which all adherents share the same understandings. By crystallization, we mean the degree to which multiple competing understandings give rise to one or two dominant understandings so that various adherents of an organization share and consistently espouse the same diagnostic framing of problems and/or the same prognostic framing of solutions. In terms of addressing the limitations of prior research, examining crystallization of these two aspects of framing—diagnostic framing of problems and prognostic framing of solutions—has the potential to shed light on previously unexplained variation in radical behavior. Why might economic hardship, for instance, be sometimes interpreted as a problem created by a particular target group and sometimes not? Even given a certain framing of the problem, why might a repertoire of violent behaviors sometimes emerge as a meaningfully-connected set of solutions and sometimes not?

In addition to framing, we also consider several other factors that may be important for explaining variation in radical behavior. First, we consider the *accessibility* of the organization to outsiders and non-members. By accessibility, we mean the degree to which membership in an organization is closed or open. While some organizations recruit openly and without restriction regardless of their level of legal transgression, such as the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, others may require that any new recruit or seeker be "vouched for" or otherwise vetted before even being granted face-to-face interaction with any members of the organization. Despite being one of the initial steps in radicalization, how recruitment shapes subsequent movement participation and activity remains relatively unclear (Rosenau et al. 2014). Recruitment into contentious political organizations ranges from open, as in the case of recruitment in public forums to the highly restricted, wherein an individual must be vetted or vouched before even

gaining access to the organization. To explore the relationship between the character of recruitment and resulting activity within a respective organization, we trace each individual's process of radicalization from their point of earliest known contact with the movement. Intuition suggests that higher-risk activity tends to be facilitated by closed/inaccessible recruitment due to a heightened need for trust and solidarity.

Next, we consider *organizational viability*. The motivation for considering organizational viability comes from the social movement literature on mobilization. Prior perspectives on radical behavior (e.g. McCauley and Moskalenko, 2008; 2011) have in general placed little emphasis on structural conditions found to be conducive to mobilization (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Johnston et al. 1994; Snow and Soule 2010). While used extensively to study other domains of political activity, collective-action mechanisms from the social movements literature have yet to be widely applied to extreme cases of political violence. It remains unclear whether extant meso-level theories of social movement mobilization such as resource mobilization (McCarthy and Zald 1977), political opportunity (Meyer 2004), and organizational forms and viability (Cress and Snow 1996; Minkoff 1999) operate in the same manner in cases of violent political mobilization. To incorporate these perspectives, we consider two dimensions of organizational viability: a movement organization's duration of activity from inception to the commission of its first major act of political violence and the size of the organization's membership base.

Finally, we examine the role of *political context*. The motivation behind considering political context comes from prior studies that have examined the relationship between social movement emergence and political opportunity as a function of mainstream partisan representation (Tarrow 1996; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). The intuition is that

institutionalized political representation may enable challengers but not be sufficient in addressing their grievances. In this study, we focus on the degree to which the state in which an organization operates tends to vote Republican.

While other conditions might be conjectured, these facilitative conditions were selected to be as comprehensive as possible given the constraints of available data and to cover a range of theories of both movement emergence and correlates of political violence in the United States. These conditions reflect the dominant theoretical perspectives in the study of social movements, including resource mobilization, framing theory, and political opportunity/process theory.

DATA AND PROCEDURES

We use formal qualitative methods to systematically examine the role of group-level frame crystallization alongside the broader set of other facilitative conditions. Data for this analysis is drawn from the extensive court case files, media documents and intelligence records from the American Terrorism Study (ATS). Although the ATS contains 66 organizations, using the FBI's broadest operational definition of domestic terrorism, we have made efforts to create a sample that consistently reflects the type of domestic extremist political violence that constitutes the focus of this study. Additionally, we conducted additional research on extremist organizations and instances of political extremist violence to identify any possible oversights due to biases in which cases were prosecuted at the federal level by the Department of Justice. Our sample consists of 43 organizations for which we have extensive qualitative data in order to aid in the interpretation of the results of our qualitative comparative analysis (QCA).

For the classification of violence, we coded on the basis of intentionality. Property destruction consists of a broad assortment of actions intended to destroy physical structures, both functional and symbolic, without intent to harm persons. For examples of larger

scale bombings classified as property destruction, such as those committed by the radical leftist organization the Weather Underground, the basis for the coding decision was contingent on the organization employing measures to prevent human injury such as calling in warnings, ordering evacuations, and ensuring all buildings and structures are empty at the time of detonation.

Case Selection

For the purpose of our study, we have focused on those cases that adhere to strict classification criteria for domestic terrorism. Despite the FBI's inclusion of US-based individual members of broader international terrorist networks, such as al-Qaeda, in their domestic terrorist lists, we exclude those involved in Islamic and international terrorism that are not radicalized within the United States. Moreover, this subset of the domestic terrorist sample provided by the FBI is overwhelmingly comprised of foreign nationals apprehended in the United States or individuals attempting to join international organizations. In a number of borderline cases, the individuals have tenuous ties, at best, to the international organization and are most frequently involved in the provision of material support. For the purposes of a comparative analysis, we find these cases to be far too dissimilar in nature to the far-left and far-right cases comprising the majority of the dataset. In the domestic national security climate since September 11, 2001, these cases are plentiful but were often hastily prosecuted and are generally material support cases. Similarly excluded are a number of internationally-based nationalist and ethnic liberation organizations such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA), Puerto Rican paramilitary organization Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional Puertorriqueña (FALN) and the leftist revolutionary movement, Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN).

Outcome Conditions: Targets and Grievances in Political Violence

There are a number of approaches to measuring the enactment of political violence, including severity (Sellin-Wolfgang 1964), targets (Walker, McCarthy and Martin 2008) and incidents (Smith and Damphousse 1998). For this study, we sought to account for variability in the targets of extremist political violence in the United States by synthesizing the studied outcomes of prior scholarship with the extensive qualitative data from the American Terrorism Study.

We distinguish acts of political violence against persons from those primarily aimed at property damage (Martin, McCarthy, and McPhail 2009). For example, a number of organizations engaging in so-called earth or animal "liberation" activities engage in a great deal of prior reconnaissance to ensure that the timing of their planned arson or bombing is unlikely to harm persons or animals. We argue that this recognition of the sanctity of human life warrants disaggregation of these cases from those acts of political violence aimed at creating human casualties. Similarly, organizations that consciously incorporated strategies to minimize or prevent physical harm to persons should be categorized accordingly.

Targets are also a relevant consideration in the classification of movements in what is a necessarily recursive categorization process. We propose a grievance-centered classification scheme as an alternative to normative measures such as the widely utilized "left", "center", and "right" designations. Scholars have long problematized this single dimensional scheme (Giddens 1994), with growing attention to the inadequacy of these classifications in light of radical, extremist, reactionary and other movements that defy traditional partisan identities. The classification of violent extremist movement organizations, shown in the following table, was iterative and took into consideration the organization's mandate, characteristics, affiliated organizations as well as the constantly evolving nature of their activities and goals.

Table 2.1. Radical Identity Categories for Organizations

Radical Identities by Core Grievance	
A = Militia/Patriot	Anti-government, Constitutional legitimacy
B = Environmental	Ecological protection
C = Gangs/Motorcycle clubs	Racial or ethnic solidarity, Hetero-masculine interests
D = Liberation D_1= Nationalist/Revolutionary D_2 = Racial/Ethnic D_3 = Animal	Defense of group(s) specified by organization, Empowerment of allegedly oppressed population
E = Racialist	Advancement or protection of white racial interests
F = Religious F_1 = Muslim/Islamic F_2 = Jewish/Zionist F_3 = Christian	Religiously motivated organizations, based on selective interpretation of scripture or theology

Coding

Qualitative coding for this study was conducted in multiple iterations, with particular attention to the integration of emergent themes in each subsequent round of coding. Coding decisions were based on extensive case knowledge of each organization and set of actors, allowing for adjudication of boundary or hard-to-classify cases. For example, the Phineas Priests are loosely organized and operate without an explicit mandate aside from the enactment of so-called "Phineas acts" as a means of challenging. By delving into the discursive materials utilized by the organization, including literature and scriptural excerpts, we may possibly conclude that the Biblical basis for the Phineas Priesthood focuses on anti-miscegenation and xenophobia. Thus, the Phineas Priests are classified within this study as "Racialist" rather than "Militia/Patriot/Anti-government" as their primary grievance are non-whites rather than state targets.

Fuzzy-Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis

In seeking to identify how various factors interact and combine to produce multiple pathways towards extremist political violence, we employ qualitative comparative analysis

(QCA). QCA is a formal qualitative method with the aim of bridging qualitative research and quantitative analytical methodologies (Ragin 2000). Our sample of 43 organizations constitutes a rich and meaningfully large selection of U.S. extremist organizations, but it still adds to a relatively small n for a quantitative study. Traditional quantitative methods, while capable of elucidating individually significant variables are less suited to the comparative study of such a sample of distinct cases. To capture the complex causal relationships within a set of cases for which we possess in-depth data, including temporal, processual, and person-level information, QCA provides an appropriate methodological approach rather than just a substitute for traditional statistical analysis.

With QCA, we seek to identify the combinations of causal conditions contributing to an outcome, rather than individually significant factors. Additionally, with a number of conditions with uncertain relationship to the outcome, we may be interested not only in their *presence* but also possible causal effects of their *absence*. To further examine how the extent or degree of the various hypothesized causal conditions relate to our outcome of violence, we turn to a variant of qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) called fuzzy-set analysis (fsQCA). There are a number of advantages of fuzzy-set analysis over the discrete presence/absence conditions of crisp-set QCA (Ragin 2000; 2008). The multi-stage analysis allows not only for a greater dialogue between empirical case knowledge and its operationalization in formal analysis, but also addresses the often-reductive quality of quantitative analysis when applied to rich, qualitative data. Additionally, it is this quality of fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis that allows researchers to integrate extensive case knowledge into the calibration and interpretation of the results, thereby synthesizing a great deal of qualitative analysis into a formal method.

Fuzzy set analysis allows researchers to capture such rich case knowledge through the process of calibration. Calibration involves the researcher-controlled generation of empirically meaningful cut-points for which to classify variables (Ragin 2007). These cut-points and also coding decisions are to be drawn from extensive case knowledge and are neither arbitrary nor fixed across all analytical settings, as would be the case with measures of statistical significance. Rather than providing a measure of significance, fuzzy set output consists of necessary conditions and combinatorial solutions of the specified conditions in relation to the outcome. Fuzzy-sets allow researchers to identify when a condition is present and to what extent by coding the individual case information using cut-points between 0 (absent) and 1 (present). To illustrate with a hypothetical example, we may have two distinct cases for which both Condition A and Condition B are present but to meaningfully different extents in the two cases. Rather than disregard these empirical differences, we capture them using varying levels of fuzzy-set membership scores, not unlike a scalar quantitative measurement. Thus, for both the independent (hypothesized causal) and outcome conditions specified in this analysis, variation between cases is frequently a matter of degree rather than simple presence or absence.

The interpretation of both crisp and fuzzy-set QCA results involves the assessment of the resultant coverage and consistency scores for both individual conditions and truth table solutions, which are combinations of causal conditions resulting in the specified outcome. Consistency refers to the percentage of observations within a given sample that conform to the specified condition resulting in the outcome. Coverage, on the other hand, refers to the percentage of all cases with the presence of that configuration.

RESULTS

Following multiple rounds of coding and calibration, the resultant 38 cases (organizations) were examined in two stages of analysis: a necessity analysis, intended to identify the causal contribution of our various hypothesized facilitative conditions to the outcome of violence, and a truth table analysis, resulting in configurational solutions illustrating the various causal pathways to our two types of outcome. We ran separate analyses to identify the distinct causal relationships for the two forms of violence specified in our analysis, disaggregating Property Destruction from Violence Against Persons.

In contrast with conventional statistical methods concerned with measures of significance, QCA seeks to identify the strength of combinatorial causal relationships, conceptualized in this analysis as pathways to outcomes. To this end, QCA utilizes measures of consistency and coverage for the individual hypothesized causal conditions and the combinatorial pathways of those conditions identified in the truth table analysis. Note that in our results, the use of the tilde ~ corresponds the causal impact of a condition's absence within a particular configuration of causal conditions. The ability to systematically analyze the causal contribution of a condition's *absence* is one of the particular strengths of QCA when identifying complex relationships within a set of hypothesized conditions.

As previously discussed, consistency refers to the extent to which a given condition leads to a particular outcome within a dataset, and is the analytical component of QCA comparable to that of statistical significance. For the following QCA results, we treat consistency over 0.75 to be particularly meaningful and reflect a possible causal relationship. In accordance with Ragin (2008), consistency below 0.75 is insufficient to suggest a causal relationship with any meaningful degree of certainty. Coverage, on the other hand, refers to the proportion of cases with the specified outcome for which the causal effect or solution is present, providing a measure

of empirical validity. However, it is important to note that consistency and coverage may often be at odds, particularly if a high coverage solution represents a small sub-set of cases. Thus for the purpose of clarity, we have emphasized the importance of consistency scores in our necessity analysis tables by organizing results in order of descending consistency. For the truth table analysis, reflecting particular pathways to the specified outcome, we sought to clarify the proportion of cases covered by each combinatorial solution, thus organizing our tables in descending order of coverage score.

Frame Crystallization: Diagnostic and Prognostic Frames

The findings of the fsQCA necessity analysis in Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 support a heightened emphasis on the role of frame crystallization as a causal condition contributing to the outcome of both forms of political violence. Although nearly all the organizations comprising the subset of positive outcome cases in either Property Destruction or Violence Against Persons engaged in collective action framing to some extent, not all developed coherent, crystallized frames. Diagnostic frame crystallization can be observed in a problem identification or grievance shared by multiple participants of an incident or organization. Similarly, prognostic frame crystallization represents the prescription for action or solution identified by a movement organization to resolve the grievances. These two forms of frame crystallization proved to be the strongest causal linkages in our necessity analysis for both Property Destruction and Violence Against Persons, with other conditions exhibiting weaker relationships.

It is necessary to clarify that these processes may occur independently and are not inherently linked. For example, El-Rukn, the Chicago street gang with links to the late Muammar Qaddafi and Libyan terrorist networks, was not associated with a high-level of diagnostic frame crystallization. Instead, El-Rukn predominately cycled between a number of interlinked, though

sometimes contradictory, problem identifications ranging from police corruption, white supremacy, to non-Islamic black assimilation. These diagnostic frames were not consistently espoused among indicted members, resulting in a membership score of 0 for diagnostic frame crystallization. However, El-Rukn's prognostic frame was significantly more coherent: the organization's primary strategy must be to secure more power through financial resources and increased notoriety with international terrorist organizations. Their planned actions cohered closely with this prognostic frame, equating financial resources with power and legitimacy. By disaggregating both the type of violence and the two forms of frame crystallization, we have sought to provide further clarity on the relationships between collective action framing tasks and their outcomes.

Table 2.2. Analysis of Necessary Conditions for Property Destruction

Outcome variable: property destruction		
Conditions tested:		
	Consistency	Coverage
diag	0.851429	0.755068
prog	0.803809	0.809981
inacc	0.672381	0.811494
org_score	0.438095	0.707257
dur_score	0.420571	0.677716
rep_marg	0.388571	0.784615

As evidenced in Table 2.2, in the case of property destruction, the higher consistency of the outcome with strong diagnostic (0.851) and prognostic framing (0.803) suggests that frame crystallization is a significant pre-condition even for Property Destruction. These results are reinforced by the finding that diagnostic, rather than prognostic, frame crystallization is of greater importance in the commission of property destruction (Table 2.2). We theorize that this is due, in part, to the act of property destruction requiring less strategic identification of targets. For

example, a series of vandalism incidents in 2002, claimed by an off-shoot of the Earth Liberation Front, involved the etching of various slogans and ideological messages into windows of three fast-food chain restaurants was associated with a low level of prognostic crystallization along with an only brief preparatory incubation period of weeks prior to the commission of the property destruction. Interestingly, our analysis finds that property destruction is associated with slightly higher – albeit inconclusive - levels of closed or inaccessible recruitment (0.67), in spite of the lesser importance of organizational lifespan. This may be a result of more tightly controlled recruitment negating the need for prolonged trust-building processes within an organization in order to commit property destruction.

Table 2.3. Analysis of Necessary Conditions for Violence Against Persons

Outcome variable: violence		
Conditions tested:		
	Consistency	Coverage
diag	0.803109	0.523649
prog	0.797927	0.591171
inacc	0.556995	0.494253
dur_score	0.502073	0.594843
org_score	0.484456	0.575031
rep_marg	0.443005	0.657692

Our analysis of conditions resulting in Violence Against Persons (Table 2.3) reflects some of the core differences in those conditions leading to the two forms of violence. Diagnostic and prognostic frame crystallization remain particularly important and notable causal conditions for the outcome (0.8031 and 0.7979 respectively), but slightly lower than that associated with Property Destruction. Similar to the necessity analysis for Property Destruction, we find that frame crystallization remains the most important of the causal relationships identified in our analysis, with all other conditions falling well below the cut-point of 0.75 suggested by Ragin for

assessing causal relationships in QCA. Interestingly, closed recruitment was less important as a causal condition for Violence Against Persons (0.55 versus 0.67) but is offset with a greater necessity for sustained organizational viability (0.50 versus 0.42). We theorize that this difference between the two types of violence can be attributed to an "incubation period" from inception, recruitment and prognostic crystallization before target persons can be identified and victimized. This incubation can consist of a period of sustained membership within the extremist collective, during which the individual continues to strengthen ideational and social commitment to the movement organization and integrates movement frames into their worldview. To better understand this possible relationship, we turn now to the organizational characteristics examined in our necessity analysis.

Recruitment and Organizational Viability

In regards to organizational characteristics, we found that the degree of inaccessibility or insularity of an organization is far less necessary to an outcome of violence against both persons and property, despite a theorized link between closed recruitment and more clandestine activity (della Porta 1988). For the purposes of our analysis, we code armed bank robberies as violence against persons as firearms reflect anticipation of violence or coercion of persons, and such incidents frequently result in homicides. Our initial expectations, prior to analysis, anticipated that higher-risk activity would be facilitated by closed/inaccessible recruitment due to a heightened need for trust and solidarity. Within the analysis of necessary conditions, the Inaccessibility of the organization in terms of recruitment resulted in a consistency level of 0.672 for Property Destruction and 0.557 for Violence Against Persons, both below the threshold to indicate their causal necessity to the outcomes.

Case knowledge of the organizations consistent with this solution suggests that the mechanism for the facilitative effect of open recruitment is the accessibility of the organization to "seekers" (Balch and Taylor 1978; Lofland and Stark 1965; Pinel and Swann 2000; Straus 1976), particularly those with violent or criminal backgrounds who may seek out extremist organizations. For example, the decentralized Christian Identity organization known as the Phineas Priesthood is associated with strong diagnostic frames and the complete absence of barriers to membership. Phineas Priests are not recruited but rather self-initiated into the Priesthood by commission of crimes against ethnic and sexual minorities, reproductive health clinics and non-white or Semitic businesses, referred to as "Phineas Acts". This organizational structure, or lack thereof, facilitated the formation of a large and diffuse network of remarkably violent actors, while requiring little in the way of organizational viability or resources.

We analyzed Organizational Viability as a function of two separate conditions: Organizational Duration and Organization Size. We measure Organizational Duration as the duration of time the organization is documented to exist at the time of the commission of the associated incidences. For movements responsible for multiple incidents of political violence, we measure the duration of the organization at the time of commission of the first incident. Similarly, we measure organization size at the point of the first associated act of political violence. The results of the analysis for necessary conditions shown in Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 suggest that neither Organizational Duration nor Organizational Size are necessary causal conditions for either type of violence to occur, with all calculations falling at or below a 0.5 threshold. As with Inaccessibility, this is not to suggest that these conditions are not causally contributive but demonstrates that they alone are not necessary to result in an outcome of violence.

Across all positive outcome cases, our data suggests an "incubation" period between an organization's inception and documented participation in political violence against persons. Our analysis, measuring the organization's duration prior to enactment of violence in months, suggests that escalation to violence is only infrequently accelerated such that the acts occur within half a year of the organization's inception. Of those cases resulting in Violence Against Persons, an Organizational Duration score of 0.5 (corresponding to 1 year to 5 years of organizational activity) or more was associated with all but four of the cases, indicating that prolonged organizational viability may be a factor in the commission of this form of violence. This was not the case with organizations engaged solely in Property Destruction. The fsQCA reveals that not only is property destruction associated with a far briefer incubation period, but also requires less organizational viability in the form of either size or duration and coherent prognostic framing activity prior to commission of violence. These findings suggest that extensive planning and organizational infrastructure are not necessary pre-conditions for the destruction of property. Interpreted alongside the aforementioned finding of a shorter incubation period from organizational formation to property destruction suggests that these acts are more likely to be more spontaneous or ad hoc in nature.

Political Context

To evaluate the role of political context in facilitating the emergence of extremist political violence, we focus our attention on the strength of the centrist right-wing in the U.S. Our analysis attempts to account for the effect of both the presence and absence of a strong mainstream conservative political orientation in a given state, given that little is known about the relationship between mainstream conservatism and mobilization on the far-left and far-right. The cases were associated with a particular state based upon the location of their most severe

incident, either in property damage or human casualties. Next, the year in which this reference incident took place is treated as the measurement point with which we associate the U.S. presidential primary election voting statistics for that given state. The index used to measure a strong right-wing majority is a percentage score, based on the margin of Republican victory in that respective state. There are admittedly disadvantages to these measures of political context, such as the exclusion of third-party candidates and the validity of the connection between mainstream political context and the extremist political subcultures within any setting. However, as a preliminary effort to capture this relationship alongside a broad range of conditions, we advance these findings for further investigation into the theorized relationship between partisan political context and the emergence of extremist political violence.

