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Steven Chermak , Joshua Freilich & Michael Suttmoeller

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The Organizational Dynamics of Far-Right Hate Groups in the United States: Comparing Violent to Nonviolent Organizations

STEVEN CHERMAK

School of Criminal Justice
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI, USA

JOSHUA FREILICH

Department of Sociology
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
CUNY
New York, NY, USA

MICHAEL SUTTMOELLER

School of Criminal Justice
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI, USA

Few studies have explored the factors that distinguish violent from nonviolent far-right hate groups. We examine four categories of factors on hate groups: (1) Organizational capacity, (2) Organizational constituency, (3) Strategic connectivity, and (4) Structural arrangements. Age and size, groups in conflict, groups led by charismatic leaders, groups that advocated for leaderless resistance tactics, and region increased a group's propensity to commit violence. Groups that published ideological literature were significantly less likely to be violent. By identifying factors that distinguish violent from nonviolent groups, this study helps us better understand characteristics of violent far-right hate groups in the United States.

This study systematically investigates which factors distinguish violent far-right[1] hate groups[2] from nonviolent ones in the United States. Few studies have empirically studied far-right hate groups in the United States and no study has compared far right violent and nonviolent groups. This project used the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) annual *Intelligence Report* and Klan Watch publications to identify known far-right hate groups that existed for at least three years in a row from 1990 to 2008 in the United States. We sampled over 50 percent ($N = 275$) of these organizations and studied them in more

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Address correspondence to Steven Chermak, School of Criminal Justice, 512 Baker Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48864, USA. E-mail: steven.chermak@gmail.com

depth. Each organization was systematically researched to uncover all relevant publically available information. Groups whose members committed at least one ideologically motivated violent crime were categorized as *violent*. Organizations whose members were not linked to any ideologically motivated violent crime were coded as *nonviolent*. Findings from previous research were used to generate models to identify factors that differentiated the two types of groups.

It is important to study far-right hate groups because they pose a deadly threat to the United States. The United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) has documented over 375 homicide events, claiming over 600 lives, committed by domestic far-right extremists since 1990. More than 100 formal organizations were connected to these incidents. More than 140 of these incidents were ideologically motivated and took the lives of over 320 persons.[3] More than half of these fatal events were committed by White supremacists. The far-right was also linked to sixty planned and/or attempted terrorist plots between 1995 and 2005.[4]

Far-right White supremacists and hate groups are seen as representing a significant threat. When surveyed about presence within their state, 85 percent of state law enforcement agencies indicated right-wing group presence, and 82 percent indicated the presence of race/ethnicity/hate-related groups.[5] A more recent survey of state police agencies (74 percent response rate) found that 92 percent, 89 percent, 72 percent, and 70 percent of respondents respectively indicated that neo-Nazis, racist skinheads, Ku Klux Klan, and Christian Identity groups were operating in their jurisdiction.[6] Simi's research demonstrates that it is important to focus on both violent and nonviolent far-right hate organizations. Simi found that far-right terrorists were usually involved in the larger movement before becoming terrorists. He concludes that their decision to turn to violence is the culmination of an "extremist career." Importantly, Simi argues that this finding indicates that, "efforts to monitor extremist groups are important . . . ."[7]

This empirical study of extremist hate groups helps extend understanding about political violence, conflict, and terrorism in four ways. First, until recently, research in this general area was not empirical.[8] This research has been subjected to many critiques that highlight methodological concerns, including infrequent reliance on data and empirical analysis.[9] Second, our focus on groups is an important contribution. Research on hate crime and terrorism usually ignore group-level analysis.[10] In fact, Asal and Rethemeyer conclude that, "organizational level of analysis has not been a major area of investigation."[11]

Third, this study innovatively compares violent and nonviolent far-right hate groups to uncover where they systematically differ. Our review indicates that this is the first study to conduct such a comparison. The few studies that focus on terrorist, hate groups, or extremist criminal organizations usually use a case study approach and qualitative methods to study a single group or small number of organizations.[12] It is an important oversight as well that most studies focus on violent and ignore nonviolent organizations.[13] The few studies that have examined state-level or county-level variation in the number of far-right paramilitary or hate groups in the country[14] do not distinguish between violent and nonviolent organizations. Instead both types are collapsed together as extremist groups.