Our findings from the necessity analysis, shown in Table 2.2 and Table 2.3 suggest that the presence of a strong mainstream conservative political orientation in a given state is alone, insufficient as a causal condition. However, it is important to note that the analysis of necessary conditions functions solely to identify those factors which are critical, rather than contributory to the outcome of violence. Therefore, to account for a broader set of possible causal relationships, we specified the following configurational analysis to test for both the presence and absence of a Republication majority in conjunction with the other facilitative conditions. Our findings suggest that both the presence and absence of a Republican majority to have causal effects, depending on the type of violence and type of movement. While we find no strong causal relationship between Republican majorities and the outcome of violence in either far-left or far-right cases in our necessity analysis, our truth table analysis and configurational solutions suggest some promising relationships between the type of violence and the political context of the organizations when acting alongside other facilitative conditions.

The following truth table analysis utilized fsQCA to identify configurational solutions relating to the two outcomes: Property Destruction and Violence Against Persons, synthesizing the three analytical categories discussed above. The truth table analysis extends the necessity analysis into combinatorial solutions, wherein the vast field of possible configurations of causal conditions is refined into significantly smaller sub-set of those producing the sought outcome.

Configurational Pathways

Although the analysis of necessary conditions suggests that the two forms of frame crystallization are the most causally significantly conditions leading to Property Destruction or Violence Against Person, this does not suggest that the other causal conditions do not have a facilitative effect. To observe their combinatorial effects on the outcome, we turn to the configurational pathways identified in the truth analysis.

To illustrate the configurational solutions provided by the analysis, Table 2.4 shows the causal pathways leading to Property Destruction. The solution "`org_score*~dur_score*diag*prog*~rep_marg`" refers to 1) large organizations 2) that are not long-lived, with 3) a high level of diagnostic and prognostic crystallization and 4) a weak/non-existent Republican majority. This solution is associated with both the Militia/Patriot movement and Environmentalist groups. The organizational category associated with this solution is the Militia/Patriot organization types, which alongside Environmentalist organizations, Animal Liberation groups, and Christian Extremists, are those most associated with Property Destruction. By associating solutions with movement types, we are able to observe different causal dynamics depending on the grievances of the involved organizations.

Table 2.4. Truth Table for Property Destruction

Truth Table Analysis: Property Destruction

	raw coverage	unique coverage	consistency
inacc*~org_score*diag*prog*rep_marg	0.245333	0.184000	1.000000
org_score*~dur_score*diag*prog*~rep_marg	0.237714	0.038095	0.893983
~inacc*org_score*diag*prog*~rep_marg	0.171048	0.015619	0.714968
inacc*~org_score*dur_score*diag*~prog*~rep_marg	0.047619	0.030476	0.739645

solution coverage: 0.475429
solution consistency: 0.842674

Cases with greater than 0.5 membership in term
org_score*~dur_score*diag*prog*~rep_marg: B (1,1),
A (0.66,0.5)

Cases with greater than 0.5 membership in term
~inacc*org_score*diag*prog*~rep_marg: E (1,0.5),
D_3 (1,0.6), F_3 (0.66,1), A (0.66,0.5), A (0.6,1)

Cases with greater than 0.5 membership in term
inacc*~org_score*diag*prog*rep_marg:

E (0.67,1), E (0.67,1)

Cases with greater than 0.5 membership in term
inacc*~org_score*dur_score*diag*~prog*~rep_marg: E (0.6,0.3)

[Category A corresponds to the "Militia/Patriot" organization type. Category B refers to "Environmentalist" organizations. Category D_3 refers to "Animal Liberation" groups, while F_3 corresponds to the "Religious" organization category, with a "Christian" sub-type.]

Of our subset of Property Destruction cases, Environmentalist and Animal Liberationist organizations are the most highly represented. Thus, the longstanding association of these groups with a far-left political orientation is rendered meaningful by the finding in Table 2.4 that three of the pathways to Property Destruction are associated with the *absence* of a Republican majority. The exception, solution "`inacc*~org_score*diag*prog*rep_marg`" is associated with Racialist orgnizations, and widely regarded as extreme far-right movements.

Thus, the finding that a Republican majority has a facilitative effect in such cases coheres with our prior understanding of such cases.

Another configurational pathway, `inacc*~org_score*diag*prog*rep_marg`", reflecting closed recruitment, small organization size, presence of diagnostic and prognostic frame crystallization and presence of a Republican majority, reinforces the findings of the prior necessity analysis finding that closed recruitment is a salient precondition for Property Destruction. It is additionally worth noting that this pathway covers 0.2377 of cases of Property Destruction. This suggests that this solution and the aforementioned pathway of "`org_score*~dur_score*diag*prog*~rep_marg`", cover nearly half of all cases of Property Destruction (0.483).

When applied to cases of Violence Against Persons (Table 2.5), we are presented with far fewer solutions, with two particular organizational categories comprising a bulk of the cases associated with the outcome: Racialist organizations and Extremist Christian groups. Reflecting similar findings to the necessity component of the QCA, we find that Violence Against Persons is associated most strongly with the presence of diagnostic and prognostic frame crystallization with slightly more accessible recruitment than associated with acts of Property Destruction, which we may attribute to the capacity for open recruitment organizations to attract violently predisposed "seekers". Snow and Phillips (1980) suggest that such individuals do not constitute a majority of religious participants, while studies of extremist movements such as the far-right white supremacist community support the notion that many participants actively sought out the movements as a means of resolving their grievances (Simi and Futrell 2010).

Table 2.5. Truth Table Analysis for Violence Against Persons

```
Truth Table Analysis: Violence Against Persons
```

	raw coverage	unique coverage	consistency
prog*diag*dur_score*org_score*~inacc	0.182383	0.105181	0.715447
rep_marg*prog*diag*dur_score*~inacc	0.141969	0.064767	1.000000

solution coverage: 0.247150
solution consistency: 0.773096

Cases with greater than 0.5 membership in term rep_marg*prog*diag*dur_score*~inacc: A (0.9,1),
E (0.74,1), E (0.6,1)

Cases with greater than 0.5 membership in term prog*diag*dur_score*org_score*~inacc: E (0.66,1),
E (0.6,1), F_3 (0.55,1)

[Category E corresponds to "Racialist" organizations. Category F_3 corresponds to the "Religious" category, sub-type extremist Christian.]

The solution "rep_marg*prog*diag*dur_score*~inacc" is notable in confirming that a strong Republican majority is a contributory condition for the commission of extremist political Violence Against Persons, with this particular configuration of conditions most strongly associated with Racialist organizations and comprising 0.142 of all cases of Violence Against Persons. This finding suggests that more conservative political climates may also facilitate extremist organizations on the racist far-right. However, Racialist cases were also associated with the other configurational solution "prog*diag*dur_score*org_score*~inacc", reflecting a possible facilitative effect of both measures of Organizational Viability, including organizational size (org. score) and duration (dur. score). This solution was also associated with Religious extremism of the Christian sub-type, a grievance category comprised most notably of militant anti-abortion organization the Army of God. Not only is this organization characterized by particularly frank and open recruitment of zealots to its cause, the Army of God also benefitted from a large and geographically diverse membership base from the height of its activities in the 1980s and 1990s. The enduring popularity of a select few organizations amongst anti-abortion extremists is a

possible mechanism for the causal significance of Organizational Viability for this movement type.

Ultimately, our findings reinforce the contributory importance of organization size and enduring organizational viability for the commission of Violence Against Persons, though in conjunction with other causal conditions. Both solutions associated with the Violence Against Persons outcome suggest a heightened causal importance of organizational viability in the form of either longevity or size, and a persistent causal linkage between diagnostic and prognostic frame crystallization and the commission of political violence. Because this most severe form of violence was associated primarily with two group types, Racialist organizations and Christian extremists, we find that our solutions demonstrate far less variation than those for Property Destruction. In order to better understand our findings in light of this relationship between grievances and outcomes of violence, we now turn to a detailed qualitative analysis of a number of our cases.

DISCUSSION AND DETAILED CASE ANALYSIS

To elucidate the findings of the fsQCA, we closely analyzed a number of specific cases in far greater depth to identify further theoretically meaningful characteristics pertaining to the outcome of extremist violence. Additionally, we selected a negative case to explore in greater detail those configurations of conditions that are not conducive to an outcome of violence.

The organization types most consistent with the high membership in the open recruitment and diagnostic and prognostic frame crystallization set are the Militia/Patriot and Racialist organizations. Echoing the earlier interpretation that open recruitment facilitates violence by attracting seekers with violent proclivities, a significant number of these organizations were involved in major incidences of violence in which a key participant sought out the organization as opposed to being recruited. Such was the case with the racialist Christian Identity organization

Covenant, Sword, and Arm of the Lord (CSA) and the similar but strongly anti-government centered Posse Comitatus. Such organizations, while not necessarily being exemplified by as open recruitment as an organization such as the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, the use of fuzzy membership scores for this analysis allowed for a lower degree of membership while retaining recognition of the relative ease with which an individual may join the CSA or a Posse Comitatus chapter.

Echoing the findings showing organizational duration contributing to the outcome of violence against persons, we find that Racialist and Militia/Patriot organizations able to first establish a compound or training camp to be substantially more inclined towards the completion of a major violent act than those without a base of operations. The establishment of these camps or compounds may account for the three- to five- year organizational "incubation" period prior to the commission of violence. Conversely, for property destruction, we find a much briefer preparatory period prior to the commission of the acts. For example, Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and Animal Liberation Front (ALF) arsons and bombings involved no established intent to harm persons and thus likely required of their participants far less solidary and moral agreement to carry out such acts. These cases represent those with a high level of diagnostic and prognostic frame crystallization along with an outcome of property destruction and no violence against persons. Cases with little to no diagnostic frame crystallization with absent or weak prognostic framing rarely result in an outcome of violence, but are associated with low-level property destruction, if any outcome.

Exceptional cases provide further insight in interpreting the findings of the formal analysis. For example, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society maintains both an incredibly coherent diagnostic frame (targeting whaling and environmentally destructive enterprises) and an

unusually stable prognostic frame (intervention through direct action via a novel form of environmental piracy). However, their outcomes in terms of both property destruction and violence against persons pale in comparison to many of the other exemplar cases. This case is exceptional in that Sea Shepherd is not only a largely above ground organization, but also because of the extent to which they strategically employ tactics of ambiguous legality. Although it could be argued that these distinguishing characteristics warrant the exclusion of the Sea Shepherd case, its inclusion provides a valuable boundary case between non-violent direct action and coercive political violence.

An inversely exceptional case can be found in the Soldiers of Aryan Culture. This prison gang has little in the way of coherent diagnostic or prognostic framing yet are associated with a high level of violence against persons. This finding, however, coheres with the extant literature on violent gangs, even during the political upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States (Short 1974), that suggests that gangs are minimally responsive to their political climates and less inclined to engage ideology in their practices. Prison gangs such as the Soldiers of Aryan Culture and the Aryan Brotherhood may be associated with a particularly high level of violence, particularly against persons, but often engage in such acts with additional motivational incentives outside of ideological and movement frames.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Using one of the most comprehensive datasets available for the study of domestic terrorism and extremist political violence, our findings from a series of qualitative comparative analyses (QCAs) identify a set of theorized conditions that vary in their relative importance yet interact and combine to facilitate the commission of extreme political violence against property and persons. Among the most noteworthy of our findings is the overlap in a great deal of

similarity in the causal conditions between the two types of violence. Despite the distinct character of the two forms of violence – that which causes grievous bodily harm to individuals, and the spectrum of property destruction (ranging from vandalism to arson), we find similar facilitative conditions. This can be seen in Table 2.5, despite substantial differences in the targets and the severity of violence enacted. But Table 2.5 also demonstrates the consistent role of framing processes in facilitating the commission of violence against both persons and property. However, diagnostic frame crystallization emerges with slightly higher consistency coefficients than prognostic framing in both cases, suggesting that problem identification is more critical as a precondition to extremist political violence than the actual conceptualization of a solution.

Table 2.6. Causal Conditions with Highest Consistency

Property Destruction	**Violence Against Persons**
1. Diagnostic Frame Crystallization	1. Diagnostic Frame Crystallization
2. Prognostic Frame Crystallization	2. Prognostic Frame Crystallization
3. Inaccessible/Closed Recruitment	3. Inaccessible/Closed Recruitment
4. Organization Size	4. Organizational Duration
5. Organizational Duration	5. Organization Size

In addition, our findings regarding the role of recruitment in facilitating extremist political violence varies based on the specified outcome, with property destruction being facilitated to a slightly greater extent by organizational inaccessibility. We theorize that this disparity is mediated by the impact of *slightly more* open recruitment of extremely violent organizations targeting persons, such as the Aryan Nation or Phineas Priesthood, to seekers already predisposed to committing violent crimes. It is important to note that in spite of the differences in causal significance of closed recruitment between the two types of violence, some degree of inaccessibility remains a meaningful facilitative condition for both outcomes. In line with these findings, we find that the commission of violence against persons is facilitated by a longer

organizational duration than property destruction, suggesting an "incubation period" for some sort of conversion and/or training before an organization has the capacity to perpetrate these crimes.

Although our findings present only a limited set of possible causal relationships pertaining to the complex phenomenon of extremist political violence in the United States, our study supports the proposition that closed recruitment or inaccessibility are facilitative of extremist political violence, albeit to varying degrees. Additionally, our findings reinforce existing studies in the collective action literature arguing for continued attention to organizational viability, as determined by longevity and resource mobilization, as a facilitative condition for even particularly extreme forms of social movement activity. Our mixed findings on the causal influence of Republican majorities on the two forms of political violence shed further light onto possible linkages between political context and extremist political activity. By testing for both its presence and its absence, we find that activities such as Property Destruction, often associated with the far-left, are facilitated by the absence of a Republican majority, while a Republican majority appears to have a possible causal link to Violence Against Persons in some cases of Racialist violence.

Finally, in keeping with the above observations, our study confirms the continued importance of movement framing processes in the study of collection action. Our findings clarify the theoretical and empirical distinction between the framing tasks undertaken by movement organizations, by demonstrating that the two types of framing take place independently and have differential effects on violent outcomes. The results of our necessity analysis suggest that only the two types of frame crystallization can be regarded as necessary conditions for producing an

outcome of violent, despite the causal influence of other conditions in conjunction with frame crystallization.

Given the organizational and meso-contextual anchoring of the foregoing findings and observations, it would appear that a shift in focus is in order in considering the radicalization process to extremist political violence: a shift from focusing primarily on the biographic, individual-level of identified and adjudicated perpetrators of radical violence to organizations and interactive contexts with which they are associated and embedded. This is not to deflect attention from individual level characteristics, but it is to suggest focusing greater attention on interactional dynamics and the organizational contexts in which those dynamics occur. Scholars and practitioners alike may benefit from a heightened attention to the interactions between organizational characteristics, political context and most importantly variations in framing activity as a means of understanding extremist political activity.

CHAPTER 3. VARIATION IN VIOLENCE BY EXTREMIST MOVEMENT TYPE

Law enforcement and even self-avowed analysts of political violence have often directed their attention to particular ideologies as so-called seedbeds for violent radicalization, as evidenced by the post-September 11th, 2001 increase in law enforcement surveillance of mosques (Schanzer, Kurzman and Moosa 2010). Yet the idea that some belief systems can be characterized as inherently violent and thus conducive to violent radicalization seems a difficult one to support.

At a simple level, one could identify a wealth of calls for violent and inhumane acts, implied or otherwise, in nearly any belief system or ideology. For instance, support for the violent enslavement of out-group members could be found as readily in the Torah as could be found in the racist rhetoric of an American plantation owner. The oft-used terminologies for extremist movements such as "fundamentalist" imply that such movements are hewing to fundamentalist interpretations of existing belief systems. Yet such an analysis leads not only to tautology but also fails to penetrate any deeper into the characteristics of extremist beliefs.

At a more nuanced level, the idea that an ideology can be inherently prone to a specific course of action, such as violence, seems to ascribe an unrealistic level of specificity to the guidance provided by ideology. Beck (2013) conceptualizes ideology as a "*system* of multiple beliefs, ideas, values, principles, ethic, morals, goals, and so on, that overlap, shape, and reinforce one another". While an ideology provides structure around which individuals can form worldviews, it is important to recognize that this definition does not imply that an ideology necessarily exhibits a high level of coherence, specificity, or stability in terms of actionable guidance. Prior scholarship on ideology paints a picture of the relationship between individuals

and ideology as often disjointed, fraught with contradictions and unsystematic in nature (Williams 1970; Snow 2004; Snow and Benford 2000).

What this suggests is that it is not simply the ideologies themselves that facilitate radicalization, violent or otherwise, but rather how they are accented, emphasized and subsequently deployed. Using the well-established concept of framing, scholars have identified how specific framing strategies are used by agents of recruitment, movement leaders and others to deploy particular elements of their ideologies to incite participation and loyalty. (For an overview of the framing perspective, see: Benford and Snow 2000; Snow 2004; Snow et al. 2014.)

Taking a framing perspective, this chapter seeks to show how the legitimation of violence can occur across a wide spectrum of different ideologies. In particular, it examines variation in the nature of violence between movements on the far-left and far-right ends of the political spectrum. Overall, movements on both the far-left and far-right have received a substantial amount of attention from the law enforcement and national security communities in the United States, as well as generated a fair share of anti-terrorism legislation in relation to their activities (Walker 2009). However, similarities and differences in the nature of their within-movement activities are less understood as are differences between the nature of violent activity observed across movement types. More specifically, few studies have systematically examined the tactical and ideational sources of variation in violent activity between the far-left and far-right, often either indiscriminately flattening the distinctions between two into a singular phenomenon of terrorism or more often, studying each in isolation than comparatively.

The findings of the analysis suggest the strongest determinative factor in the degree of violence enacted by a movement lies in the movement organizations' framing strategies. In the

case of motivational framing, I observe adherents on the far-left employing a pervasive motivational frame assigning sanctity and value to all human and non-human animal life, resulting in a heightened emphasis on property destruction. In contrast, adherents and organizations on the far-right tend to deploy frames of dehumanization and vilification of their targets, such as non-whites and/or non-Christian persons. These frames, in turn shape the prognostic framing of movement organizations and their propensities to cause harm to persons in the course of their activism. Additionally, I observe a key difference in terms of how movements conceptualized property, with the far-left most often eschewing the notion of private property while the far-right places a great deal of emphasis on the sanctity of property and its symbolic value. Finally, the analysis identifies similarities in the framing strategies of the far-left and far-right in their use of a justificatory motivational frame conceptualizing their violent actions as morally-defensible preemptive self-defense.

Overall, this chapter contributes two key intuitions about the relationship between political ideology and political violence. The first intuition is that the use of violence gets legitimated in different ways depending on the beliefs and values of a particular ideology. Two ideologies may be at opposite ends of the political spectrum and therefore diametrically opposed in terms of their particular beliefs and values. But if one of these ideologies has the propensity for violence, this does not imply that the opposing ideology is consequently opposed to violence. Violence may simply take on different forms and come to be rationalized through different rhetoric. By examining the range of ways in which violence can come to be rationalized at different ends of the political spectrum, this chapter contributes to the perspective that violence, as a specific course of action, is at best only loosely-coupled to the particular beliefs and values of an ideology.

Building on this insight, the second key intuition offered by this chapter is that underlying the ostensive rationales through which particular forms of violence get justified within particular ideologies, there are actually some fundamental commonalities in the logical structures of these rationales. At the most fundamental level, rationales for violence from across the political spectrum all seem to reflect an implicit recognition that, in and of itself, violence is morally reprehensible. If violence were not inherently reprehensible given the beliefs and values of a particular ideology, then a complex justification would not be necessary. Yet the analysis in this chapter suggests that across the political spectrum, it is important for those who engage in violence to believe that it somehow preempts other non-justifiable violence. These beliefs are reflected in highly-elaborated frames that come to be shared among adherents. By examining these commonalities, this chapter contributes to the perspective that violence is the result of a general set of facilitating conditions, which can arise across the spectrum of political ideologies as opposed to being coupled to the beliefs and values of any particular ideology.

Literature Review

Extremism

The following study divides its subjects into two broad categories: far-left and far-right extremists. This categorization of their movements as extremist is not intended as a value judgment but rather as a means of understanding the character of their beliefs and operation. Extremist movements often defy convenient classification, but in the case of extremism in the United States, the term is used in this study as a way of situating the movements in relation to their more moderate peers. Breton, Galeotti, Salmon and Wintrobe (2002) note in the foreword of their anthology *Political Extremism and Rationality* that extremism can be defined variously as: 1) a move away from the center towards an extreme versus an equilibrium position; 2) a

rigidity of beliefs with little capacity or willingness to compromise; 3) "a shrinking of the range" or limited spectrum of options and choices which are considered by the individual; 4) a heightened salience or importance of a certain set of beliefs, often to the point of fixation; and/or 5) the tactics, particularly violent ones, used to further one's political aims. For the purposes of this study, I find that this definition is sufficient in capturing the types of movements being examined and adequately describes the qualities of their activities. Because this broad set of dimensions of extremism was also utilized in identifying potential subjects for the following study, there remains a number of methodological challenges and issues to resolve in the theoretical treatment of "extremism" going forward.

Classifying the Far-Left versus the Far-Right

Although some scholarly discussion has been devoted to nuancing the classification of social movements within various conceptualizations of the "political spectrum", with the most recent and extensive being Heywood's (2017) examination of political ideologies, the linear spectrum of ideological classification remains the most prevalent and perhaps the most readily utilized heuristic for classifying movement organizations. On the other hand, as Heywood summarizes, there is an emergent alternative in the form of the "horseshoe thesis" (Faye 2004), which acknowledges that the embracement of violent and extra-institutional tactics and compromises to individual liberty at the two extremes of the political spectrum is such that radicals of both variants may have more in common than their centrist counterparts on the left and right. Although this conceptualization has its utility, in the course of examining both the extensive data in the American Terrorism Study and through ethnographic fieldwork with individuals across the spectrum, it is apparent adherents at these two poles of the political spectrum perceive themselves to be diametrically opposed and view one another as primary

antagonists. This deepening gulf between the far-left and far-right furthers the necessity of comparative research as their increasing visibility continues to stir debate among observers and onlookers.

The recent emergence of the designation "alt-right" has given new substance to the two-pole distinction between the far-left and far-right. Within the discourses of the two sides of a heightening conflict between progressive and ultra-conservative values, the rhetoric of the far-right has taken to framing the far-left with such pejoratives as "social justice warriors" and broadly lumping all anti-racist, anti-fascist groups as "ANTIFA", referring to these activists under the moniker used by the widely organized Anti-Fascist Action groups active throughout Europe and North America. Similarly, the far-left has taken to characterizing the increasingly visible far-right as "neo-fascists", "white supremacists" and intolerant bigots, while the mainstream media has labeled this recent surge in far-right activity with the term "alt-right".

Through empirical investigation of the enterprise of framing within movements associated with violent extremism, as well as a comparative approach to develop grounded bases for differentiating extremist movements from their moderate or reformist counterparts, I seek to identify mechanisms for radicalization *aside* from simply ideology. To accomplish this, I focus the ideational component of my analysis on frame alignment processes. First advanced by Snow et al. (1986), frame alignment refers to the micromobilization process by which individual frames reach a state of congruency with those deployed by the movement.

The relationship between ideational work such as framing and mobilization has been established many times over, with framing emerging as one of the most productive approaches to the study of social movements in recent decades (for an overview, see: Benford and Snow 2000; Snow 2004; Snow et.al, 2014). Drawing on Goffman's discourse on frame analysis (1974), Snow

et al. (1986) conceptualized collective action frames as sets of meanings, beliefs, values and attributions that legitimate and motivate the actions of collective actors, the key objective of which is frame alignment. Snow and colleagues (1986) first conceptualized frame alignment as a form of micromobilization, wherein individual frames and beliefs align with those deployed by the movement, resulting in a resonance between movement adherents and the aims of the movement.

Data and Methods

This research will draw from a wealth of original qualitative data and previously unanalyzed case file data on participants of extremist social movements from the American Terrorism Study (ATS) originally developed by Brent Smith at the University of Arkansas and expanded with a Framing and Identity Database by Dr. David A. Snow and Anna Tan. The case selection will be expansive, encompassing all organizations and individuals classified by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as "domestic terrorists" from 1980 to the present, as well as extensive expansion using Southern Poverty Law Center and hate crime databases on political extremism. The dataset is comprised of court case data, police and FBI intelligence and open source media as well as post-conviction records of 465 persons and 38 organizations for which extensive qualitative data and statements were available.

Among the challenges faced by all scholars of political violence is the reality that the availability of data and the selection of cases are heavily influenced by highly mutable and context-specific definitions of "terrorism". Using the American Terrorism Study and TEVUS (Terrorism and Extremist Violence in the United States) database, I examine cases from the FBI designated population of domestic terrorism events and perpetrators within the United States from 1980 to 2012. To identify and correct for biases and definitional shifts in the FBI and

Department of Justice's indictment of individuals for "terrorism"-related charges, I also expand the available data by seeking out cases which may have been excluded from the sample due to the particular conceptualization of what constitutes terrorism during the given time period. For example, following September 11, 2001, the U.S. government's focus on international terrorism, particularly that originating from the Middle East as well as so-called "homegrown" jihadist activity, greatly diverted attention from domestic extremism such as violent attacks committed by Aryan Brotherhood members and other white power movement (WPM) adherents.

As discussed previously, what constitutes terrorism and political violence is highly variant across both place and time, particularly in the eyes of overseeing government agencies. In this study, I treat the cases of "domestic terrorism" as alleged by the U.S. government and law enforcement agencies as incidences of violent radicalism. In order to account for variation in operant definitions of "domestic terrorism" and the likely shifts in what kinds of violent radical political activity are included in the law enforcement conceptualization thereof, I will attempt to identify biases and distinct shifts in the composition of the sample of individuals and movement organizations for my study.

The depth and richness of available qualitative data on individuals indicted on federal terrorism charges varies immensely. Smith and Damphousse (2002) suggest that these weaknesses of the data do not constitute systematic biases or lacunae but rather the challenges of using court case data, which is subject to a variety of unorganized processes such as appeals, truncated legal records and inconsistent court record-keeping. To enrich the court case data, myself and Dr. David Snow also contributed a qualitative supplement to the ATS data. This "Framing and Identity" database includes the addition of a substantial number of qualitative dimensions as well as organizational characteristics. This supplemental database emphasizes the

role of framing, broken down into constitutive components such as Diagnostic Framing and Prognostic Framing, as well as organizational dimensions such as recruitment and membership in extremist organizations. I will be utilizing this database and disaggregating the analysis to individuals within the organizations. This process of data collection involved extensive collection of media reports, online communiqués and was then supplemented with the ethnographic component of the data, in the form of interviews conducted with the subjects and field observation in various movement-related settings.

The interviews and field observations that constitute the ethnographic component of this study were conducted between August of 2015 and March of 2017. The interviews generally took place subsequent to informal introduction from mutual friends, whether over text message or in-person. All interviews are unstructured and of variable length, as effort was made to ensure that the interview time was scheduled in such a way that it could proceed with minimal time constraints. Sampling was not random, but rather strategic: utilizing a variety of networks and contacts within the activist, subcultural and independent music communities, I sought to identify a fairly diverse assortment of subjects across the spectrum from far-left to far-right with informants also representing less visible extremist movements such as ethnic liberationist movements (black separatism), the men's rights movement and outlaw motorcycle gangs. These movement adherents were then classified based upon their statements, attributions and self-identification into the broader categories of far-left or far-right.

Beginning from these starting points, once initial interviews were complete, most respondents were quite willing to refer me to additional individuals that they suggested might be open to being interviewed. Because of the rarity of these individuals in the broader context of society, I could not be overly selective in who I chose to interview. Even so, exclusion criteria

were utilized to make determinations of which individuals to interview within these snowball samples. Exclusion criteria included non-affiliation with the movement with which the identified – that is, individuals who described themselves as sympathetic but never engaged in any activism on behalf of the movements with which they claimed to be associated nor were they in direct social contact with any individuals in the movement organizations. Both on the far-left and far-right were a number of individuals who initially described themselves as "heavily involved" or "hardcore" in the course of their introduction, but eventually made it clear that although they had every intention to involve themselves, they had stayed on the sidelines for a host of reasons. Brief interviews with these individuals were retained but not included in the data examined herein. Additionally, those respondents, particularly on the highly secretive far-right, who I was able to gain social access to had to be pursued vigorously and with great effort in situating myself in such a way that I was trusted. Even with these measures in place and significantly lowered selectivity in terms of who was to be interviewed, a number of individuals declined to be interviewed. All names used in both the analysis and the bodies of the transcribed interviews are pseudonyms, including those who are secondary subjects. Ages, locations and affiliations are all retained, with approximate ages used for a number of subjects who did not mention their age when asked briefly about the biographical backgrounds. In these cases, I used the age given for the individual by the previous interviewee or person who referred her/him to me for the interview.

The following table summarizes the characteristics of the interviewees. All subjects were interviewed in a recorded but informal, lengthy interview session and also observed and interacted with in a variety of other social settings. Four of the subjects were given follow-up interviews to both revisit topics raised in the previous interview and to touch upon issues not

covered in the original interview. Only two interviews were conducted on the phone or Facetime (a video chat interface similar to that of Skype), with both of those individuals – John of Lincoln, NE and Eric of Toronto, ON – being former acquaintances with whom I have had extensive previous face-to-face contact. Otherwise, all interviews were conducted in informal recorded sessions, generally in neutral locations familiar to the interview subjects such as coffee houses, restaurants, or public parks.

Table 3.1. Interviewees

	Pseudonym	**Age**	**M/F/T***	**Location**	**Affiliation/Beliefs**
1.	Tommy	19	M	Chicago, IL	White power/racialist, WN
2.	Chris	29	M	Hemet, CA	Nazi Lowrider, OMC gang
3.	Lisa	~28	F	Riverside, CA	Racist skinhead, neo-Nazi
4.	Ricki	37	M	~Anaheim, CA	Mongol MC, OMC gang
5.	John	32	M	Lincoln, NE	Anti-capitalist, "class war"
6.	Eric	22	M	Toronto, ON	Animal liberation/anarchist
7.	Patrick	31	M	Los Angeles, CA	Anarchist, anti-capitalist
8.	Greg	33	M	Los Angeles, CA	Anarchist, animal-liberation
9.	Scott	38	M	Everett, WA	White supremacist, form. AN
10.	Leigh	44	M	Marysville, WA	Sovereign Citizen/Oath Keeper
11.	Sally	20	F	Bellingham, WA	Anti-capitalist, animal lib
12.	Hammam	37	M	Los Angeles, CA	Nation of Islam, black sep.
13.	Jeff	31	M	Seattle, WA	Proud Boy, WN, anti-immigrant
14.	Ryder	27	M	Olympia/Portland	ANTIFA, anarchist, anti-cap
15.	Eli	~39	M	Tacoma, WA	Neo-Nazi, Euro Aryan Nat.
16.	Giorgi	28	M	Omaha, NE	Neo-fascist, NSM, neo-Nazi
17.	Nick	32	M	Seattle, WA	Proud Boy, "alt-right", WN
18.	Harrison	35	M	Syracuse, NY	Men's rights activist
19.	Nicky	31	M	Portland, OR	Former WP, MC outlaw
20.	Will	53	M	Portland, OR	Former WP, MC outlaw
21.	Jessi	24	F	Tacoma, WA	Animal lib. Earth lib. Anarc

*Male/Female/Transgender

Additionally, extensive field notes were taken outside of interview interactions with the respondents being observed and interacted with in a variety of settings. Included among the settings in which interviews and field observation took place were protests, rallies and awareness raising events on both the far-left and far-right, and concerts targeting fans of music associated with either the far-left or far-right. In the case of those events organized by far-right

organizations and individuals, aside from instances in which an interview respondent maintained close proximity to provide a degree of entrée or safety, field observation was taken under the premise of being a naïve outsider who happened to "stumble upon" these events. Most notably, a number of concerts involving neo-Nazi musicians and self-described National Socialist black metal bands were attended after finding event information on movement-specific online message boards or websites. In order to draw minimal attention to myself, I arranged my appearance to fit closely with that of the attendees, such as displaying my tattoos, wearing a studded leather jacket and band shirts of similar but non-racist artists and responding to any questions or conversation from other attendees with the premise that I am a fan of the specific genres of music but know little about the beliefs of the bands themselves. The field notes capture roughly 270 hours of observation of and interaction with the respondents as well as with others in their social circles.

Both the data collection process and analytical process took place in tandem and in multiple rounds, building upon insights emerging in each successive iteration. Drawing from Charmaz's (2006) processes for developing grounded theory, the 21 interviews and roughly 270 hours of other field notes were coded in order to identify key themes and patterns in the data. The development of grounded theory can be characterized not as a single procedure but rather a process of analysis that identifies meaningful themes and concepts through continuous refinement. In practice, grounded theory involves multiple rounds of coding, beginning with freeform codes and observations, gradually evolving into more specific coding schemas and typologies.

For the frame analysis component of this study, I utilize the concept of frame crystallization as an operationalization of frame alignment. Frame crystallization is the extent to which multiple members of the same organization or movement espouse the same frames,

whether that may be in the form of shared master frames identifying direct action as the primary mean to effect political change, or in diagnostic, prognostic or motivational frames driving their activism. Both the ATS data and the ethnographic data was coded for frame crystallization in order to not only identify the frames present among the individuals in the ATS and in the ethnographic data, but also the extent to which these multiple members were in agreement with or adherents of these frames, thereby highlighting their actual importance in practice.

Analysis and Findings

A qualitative analysis of the 21 interviews and observations about the subjects supports a link between movement type and the commission of extremist violence. The interviewees were categorized based on their self-identification with certain movement organizations and avowed adherence to a number of radical identities. In the course of expanding the ATS and constructing a qualitative database useful for comparative research, Dr. Snow and myself conceptualized the following breakdown of the movement types by radical identity. These movement types are informed by the core grievance of the movement adherent or movement organization and allows us to broadly distinguish between movement sub-types on the far-left and far-right that may share, broadly, similar ideological underpinnings but drastically different aims politically.

Table 3.2. Radical Identities by Core Grievance

A = Militia/Patriot
B = Environmental
C = Gangs/Motorcycle clubs
D = Liberation D_1= Nationalist/Revolutionary D_2 = Racial/Ethnic D_3 = Animal
E = Racialist

F = Religious
F_1 = Muslim/Islamic
F_2 = Jewish/Zionist
F_3 = Christian

Table 3.3. Unprompted Admissions to Committing Acts of Violence or Destruction

Subject	Orientation	Violence Against Persons	Property Destruction
Tommy	Racialist	O	O
Chris	Gang	X	O
Lisa	Racialist	X	O
Ricki	Gang	X	X
John	Far-left	O	O
Eric	Environ.	O	X
Patrick	Far-left	X	X
Greg	Environ.	O	X
Scott	Racialist	X	O
Leigh	Far-Right	X	O
Sally	Environ.	O	X
Hammam	Liberationist	O	O
Jeff	Racialist	X	O
Ryder	Far-Left	X	X
Eli	Racialist	O	O
Giorgi	Racialist	O	X
Nick	Racialist	X	O
Harrison	Far-right	O	O
Nicky	Gang	X	O
Will	Gang	X	O
Jessi	Environ.	O	X

Table 3.4. Admissions to Violence and/or Property Destruction by Far-Left vs. Far-Right

Type	# of Subjs.	Violence Against Persons	Property Destruction
Far-Right	13	10	3
Far-Left	8	2	6

Table 3.1 summarizes all interview subjects across the duration of the entire study. For clarification, Table 3.2 provides a breakdown of the movement sub-types, organized by radical identity and core grievance associated with the movement organizations. For a further explanation of these radical identities, please see the introduction that provides an overview of these categories, which were developed through a grounded theory approach and refined and

informed by secondary data. Table 3.3 summarizes the participation of the 21 subjects in violent activity based on unprompted admissions made in the course of either an interview or informal conversation. For the purposes of this analysis, I consider an admission unprompted if it was not in relation to a question posed by the researcher regarding violent or criminal activity. There are certain weaknesses to this approach, namely the likelihood that one might be less inclined to openly discuss violent acts with a relatively unfamiliar person. Additionally, when disaggregating the acts into Violence Against Persons versus Property Destruction, it can be observed that property destruction is discussed more frequently (though only by a single observation). This may be a result of lower stigma associated with acts of vandalism or property destruction versus that of harming another individual. Finally, Table 3.4 presents the tallies of admissions of violence or property destruction by Far-Left versus Far-Right.

In order to compare these interviewed individuals to those indicted for involvement in terrorist activities by the federal government, below is a summary of the instances of Violence Against Persons and Property Destruction enacted by persons contained within the American Terrorism Study (ATS) database, organized by radical identity and then re-aggregated by position on the far-left or far-right. Utilizing the coding scheme from the previous chapter, the acts of political violence associated with each of the organizations was totaled and then coded on a scale from 0 to 1 based on severity. The severity coding scale was developed through a grounded process through which the cases are all scored relative to one another. For example, a score of 0 on VIOL (Violence Against Persons) reflects no harm done to individuals where a score of 1 (most severe) corresponds to human casualty, including mass casualties, murders and assassinations. Similarly for Property Destruction, a score of 0 reflects no damage to property or facilities, whereas 1 reflects an act of arson, bombing or complete destruction of a targeted

property. The sums total all incidents associated with the movement type as a sum of all of the severity scores associated with the movement. The tables below also reflect the mean severity score of both Violence Against Persons and Property Destruction by movement type. Aggregated into the Far-Left and Far-Right, the radical identity type are then totaled once again and then mean severity scores totaled and re-averaged based on the number of movement types within each category.

Table 3.5. Violence Against Persons by Movement Type

Radical Identity	sum(VIOL)	mean(VIOL)
Militia Patriot	4.5	0.4091
Environmental	0	0
Gangs/Motorcycle Clubs	1	1
Liberation Movement: National/Revolutionary	3	0.75
Liberation Movement: Racial/Ethnic	1	0.5
Animal Liberation Movement	0	0
Racialist	8.75	0.6731
Religious Extremism: Christian	1	1

Table 3.6. Property Destruction by Movement Type

Radical Identity	sum(PROP)	mean(PROP)
Militia Patriot	6.75	0.61363636
Environmental	3	1
Gangs/Motorcycle Clubs	0.75	0.75
Liberation Movement: National/Revolutionary	3.25	0.8125
Liberation Movement: Racial/Ethnic	1	0.5
Animal Liberation Movement	3.75	0.9375
Racialist	8.75	0.6731

Religious Extremism: Christian	1	1

Table 3.7. Violence Against Persons and Property Destruction By Far-Left vs. Far-Right

Type	sum(VIOL)	mean(VIOL)	sum(PROP)	mean(PROP)
Far-Left	4	0.3125	10	0.8125
Far-Right	15.25	0.958	17.25	0.759

As evidenced in the summary statistics above, the interview subjects provide a means of comparison and insight into the types of organizations and individuals contained within the ATS, with the exception that they were not indicted on federal terrorism charges and are therefore more accessible by virtue of not being incarcerated or having substantially altered their identities following release from the Department of Corrections. The relative composition of the sample of interview subjects based on movement type and their participation in the two forms of violent activity in their activist careers suggests that the ethnographic component of the data may provide a reasonable means of gaining deeper insight into the backgrounds, rhetorical and ideational characteristics, beliefs and experiences of individuals who enact political violence. One of the more readily apparent differences though is the substantially higher level of participation in Property Destruction on behalf of the Far-Right than in the interview study subject sample. One significant explanation for this discrepancy is that individuals on the far-right frequently engaged in activities such as mosque, temple, abortion clinic or gay bar vandalism, bombings or arsons with the intent of harming individuals. In cases in which property destruction was not the primary objective, the case was coded as property destruction as well as violence against persons with the severity score weighted to reflect the extent of the property destruction as well as the intent to inflict harm on persons. Oftentimes, the far-right perpetrators

associated with these incidents strategized their actions to maximize the total harm enacted and sought to both figuratively and literally "cripple" their targets, as gathered from comments within the ATS data associated with Christian extremist organization the Army of God. Similar remarks can also be attributed to indicted members of racialist group the Order and racialist organization the Phineas Priests, who engaged in a number of bombings or arson incidents resulting in both violent outcomes. Although organizations on both the far-left and far-right engaged in significant levels of Property Destruction, the following analysis will provide further insight into the distinct characteristics of how the far-right often utilizes both forms of violence, both strategically and as a consequence of prognostic frames attaching symbolic value to certain physical structures and properties.

In interviewing the individuals represented in the ethnographic component of the data, I also sought to gain greater access to an additional population that is not represented in the ATS – negative cases. Of those individuals, although all were self-identified activists within their respective movements, not all admitted participation in violence of either property-destruction or violence against persons. In the following chapters, in addition to analyzing differences between those who enact violence on the far-left and far-right, I also hope to compare those who have and those who have not, in the interest of further identifying sources of variation in how violence is enacted within extremist movements.

Differences Between the Far-Left and Far-Right in the Use of Violence as Identity Work

Strong differences can be observed in the weight placed on the use of violence as a form of identity work and its perceived value to the movement. Snow and Anderson (1987) advanced the concept of identity work as a range of behaviors intended create and sustain self-identity. Of particular relevance to understanding the actions of activist adherents of extremist political

movements, identity work is particularly useful as a means of understanding how radical identities are formed, sustained and deployed in the process of violent activism. Snow and Anderson describe five key aspects of identity work: (1) the verbal construction of identity, (2) arrangement and display of physical props, (3) arrangement of appearance / "face work", (4) selective association with individuals and groups and (5) engagement in group-relevant acts and events. While identity work is present in nearly all social settings, the role of identity in collective action is heightened in the case of collective identity, wherein individual adherents of movements are engaged in the construction of a group identity. While scholars such as Simi and Futrell (2009) have previously explored how identity work operates in the far-right, specifically in white power movement communities, comparative studies of how identity work shapes violent activity in the far-left versus the far-right are limited. On the far-left, intimidation and violence is far less frequently utilized as a gauge of commitment. For example, Sally 20 year old female animal liberationist and anarchist in Bellingham, WA, John a 32 year old male anti-capitalist from Lincoln, NE and Jessi, a 24 year old female animal and earth liberation activist from Tacoma, WA all expressed their resistance to collaborating with other activists within either their own organizations or other groups that openly owned guns and chose to openly carry items such as knives and batons to protests. As John describes, "these people make us look bad. We're ready for a fight but that fight is more for hearts and minds and it doesn't help us to scare the kinds of people who come to these protests as moderates or because they're curious about our movements."