Finally, this study's focus on homegrown American organizations is a positive addition. Terrorism researchers mostly investigate international terrorism and foreign terrorist campaigns,[15] and recently most of the focus has been on Al Qaeda and related groups.[16] Domestic terrorism and extremist criminal organizations in the United States have been less studied.[17] Below we first review the literature and highlight a series of hypotheses about which factors could be associated with whether or not a far-right hate group is violent. Second, we discuss the data and the statistical methods used to analyze these data. Next we

set forth our results and discuss their implications. We conclude with a discussion of future research projects that could extend the findings.

Literature Review

We review research on terrorism, political violence, and extremism to identify organizational factors that might explain why some groups or their members may turn to violence. Prior studies find that hate groups, like White supremacist organizations, face similar challenges as other political organizations. These obstacles include garnering sufficient funding to maintain the group, recruit members, and overcome competition.[18] Groups that effectively manage these challenges are more likely to survive, grow, and perhaps be more linked to violence. This research finds that four categories of factors may be associated with violent groups: (1) Organizational capacity, (2) Organizational constituency, (3) Strategic connectivity, and (4) Structural arrangement. We also discuss a few other variables that may explain a group's or its members' propensity to be involved in violence.

Organizational Capacity

It is difficult for such groups to survive and maintain their activities or grow. For example, the overwhelming majority of terrorist groups last less than a year.[19] Most extremist far-right hate groups as we demonstrate below also last less than one year. Recruitment, funding, and adaptability are mechanisms that could enhance organizational capacity. Horowitz states that terrorist groups have "resource constraints that influence their planning processes, from how often they attack—the operational tempo—to whom they plan to attack and how they plan to conduct attacks."[20] It is thus important for organizations or movements to mobilize sufficient resources to survive and then thrive.[21]

Recruitment. Maintaining group membership and adding new members are critical to organizational survival. New members may provide new skills/expertise and have intelligence about potential areas or issues of concern. These new members could also contribute innovative strategies to achieve organizational success, including greater effectiveness in committing violent acts.[22] Original group members may be energized when others commit to the cause they believe in. These energized members may be encouraged to act on their own to further the group's goals. Similarly, additional members could result in connections to other individuals, groups, and social institutions that both increase the pool of potential violent actors and ensure that more successful violent strategies are diffused to this wider segment.[23] In all these cases, the result could be both group ordered attacks or members committing attacks on their own, not because of an order from the group's command structure but, to further the organization's goals.

Hate groups, like other organizations, must develop multiple strategies to recruit effectively, as new members are likely to join in different ways.[24] Most mainstream White individuals are either initially wary or hostile to White supremacist groups due to their racist message and the stigma associated with such groups.[25] In addition, the movement is factionalized, and several hate groups may compete for the same pool of potential members.[26]

It is possible that the most violent prone individuals experiment with different groups before finding one whose ideology and goals are consistent with their interests.[27] The few studies that examine recruitment find groups use multiple strategies to identify potential members. Horgan[28] finds that becoming a terrorist is a process and potential members must learn about how to join a group.[29] Many individuals are recruited through friends and

family networks.[30] Weinburg and Eubank's examination of left- and right-wing groups in Italy found that 13 percent of members joined because of family or friends.[31] Similarly, Sageman's study of global *jihadists* found that many joined in clusters due to preexisting relationships with current members.[32] Others stress that distributing propaganda through publications, the Internet, and the media,[33] recruiting at protests or events, and conducting activities to target specific groups of people (e.g., prisoners, youth)[34] are critical for successful recruitment.