In the course of my analysis, I also began to observe intimidation as a concomitant process alongside the commission of violent acts, particularly on the Far-Right. Much of this was accomplished through the identity work practice of face work in the form of clothing and tattoos,

arrangement and display of physical props and ultimately through the use of violence as a form of demonstration event. As evidenced by former neo-Nazi Lisa's display of a Nazi flag in her bedroom or the acquisition of a Swastika chest tattoo by 39 year old former Aryan Nation member and neo-Nazi Eli, certain images such as the Nazi swastika possess such a powerful symbolic effect on observers that they are particularly potent as instruments of intimidation. Simi and Futrell (2009) observe that the display of certain markers of identity such as swastika tattoos carry such extraordinary risks and stigma that they may only be deployed in very selective settings.

As further evidence of the role of violence as a form of identity work, the character of the violent acts described by the subjects strongly coheres with the movement frames of their respective organizations or groups. To illustrate, it can be observed in Table 3.2 that, with only two exceptions, participants of far-left leaning movements eschewed violence against persons and instead enacted acts of property destruction. Similarly, Patrick, the one far-left subject who did admit to committing acts of violence against persons describes himself as "not a violent person by any means" but assaulted an alleged neo-Nazi sympathizer at an anti-immigration protest who he claimed was physically intimidating another protester. Although if this incident did indeed transpire as described, it could be categorized as an incident of self-defense of some kind; yet, for the purposes of this analysis, it is undeniably an act of physical violence. The framing of instances of violence against persons as self-defense was consistent across both individuals on the far-left who admitted to violent acts. A comparable frame also emerged among far-right subjects, and will be addressed in greater detail further in the analysis.

Regardless, knowledge within the movement and its affiliates that an individual had committed an act of property destruction in the interests of a far-left movement had strongly

positive social consequences. Even those aforementioned instances of violence against persons under the auspices of self-defense can have beneficial consequences emotionally and socially for far-left activists. This can be seen in the remarks of Ryder, a 27 year old anti-capitalist, anarchist and member of ANTIFA (Anti-Fascist Action)[1], who was seen at an Occupy Portland protest action physically grappling with a uniformed and armored police officer equipped with pepper spray. He remarked proudly:

> There's photos all over the internet – like social media (of the incident). People still ask me about it all of the time. Even though my face is covered, people recognize me by the dreads [dreadlocks] and I've posted it on my Facebook. It feels good to know something I did inspired people, if it empowers people to fight back against something unjust, that's something I'm proud of."

Variation in Violence Rooted in Differences in Movement Frames

Across the qualitative data contained within the American Terrorism Study and the various movement participants interviewed, a number of frames central to the movements emerged. In the course of coding the ATS and ethnographic data, both individuals and organization's espoused certain diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames. In contrast to individual-level attributions or beliefs, frames were shared among multiple respondents or documents associated with an organization. The degree to which these frames aligned among multiple respondents was coded as frame crystallization. In the analysis below, I find that crystallization of a number of key frames was associated with higher incidence of violence. Of

[1] ANTIFA has been a longstanding fixture in the radical leftist community as an anti-racist, anti-fascist and by extension, often anti-law enforcement organization attributed with the development of the "black bloc" tactic of individuals gathering at protests with black masks or bandanas and all-black clothing in order to highlight their anonymity and non-hierarchal nature.

the three core elements of collective action framing: diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing, I found a number of pervasive themes in the frames that mobilized adherents to engage in political violence.

I identified these frames through multiple rounds of open coding within the two data sources and then multiple iterations of thematic coding using a shared coding scheme to identify common frames and discursive patterns within the data.

Far-left: The Sacred Personhood of Human and Non-Human Animals.

In order for the internal logic of this prominent frame within the animal rights movement to operate, the inherent sanctity of animal life is recognized as a function of their status as non-human persons. This personhood therefore bestows a symmetrical level of sanctity to all forms of life. Although animal and earth liberation activists would be loathe to elevate the value of human life over that of non-human animals, by extension, human life cannot simply be trivialized. According to Sally, a 20 year animal liberationist, vegan activist and self-described anti-capitalist anarchist,

> WE don't do that. We don't hurt people. That's the government's job – the police, the military – weapons of oppression they use against us - they do that to silence us. It makes me so angry when I read a news story about "violent protesters" because they never talk about the violence used by the police to shut those protests down, or that they never hurt any actual people on purpose.

It is important, then, to clarify that these values deal with the acts of extinguishing human and non-human animal life. When it comes to the potential for injury of either workers within targeted industries or members of law enforcement harmed during protests, subjects on the far-

left had far more ambiguous attitudes. Unlike Sally, who vehemently denied that any individual within "her" radical left community has ever harmed another person, Greg, a 33 year old animal and earth liberationist, describes these instances as "unavoidable" and "miniscule" compared to the "devastation unleashed by the organizations and corporations that employ them", speaking in references to workers who may be injured in the course of industrial sabotage or arsons of factories and farming or logging operations.

When pressed on this question of the sanctity of life, I asked four of the 7 subjects on the far-left what they felt about the use of extreme tactics such as bombing, vandalism and arson in the pro-life movement. This question was raised when appropriate within the flow of the interview in hopes of gaining greater insight into the tendency or capacity for analogical thinking between their actions within their Far-Left movements and those of the perceived Far-Right. All 4 individuals initially bristled at the question. Sally, the 20 year old animal liberationist, described abortion clinic bombings as a form of "religious terrorism," and Ryder, the anti-capitalist activist who admitted to "sabotaging" a convention center in downtown Portland as among the proudest of his activist accomplishment, described the destruction of abortion clinics as "an attack on human rights".

Snow and Machalek (1983) in their study on the nature of the "convert" as a social type, conducted among individuals of a new religious movement, found that one of the characteristics of adherents of unconventional belief systems is the suspension of analogical thinking. Analogical thinking draws parallels between actions within one setting to another, for example, how violence utilized by one movement may be morally or ethically comparable to that enacted by another movement. In questioning the individuals on the Far-Left on the possible human casualties from activities such as factory or corporate sabotage or the widely publicized arson of

housing developments or the firebombing of the Tandy Leather Factor in Utah in 1997, respondents emphasized the commitment of the "radical community" (to use the term espoused by 5 of the 7 subjects) to non-violence. Respondents drew symbolic boundaries between these actions and what they conceptualized as "violence" by highlighting that the physical structures themselves were the target, rather than individuals associated with the institutions or businesses.

This phenomenon, of course, provides segue way to the other predominant frame within the Far-Left: property destruction is not violence.

Far-Right: Property as Sacred – Far-Left: Property is Unjust

Consistent with the anti-capitalist traditions echoed throughout much of the literature and rhetorical materials within far-left movements (Giddens 1994), the destruction of property is regarded merely as a strategic act, or in some cases, a necessary act. Among the self-identified anarchist subjects that were interviewed, of which there are 6, the subjects referred to the common trope that "property is theft" and that the sanctity of privately owned property only served to perpetuate oppression and inequality. The Far-Left subjects interviewed also consistently described themselves as anti-capitalist, whether this was expressed by aligning themselves against certain forms of property and enterprises, such as those involved with the meat and fur industry or actively sabotaging so-called vehicles of capitalism and globalization such as meetings of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and supra-national coalitions focused on global economic development such as the G8 and G20. Therefore, their particular form of violence is strictly against property rather than persons – reflected in the ethnographic and ATS data by the overwhelming abstention from Violence Against Persons among individuals on the Far-Left. In fact, in a statement regarding a particular incident of vandalism of an animal

research lab, animal liberationist Eric describes the motivations behind the incident as compassionate rather than malicious: "I really wouldn't want anyone to lose their job or get hurt or whatever and I think as far as this action, we wanted to keep it that way". In the case of the Far-Right, their diagnostic framing often identifies other types of persons as their adversaries, and thus we find that they are overwhelmingly responsible for acts of violence against persons in both this sample and also in other secondary datasets[2] on extremist violence.

Perhaps due to this materialist view of property, the perpetrators of property destruction in both the interview data, and the more extensive ATS data on individual actors, rarely destroyed property for solely symbolic reasons. While perpetrators of property destruction on the far-right frequently identified targets based on their symbolic value to the targeted communities, such as gay bars and abortion clinics in the case of Christian extremist organizations such as the Army of God, or predominately African American churches in the case of racialist organizations. In spite of the widely publicized and pervasive acts of anti-capitalist vandalism within the radical community, perpetrators on the far-left characterized the targeting of high-visibility symbols of globalization such as Starbucks and Nike as "putting a dollar value on the destruction of our communities". Surely enough, this mantra of raising the economic costs of the exploitation of animals, including human animals, is consistent with the founding principles of the main organizations active on the far left, the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF).

In an inversion of the far-left movements' denial of property destruction as violence, the far-right places a far greater value on the sanctity of personal property, with a number of

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[2] For further reference, see the Terrorism and Extremist Violence in the United States (TEVUS) database administered by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) and the American Terrorism Study (ATS) dataset maintained at the University of Arkansas Fayetteville.

interview subjects and individuals in the ATS all making statements to the effect that government seizure of property -- in the form of militia headquarters or training compounds, vehicles, or firearms -- was a form of violence against them, against which they have a legitimate right to defend themselves. With the events of the January-February 2016 Ammon Bundy and loosely affiliated Sovereign Citizens occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Harney County Oregon still recent at the time of the interviews, a number of interview subjects raised the matter of the sanctity of individual land ownership, with two individuals, Leigh – a self-described 44- year old Sovereign Citizen, and Scott, a 38-year old white separatist/white nationalist, mentioning the Bundy standoff on their own volition.

On the other hand, within the federally indicted perpetrators of violence in the ATS database, individuals on the far-right committed a number of high-profile acts of property destruction, but these were primarily in conjunction with attacks on persons as well. This tendency, coupled with an additional frame characterizing violent action as a form of defense of a community or race's rights, provides a meaningful explanatory tool in regards to the higher levels of violence against persons observed on the far-right. In the aforementioned reference to the Army of God, the intent of these large-scale violent incidents committed by adherents of far-right movements is to "cripple", both literally and figuratively, thus calling for attacks that target both civilian persons and facilities, institutions or buildings deemed significant to the targeted populations. These targets may be racial and religious in nature, such as the White Patriot Party's intention to firebomb a mosque during worship services, or governmental in the most infamous case of the Oklahoma City Bombing, carried out by anti-government terrorists Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, culminating in 168 deaths, nearly 700 injured and estimated $652 million dollars in damage to the targeted federal buildings and adjacent structures.

Far-right: Dehumanization of Non-Whites and Other Targets of Violence

This reasoning can be understood in many respects to be the central logic underlying the racially-motivated mass killing prescribed by the Nazi ideology from which a substantial proportion of contemporary white power frames are derived. These values become more nuanced and sometimes conflicting between individuals in different organizations within the white power movement, such as attitudes towards whites with darker complexions or those with Spanish ancestry. In a previous study employing an ethnographic content analysis of the largest online white power movement community, Stormfront, Snow, Tan and Owens (2013) found the contemporary white power movement (WPM) to be largely divided into two competing frames of white power ideology: the American frame and the European frame. The European frame was most commonly associated with adherents of U.S. based groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, espousing U.S.-centered view of white culture and identity wherein patriotism and American values of constitutional liberties and alleged principles of the Founding Fathers take precedence over heritage and ties to European traditions. On the other hand, the European frame emphasized white heritage as being fundamentally linked to a European identity, wherein adherents will identify themselves based on their nation's or ethnic group's ancestry, such as Nords or Anglos. Adherents include many American users who denigrate the course of U.S. history as being an affront to the white race, and view the U.S. as being fundamentally tainted by multiculturalism, and therefore either prefer to identify with their European ancestry and/or call for a restoration of these ethnic identities in the United States.

In order to constantly reinforce this dehumanization process and trivialization of life, movement adherents utilizing both the European and American frames are frequently observed to use terms such as "monkeys" and "vermin" and refer to violence against their targets not as

crime or brutality, but rather "cleansing", a form of "cleaning up", and "extermination". As can be further observed in the ATS data describing organizations such as the World Church of the Creator, a racist, white supremacist religious organization that also engages in racially motivated violence, as well as in the discourse of the Aryan Nation and the Covenant, the Sword and the Arm of the Lord, racialist organizations go to great length to dispel moral discomfort amongst their followers by advancing motivational frames calling for violence in order to neutralize the threat of non-whites to the white race. This can be observed in the "14 Words", a slogan elevated to near universality in the WPM: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children." Initially coined by David Lane of racialist organization the Order, responsible for the 1984 kidnapping and assassination of Jewish radio host Alan Berg, the 14 words are often accompanied by the 88 word excerpt from Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*:

> What we must fight for is to safeguard the existence and reproduction of our race and our people, the sustenance of our children and the purity of our blood, the freedom and independence of the fatherland, so that our people may mature for the fulfillment of the mission allotted it by the creator of the universe. Every thought and every idea, every doctrine and all knowledge, must serve this purpose. And everything must be examined from this point of view and used or rejected according to its utility (Hitler 1925).

The ubiquity of these two statements to the contemporary WPM can be observed in the prevalence of tattoos bearing the numbers 14 and 88, often stylized to "14/88" with 88 also corresponding to the 8th letter of the alphabet "H", providing the double entendre of "Heil Hitler". Aside from its ubiquity as an identity marker in online communication, two of the interview respondents on the far-right have this tattooed on parts of their bodies.

Differences arise, however, when dealing with the American versus the European frame's conceptualizations of whiteness and purity of heritage. In the interview with a second generation Italian white supremacist, the individual expresses his resentment of what he considers the American perspective on race and also purity because he feels organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan alienate Italians on the basis of their darker complexion, immigrant status and their relationship to Catholicism. Giorgi, a 28-year old self described "neo-fascist" and neo-Nazi from Omaha, Nebraska, was adamant in his adherence to the core principles of Third Reich Nazism and considered himself to be a "expert historian" on the white race and the anthropological origins of white supremacist beliefs. As a second generation Italian immigrant, Giorgi connected strongly with his Italian heritage, particularly the faction of his family that he stated was loyal to the fascist regime of Benito Mussolini. In his interview, he described a hierarchy embraced by the Third Reich in which Jews and most non-whites were intellectually inferior to the point that they were "not entitled to the kind of "human rights" you or I talk about when we're discussing the subject of human rights". For emphasis, when discussing the personhood of non-whites, particularly those of African, Middle Eastern or Latin descent, Giorgi raised his hands in "finger quotes" to suggest he was referring to those individuals as humans only loosely. Based on his self-described "scholarship" of eugenicist texts, Giorgi draws boundaries of personhood based on national heritage and supposed phenotypes within these European heritages.

In contrast to Giorgi's framing, Nic, a 32 year old white supremacist and "Proud Boy", and Jeff, a 31 year old "Proud Boy" and white power activist, include most forms of immigrant and non-Americans in their framing of opponents. The "Proud Boy" organization was founded in 2016 by former VICE media co-founder and journalist, rapidly achieving a startling level of popularity among social media savvy, attractive and urban white men. Described by its founder

as a "pro-Western fraternal organization" that is "anti-racial guilt", the group is distinctively American in its diagnostic frames that cite immigrants as having "stolen" and "eroded" the integrity of American culture and, in the words of Nick, credits its vitriol to the "toxic submission of Western culture to so-called 'refugees' that have castrated so much of Europe". In expanding their dehumanization to immigrants, these respondents describe the prognostic frame that immigrants ought to, in the words of Jeff, "drown in their boats before they can put a hand on U.S. soil" and "keep their diseases and filthy backwards lifestyles" in places such as Syria, "where they belong". The language of cleanliness, purity and civility is powerful and potent as a means of rhetorical boundary construction and emerged repeatedly in interviews with all 8 of the racialist respondents. By attaching a notion of impurity and uncleanliness with these targets, adherents of these movements can then morally justify their violence as a form of "cleansing" and "purification", consistent with those ideals and mandates as outlined in the 14 and 88 words.

Common Frames Between the Far-Left and Far-Right

Violence as Self-Defense and Violence As Preemptive Protection of Rights

The use of self-defense as a motivational frame serves a similar purpose as dehumanization of targets in that it facilitates the dispelling of moral conflict or ambiguity on the part of movement adherents. As demonstrated in the discussion of identity work among respondents, those on the far-left who had engaged in violence against persons often framed their actions as having been in self-defense, eschewing the term "violence" altogether and rejecting the notion that such actions are violent. The conceptualization of self-defense as a form of activism is neither novel nor specific to extremist social movements. As Strain (2005) explores in his study of the Civil Rights-era, armed self-defense occupies a unique conceptual position between the advocacy of more militant forms of violent activism as a tactic and the nonviolence practiced within other factions of the Civil Rights movement. Although imbued with a surfeit

legalistic complexity in terms of justification, appropriateness and consequences, Strain argues that social attitudes towards self-defense imbue it with a sort of apolitical character. Thus, the framing of self-defense within the context of extremist activism can be seen as a means of diffusing the appearance of political motivation and instead re-framing violence in movement tactics as a form of justifiable self-defense that carries with it a sense of moral defensibility, urgency and also a sort of compulsory obligation to respond.

As evidenced by the title of the highest visibility publication associated with the animal liberation movement, *Bite Back*, the far-left frames proactive action against animal enterprises, animal research facilities and any other institution bearing responsibility for alleged cruelty against animals as a justifiable form of defense on behalf of animals that cannot "bite back" themselves. By extending the notion of self-defense to the more elaborate concept of "defense of non-human persons by proxy", the far-left provides a form of moral rationalization to their mandate of utilizing "any means necessary". *Bite Back* magazine is a public source for anonymous claims of responsibility for various direct actions, acts of sabotage and incidents of political violence enacted by animal rights supporters (ALF in the US, Animal Rights Militia in the UK prior to the 2000s). By re-framing destructive tactics as a form of self-defense by proxy, activists conceptualize their actions within a highly moralistic understanding of provocation (that is, intrusions or encroachments diagnostically framed as threats to a certain species, region, or community) warranting a drastic response. For example, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society has been variously branded seafaring environmentalist heroes and eco-terrorist pirates waging a violent campaign against the whaling industry. In their own organizational communiqués, Sea Shepherd describes their operations as such: "Sea Shepherd has been on the front lines for nearly three decades protecting whales from illegal whalers. From Japan to Iceland to Norway and

elsewhere around the globe, Sea Shepherd's direct action crews defend whales from slaughter." Similarly, in regards to their work sabotaging industrial shark fishing enterprises, Sea Shepherd frames their engagement as an

> all out battle to save sharks from the threat of decimation. Not only does Sea Shepherd work hard to raise awareness and care for this unpopular species, we also patrol marine protected areas, expose corruption/greed, and arrest the criminals who drive the multi-billion dollar shark-killing industry.

Just as the perpetrators of violence on the far-left characterized each of their actions as an act of self-defense, or defense of non-human persons, those on the far-right viewed their actions as a form of pre-emptive action in defense of their property, their rights, and also their "families" or "communities". How proximal these threats had to be to warrant violent action varied, but the common feature is that most of the individuals felt their actions were justified in spite of being pre-emptive. For example, the West Virginia Mountaineer Militia (also known as TMM – the Mountaineer Militia), of which seven individuals were ultimately arrested in connection to the plotted bombing of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division building in West Virginia, framed their actions as a preemptive defense of the basic constitutional rights of U.S. citizens. In documents contained within the ATS court case data, court records note that group founder and leader Floyd Raymond Looker, "advised TMM was created to provide a means of citizen defense in protection of constitutional rights perceived as under threat from the United states Government." In another statement to the media following his arrest, Looker stated, "We're not here to overthrow the U.S. government. We're here to defend--and defend is not attack--our constitutional rights." In their diagnostic framing, the TMM perceived the operations of this Criminal Justice Information Services Center as a direct threat on the privacy and civil

liberties of U.S. citizens and believed it to be an epicenter for the unlawful surveillance and monitoring of citizen activity.

Given the substantially less visible degree of activity on the part of black liberationist movements such as the Nation of Islam, only one interview subject was identified for the purposes of this study. Although with such small samples, comparison between this subject and individuals with the ATS is rendered less meaningful, it is worthwhile to highlight that Hammam, a 37 year old black separatist and Nation of Islam member, has participated in neither violence against persons nor property destruction. Within the ATS data, there is only one organization within the Liberationist/Racial-Ethnic category identified to be involved in political violence, with a mean severity score of 0.5 for both types. When asked about his values and attitude towards the use of violence to further the goals of black separatism and the Nation of Islam, Hammam was ambiguous and in some regards conflicted. He states,

> When I was young maybe I was angry. Hell I know I was an angry young man and when I would watch the news and watch those white boys beating my brothers and sisters down in the streets, I would want justice, whatever that looked like. But I'm grown now and when I think about having to use my hands on another person, that would have to be to protect myself and my people."