It is hypothesized that groups that recruit most aggressively and (successfully) will be more likely to be involved in violent crimes. Importantly, groups that target specific types of members may be more likely to be involved in violence. Groups that recruit at protests and/or concerts and specifically target youths are likely to be attracting members that are more prone to participate in violence. These violent individuals could commit violent acts on their own to further the group's ideology.

Funding. Terrorist and extremist groups need funding to succeed. Although it may be inexpensive to commit specific terrorist acts, it is more costly to create and sustain an organized ongoing attack capacity. Often the targets selected for planned attacks and the method of attack are constrained by the organization's financial level.[35] Financial resources are also required to maintain internal security, mount operations, maintain communications and safe-houses, provide training, produce documents, conduct intelligence, and obtain weapons.[36] Similarly, resource mobilization theorists from the social movement literature argue that for groups and movements to succeed they must have sufficient resources such as money.[37] While initially this framework was applied to left-wing movements, it has also been applied to far-right organizations and movements.[38]

Stern found that finances are important for successful terrorist groups: "where there is money for Islamist causes but not communist ones, Islamist terrorist groups will rise and communist ones will fail."[39] It could be that groups with more funding sources have increased capabilities that result in a more efficient and cohesive organization. In turn, these groups may be more violent. Indeed, O'Neil finds that an organization's ability to conduct lethal attacks may be linked to their effectiveness as fundraisers.[40]

Although we believe that funding is positively related to violent attacks for some types of terrorist organizations, we hypothesize that it will have no effect on violence by far-right hate groups. The crimes that these groups commit are ideologically motivated but are generally not designed to overthrow the government. Instead, the goal is usually to harm individuals from racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds that they loathe. These attacks—while violent—are inexpensive to mount. Similarly, as noted, many of these attacks are unplanned, spontaneous acts that are committed by the group's members on their own. Thus, while funding levels may matter in terms of sustaining an organization, they may have little impact on whether the group's members commit a violent hate act.

Age of Organization. Organizational age is another way to operationalize group capacity.[41] New organizations face challenges, including developing structures and routines to maximize workflow, establishing connectivity in the organizational field, and overcoming start-up setbacks. Although there is debate about the effects of organizational age,[42] some argue that older organizations are better able to overcome these hurdles and survive. Horowitz explains that, "as groups build an operational history, they develop institutionalized command and control structures focused on the types of operations the group conducts."[43] Older organizations can draw on their experience to learn and adapt the best practices—including the most efficient ways to commit violence—they have observed from other groups.[44]

Chermak noted this when observing changes within the militia movement following the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. The militia organizations that survived and maintained operations after the bombing were able to deal with the intense public scrutiny. Interestingly, many of the groups that survived and were involved in criminal activity also adapted by either going underground or morphing into other types of extremist groups to avoid law enforcement infiltration.[45] Importantly, Caspi's study of a sample of 13 far-right hate groups whose members committed at least one ideologically motivated race-based homicide found that the age of the organization was positively and significantly related to the number of ideologically motivated homicide events.[46]

Based on these studies, it is hypothesized that older groups are more likely to be violent. Over time, these groups, and their individual members, learn from past successes and failures and acquire knowledge that could aid their successful commission of criminal acts. For example, Asal, Ackerman, and Rethemeyer find that less experienced organizations are less likely to pursue chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) weapons.[47] It is important to note, however, that other research finds that group age has no effect or a negative effect on violence. Asal and Rethemeyer found that organizational age did not affect group lethality, and Horowitz found that group age had a negative effect on the adoption of suicide tactics by other terrorist organizations.[48]

Size of Organization. Size is another variable that may increase the likelihood that a group is involved in violence. Jones and Libicki's analysis of 648 terrorist groups using the RAND–Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) terrorism database found that size of the organization was related to group survival. Larger groups tended to last longer.[49] Researchers conclude that larger organizations benefit from the collective expertise of members, and ultimately larger organizations are more lethal terrorist organizations and pursue CBRN weapons.[50]