When asked to clarify who he considered his people, he continued "My family, and I have a lot of family so I guess that can also mean my community, but that's where I draw a line because it doesn't do us no good to be out there fighting in the streets if it means more guns pointing at us."

Discussion and Conclusion

In systematically analyzing interviews with 21 subjects on both the far-left and far-right, as well as the data included in the ATS on 465 persons and 39 organizations indicted on charges of terrorism, a number of key sources of variation in their degree of violent activity emerge. First, the analysis reveals that despite similarities in terms of participation in identity work with their counterparts on the far-left, adherents on the far-right were significantly more inclined to

commit Violence Against Persons, in part due to far-right organizations often requiring violence in order to sustain membership.

Of the most prevalent themes shaping an individuals' propensity to commit violence, belief in the Sanctity of Life, was the most apparent on the far-left. Within the Far-Left, a common frame emerged that established the sacred personhood of human and non-human animals, therefore forbidding or discouraging actions that would cause direct harm to living beings.

In terms of characteristics of movement frames, perpetrators of violence against persons in the ATS and ethnographic data shared the diagnostic tendency to frame individual persons or groups of persons as part of their grievances. Moreover, an emergent frame of Dehumanization of Non-Whites emerged on the far-right justifying violence against persons belonging to certain groups of people on the grounds that they are sub-human and therefore not entitled the same rights as white, heterosexual and Christian persons, and in more specific cases, American citizens. This included the demonization of racialized peoples and certain figures they blame for the erosion of white rights such as refugees, as well as the justification of violence against individuals who are perceived to be traitors to the values of either white race such as white anti-racist activists, or morally reprehensible figures such as doctors who provide abortions. The prognostic framing that called for the dehumanization of targets of racialist movements was then bolstered by the motivational frames pervasive within the WPM calling for the protection of the white race at all costs, evidenced in the ubiquitous "14 Words" and accompanying "88 words", as phrased by David Lane of the Order and Adolph Hitler respectively.

On the other hand, far-left activists were far more likely to apply diagnostic framing to institutions, industries and organizations rather than individuals, with prognostic framing activity

calling for the destruction of property of their targets rather than enactment of violence against individuals. In doing so, the far-left was observed as espousing a common frame that Property Destruction is Not Violence. Through this framing of property as distinct from the rights and sanctity of human and non-human animal life, far-left activists engaged in the justification of often large-scale destruction of property in order to further their interests. The notion of destroying private property in defense of animal lives or environmental causes is distinguished from similar acts committed by far-right activists such as abortion clinic bombings or mosque burnings in that the respondents believe their actions to be in defense of the unvoiced rights of animals or the environment, as opposed to being committed with the intention of harming others. On the other hand, interview respondents and individuals in the ATS on the far-right framed Property as Sacred, justifying any means necessary in order to defend private property from either the encroachment of other individuals, particularly non-whites or immigrants, or representatives of the government.

Apropos of these rights framed by the far-left and far-right, the second most prevalent theme that emerged was that of Self-Defense/Preemptive Defense of Rights. Those who did commit acts of violence on both the far-left and far-right tended to characterize many of their actions as self-defense, despite being pre-emptive in nature or in defense of a population that did not explicitly request this type of defense.

The findings of this study suggests that it is not just ideology broadly that distinguishes the level of violence enacted by the far-left versus the far-right but rather particular organizational characteristics and frames that shape the resultant political violence.

CHAPTER 4. VARIATION IN VIOLENCE WITHIN MOVEMENTS: BETWEEN AND WITHIN MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

In the preceding chapter, I challenged the idea that the propensity for political violence is inherently linked to the specific beliefs and values of any particular ideology. Comparing both the far-left and far-right, I showed how violence can be legitimated by organizations from across the political spectrum, using different frames that rationalize violence within the particular beliefs and values of a given ideology. That finding has an important implication for how political violence should be conceptualized and empirically explained. If the propensity for legitimating violence is to some degree independent of the specific beliefs and values of particular ideologies, then the transition from non-violent to violent adherence to an ideology may reflect underlying social processes that are common across the political spectrum.

This chapter therefore shifts the level of analysis from comparing different ideologies to comparing different organizations within the same ideology. As in the preceding chapter, the analysis still covers both the far-right and far-left. But the focus is on examining whether there are similar social processes underlying violent radicalization on both ends of the political spectrum. In particular, this chapter addresses the question of why, despite sharing a common set of beliefs and values, some organizations under the same ideological canopy are more prone to violence than others. For example, even within one of the most violent movement types, some racialist organizations such as the Fourth Reich Skinheads have no known incidents of adherents perpetrating large scale acts of violence across their organizational lifetimes (in spite of informant allegations suggesting violent plotting), while other organizations such as the Aryan Brotherhood are characterized and very much defined by their role as violent zealots employing violent tactics as a primary strategy.

To address this question, I analyze differences in the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames within movement organizations, as well as how differences in member experiences of socialization, radicalization and identity work may contribute to heightened levels of violence within some organizations compared to others. Overall, while movements from both the far-left and far-right have received a substantial amount of attention from the law enforcement and national security communities in the United States (Walker 2009), less is known about how radicalization and identity processes operate within these extremist movement types and shape the activity of adherents. Importantly, because the master frames and ideological bases of organizations are common within the same movement, it will be these organizational level framing activities along with differences in recruitment, member experiences, and identity processes that contribute to varying levels of violence within a movement.

Using a mix of data drawn from the American Terrorism Study (ATS) and a sample of 21 unstructured interviews as well as observational fieldwork with adherents of various extremist movements, this chapter will examine the identity processes associated with radicalization and participation in extremist movements, as well as the specific collective action frames adopted and espoused by the individuals within the movement organizations.

The findings in this chapter suggest that identity work in extremist movements is heightened as a result of number of related processes such as stigma associated with their extremist identities and consequences of their movement activity. I argue that this is a substantial source of variation when considering differences in violent engagement between organizations within the same movement. As individuals engage in significant and often permanent face work, aggressive selective association and various forms of verbal and visual self-presentation, perceived and/or actual insularity is heightened. This in turn leads to continuous cultivation of an

extremist identity and politics, further validating their perceived conflict while also strengthening within-movement social bonds. Extending Simi and Futrell's (2009) work on negotiation of the stigma associated with the white power movement, I find that the disclosure and expression of an extremist identity becomes a form of activism in and of itself. As a part of this process, violence may be enacted as both a form of validation to one's peers or as a consequence of one's intensified participation in an extremist movement. Overall, the findings in this chapter suggest that it is these shared organizational framing characteristics, membership traits and identity processes that contribute to the heightened violent activity observable in the most violent organizations in each movement type.

Literature Review

Radicalization, Biographical Availability and Biographical Susceptibility

Individuals are not passive subjects to processes of radicalization, nor are the proposed mechanisms deterministic pathways towards a violent outcome. They are products of the intersection of complicated social experiences, existing cultural orientations, and, as this study will argue, a number of biographical conditions that may either facilitate or hinder the radicalization process. Moreover, the process of radicalization towards a violent cause is not unidirectional: it may not only be the movement that recruits the participant but rather the participant who, consciously or not, seeks out the movement or cause to facilitate their efforts to resolve both personal and political grievances. In contrast with prior research identifying biographical availability as bounded by obstacles such as career and family commitments, I suggest that the concept of biographical availability is limited in its ability to explain participation in extreme or violent movements. Studies of individual-level predispositions and biographical correlates of participation in social movements are not rare (Corrigall-Brown et al.

2009; Klandermans and Oegma 1987; McAdam 1986), but few have examined how these dynamics may operate in extremist movements (Beck 2015). In order to extend these findings to extremist political organizations, I hope to draw from a wealth of existing studies within the social movements literature on recruitment and participation in high-risk activism.

Factors frequently used to comprise biographical availability measures such as education, family and employment (see: Giugni 2004) may not be particularly salient deterrents for participation in extremist movements. In addition to these theorized biographical deterrents then, it is possible that particular social conditions and experiences increase one's susceptibility to radicalization, as suggested by McAdam's (1990) findings that factors in upbringing and acculturation may significantly increase one's propensity towards high-risk political participation. Such factors may overcome the biographical constraints suggested by conventionally theorized frameworks of biographical availability. Thus, as a set of conditions engaged in facilitation rather than hindrance, I describe this dimension of movement participation as biographical susceptibility. Prior scholarship lays a foundation for this asymmetrical analysis of biographical factors, wherein both the presence and absence of certain circumstances may be conducive towards radicalization. Corrigall-Brown, Snow, Smith and Quist (2009) further complicate the picture on social movement participation, finding that less biographically available homeless individuals were often more inclined to mobilize. Studies such as this highlight the complexity of biographical availability and the tendency for biographical characteristics to operate differently depending on context and individual characteristics.

Petrie (2004) finds that the demographic predictors of protest participation for the 1960s, no longer apply as readily to contemporary political movements. If this is the case, then it is not only plausible but highly likely that the biographical and demographic predictors for

participation in extremist movements would differ greatly from both historical protest movements and contemporary non-violent forms of protest. Beyerlein and Hipp (2006) explore the importance of this expanded conceptualization of biographical availability, addressing counterintuitive findings of past research by showing that biographical unavailability does constrain social movement activism, but only in first stage of the mobilization process, thereby blocking people from entering the pool of potential participants. Wiltfang and McAdam (1991) find that while biographical availability factors account for participation, socialization factors account for much of the variation in risk-level of participation.

Additionally, I seek to explore how seekership may play a role in individual radicalization processes and contributing to varying levels of resultant violent activism. Lofland and Stark (1965) advanced the notion of seekership in relation to participation in religious movements, defining a seeker as "a person searching for some satisfactory system of religious meaning to interpret and resolve his discontent". Snow and Phillips (1980) suggest that such individuals do not constitute a majority of religious participants, while studies of extremist movements such as the far-right white supremacist community support the notion that many participants actively sought out the movements as a means of resolving their grievances (Blee 2008; Simi and Futrell 2010). Seekership, or other forms of "self recruitment" into movement organizations, may be one of many circumstances in which biographical barriers to participation may be readily overcome. Additionally, organizations open to seekership may be sought out by individuals with existing predispositions towards violence, and experience heightened levels of political violence after recruitment.

Identity Work

To understand the significance of the range of behaviors associated with participation in extremist movements, I look to the literature on identity work. Snow and Anderson (1987) first proposed identity work as a range of behaviors that serve to create and sustain self-identity. As it pertains to social movements and collective behavior, identity work is particularly relevant to understanding the identity processes through which collective identities manifest. Snow and Anderson describe five key aspects of identity work: (1) the verbal construction of identity, (2) arrangement and display of physical props, (3) arrangement of appearance / "face work", (4) selective association with individuals and groups and (5) engagement in group-relevant acts and events. While identity work is present in nearly all social settings, the role of identity in collective action is heightened in the case of collective identity, wherein individual adherents of movements are engaged in the construction of a group identity. While scholars such as Simi and Futrell (2009) have previously explored how identity work operates in the far-right, specifically in white power movement communities, comparative studies of how identity work operates across the far-left and far-right are scarce.

Stigma

Although identity work is pervasive throughout all forms of social movements, the construction of an extremist identity carries a unique set of challenges. Because of their position at the margins of what is perceived to be the political mainstream, extremist movements may face stigmatization. Goffman (1963) describes stigma as "[t]he phenomenon whereby an individual with an attribute which is deeply discredited by his/her society is rejected as a result of the attribute. Stigma is a process by which the reaction of others spoils normal identity." While stigma is generally understood in terms of its detrimental effects, prior scholarship suggests that it may also have empowering qualities. For example, Crocker and Major (1989) contradict prior

assertions that stigma uniformly results in low global self-esteem, instead finding that stigma may be self-protective in nature. The authors suggest that subjects encountering social stigma attribute negative reactions to prejudice on the part of their detractors. Additionally, stigmatized individuals evaluate their social outcomes based on members of their own group rather than the advantaged outgroup, and devalue traits that their stigmatized group eschews or lacks while strongly valuing traits in which their group excels. In terms of social movements, the attribution of negative reactions to prejudice may be valuable in sustaining certain movement frames.

These findings are particularly relevant when considering subcultural identification as a form of self-imposed stigma. In Hebdige's (1979) influential study of British youth subcultures such as skinheads, mods, and punks, the author argues that the adoption of these deviant subcultures is a form of symbolic resistance. As observed by Simi and Futrell (2009), when these identities are coupled with political mobilization, these stigmatized subcultural activities are no longer merely symbolic but rather tools of political contention and activism. In the case of Hebdige's work, intersections of race, culture and class-consciousness of the youths are highly formative in developing these cultures, and in the case of many, involve the embracement of stigmatized working-class or poor identities. The self-protective process of embracing traits associated with social stigma can be of particular significance when forming collective identities within social movements. When the stigmas of individual adherents are brought into alignment with the frames and beliefs of the movement, they may become self-reinforcing and heighten the individual's identification with the collective identity. It is through this process, I theorize that a greater susceptibility to the enactment of violence also occurs.

Grievances, Victimhood and Trauma

Studies of the factors contributing to the micromobilization of individuals towards participation in violence remain scarce. White's 1989 study of the formation of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) provides a promising framework towards understanding the relationship between individual perceptions and violent political participation. Utilizing a mixed quantitative and structured interview methodology, White finds that those endorsing political violence shared three traits: experiences of state violence, both indirectly and directly, a perception of the repressive authority as illegitimate, and sensitivity to how peers and close associates react to violence. White's findings reinforce the need for further attention to how groups collectively interpret both individual and shared experiences, transforming these experiences into movement grievances.

I extend the scope of White's study by expanding my focus to a broader spectrum of individually experienced traumas, such as childhood abuse, economic hardship and victimization in both violent and property crimes. Such experiences are not exclusive to perpetrators of violence: in fact, they are pervasive across such a broad range of the population that *alone* they may tell us little about an individual's propensity towards violence aside from an increase in risk for future criminality (Haapasalo and Pokela 1999). The significance of these experiences to radicalization are not in the experiences in and of themselves but rather how they have been integrated into the individual's understanding of themselves and their social world. Movement organizations provide ripe environments for the contextualization of individual experiences into actionable political grievances, by providing adherents with diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames.

Klandermans, Roefs and Olivier's (2001) study of grievance formation in post-Apartheid South Africa provides a strong foundation for investigation into the role of context, framing and

perception in the formation of mobilizing grievances. The authors find that the prospect of future improvements in social conditions outweighed the post-Apartheid low standard of living such that widespread discontent failed to coalesce into mobilizing grievances. Using this framework of examining both objective and subjective conditions for grievance formation in the radicalization process, I hope to identify the configuration of contextual, organizational and ideational circumstances in which traumas and biographical experiences form into mobilizing grievances.

In spite of a profusion of clinical and scholarly evidence that certain kinds of trauma may be predictors of future violent behavior (Driessen et al. 2006), there have been few studies examining the overlap between clandestine political violence and other forms of violent crime. Studies establishing the linkages, such as Song, Singer and Anglin (1998), find that over 50% of the variance in violent behavior among 3725 adolescents could be attributed to experiences of violence and victimization. For those with traumatic experiences, what factors shape the decision to channel violence and anger towards political participation? Perhaps on a more fundamental level, my proposed research seeks to identify whether or not participation in clandestine political violence shares any of the characteristics of more widely studied phenomenon such as urban youth participation in gang-related violence and violent theft or non-premeditated assault (DuRant et al. 1994; Eitle and Turner 2002). In their study of former members of violent White supremacist groups Simi et al. (2016) find substantial similarities in experiences of childhood and adolescent adversity among adherents of extremist movements and those of conventional violent offenders and gang members. Such findings reinforce the complexity of radicalization and the necessity of increasingly comprehensive explanatory approaches to the phenomenon.

One of the possible linkages to be made between trauma and framing is that of perceived victimage as it pertains to injustice. The framing of injustice has long been theorized to be an essential characteristic of successful collective action frames (Gamson 1992; Turner 1969). A possible dimension to be explored in the proposed research is whether one perceives themselves to be a victim of injustice in relation to their traumatic experience. More broadly, I hope to identify whether there is a link between radicalization, violent outcomes and the extent to which individuals perceive themselves, or a group they identify with, to be victims of injustice. My research will distinguish between individually experienced traumas or events (such as childhood abuse or institutionalization) and those experienced collectively (such as war in one's country of origin, or systemic racism). To ascertain an individual's awareness of injustice or perception of victimhood, I will rely on their own discourses or reports generated from direct correspondence with the individuals rather than media speculation or statements made by others in legal proceedings.

Data and Methods

The interviews in this analysis were conducted between August of 2015 and March of 2016. The interviews generally took place subsequent to informal introduction from mutual friends, whether over text message or in-person. All interviews are unstructured and of variable length, as effort was made to ensure that the interview time was scheduled in such a way that it could proceed with minimal time constraints. Sampling was not random, but rather strategic: utilizing a variety of networks and contacts within the activist, subcultural and independent music communities, I sought to identify a fairly diverse assortment of subjects on the far-left, far-right and other extremist movements. Beginning from these starting points, once initial interviews were complete, most subjects were happy to refer me to additional individuals that

they suggested might be open to being interviewed. Because of the suspected rarity of these individuals in the broader context of society, I could not be overly selective in who I chose to interview. Even so, certain selection criteria were utilized to make determinations of which individuals to interview within these snowball samples. Initially, in the previous round of study comparing violence on the far-left to the far-right, exclusion criteria included non-affiliation with the movement with which the identified – that is, individuals who described themselves as sympathetic but never engaged in any activism on behalf of the movements – claimed to be associated. Both on the far-left and far-right were a number of individuals who initially described themselves as "heavily involved" or "hardcore" in the course of their introduction but who eventually made it clear that although they had every intention to involve themselves, stayed on the sidelines for a host of reasons. In this iteration of the study, in comparing variation in violence within the far-left and far-right respectively, the number of these "hangers-on" and non-involved but self-identified affiliates were retained in the data as they could prove to be a meaningful source of variation. Their presence raises an additional question as to which movement organizations may attract more of these inactive affiliates, therefore reducing the numbers of individuals actively committing acts of political violence on behalf of the organization.

Conversely, many of those subjects with whom I was able to gain social access through prior contacts had to be pursued vigorously, with great effort expended in situating myself in such a way that I was trusted. Even with these measures in place and significantly lowered selectivity in terms of who was to be interviewed, a number of individuals declined to be interviewed. All names used in both the analysis and the bodies of the transcribed interviews are pseudonyms, including those who are secondary subjects. Ages, locations and affiliations are all

retained.

The following table summarizes the characteristics of the interview subjects. All subjects were interviewed in a recorded but informal, lengthy interview session and also observed and interacted with in a variety of other social settings. Two of the subjects were given follow-up interviews to both revisit topics raised in the previous interview and to touch upon issues not covered in the original interview. Additionally, extensive field notes were taken outside of interview interactions with the subjects being observed and interacted with in a variety of settings. These field notes capture roughly 270 hours of observation of and interaction with the following subjects as well as others in their social circles.

Table 4.1. Subjects

	Pseudonym	Age	M/F/T*	Location	Affiliation/Beliefs
1.	Tommy	19	M	Chicago, IL	White power/racialist, WS
2.	Chris	29	M	Hemet, CA	Nazi Lowrider, OMC gang
3.	Lisa	~28	F	Riverside, CA	Racist skinhead, neo-Nazi
4.	Ricki	37	M	~Anaheim, CA	Mongol MC, OMC gang
5.	John	32	M	Lincoln, NE	Anti-capitalist, "class war"
6.	Eric	22	M	Toronto, ON	Animal liberation/anarchist
7.	Patrick	31	M	Los Angeles, CA	Anarchist, anti-capitalist
8.	Greg	33	M	Los Angeles, CA	Anarchist, animal-liberation
9.	Scott	38	M	Everett, WA	White separatist, form. AN
10.	Leigh	44	M	Marysville, WA	Sovereign Citizen/Oath Keeper
11.	Sally	20	F	Bellingham, WA	Anti-capitalist, animal lib
12.	Hammam	37	M	Los Angeles, CA	Nation of Islam, black sep.
13.	Jeff	31	M	Seattle, WA	Proud Boy, WP, neo-fascist
14.	Ryder	27	M	Olympia/Portland	ANTIFA, anarchist, anti-cap
15.	Eli	~39	M	Tacoma, WA	Neo-Nazi, Euro Aryan Nat.
16.	Giorgi	28	M	Omaha, NE	Neo-fascist, NSM, neo-Nazi
17.	Nick	32	M	Seattle, WA	Proud Boy, "alt-right", WS
18.	Harrison	35	M	Syracuse, NY	Men's rights activist
19.	Nicky	31	M	Portland, OR	Former WP, MC outlaw
20.	Will	53	M	Portland, OR	Former WP, MC outlaw
21.	Jessi	24	F	Tacoma, WA	Animal lib. Earth lib. Anarc

Both the data collection process and analytical process took place in tandem and in multiple rounds, building upon insights emerging in each successive iteration. Drawing from

Charmaz's (2006) processes for developing grounded theory, the 21 interviews and roughly 270 hours of other field notes were coded in order to identify key themes and patterns in the data. The development of grounded theory can be characterized not as a single procedure but rather a process of analysis that identifies meaningful themes and concepts through continuous refinement. In practice, grounded theory involves multiple rounds of coding, beginning with freeform codes and observations, gradually evolving into more specific coding schemas and typologies.