Horowitz states that larger groups should be better able to implement novel strategies to improve their operations. He argues that size is often associated with lethality among terrorist groups.[51] Caspi found that organizational size was positively and significantly related to the number of ideologically motivated events in which a hate group engaged. He also found that group size was related to group age and the number of links a group had to other organizations. Caspi concludes that it is possible that size and age may be correlated and that large groups may just have more connections.[52] Other scholars argue though that being large is detrimental because the organization must struggle with maintaining basic operations. Thus small organizations may be more deadly.[53] We think, however, that being larger will increase an organization's likelihood of being involved in violence. In one way, size might impact violence as a simple reflection of the law of averages. That is, there are simply more opportunities for organizations with large memberships to be connected to violent actions. In addition, larger organizations might be more likely to be linked to violence because of the diversity and strength of their membership. Large organizations are more likely to have resources to finance members and allow them to focus on criminal matters. These organizations may also be more likely to have individual members with various skills and backgrounds. These skills might be useful in planning, executing, or encouraging criminal activities, and in providing intelligence to identify susceptible targets.[54]

Military Members. There have been several reports, although relying primarily on anecdotal or case studies, that document that far-right extremists groups have aggressively attempted to recruit military personnel into their organizations.[55] These reports imply that compared to other extremist groups, far-right groups are more interested in recruiting

military veterans into their organizations. For example, an analysis of data from the American Terrorism Study concludes that far-right groups are significantly more likely to have members with military experience.[56] Having members with military backgrounds may increase a group's propensity toward violence in several ways. First, former members of the military may have particular technical and leadership skills that can be used by the group to commit violence.[57] This skill set includes extensive training in the use of weapons, explosives, and combat strategies. Second, military veterans turned activist may have specific grievances directed at the government. Thus, we hypothesize that groups that have members with previous military training will be more likely to be involved in violence.

Organizational Constituency

Groups use various strategies to increase their visibility with their organizational constituencies (i.e., others that matter to them). Asal and Rethemeyer explain that terrorist organizations are often focused on their audience—"groups or deities that the organization is trying to impress."[58] Although some hate groups may shun publicity, most far-right hate groups attempt to engage outside constituencies using strategies such as running for political office, organizing conferences, appearing in the media, and participating in community programming. Such strategies result in the group engaging public and mainstream organizations.[59]

Groups might also adopt strategies to engage other extremists. Strategies such as publishing racist propaganda, passing out leaflets, and conducting training exercises demonstrates to others that the group will take steps to achieve their objectives.[60] While a group may choose these strategies for a variety of reasons, one explanation is to gain legitimacy and spread its message.

These arguments are consistent with resource mobilization theory from the social movement literature. Research has found that extremist racist organizations attempt to leverage other extremist groups.[61] Oberschall claims that successful social movements exploit previous movements and recruit already mobilized individuals.[62] Pitcavage concludes that the far-right militia movement of the 1990s recruited from the similarly extremist Posse Comitatus movement active in the 1980s.[63]

In sum, research indicates that many groups attempt to conduct a variety of activities to spread their message. We hypothesize that far-right hate groups that more actively spread their messages—and are thus reaching a wider audience—are more likely to be violent. These activities could encourage individuals to act on their own to further the group's ideology.[64] A group's increased engagement might also produce a greater number of links with other entities that members could exploit to commit ideologically motivated violent crimes.[65] (This point is discussed further below.)

Strategic Connectivity

Many terrorist and extremist hate groups are increasingly attempting to connect to various networks.[66] Having more links provide groups benefits such as better intelligence, the quick sharing of new information, new members, training, expertise, donations, weapons, safe houses, transportation networks, and propaganda and other types of encouragement.[67]

Asal and Rethemeyer discuss how "through relationships terrorist organizations spread out the mobilization tasks, diversify the risks inherent in mobilizing resources (of detection in particular), and even build the basis for a division of labor between organizations."[68] Similarly, Futrell and Simi discuss that the White Power Movement (WPM) "persists

largely because of the intense commitment, rich and variegated culture and strong activist networks that members cultivate in the movement's free spaces."[69]