Although the verbal construction of identity is conceptualized by Snow and Anderson (1987) as a distinct form of identity work, due to the verbal nature of the data sources, verbal construction of identity often intersects with discussions of the other forms of identity work. Therefore, I interweave anecdotes, quotes and observations related to the verbal construction of identity throughout the following discussion. The other forms of identity work were observed in the ethnographic field notes taken before, during and after interviews while interacting with the respondents in their settings, as well as at various relevant events such as protests, rallies, and music concerts geared towards either a leftist or far-right audience.

Analysis and Findings

A preliminary analysis of the 21 interviews and observations supports a link between identity work, frame variation and the commission of violence on behalf of an extremist movement and the resulting degree of violence associated with certain movement organizations. Different organizations within the respective movements consistently called for more violent demonstrations of identity than others.

Table 4.2. Unprompted Admissions to Committing Acts of Violence or Destruction, Far-Left

Pseudonym	Affiliation/Beliefs	Violence Against Persons	Property Destruction

John	Anti-capitalist, “class war”	O	O
Eric	Animal Liberation/anarchist	O	X
Patrick	Anarchist, anti-capitalist	X	X
Greg	Anarchist, animal-liberation	O	X
Sally	Environ., Animal Liberation	O	X
Hammam	Nation of Islam, black sep.	O	O
Ryder	Anarchist, ANTIFA	X	X
Jessi	Environ., Animal Liberation	O	X

Table 4.3. Unprompted Admissions to Committing Acts of Violence or Destruction, Far-Right

Tommy	White power/racialist, WN	O	O
Chris	Motorcycle Club/Gang	X	O
Lisa	Racialist, Neo-Nazi, WS	X	O
Ricki	Mongol MC, OMC gang	X	X
Scott	White separatist, form. AN	X	O
Leigh	Sovereign Citizen/Oath Keeper	X	O
Jeff	Proud Boy, WN, anti-immig.	X	O
Eli	Neo-Nazi, Euro Aryan Nat.	O	O
Giorgi	Neo-fascist, NSM, neo-Nazi	O	X
Nick	Proud Boy, “alt-right”, WN	X	O
Harrison	Men’s rights activist	O	O
Nicky	Former WP, MC outlaw	X	O
Will	Former WP, MC outlaw	X	O

Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 summarize the participation of the 21 subjects in violent activity based on unprompted admissions made in the course of either an interview or informal conversation. The individuals are disaggregated first by movement type, as reflected in Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 and then distinguished by their respective movement organization affiliation. Similarly, Table 4.3 outlines the unprompted admissions of the enactment of violence on the part of those in the far-right. For the purposes of this analysis, I consider an admission unprompted if it was not in relation to a question posed by the researcher regarding violent or criminal activity. There are certain weaknesses to this approach, namely the likelihood that one might be less inclined to openly discuss violent acts with a relatively unfamiliar person. Additionally, when disaggregating the acts into Violence Against Persons versus Property Destruction, it can be

observed that property destruction is discussed more frequently (though only by a single observation). This may be a result of lower stigma associated with acts of vandalism or property destruction versus that of harming another individual.

Table 4.4 through Table 4.9 below provide summaries from the two data sources of this study, the ethnographic component and the American Terrorism Study, disaggregated between the Far-Left and Far-Right and then based on the sub-type of grievance. Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 outline the commission of Violence Against Persons and Property Destruction by the movement types observed within the interview subjects. Totals refer to the total number of respondents who made unprompted admissions to participation in the type of political violence addressed in the table.

Table 4.4.

Far-Right	# of Subjs.	Violence Against Persons	Property Destruction
Right-Wing	2	1	0
Racialist	8	4	1
Gang	4	4	1

Table 4.5.

Far-Left	# of Subjs.	Violence Against Persons	Property Destruction
Left-Wing	3	2	2
Environ.	4	0	5

Table 4.6 through Table 4.9 below summarize the American Terrorism Study data on the 39 organizations' participation in the two forms of political violence. The "sum" column summarizes the total number of organizations of the specific movement type that engaged in the type of violence described in the table, while the "mean" column averages the severity of those incidents, coded as a score from 0 to 1. This measure of severity was utilized in Chapters 2 and 3

as a means of providing a deeper level of insight into not only the prevalence of violent incidents but also as a means of comparing their characteristics. Of greatest importance is the proportion between 0 and 1 in the "Prevalence" column identifies what proportion of the total organizations within the movement category engaged in the specified form of political violence.

Table 4.6. American Terrorism Study Violence Against Persons by Far-Left Movement Type

RAD_IDENTITY	Prevalence	sum(VIOL)	mean(VIOL)
Environmental	0/2	0	0
Liberation Movement: National/Revolutionary	3/4	3	0.75
Liberation Movement: Racial/Ethnic		1	0.5
Animal Liberation Movement	0/3	0	0

Table 4.7. American Terrorism Study Property Destruction by Far-Left Movement Type

RAD_IDENTITY	Prevalence	sum(PROP)	mean(PROP)
Environmental	2/2	2	1
Liberation Movement: National/Revolutionary		3.25	0.8125
Liberation Movement: Racial/Ethnic		1	0.5
Animal Liberation Movement	3/3	2.75	0.91666667

Within the Far-Left category of movements, the most apparent observation is that Liberation movements of the National/Revolutionary types are far more inclined to be involved in Violence Against Persons. Moreover, the mean severity of these incidents nears "1" – indicating mass casualties, murder or grievous bodily harm to one or more persons.

In the following Table 4.8 and Table 4.9, the summarized American Terrorism Study data reinforces the findings of the ethnographic component of the analysis, with Racialist and Motorcycle Club/Gang organizations with the highest prevalence of violence against persons. Additionally, Christian Extremist organizations, a movement type not represented among the interview respondents, demonstrate the prevalence of violence within that movement type. It is worth clarifying as well that although only one organization was indicted and associated with the ATS data from each movement, these organizations constituted the most active and highest visibility adherents of these movements and acted as figureheads for their respective movements, as was especially the case with Christian Extremist organization the Army of God.

Table 4.8. American Terrorism Study Violence Against Persons by Far-Right Movement Type

RAD_IDENTITY	Prevalence	sum(VIOL)	mean(VIOL)
Militia/Patriot	6/11	4.5	0.40909091
Gangs/Motorcycle Clubs	1/1	1	1
Racialist	11/13	8.75	0.67307692
Religious Extremism: Christian	1/1	1	1

Table 4.9. American Terrorism Study Property Destruction by Far-Right Movement Type

RAD_IDENTITY	Prevalence	sum(PROP)	mean(PROP)
Militia Patriot		6.75	0.61363636
Gangs/Motorcycle Clubs		0.75	0.75
Racialist		8.75	0.67307692
Religious Extremism: Christian	1/1	1	1

Identity Work

In terms of sources of variation in relation to violent activity, it appears that certain types of identity work are associated with a higher propensity for violence. Through observations and statements made by the interviewees, alongside data from the ATS, I investigate the role of various forms of identity work, particularly those that are permanent and/or stigmatizing as contributing to heightened violence among certain movement organizations within the same movements.

Selective Association: Sacrifices and Commitment

Of the 21 respondents, 15 extensively addressed the issue of commitment, particularly personal sacrifice in order to sustain their participation in their respective movements. These subjects were involved with movements on the Far-Left, Far-Right and in four cases, Motorcycle Gangs (or motorcycle clubs, as is their preferred nomenclature). Personal sacrifice was coded in any instances of the individual explicitly stating that they were forced to choose between conflicting priorities and experienced some negative consequences as a result of their choosing the movement or organization. For example, 33-year-old former anarchist and anti-capitalist Greg reflects on his most committed period of his activist career, referring to the life of "train hopping[3] and squalor" in the far-left as "lost time" during which family and social relations suffered. Now as a father and working as head trauma nurse at a downtown Los Angeles hospital, Greg viewed his alienation from his parents and siblings as a form of "self-imposed exile" that fueled his belief that he was alone in his values and feelings without his friends in the anarchist community.

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[3] Train hopping or freighthopping is the act of boarding freight cars of non-passenger trains in order to obtain free transportation; a declining but once pervasive practice in the anarchist community. The "hobos" often romanticized by the anti-capitalist anarchists likely inspired its popularity in the community.

The particular character of each individual's sacrifices or compromises varies greatly, but 11 of the subjects – Chris, a Nazi Lowrider; Lisa, a racist skinhead; Ricki, a Mongol MC member; Greg, a former anarchist and animal liberationist; and Eric, an anarchist and animal rights activist – describe distancing from their families as a result of their participation in an extremist movement. In Greg's case, he refers in retrospect to his estrangement as self-imposed, while others experienced negative consequences in their family lives that were not anticipated. Lisa, a former neo-Nazi skinhead in her late 20s, reflects sadly on the stigmatizing consequences of her identity work, "I told my parents that I hated non-white people and I bought a Nazi flag for my room and they freaked out and the rest of my family wouldn't talk to me." More broadly, all subjects exhibited some degree of group engagement or selective association, whether through estrangement from their biological families or the adoption of a strong affective network of individuals associated with the movement. Much like Greg, in five of the cases, the subjects describe points of their activist careers during which nearly their entire social community and meaningful relationships were comprised of individuals within the same movement or ideology. A valuable observation to contextualize these statements by these individuals is that the organizations they were affiliated with were the Animal Liberation Front, the Aryan Nation, and the Mongol MC, all of which represent the most active in each of their movement categories.

In the case of the Far-Left, it can be observed that individuals adopting one cause tend to also identify with a range of left-leaning beliefs and lifestyles. For example, 5 of 7 in the sample of individuals on the Far-Left also identified as vegan. While this may be an aberration due to the small sample, the five respondents were from different geographical regions and organizations and did not know one another. These individuals on the Far-Left were not all associated with animal rights related organizations in spite of their commitment to so-called "cruelty free"

lifestyles. Similarly, the earth and animal liberationists (Greg, Eric, Jessi and Sally) also strongly espoused anti-capitalist values and cultivated lifestyles consistent with this ideology. As animal liberationist Eric reflects on his relationships with non-vegans: "I still can't fucking FATHOM how some people call themselves anarchists and aren't vegan…it definitely makes me trust someone less and make me less interested in having them in my life unless they've got good reasons for it."

The totality of these various lifestyle changes, ranging from strict anti-capitalism, militant veganism and the vilification of practices perceived as oppressive, everything ranging from driving cars to practicing monogamy results in an increasingly homogenous social life revolving around a far-leftist political ethos. Alongside this process of extremely selective association is a far-reaching diagnostic frame that problematizes the entirety of "society" as oppressive and dehumanizing.

> We're just born and from the minute we're born we gotta serve a purpose and be a part of this society but not in like…a meaningful way but like as a tool. It's like in the Matrix [science fiction film] where you're really just feeding this huge complex machinery and there's no human beings anymore so we're just fuel for this awful system that doesn't even benefit us anymore. To me that's CAPITALISM, that's it right there. It's where we're slowly dying and just getting parasitized by this awful machinery that we built and we're just TRAPPED and it's like the Matrix where it's all around us. It's in EVERYTHING. Like the cars, the jobs, everything we do.

The expansion of a movement identity to encompass much of an individual's life can also be thought of as identity extension (Snow and McAdam 2000). Using the example of "being a good Christian", the authors illustrate identity extension as the necessity of presenting the same

version of self in all aspects of their lives, whether to friends, family or strangers. In the context of an extremist movement that identifies the whole of society as problematic as well as capitalism as being all-encompassing, the individual may feel compelled then to enact their beliefs in all aspects of their lives. It is evident that some organizations are more demanding of this totalizing lifestyle commitment than others.

In the case of one of the most notorious and destructive cells operating on behalf of both the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and Earth Liberation Front (ELF), the FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) apprehended 13 individuals between December 2005 and January 2006 as part of an investigation dubbed "Operation Backfire". These individuals, longtime co-conspirators and activist collaborators, referred to themselves as "the Family", with one of the 13 committing suicide while in custody and none of the eventual 18 indicted accepting cooperation plea agreements or providing testimony against or informing on their collaborators. This degree of commitment and sacrifice in the interest of the collective interests of the organization is observable only in the most active of the movement organizations in both the ethnographic data and the ATS: organizations on the low to mid-range of violent activity frequently had at least one individual acting as a cooperating witness or accepting reduced sentences in exchange for their testimony.

Aggressive selective association is, of course, not particular to the Far-Left but these examples highlight that the kinds of in-group insularity or separatism associated the racist far-right may also be equally salient in the far-left. Moreover, it is evident that higher rates of selective association may also be associated with heightened participation in violent activism. For example, four of the 7 far-left respondents who describeed seeking employment at vegan institutions, such as animal rights groups or vegan restaurants, were also members of either the

Animal Liberation Front or Earth Liberation Front Of the movement organizations within the ATS, these two constituted the lion's share of high profile incidences of property destruction. With these individuals, the desire to work in so-called "cruelty free" establishments or institutions was a reflection of the totalizing nature of their radical identities, wherein the individuals also stated that they would not accept living arrangements where meat or animal products were on the premises.

On the far-right, selective association amongst adherents of racialist organizations posed substantial challenges to the members, particularly those identifying as white supremacist. In order to minimize social and professional interaction with non-whites and immigrants, white supremacists must either choose professions and places of employment with predominantly white workforces or be self-employed. Within the ATS data, this dynamic could be also be observed, with the rate of employment in family-owned businesses or sole-contractor operations amongst white supremacists to be over one half. Of the two self-identified white supremacist interview respondents, Eli, a roughly 39-year old port worker in Tacoma, WA, and Giorgi, a 28-year old contractor and part-time bookkeeper, both identified substantial difficulties in their careers with frequent disruptions in their employment histories due to conflicts with non-white co-workers. As such, Eli stated that his beliefs required that he "keep a constant eye out when new guys came on the job" and "draw a fucking line in the sand" when non-English speaking and non-white people were hired to work alongside him in shipping operations at the Port of Tacoma. Similarly, Giorgi chose to work exclusively in businesses owned by family members or family friends, finding that he would rather sacrifice earning potential in order to avoid working in "an environment where I'm having to wave my goddamn hands around to communicate with some braindead fresh off the boat day laborer" or "some mud who I can tell is just going to cause

me problems down the line", with the latter remark in reference to non-white co-workers vocalizing complaints about his antagonistic demeanor towards them and the possibility of discrimination claims being brought against him. This heightened level of confrontation and disdain for non-whites is one of the distinguishing characteristics of individuals identifying as white supremacists versus white nationalists, despite substantial crossover in their beliefs in values. The functional distinctions between white supremacists and white nationalists/separatists will be addressed in further detail later in this analysis.

Face work: Tattoos and Appearance

Through detailed observations of the subjects' appearances and also inquiries into their self-presentation, it was observed that all subjects engaged in a great deal of "face work" in the process of cultivating their identities. The most startling of these findings was the sheer number that bore permanent markers of their commitment, in the form of tattoos. Although tattoos are becoming increasingly normalized and common, particularly in young adults, the preponderance of movement-related tattoos in this small sample of subjects suggests that the permanence of these identity markers is related to commitment processes within certain forms of movements. Phelan and Hunt (1998) explore the significance of tattoos as a form of visual communication of "moral careers". However, unlike the highly structured and linear progression of rank and commitment in prison gangs, the tattoos adopted by members of most extremist organizations are regulated by far less rigid norms within the movements.

As a form of permanent identity work, tattoos also appear to be linked to the enactment of movement related violence. In order to differentiate between the propensity towards deviant behavior and the mere act of getting tattooed (which also still remains socially stigmatized in many localities and social settings), I asked respondents if they had any tattoos relating to their

identity, beliefs or values – previous or otherwise. The three individuals – reflecting subjects on the far-right and far-left with no tattoos relating to their membership in their respective movements were also those who had never been arrested and admitted no participation in violent acts. With 21 interview subjects and limited availability of data on the physical characteristics of individuals within the ATS, this linkage is purely observational but nonetheless represents a potentially power explanatory relationship between certain forms of identity work and the willingness to commit violence on behalf of extremist movements.

Lisa, a former neo-Nazi skinhead and recovering addict is notable in having numerous body modifications, all of which are non-concealable and present a significant obstacle to conforming to normative visual standards for most forms of employment or social acceptance. She notes that she worries that aside from her also heavily modified ex-neo Nazi partner Tony, there is "no one else that will want [her]". Lisa has surgically pointed ears, like an elf, which is a rare but not entirely unseen body modification similar to tongue-splitting and other forms of soft-tissue cosmetic procedures. Her chest is fully tattooed with apocalyptic scenes of flames and rubble and along with her arms covered in text tattoos, including lyrics from racist European metal bands. As a form of permanent identification with a neo-Nazi identity, even as a "former" who has since left the white power movement, Lisa continued to experience significant difficulty expanding her social networks and overcoming the isolation of extremist selective association. During the course of the ethnographic data collection process, the consequences of Lisa's permanent face work manifested in a particularly vivid incident in which Lisa and her partner Tony became engaged in a heated confrontation with their Hispanic neighbors, who vocalized remarks towards them such as "white trash bigots" and "racist assholes" and ultimately lodged

an apparently baseless "vicious dog" complaint against them with a local animal control department shortly after moving in to the rental home next door.

In the course of modifying their appearances to distinguish themselves from others and communicate their extremist identities, the study respondents increasingly perceive a sense of social distance and stigma from peers and outsiders. By embracing this stigma, the individuals' belief in the antagonistic relationship between themselves and a vague notion of so-called "society" is heightened and furthers their commitment to their extremist identities. Within the sample of individuals interviewed, the table below summarizes permanent body modifications associated with their participation in their respective movement organizations and the individual's respective participation in political violence, either Property Destruction or Violence Against Persons. These body modifications were either documented through plain view observation if the tattoos were visible outside of the clothing worn by the respondent, or either described or shown to me after the informant was asked if they had any markings relating to their association with extremist movements.

Table 4.10. Tattoos and Markings Related to Extremist Movement Participation

Subject	Orientation	Affiliation/Beliefs	Viol.	Tattoos/Markings
Tommy	Racialist	White power/racialist, WS	No	None
Chris	Gang	Nazi Lowrider, OMC gang	Yes	Swastika on stomach, above navel
Lisa	Racialist	Racist skinhead, neo-Nazi	Yes	WPM rune tattoos, racist song lyrics
Ricki	Gang	Mongol MC, OMC gang	Yes	Mongol MC tattoo on arm, 1% tattoo
John	Far-left	Anti-capitalist, "class war"	Yes	Anarchist symbol on leg and red star
Eric	Environ.	Animal liberation/anarchist	Yes	"Green anarchist" symbol on ankle
Patrick	Far-left	Anarchist, anti-capitalist	Yes	Multiple anarchist tattoos, incl. hands
Greg	Environ.	Anarchist, animal-liberation	Yes	Cruelty-free rabbit logo tattoo on wrist
Scott	Racialist	White separatist, form. AN	Yes	Confederate flag tattoo on shoulder

Leigh	Far-Right	Sovereign Citizen/Oath Keeper	Yes	"Don't Tread On Me" tattoo and crossed rifles with fasces on arm
Sally	Environ.	Anti-capitalist, animal lib		Black mask "black bloc" tattoo on arm
Hammam	Liberationist	Nation of Islam, black sep.	No	None
Jeff	Racialist	Proud Boy, WS, anti-immig.	Yes	Required Proud Boy tattoo, Dutch flag
Ryder	Far-Left	ANTIFA, anarchist, anti-cap	Yes	Misc. anarchist tattoos, Molotov cocktail
Eli	Racialist	Neo-Nazi, Euro Aryan Nat.	Yes	WPM rune tattoos, swastika on chest
Giorgi	Racialist	Neo-fascist, NSM, neo-Nazi	Yes	Swastika on right shoulder, Italian flag
Nick	Racialist	Proud Boy, "alt-right", WS	Yes	Proud Boy tattoo required by members
Harrison	Far-right	Men's rights activist	No	None
Nicky	Gang	Former WP, MC outlaw	Yes	MC insignia on arm, Nordic black sun
Will	Gang	Former WP, MC outlaw	Yes	MC insignia on arm, Gulf vet tattoo
Jessi	Environ.	Animal lib. Earth lib. Anarc	Yes	Earth lib. tattoo of armed animals

Demonstration Events: Intimidation and Violence As Identity Work

In the course of this study, addressed in Chapter 2 comparatively between the Far-Left and Far-Right, intimidation can be observed as a concomitant identity process alongside the commission of violent acts as forms of identity work serving to deepen commitment and potentially heighten violent participation. While some of this was accomplished through the aforementioned face work in the form of clothing and tattoos, it was also observed in an additional form of identity work: the arrangement and display of physical props. As evidenced by Lisa's anecdote about the Nazi flag she began proudly displaying in her room in her parents' home, the use of physical props is an important process in signaling identity. Certain images such as the Nazi swastika possess such a powerful symbolic effect on observers that they are particularly potent as instruments of intimidation. Simi and Futrell (2009) observe that the display of certain markers of identity such as swastika tattoos carry such extraordinary risks and stigma that they may only be deployed in very selective settings.