Recent research demonstrates that studying links between and among terrorist organizations is important. Enders and Jindapon state that networks that are more connected are more sophisticated.[70] These entities are more capable logistically which should translate into the ability to be more violent. Asal and Rethemeyer were the first to examine if greater numbers of linkages were associated with more lethal terrorist organizations. They "leverage[d MIPT] data on the network of terrorist organizations worldwide to explore the importance of organizational connections to the behavior and lethality of those organizations."[71] Importantly, they found that more alliance ties increased lethality in all of the models produced. Asal and Rethemeyer argue that groups with more ties are more likely to acquire knowledge that could be useful to mounting violent acts.[72]

Horowitz also used MIPT data (1968–2006) to study the diffusion of suicide tactics among terrorist groups.[73] He argues that cooperation and communication among terrorist groups played an important role in the spread of the suicide bombing terrorist tactic.[74] Horowitz states that more ties provide more opportunities for groups to learn from one another successful tactics and possible targets.[75] Finally, Caspi used data from the ECDB and identified 36 ideologically race-based homicide incidents that were committed by formal members of 24 far-right hate groups. Caspi found that groups with more direct ties with other hate groups were associated with more homicides. Based on these findings, we hypothesize that groups with more links to other far-right groups are significantly more likely to be violent.[76]

Conflicts With Far-Right Groups

Groups with greater numbers of linkages may be better positioned to obtain resources, expertise, and commitment from other groups. But, it is also possible that some groups could have conflicts with other organizations that could hamper their ability to operate and succeed. Oots explains that "competition is not unusual among terrorist organizations" and that "the more successful a group is at attracting members, the more likely it is to face competition."[77] It is therefore not surprising that some far-right hate groups, in addition to their hatred of minority groups and the government, are also in conflict with other hate groups. Hate groups disagree, vehemently at times, on methods, strategies, and ideologies.[78] Conflicts may arise for a variety of reasons including personality differences, competitions over potential recruits, and disagreements over ideological beliefs or whether or not violence should be employed.[79] Many groups contrast their methods and motives with other groups to enhance their own standing. For example, after the Oklahoma City bombing, Chermak highlighted how groups like the Militia of Montana and specific individuals including John Trochmann, Bo Gritz, and Norm Olsen significantly influenced public understanding of the militia movement by being the sources of choice for news reporters. Other groups and individuals aggressively combated these images by attempting to access the media to explain that these groups or individuals were not representing their beliefs.[80]

These conflicts may force groups to compete in various ways, including increasing the likelihood that a group either advocates for or actually commits violent crimes. Groups in conflict may try to outdo their competition—hostility acts as pressure to prove that the group is serious about accomplishing its goals. This could lead to both the group leadership ordering its members to commit these attacks and to the organization's members on their own attacking to further the group's ideology. The violent act can thus signal to others the group's commitment to its cause.[81] Importantly, the violent act will also probably lead to publicity about the group, and the media may be more likely to cover the event, especially

if it involves serious violence. For these reasons we hypothesize that groups that are in conflict with other far-right hate groups are more likely to be violent.

Structural Arrangements

Groups can be organized in different ways. Some organizations use a paramilitary-style structure, with top-down leadership. Other organizations may consist of small groups of individuals brought together to achieve a goal without a formal leadership structure. Groups may be above ground—actively engaged with mainstream society and attempting to influence it through legitimate structures—or disengaged and/or underground. Most hate groups tend to be small and independent, but there are exceptions. Some groups, such as the National Socialist Movement, have many chapters in different states.

Three structural variables may be particularly important to the question of whether a group engages in violence: charismatic leadership, whether the group endorses leaderless resistance tactics, and whether the group operates within prison.

Charismatic Leader. Leadership is critical to the formation of terrorist groups[82] and to the success of social movements generally, and far-right ones particularly.[83] Effective leaders motivate individuals to join, rally individuals around a particular identity, and increase the group's cohesiveness. Strong leaders also sustain an organization's strength by encouraging people to fully commit to the ideas and motives of the group.