An additional Racialist organization that has emerged only in the last year as part of the so-called "alt-right" is the Proud Boys. Founded by former VICE media co-founder and journalist, the organization has achieved a startling level of popularity among social media savvy, attractive and urban white men. Described by its founder as a "pro-Western fraternal organization" that is "anti-racial guilt", the group asserts its public visibility through the highly identifiable "uniform" donned by its members: a black, British-made polo from the "Fred Perry" brand, also associated heavily with U.K. skinhead culture. The visual impact of this association with skinhead imagery has contributed to the militant and confrontational image of the Proud Boys. Two of the Racialist interview subjects identified themselves as Proud Boys: 31 year old bartender Jeff from Seattle, WA and 32 year old motorcycle mechanic Nick, also of Seattle, WA. When asked about the uniform of the organization, Nick states, "we know it looks sketchy. That skinhead thing is part of what pisses the PC kids off the most." Furthermore, membership in the Proud Boys requires that all members get a Proud Boy tattoo and also commit an act of violence on behalf of the organization, whether that be a fight with ANTIFA or ARA (both far-left anti-racist organizations known for counter-demonstration against right-wing protests). The Proud Boys provide a particularly powerful case study in the role of identity work and recruitment strategies in heightening violent activity and will be discussed in even further detail later in the analysis.

From such overt acts of intimidation, it can be reasonable to observe a link between symbolic acts and more literal forms of violence that may be more prevalent in some movement organizations rather than others. One of the movement types on the Far-Right associated with the highest and most consistent degree of violence are Motorcycle Clubs and Gangs. Based on the responses of the interviewees, it appears that the commission of a violent act can also be a form

of identity escalation within this movement. In the case of Chris and Ricki, violence against others was related to their initiation into their respective groups. Semi-jokingly self-described as a "career outlaw", Mongol motorcycle club (MC) member Ricki refers to a particular incident of property destruction as instrumental to his full initiation into the club. At the behest of the MC, Ricki was directed to the location of an unknown person's car and instructed to "fuck up this guy's car". During a subsequent interview, Ricki stated that he broke all of the car's windows, headlights and taillights with a tire iron and then set fire to the vehicle using barbeque starter fluid. Despite a lack of knowledge as to the reasoning behind the attack and the targeted victim, Ricki obliged, reflecting that such acts were necessary to demonstrate that he "was no pussy" but rather a tough and trusted member. Within the American Terrorism Study data, this heightened level of violence is evidenced within the Gang and Motorcycle Club movement type by an average severity score of "1", reflecting the most severe of violent incidents. Although only one outlaw motorcycle club is represented in the ATS, this group constituted one of the most violent organizations within the entire dataset. Beyond identity work, the relationship between violence and initiation points to aspects of organizational dynamics in extremist movements in great need of further investigation. Violence may play both a strategic role to the movement organization's aims and serve to build trust and commitment within the group.

The process of committing violence on behalf of an extremist organization or movement appears to produce its own consequences on radicalization. Four of the respondents noted that the knowledge within their movement organization or social community that they had committed a violent act fueled increased acceptance or respect in the movement, but also produced a sense of obligation. As Chris described, after committing acts of violence together, all of the members involved had the capacity to "snitch" on one another and thus forced them to remain close knit.

In the sense that it serves to concretize a certain identity to oneself and others, doing violence can itself be a part of identity work as well as a form of mobilization. This observation is consistent with the "demonstration event" component of identity work wherein the individual engages in group-relevant acts.

When questioned about what he had done in service of the Nazi Lowriders, Chris became agitated as though the question made him "sound like a pussy" and suggested he had not done enough to demonstrate his commitment to the organization. In this regard, it is clear that abstention from violence in some organizations constitutes a type of identity-infidelity. In his paradoxical reticence to discuss violence with an outsider while also asserting that he was both willing and culpable in engaging in violent acts, Chris' statements may be illustrating the significance of violence to certain extremist identities. In this regard, it is also possible that the verbal acknowledgement of having committed acts of violence is the essential element to the violence-as-identity-work relationship. Such intersections demonstrate the overlapping quality of the various forms of identity work and how they operate.

The Proud Boys provide a particularly vivid case study showcasing the links between identity work, recruitment strategies, violent radicalization and elevated levels of resultant violence. In the publicly posted and highly publicized founding statement issued by founder and former VICE Media journalist Gavin McInnes, the process of initiation into the Proud Boys is comprised of four levels or "degrees", as they refer to them. Initiation into the group is a process. The first degree is announcing you're a Proud Boy. "This means you make your Western chauvinism public and you don't care who knows it," McInnes wrote. This requirement of a public avowal of identity, with the acknowledgment that it may bring stigma, conflict and

disapproval from others outside of the movement, illustrates the significant social consequences and commitment building function of self-identification in identity work.

The second degree requires that the initiate receive a vicious physical beating from at least five other Proud Boys until "you can say the name of five breakfast cereal brands". From an identity work standpoint, this requirement also provides the first steps towards selective association and intra-group solidarity, as it necessitates the individual become embedded with a number of existing members. This level also requires the initiate to give up masturbation. The significance of this as a component of the "self sacrifice" aspect of identity work also highlights an additional means of connecting with a perceived sense of victimhood as the rhetoric of the Proud Boys (drawing inspiration from the men's rights movement) attributes masturbation to the emasculation of men, who ought instead seek sexual gratification only through traditionally masculine means via heterosexual relationships with women. This membership requirement borrows heavily from the also nascent Men's Rights movement, in its emphasis of reclaiming masculinity as a requirement of membership.

The third degree means you must get a "Proud Boy" tattoo. The fourth and final level requires the would-be Proud Boy to engage in "a major fight for the cause." McInnes has explained: "You get beat up, kick the crap out of an antifa." By constructing a recruitment process through which individuals may essentially self-recruit into the organization, the Proud Boys take advantage of seekership amongst individuals already predisposed to violence, integrating a violent prognostic frame into the very membership framework of the organization. In a troubling recent development on August 11, 2017, a "Unite the Right" rally held in Charlottesville, Virginia by journalist and Proud Boy member culminated in the death of an anti-racist and anti-fascist protester after a white power demonstrator steered his car into a crowd of

counterdemonstrators. Despite their relatively recent formation, the Proud Boys have rapidly gained a great deal of visibility on the far-right and in the broader public consciousness, in part due to the organization's requirements that members engage in high visibility demonstration events and commit acts of violence on behalf of the group.

Framing Differences on the Far-Right as a Source of Variation in Violent Activity

Master Frame: White Supremacy versus White Nationalism/Separatism

The degree of variation in levels of violent activity across the far-right spectrum of extremist movement organizations can be observed between the primary movement types: Militia/Patriot, Racialist, Gangs/Motorcycle Clubs and Christian extremist organizations. Of these movements, the most incidents are associated with Racialist organizations. However, between organizations within this category, there exists a significant level of variation in the extent to which members engaged in political violence. Examination of the discourses of members and movement organizations within each of these movement sub-types reveals that certain organizations favor white supremacist rhetoric over separatist approaches, such as the Nazi Lowriders in the Motorcycle Gang category and the Arizona Patriots of the Militia/Patriot movement. To contrast, secondary data and interviews with outlaw Motorcycle Club members in organizations within the same movement suggest that clubs such as the Gypsy Jokers, in spite of their classification as an outlaw gang by the FBI, engage primarily in unlawful smuggling and drug trafficking operations as opposed to the routinized violence against Jewish and non-white persons exhibited by organizations such as the Nazi Lowriders. Similarly, this contrast can be observed when comparing the violent activity associated with the John Birch Society, one of the longest standing U.S. Patriot organizations, and that of the Arizona Patriots, whose white

supremacist discourse was reflected in the organization's long term plans to engage in "commando assaults" of African-Americans, Jews and agents of the federal government.

These findings across multiple movement types serve to illustrate a crucial and ongoing divide in the contemporary white power movement (WPM) and its associated collective action frames: White Nationalism (WN)/Separatism versus White Supremacy. Based on ATS data, white supremacist organizations as a whole demonstrate a slightly higher level of violence than their white nationalist counterparts. To illustrate, not only is the list of organizations within the dataset skewed towards those with white supremacist frames, the Racialist organizations coded with the highest scores for Violence Against Persons are the Aryan Nation, the Ku Klux Klan and the Phineas Priesthood. Within the prognostic framing of these organizations, enactment of violence against non-whites is the primary means through which the movements accomplish their objectives, with neo-Nazi organizations such as the Aryan Nation and Hammerskins calling for "race war" and the Ku Klux Klan and Phineas Priesthood advocating direct violence against people engaged in "race mixing" and "miscegenation". The motivational frames attached with such white supremacist movements compel these actions on the basis that non-whites pose an immediate and direct threat to the safety and future of the white race.

As a possible counterpoint to the analytical value of distinguishing between the various manifestations of white power ideologies, it is possible that the White Nationalist/Separatist faction of the WPM exists solely as a means of providing legitimacy to the movement, while sidestepping the negative connotations associated with White Supremacy. This treatment of white separatism as a form of rhetorical "rebranding" is explored by Berbrier (1998) in his analysis of the New Racist (NR) framing strategies, advancing white separatism as a means of capitalizing on the cultural-pluralist and multicultural master frames pervasive in a post-Civil

Rights movement Western society. Taking these findings in context with the discourses of the interview respondents in this study, I find significant merit in Berbrier's notion of white separatism and white nationalism as framing strategies geared towards presenting a form of "hate-free" racism, more palatable to the contemporary political climate. However, examining that the distinctions between overt white supremacist movement frames and those of the white separatism/nationalism may still produce observable differences in violent outcomes among adherents of the WPM.

The distinction in WPM frames was observable among the far-right interview subjects, as individuals who expressed their commitment to the white supremacist frame demonstrated a far greater willingness to readily attack non-white individuals. Among the interview subjects affiliated with Racialist organizations, 2 of those 3 of the 13 respondents who had not participated in Violence Against Persons were associated with White Separatist/White Nationalist organizations and espoused those movement frames. Although the distinction between White Nationalist (WN)/Separatist and White Supremacist views is a fine one, and adherents of both framing perspectives are at best described as virulently racist, one of the core differences is in prognostic framing. Possibly as a function of WN advocating for the formation of separate white nations and the practice of insularity from non-whites, the prognostic frames within WN organizations such as the National Alliance encourage the formation of pro-white membership organizations as a means of protecting white racial identity.

Motivational Framing: Holy War or Divine Sanction Heightens Violence On the Far-Right

One of the defining motivational frame characteristics distinguishing the most violent organizations on the far-right from others is the presence of theistic motivational frame. The theme of divine sanction of violent actions emerged within a number of organizations on the far-

right, revealing parallels with many of the framing strategies of Islamic extremist movement organizations in terms of selective scriptural interpretation to support violence as well as antagonistic boundary work drawing harsh distinctions between so-called "believers" and "non-believers". Boundary framing is not peculiar to extremist movements: numerous scholars have turned their attention towards the strategies with which political actors delineate allies and enemies, constructing the protagonists and antagonists of their movements (Hunt et al. 1994), and utilize "adversarial framing" to elaborate on those that pose a threat or obstacle to the political aims of the movement organization (Gamson 1995). The distinction to be observed here is the manner in which extremist movement organizations utilize religious rhetoric to frame antagonists as not only opponents of the movement, but indeed inherently immoral and heretical forces whose mere existence represents an imminent corruption and degradation of the values of the righteous adherents.

The motivational frame of divine sanction can be best summarized as one in which violent actions committed in service of a movement's political aims are framed as part of a "Holy War" and that violence enacted on behalf of the movement organization is under Divine Sanction. Examples of organizations deploying this frame of Divine Sanction include the Christian extremist group the Army of God, responsible for the murders and attempted murders of multiple abortion-providers and the bombings of abortion clinics and gay bars; the Racialist group the World Church of the Creator, also associated with the white supremacist Christian Identity movement, whose members are instructed to be foot soldiers in the RAHOWA (racial holy war) and have been convicted of racially-motivated murders, numerous violent assaults and bombings; and finally, the Racialist organization the Phineas Priesthood, whose decentralized membership has been responsible for a campaign of violence ranging from the murder of

abortion clinic doctors, bombings of gay and lesbian establishments, and assaults and murders of mixed-race couples. By utilizing motivational framing imbuing the violent actions of movement adherents with Divine Sanction and empowering adherents with a Zealot or Holy Warrior identity, these organizations diffuse the moral and ethical conflict that may be experienced by some members in the use of violence to advance their beliefs. Furthermore, in a conjunction with the concept of seekership, which will be addressed further in this analysis, these organizations are able to utilize these frames in order to attract individuals who believe themselves to be agents of divine justice.

Although not fully reflected in the federal terrorism charges of the ATS as many of its most violent crimes were prosecuted at the state level, the World Church of the Creator is actually one of the most violent organizations within the Christian Identity pseudo-theology associated with the Racialist white power movement. Through a racialized interpretation of Christian theology, these organizations reject the historical and theological consensus of Jesus Christ as a Jew, framing themselves instead variously as the "Church of Jesus Christ, Christian" and "Christian Identity" churches, emphasizing the elements of Christian doctrine advocating for violent intervention against those individuals supposedly living in opposition to the moral principles of fundamentalist Christianity and selectively interpreting scripture to support a white supremacist framework in which adherents are tasked with the elimination of so-called "subhuman" "mud races".

The Phineas Priesthood draws its inspiration from a selective interpretation of scripture. From the Book of Numbers, ironically of the Hebrew Bible, the Phineas Priests drew their inspiration from the passage Numbers 25 wherein the sexual intermingling of Israelites with the pagan Baal-worshipping Midianites brings about a curse against Israel, with God instructing

Moses: “Take all the chiefs of the people, and impale them in the sun before the Lord, in order that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel.” The protagonist Phineas observes an act of miscegenation between a man and woman, “Taking a spear in his hand, he went after the Israelite man into the tent, and pierced the two of them, the Israelite and the woman, through the belly. So the plague was stopped among the people of Israel.” In their recruitment discourse and motivational framing, the Phineas Priests suggest that the only qualification for membership as a Phineas Priest is the commission of these so-called “Phineas Acts” against non-whites, homosexuals, and the morally impure (such as those seeking or performing abortions).

During an appearance on nationally broadcast “Phil Donahue Show” on March 15, 1993, Phineas Priest member Paul J. Hill illustrated his beliefs to Donahue with the analogy of a man killing children at a playground: "If you were to come up behind that man and shoot him in the back three times, you would have protected and saved innocent life from undue harm." He said, "I'm advocating the consistent theology of the Bible, and that is that we must protect innocent life." By engaging in motivational framing that draws equivalency between the infallibility of the Bible and the frames of the movement, extremist movement organizations seek to dispel any moral ambiguity that adherents may experience in regards to their actions and also seek to align members with those biblical protagonists intended to serve as moral exemplars for all religious followers. As discussed earlier in the analysis, one could find as much scriptural basis for pacifism as they could for violence by consulting the holy books of any religious order. It is through the selective interpretation of these texts that movements construct these powerful, violently didactic frames.

Snow et al. (2013) identify the mechanisms underlying this process of constructing meaning and a movement centered reality as frame articulation and elaboration. Frame

articulation is the process by which movements assemble a range of elements, such as experiences or events, cultural artifacts such as texts, and issues or grievances into a coherent whole, thereby forming a particular interpretation of something and imbuing it with a particular meaning. Frame elaboration, refers to the differential weighting or emphasis of the various constituents of the frame, highlighting some elements over others and bringing certain facets of the frame into sharper focus. As is apparent in the framing of violence as Divinely Sanctioned, it is not sufficient to simply to state that the Bible condones violence to reinforce its teachings or to protect the Christian faith. Rather, movements select specific scriptural elements such as the story of Phineas and articulate it in the context of contemporary controversy, or emphasize a racialized interpretation of ancient ethnic and tribal conflicts that supports a modern racist belief system.

Framing Differences on the Far-Left as a Source of Variation in Violent Activity

Motivational Framing: The Acceptable Humans Costs of Meeting Our Demands

The largest disparity in degree of violent activity on the far-left can be observed between the Environmental and Animal Liberationists and the National/Revolutionary and Ethnic Liberation organizations. Although the toll of property destruction associated with Environmental and Animal Liberation organizations is not insubstantial, the overwhelming majority of cases involving Violence Against Persons on the far-left are associated with National/Revolutionary Liberation organizations. These organizations are unique in sharing the frames consistent across the far-left such as the broader objective of empowering the disenfranchised and alignment with principles of social justice but deploying prognostic framing favoring the use of violence to accomplish their goals.

As background, these organizations were the most active domestically during the late 1960s to the mid-1970s, forming as extremist and revolutionary offshoots of the New Left student activist movement Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The Weather Underground Organization (WUO) remains infamous and notable as one of the most violent leftist organizations in United States history. In a remark to journalist years following his participation, WUO member Brian Flanagan reflects, "when you feel you have right on your side, you can do some pretty horrific things."

Part of the rhetorical strategy of the organizations most active in political violence is the framing of violence as essential to their struggles to address their grievances. In a statement given to a journalist as part of her participation in a documentary film on the WUO, Naomi Jaffe reflects:

> We felt that doing nothing in a period of repressive violence is itself a form of violence. That's really the part that I think is the hardest for people to understand. If you sit in your house, live your white life and go to your white job, and allow the country that you live in to murder people and to commit genocide, and you sit there and you don't do anything about it, that's violence (Green et al., 2002).

In framing inaction as a form of commensurate violence, members of organizations such as the WUO imbue violence with a type of inevitability and therefore reduce the moral conflict as to the degree to which the human costs of action can be weighed against the political gains afforded by violent political action.

To clarify, the rationalization of human costs in pursuit of political aims is far more pervasive on the far-right, but its framing is distinct in that violent actors on the far-right engage less in justificatory rhetoric in regards to negative consequences for other people in favor of

discourses emphasizing the necessity of violence and its inherency to accomplishing the goals of the movements. On the other hand, because far-left movements place such a high moral value on the welfare of others and often frame their actions as altruistic, violent consequences require far more elaborate moral reasoning. This conflict can also be observed in the discourses of the interviewees on the far-left when questioned about their feelings regarding humans being harmed in the process of either animal liberation or environmental protection. None of the respondents on the far-left outright stated that they were comfortable with or endorsed the loss of human life in order to accomplish their political aims, but were posed with a hypothetical example of individuals who regularly "mistreated" animals in the course of scientific research or agriculture. To this example, Jessi, a 24-year old animal liberationist echoed one of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF)'s motivational frames arguing that,

> Once you've crossed that line of taking a life – any animal life – you've lost your right to share this earth that we've been given. All life is sacred but once you've taken another life, you've forfeited that by breaking that vow we all have to make to respect all life.

One of the most active far-left animal liberation organizations, Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) engaged in campaigns against prominent scientific research firm Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS) that often escalated into the direct targeting of individual associates of the institution. The Southern Poverty Law Center describes SHAC's engagement with even distant associates of HLS as "frankly terroristic tactics similar to those of anti-abortion extremists." (*Intelligence Report,* Fall 2002, Issue Number: 107). The commonalities in violent activity and observable similarities between the justificatory motivational frames used by the most violent organizations on the far-left highlights this study's findings that sources of variation in violence

within movements may share far more commonalities across movement types than previously thought.

Motivational Framing of Violence on the Far-Left and Far Right

Despite differences in the underlying values and beliefs about the value of human life, both movements on the far-left and far-right must approach motivational framing similarly in order to rationalize or justify harm to other human beings in order to mobilize their adherents. The most consistent characteristic among both the 21 interviewees and the perpetrators of Violence Against Persons in the ATS is a belief, however conflicted, in the defensibility of these actions, at least prior to any form of legal prosecution. In order to neutralize moral conflict over the commission of violence, those organizations engaged in Violence Against Persons engage in motivational framing that invokes both the inevitability of harm that will come to the adherents and their communities – animals or the environment, or the activists themselves in the case of the far-left, and the white race, "true" Christians, or militiamen/Patriots and their families in the case of the far-right – and the efficacy of violent direct action as the only redress to these threats.

As seen in the justificatory motivational frame used by the ALF that implies that violence may be an acceptable intervention against those who have themselves caused harmed or "taken lives", a similarly constructed frame can be observed in the rhetoric of the Army of God calling for violence against those responsible for "killing babies", as the SPLC observes similarities in the tactics, and fundamentally, the prognostic framing of the most violent organizations of the animal liberation movement as in the anti-abortion movement. By employing a motivational frame that justifies violence against those who are perceived to have caused harm, the most violent movement organizations across all movement types seek to neutralize the perception of

violence as a moral transgression and instead frame it as either retaliatory or a form of justice meted out.

The following analysis and discussion will further elaborate how shared dynamics across movement types in terms of recruitment, seekership, perceived victimhood, and frame alignment further impact the degree of violence in extremist movements.

Recruitment, Seekership and Frame Alignment

In accordance with the findings in Chapter 1 on the facilitative conditions for violence and property destruction across all movements in the United States, I find that inaccessibility of organizations in terms of their recruitment processes contributes differentially to heightened levels of violence depending on the movement type and also characteristics of the movement organization. This finding supports the theorized relationship between an organization's clandestine nature and its level of engagement in political violence (della Porta, 1988). An analysis of the ATS organizational data finds that of the 18 most inaccessible organizations (with coding scores reflecting "fully closed" recruitment), 9 were associated with the most severe degree of Violence Against Persons. On the other hand, the 12 organizations with scores of "0", reflecting completely open recruitment and above-ground visibility, 5 had instances of the most severe incidents of Violence Against Persons.

Reiterating the results of earlier analyses, in this study I identify a more complicated relationship between recruitment and violent radicalization, particularly when considering the five most violent organizations with open recruitment are: Posse Comitatus, the Aryan Nation, the Covenant, the Sword and the Arm of the Lord, the Phineas Priesthood and the Army of God. These organizations, although openly and actively recruiting supporters, were also lightning rods for the attraction of violent individuals seeking organizations that reinforced their anger and

validated their desire for extreme measures to accomplish their political aims. A particularly clear illustration of this can be observed again in the aforementioned Phineas Priesthood, for which the only requirement to become a member is the commission of so-called Phineas Acts, as well as in the Proud Boys for which a known requirement for membership is the commission of an act of violence. The fore knowledge that an organization requires the enactment of violence will increase its appeal amongst certain individuals, while simultaneously discouraging participation from those unwilling to commit violence. The degree of violence observed within these organizations with open recruitment illustrates the consequence of open recruitment with the caveat that individuals are expected to engage in violence as a condition of their membership.

The case of the Proud Boys provides a powerful illustration of the violent consequences of the intersection of seekership and open recruitment, and the types of identity work and frame crystallization discussed in this analysis. By requiring violence as a minimal qualification for membership in the form of the initiation-by-beating, the Proud Boys' open recruitment solicits individuals with an existing willingness to commit violence and then deploys prognostic frames that asks that they do so on behalf of the movement. This dynamic can also be observed in the aforementioned cases of the outlaw Motorcycle Gangs, for which violence is an essential component of the identity work needed to sustain membership. Similarly, the Phineas Priesthoods' membership-through-violence illustrates how open recruitment can ensure a nearly homogeneously violent membership base willing to commit political violence on behalf of the movement in spite of the absence of a vetting process through which movement organizations may select only those willing to engage in violent activism.

Frame Alignment: Perceived Victimhood and Trauma Among Movement Adherents

Prior scholarship on violence suggests a link between both early life and adult experiences of violence and propensity to commit violence (DuRant et al. 1994; Driessen et al. 2006; Eitle and Turner 2002). In the following discussion of patterns of perceived victimhood amongst adherents of extremist movements, I find that the dynamics of open recruitment and seekership may also act in conjunction with traumatic life experiences in order to facilitate alignment with movement frames advocating for violence. For a number of the interviewees, a perceived sense of victimhood was associated with a higher incidence of participation in violent activism. In their interviews, a startling number of individuals who made unprompted admissions to having committed acts of Violence Against Persons also made claims to having been themselves victimized by the targets of their violent activism. This was particularly apparent in the most violent of the Far-Right movement types – Racialist organizations, of which 6 of the 10 total respondents attributed their radicalization and beliefs in part to being victimized by non-white minorities. Similarly, the men's rights activist, Harrison, a 35-year old machinist and mill operator in Syracuse, NY, attributes his "awakening" and decision to join the men's rights movement to his acrimonious divorce, after which he identified with the movement's aims and in particular, its diagnostic framing of feminists and women's rights movements as the cause of men's diminishing status and power in society. The results of this study point to the role of trauma as a powerful means of facilitating frame alignment for those movement organizations who engage in victimhood based framing and call for violent action to redress these grievances. Within the Racialist movement type, there is a pervasive frame of White Victimhood, particularly salient with the most violent organizations active in the movement such as the Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nation and other neo-Nazi organizations such as the Soldiers of the Aryan Culture.

As a counterpart to this observation, one of only two respondents within far-left movements admitting to having committed an act of violence on another person made specific references to the consequences of being a victim of a violent crime. While the rhetoric of the interviewee does not suggest a causal link between the attack he suffered and his violent altercation with an anti-immigrant protestor, he describes the experience of violent victimization as having instilled a "righteous anger" in him that bolstered his commitment to his anarchist and anti-capitalist values. Patrick, the 31-year old anti-capitalist and anarchist, describes the violent mugging he experienced in that he felt as though he was "the lead character in this weird movie about how fucking desperate and sad America has become and all of the fucked up oppressive systems we're caught up in." He was approached, accosted and then got into a sudden physical altercation with a young black male in his late teens, who then struck Patrick in the face and then continued to beat him when he was incapacitated. He was robbed of his personal affects, namely his phone and wallet. The man was arrested and identified as the suspect in Patrick's mugging due to his possession of stolen financial information. Patrick declined to press charges and advocated on behalf of the perpetrator. Interestingly, this informant engages in victimage framing in such a manner that it strips the perpetrator of moral responsibility, instead allowing him to redirect his anger and sense of injustice to a broader capitalist system. He elaborates, reflecting that "it just felt like we were both victims in our own fucked up way. I mean, I kept thinking that I was creating another victim of the prison-industrial complex and that I was playing my own fucked up part as a white person in putting him there…"

These frames of perceived victimhood can be observed in the most violent organizations on the Far-Left, those categorized as National/Revolutionary Liberation movement types. The element of seekership as a precursor to extremist political violence is also particularly evident in

this instance, as pacifist members of the SDS or those opposed to the use of violent tactics balked at the formation of the self-described militant revolutionary Weather Underground Organization, while those members dissatisfied with the perceived inefficacy of peaceful protest tactics readily signed on with this new "War Council". With the Weather Underground Organization (WUO) sharing members and eventually evolving into the May 19 Communist Order (M19CO), their increasingly clandestine and extreme tactics were accompanied by a belief in their persecution and vilification on the part of the federal government, and the police brutality they had suffered in the course of their non-violent activism.

In another illustrative example of the role of trauma and perceived victimhood in heightened violent activity, WUO founding member Mark Rudd was admittedly "devastated" and "consumed with grief" following the March 6, 1970 accidental detonation of an explosive device intended for a Non-Commissioned Officers' (NCO) dance to be held at Fort Dix U.S. Army base that resulted in the deaths of three WUO members and close friends of Rudd's. Rather than deter further engagement, the event deepened Rudd's belief in the inevitability of their "martyrdom" for the cause, in turn leading to an accelerated bombing campaign. Although another WUO member, Bill Ayers stated in 2003:

> We were very careful from the moment of the townhouse on to be sure we weren't going to hurt anybody, and we never did hurt anybody. Whenever we put a bomb in a public space, we had figured out all kinds of ways to put checks and balances on the thing and also to get people away from it, and we were remarkably successful (Green et al., 2002).

Mark Rudd believed that casualties, including among WUO members, were inevitable, with other core members reflecting that the losses of these friends and collaborators galvanized their prognostic frame that continued bombing and destruction of structures and institutions associated

with oppression was the only way forward. The "martyrdom" of those who died in the townhouse explosion became integrated into the motivational frames of the movement, imbuing adherents with a fatalistic commitment to the movement "at all costs".

Two Vietnam War veterans and ex-convicts along with their respective spouses founded an additional organization, the United Freedom Front (UFF). In their remarks regarding the cultivation of the organization and its motivations, the founder and self-described leader of the UFF, Raymond Luc Levasseur, reflected on his view of being one of the "victims" and "broken toys" of the defective democracy that had "betrayed [him]". In another instance of seekership, Levasseur was not involuntarily drafted but rather enlisted in U.S. Army, describing a desire to "be a part of a struggle", and later described himself as being radicalized by the experience of his tour of duty in Vietnam in 1967. This experience led to formation of then-nascent views that would later align with the frames of the militant New Left: Levasseur describes drawing parallels between the racism he felt a victim of (though white, as a French-Canadian) and the racism against both Vietnamese people and black soldiers.

The findings of this study suggest a more complicated relationship between prior theorized factors in radicalization such as biographical availability, while reinforcing the hypothesized links between biographical susceptibility through trauma as well as the effect of seekership neutralizing obstacles to participation.

Beyond Biographical Availability: Biographical Susceptibility to Recruitment

The Levasseur/United Freedom Front case study proves revelatory and analytical useful in another facet as well: the diminished salience of biographical availability for those susceptible to violent radicalization and inclined towards violent seekership. In yet another instance of a phenomenon observed within nearly every extremist movement analyzed in this study, Lavasseur

lead the UFF along with his spouse Patricia Gros. In stark contrast to the suppositions of prior research on biographical availability that family ties and spousal/parental responsibility are an obstacle to participation in activism, Levasseur and Gros integrated their violent activism into the very framework of their family. After nearly a decade-long string of robberies, arsons and bombings, Levasseur and Gros were apprehended by the FBI's elite Police Tactical Unit on November 4, 1984. As FBI HRT agents immobilized the van Levasseur and Gros were driving and seized the couple, their three children, aged 10, 9 and 2 sat in the back, later taken into the custody of juvenile protective authorizes (U.S. v. LEVASSEUR, (D.Mass. 1988).

In the case of participation in political extremism, the results of this study suggest that certain biographical characteristics shift an individual's susceptibility to violent radicalization in a manner that is far more salient than the theorized constraints associated with biographical availability measures such as education, family and employment (Giugni 2004). To illustrate, six of the 21 interviewees were in romantic relationships with spouses or partners also involved in the same extremist movement. Additionally, four respondents, not all of whom were in active relationships, had children and described efforts to either integrate their children into their activism or adaptations they made to their parenting strategies in order to accommodate their continued involvement in their movement organizations. Scott, a 38-year old white separatist describes his experience of raising children as a white power activist as

> …part of the struggle. Being a dad, it's not like a separate part of my life. When you think about the fight to preserve white heritage, your children are that future you're fighting to protect so I make sure they're raised right and that they learn those values early on before they (referring to liberals in the public education system) can get to them.

Echoing the earlier discussion of the consequences of movement participation on employment for movement adherents in terms of either far-left individuals seeking out vegan-friendly workplaces or individuals on the far-right preferring predominately white working environments, it is also evident that the professional careers of extremist movement adherents are subordinate priorities to their commitment to their beliefs.

In addition to the experiences of victimhood that may contribute to frame alignment among adherents of the most violent organizations within each respective movement, analysis of the discourses of the interviewees suggests that the experience of ideational resonance and frame alignment with those of an extremist movement provides a powerful "pull" that adherents will prioritize above all else, often structuring their lives around this newfound identity and mandate. One illustrative example of this is Jennifer, a 36-year old former member of the Aryan Nation and World Church of the Creator who served prison time for her involvement in an attempted armed armored car robbery, and another incident described as a racially motivated kidnapping. She agreed to share her experiences in the WPM but declined a recorded long-form interview. At the height of her involvement, Jennifer was already a single mother with full custody her of toddler son and caring for the daughter of another WPM activist with whom she was romantically involved with. Reflecting on her commitment to the movement, she stated:

> At that point there was nothing that would stop me, once I understood that we would be on the front lines of the race war, there was sacrifices we would all have to make. Leaving the kids with my mom was the least of my concerns – what we were doing was so much bigger than that and even after [I was sentenced to] prison I didn't have any regrets. I do now but when you're under that spell, there's nothing that was going to stop you.

Conclusion

In the course of examining what factors account for variation in levels of violence within movements, and even within movement organizations, it is apparent that the strongest explanatory power lies in micromobilization processes: differences in identity work, collective action framing, and recruitment. When these observations on framing and identity work are examined comparatively in search of factors accounting for heightened levels of violence in some organizations within their respective extremist movements, the most persistent theme is that of an overarching intensity – a heightened level of commitment required of its members. I argue that this heightened commitment and intensified identity work may also responsible for the similarities shared between the most violent organizations across the various extremist movements: a pervasive conflict with what is perceived as mainstream lifestyles and beliefs that in turn sets off a positive feedback loop of stigma. Through this conflict, individuals in extremist movements view themselves in opposition to their perceived detractors and reflexively further cultivate their identities to challenge these norms. Consistent with Crocker and Major's (1989) findings on the self-protective nature of stigma, the subjects of this study embraced their movement identities and subsequently also their stigmatized characteristics such as lifestyle non-normativity and violence.

In addition to severely stigmatizing and violent identity work, the analysis also identifies a number of thematic frames associated with the most violent organizations within each respective movement. Across the most violent organizations of all movement sub-types, there is evidence that extremist political violence is facilitated by justificatory frames neutralizing or in some cases specifically isolating violence as a strategy for addressing movement grievances. In addition to these shared framing strategies, I find that on the far-right, the utilization of a white

supremacist versus white nationalism/separatist frame to be associated with heightened levels of Violence Against Persons within the already violent Racialist movement sub-type.

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Despite the attention that the phenomenon of terrorism has attracted, there is little consensus regarding what formula or pathway explains why certain individuals go to violent lengths to accomplish their political goals, while the vast majority of individuals do not. Public discourse, in particular, continues to be dominated more by stereotypes about violent individuals and violent ideologies than by an understanding of underlying radicalization mechanisms. An overarching motivation behind this dissertation has therefore been to contribute a more empirically-grounded account of radicalization. By examining social movements from across the entire left-right political spectrum, by considering variation not just across movements but across individuals and organizations within the same movement, and by taking an inductive, ethnographic approach to conceptualizing political violence, this dissertation takes a step towards dispelling popular stereotypes by offering a more empirically-grounded and generalizable alternative.

The overarching insight offered by this dissertation is that political violence is not simply a product of more "extreme" individual grievances or certain political ideologies but a complex process through which individual experiences come to be aligned with elements from political ideologies in a way that legitimates violence. Findings across three empirical studies point, in particular, towards the importance of framing. Following prior research on the role of framing in social movements (Snow et al., 1986), the studies in this dissertation begin with the premise that, in and of themselves, individual life experiences are equivocal and can be interpreted in a variety of different ways. Instead of assuming that any particular life experience inherently predispose individuals to particular courses of action, I ask the question of how individuals can come to

bracket equivocal life experiences into more meaningful and complex narratives so that specific courses of action become apparent.

Using the framing approach, I challenge the idea that violence is inherently tied to the content of certain ideologies. In a study comparing movements from both the far-right and the far-left, I show that violence can become legitimated across a wide spectrum of different ideologies. The key insight from this study is that the use of violence gets legitimated in different ways depending on the frames utilized by the respective movement organization. For instance, while adherents on the far-left tend to assign sanctity and value to all human and non-human animal life, resulting in a heightened emphasis on property destruction, adherents on the far-right tend to deploy frames of dehumanization and vilification of their targets, such as non-whites and/or non-Christian persons, resulting in greater emphasis on violence against people.

These findings have two important implications. First, by shedding light on the range of ways in which violence can come to be rationalized at different ends of the political spectrum, the findings suggest that violence, as a specific course of action, is at best only loosely-coupled to the particular beliefs and values of an ideology. The comparison of far-left and far-right movements, in particular, shows how two ideologies may be diametrically opposed in terms of their particular beliefs and values, but the tendency for one of these ideologies to exhibit violence does not imply that the opposing ideology is consequently opposed to violence.

Second, underlying the ostensive differences in the particular forms in which violence arises and gets rationalized under different ideologies, there are important commonalities. At the most fundamental level, rationales for violence from across the political spectrum all reflect an implicit recognition that, in and of itself, violence is morally reprehensible. If violence were not inherently reprehensible given the beliefs and values of a particular ideology, then a complex

justification would not be necessary. Yet my findings suggest that across the political spectrum, it is important for those who engage in violence to believe that it somehow preempts other non-justifiable violence. These beliefs are reflected in highly-elaborated frames that come to be shared among adherents. By examining these commonalities, my findings contribute to the perspective that violence is the result of a general set of facilitating conditions, which can arise across the spectrum of political ideologies as opposed to being coupled to the beliefs and values of any particular ideology.

Building on these insights, a follow-on study considers factors that explain variation in violence within the same ideology. The key insight in this study, is that, if the propensity for legitimating violence is to some degree independent of the specific beliefs and values of particular ideologies, then the transition from non-violent to violent adherence to an ideology should to some extent reflect underlying social processes that are common across the political spectrum. My findings point, in particular, towards the role of identity work, including processes of stigma, as an important source of variation in violence within movements. The main intuition is that, as individuals engage in significant and often permanent face work, aggressive selective association and various forms of verbal and visual self-presentation, perceived and/or actual insularity is heightened. This in turn leads to continuous cultivation of an extremist identity and politics, further validating their perceived conflict while also strengthening within-movement social bonds. As a part of this process, violence may be enacted as both a form of validation to one's peers or as a consequence of one's intensified participation in an extremist movement. Overall, my findings suggest that it is these shared organizational framing characteristics, membership traits and identity processes that contribute to the heightened violent activity observable in the most violent organizations in each movement type.

Contributions and implications

Overall, this dissertation paints a very different picture of political violence from the ones that continue to dominate popular discourse and shape policy. In contrast to depictions of socially-deviant or psychopathological lone-wolf type terrorists, I believe that most individuals who engage in political violence are not isolates (Futrell and Simi 2004). At the same time, in contrast to depictions of entire ideologies as inherently prone to violence, I believe that most radical political spaces are not inherently seedbeds of political violence (Polletta 1999; della Porta 2006). The overarching thesis suggested by my analysis is that there are no inherent characteristics to any belief system or ideology conducive to violent radicalization. Rather, *it is the selective accenting and emphasizing of certain elements of any belief system that facilitates radicalization.* I show how this is accomplished through framing activities within movements and within certain movement organizations that emphasize the necessity of violence to accomplishing a movement's political goals. While these collective framing tasks are available to movements of any ideology, my research sheds light on the particular framing strategies favored by extremist organizations. The usefulness of this course of analysis is reinforced by this study's extensive comparative approach drawing from a range of qualitative and quantitative data sources on individuals, organizations and movements from the extremes of the political spectrum, ranging from the self-described "pacifist" far-left to the violent hate groups of the far-right.

These insights offer several contributions to the understanding of political violence. At a broad level, the perspective in this dissertation addresses two limitations in prior accounts of political violence: 1) they do not account for the process of *how* individual life experiences come to be interpreted in a way that makes radical political behavior seem like a relevant course of

action, and 2) they do not explain why there would be variation in radical behavior among individuals exposed to similar experiences. A common theme among individual-level perspectives, for instance, is attempting to account for the cost-benefit calculus that would lead individuals to conclude that a risky or self-sacrificial course of action is the most desirable available option. But as scholars have pointed out, even the most direct, individually-experienced stimuli, such as personal victimization, do not in and of themselves present individuals with clear repertoires of responses consisting of radical political behavior (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2009). Individual experiences must be framed in connection with well-articulated and shared group grievances for individuals to make the leap from initial stimuli to the very particular perception of choice alternatives that includes radical behavior. By taking a framing perspective, this dissertation provides an account of the process by which certain patterns of political violence comes to be legitimated as appropriate responses to otherwise equivocal life experiences. In particular, it sheds light on then micro-mechanisms through which individual interpretations of interests, values, and attributions come to be aligned with the goals and ideologies of a social movement organization.

By shedding light on how framing processes mediate individual experiences and ultimate actions, the perspective offered by this dissertation also provides insights about why different individuals exposed to a common set of circumstances may come to interpret it differently—i.e. why some may view radical behavior as the only acceptable option while most others may perceive a range of non-violent activism behaviors as acceptable. While research on macro-level factors has helped to explain why in aggregate, certain nations or groups have higher incidences of radical behavior than others (Weinberg 1991; Burgoon 2006; Piazza 2011; Muller 1985; Van Dyke & Soule, 2002), within these aggregate levels of analysis, little is known about what

explains variation across individuals. Scholars find extensive variation within movements and movement organizations as to the proclivity of individual participants to high-risk protest (McAdam 1986; Klandermans and Oegma 1987). Moreover, studies of participation in social movements and protest do not support the supposition that participants engaged in peaceful and non-transgressive approaches to political challenge readily transition into transgressive forms of protest. Evidence suggests that the intention to engage in low-level activism is a distinct construct from the intention to engage in radicalism and that low-level activism is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for radicalism (Moskalenko & McCauley, 2009). By taking a framing perspective, this dissertation sheds light on a general set of social processes that explain why, within a given ideology, certain adherents and organizations will be more prone to violence than others.

Besides addressing these overall gaps in the literature, the perspective offered in this dissertation helps to address several particular challenges faced by recent theories of radicalization within the collective action and social psychology literatures. First, several recent studies have advanced theories that explain the emergence of terrorist violence based on macro-level conditions such as transformations at the state-level and changes in political context (Oberschall, 2004; Goodwin, 2006). Although these theories endeavor to identify the mechanisms and political circumstances in which terrorism is likely to emerge, they are limited in explaining the "how and why" of individual radicalization and subsequent participation in those activities. Second, theories of radicalization have a tendency to differentiate radicalization processes based on ideological orientation, rather than identify common pathways or processes across movements. For instance, there exist numerous theories focusing on the phenomenon of Islamic extremist terrorism, both domestically and abroad (Sageman 2004; Dalgaard-Nielsen

2010). Similarly, recent research on domestic terrorism has focused on mobilization among right-wing militia and patriot organizations (Van Dyke and Soule, 2002). In general, one of the major difficulties in developing comprehensive theories of violent radicalization is that few scholars have conducted empirical comparative studies of political violence that incorporate movements on both the far-left and the far-right.

By identifying variation between and within the various forms of movements on both sides of the political spectrum, this dissertation contributes to the understanding of common features in the conditions for radicalization and escalation to violence. It sheds light on a range of conditions that shape why individuals and organizations within a single movement may vary drastically in degrees of violence, sometimes even ranging from pacifistic to militant within the same organizations.

Overall, this dissertation informs my belief that political violence is not appropriately understood as either an individual-level or contextual-level phenomenon. Radicalization is more appropriately understood as a process, involving interactions between individual-level experiences, the characteristics of social movement organizations, and the ideational work within social movements, including frames and discourses. I hope that, by shedding light on this phenomenon from a grounded perspective, my research helps to eschew stereotyped presumptions, particularly those ascribed in popular media and rhetoric to the various extremist ideologies represented in domestic terrorism cases.

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