Freilich, Chermak, and Caspi's analysis of the life histories of several White-supremacist groups concludes that effective leadership is critical for a group's success. They found that the Aryan Nation's successes were due to the abilities and strengths of Richard Butler, that the National Alliance only thrived once William Pierce became its leader, and that Public Enemy One (PEN1) became a force because of its leader. This study also documents that ineffective leadership or the death of a strong leader can lead to the demise of a group.[84] Hamm concludes that the large growth in number of far-right racist—and often violent—skinheads in the United States in the 1980s was due to the leadership of Tom Metzger.[85] Some of the most "successful" violent far-right groups in the United States were formed and led by charismatic, strong leaders, including the "Order," which murdered five individuals and committed spectacular robberies that netted close to $10,000,000 in the 1980s, and the Aryan Republican Army, which committed more than 20 robberies in the 1990s.[86] Similarly, resource mobilization theorists argue that successful groups and movements have more resources, such as effective leadership abilities, to employ.

Being an effective leader, however, is a major challenge. Significant variation may be expected in the ability of individuals to bring people together to commit not only to being an active member of a group, but also to training for and participating in violent actions. We hypothesize then that groups that are led by a skilled leader—one that is charismatic and entrepreneurial—are significantly more likely to be involved in violent activities.

Leaderless Resistance. Violent extremist movements have long practiced leaderless resistance. The far-right in particular has supported this tactic for decades and recently several high profile White supremacist leaders have again endorsed its use.[87] This tactic makes it more difficult for law enforcement to detect potential threats because the small number of individuals involved and their isolation from organized entities allow them to "fly under the radar." Damphousse and Smith find that the far right's use of leaderless resistance has resulted in far-right groups becoming smaller, having fewer members.[88] Arquilla, Ronfeldt, and Zanini and Enders and Jindapon explain that more recently formed terrorist groups

are less likely to be completely top-down organizations and are more likely to be "flatter" to guard against infiltration.[89] Flatter organizations allow more openings for down-up organizing that is consistent with leaderless resistance.

Groups that advocate leaderless resistance tactics may be more likely to engage in violence. After all, these organizations are urging their members to use violent tactics. Further, these groups are warning their members and supporters to be fearful of law enforcement infiltration, and to conduct their planning and violent acts secretly and in isolation. We hypothesize that organizations that endorse leaderless resistance are linked to specific violent acts that their members—as well as nonmember supporters and others—commit on their own initiative due to the group's encouragement of violence, as opposed to crimes that are committed due to direct orders from the group's leadership.

Operating in Prison. Groups that function within prisons might also have increased tendency toward violence.[90] There has been frequent discussion about how White-supremacist gangs are particularly problematic for prison administrators as they are frequently involved in violence. Indeed, the SPLC estimates that nearly 20 percent of the murders that occur within prisons are linked to White supremacist groups.[91] In addition, some scholars argue that prisons are critical to radicalizing individuals toward violence.[92] Groups that operate in prison have access to individuals with a criminal history, and we hypothesize that this might translate into using violence to further the group's ideology.

Other Group Characteristics

Besides investigating variables that prior research has indicated may impact the propensity for violence among groups, we examine additional variables related to general characteristics of the groups. It is important to examine indicators of place. Two variables may be related to a group's propensity for violence: type of area (e.g., urban, suburban, rural) and region. An analysis that examined the geography of terrorism using the MIPT terrorism database concluded that terrorism incidents tended to cluster in urban areas.[93] Urban areas offer advantages for terrorists including proximity to targets and high-impact targets (e.g., those that are highly populated), access to individuals who could support an operation, availability of material, greater likelihood to be invisible, and quicker access to the media.[94] Other research has indicated that the motives and targets of terrorists may vary regionally.[95]

Research Design

This section discusses the sampling design, variables used in the study, and analysis plan.

Sampling Design

There were a number of methodological obstacles that had to be addressed to provide a quantitative assessment of differences between violent and nonviolent far-right hate groups in the United States.

First, a sample had to be selected. There are few sources that systematically and regularly maintain listings of individual far-right hate groups. An exception is the SPLC *Intelligence Report*, which arguably provides the best listing of both violent and nonviolent hate groups in the United States. There were several advantages to using the *Intelligence Report* and its predecessor *Klanwatch* to identify groups for analysis. First, the report is

published annually. Second, one issue every year includes a state-by-state listing of all known hate groups in the United States. Third, although scholars have noted problems with SPLC procedures for identifying hate incidents or groups,[96] the SPLC has used the same set of strategies to identify hate organizations over time, relying on "hate group publications and websites, citizen and law enforcement reports, field sources and news reports."[97] Fourth, unlike law enforcement agencies and others that compile intelligence information only on criminally active groups, the SPLC tracks violent and nonviolent groups. Significantly, the SPLC specifically excludes websites that are the work of a lone person not affiliated with a group.[98] Thus, the sample includes groups that are identifiable, some that have participated in violent and/or other hate group activities, are comprised of two or more individuals, and seek to further an extremist ideology.

We compiled a listing of all far right hate groups existing in the United States between 1990 and 2008 that were identified in the SPLC's annual reports. As discussed below, data about each organization and their activities were compiled using open sources. We were concerned that information about groups prior to 1990 would be more difficult to collect. In addition, it was important to make data collection and coding manageable. The SPLC has provided the hate group crime listing for at least of these years. We used 2008 as the back-end cutoff so that there would be a period of time for adequate identification and collection of violence-related information.

We identified over 6,000 hate groups and noted every year that each group was listed in one of the SPLC's annual reports. We eliminated any group that did not exist for at least three consecutive years. This three-year rule is consistent with other research that has studied organizational violence.[99] This decision was primarily based on our interest in examining groups that demonstrated some survival capacity, as most terrorist organizations do not have very long life spans. It is evident that it takes commitment to sustain an extremist organization for at least three years and these groups may be particularly threatening. Importantly, focusing on these groups also increases the likelihood that some information will be available about them through open sources.

From the list of organizations that met these criteria ($N = 550$), we randomly selected half for analysis. Data were collected on 275 hate groups. The vast majority were single-chapter organizations (93.5 percent) and when an organization had multiple chapters we coded information about the umbrella organization. For example, the SPLC intelligence report noted 24 different chapters of the World Church of the Creator, but we only included the umbrella organization in the compiled list.

A second obstacle we faced was gathering reliable information about each of the 275 groups. Although there may be rich intelligence data about some of the violent groups in our sample, getting access to this information would be difficult or impossible. Hate-monitoring organizations like the SPLC and the Anti-Defamation League collect extensive information about some of the groups in the study, but their coverage is not complete. In addition, only some of what they have available is made public in various documents and reports.

We decided that the best approach to collect organizational-level data about each group was to design an open-source study to access all available documents, reports, court cases, media reports, and blogs written about each group. Open source information has become increasingly valued[100] and these data are being used more frequently in terrorism research.[101] Thus, groups were searched using a protocol used to create the ECDB.[102] This protocol includes accessing the information available through 26 search engines, including Google, News Library, Infotrac, Lexis-Nexis, and All the Web to uncover all public source materials on that group, including court documents such as indictments and appellate

decisions when individuals were involved in criminal cases. The name of the group was used as the initial search term. But as individuals and locations were identified in the initial search materials, follow-up searches were conducted to collect additional information. Finally, targeted searches were conducted when specific information was lacking using existing search materials. The information about each group was inputted into an ACCESS file using a group-level codebook.

Variables

Table 1 includes the descriptive characteristics of the dependent and independent variables used in this study. Our primary interest is examining whether specific organizational factors increase the likelihood that a group commits ideological violence, controlling for other variables.

Dependent Variables. We examine two dependent variables. The first dependent variable is *group violence*. This variable is coded as present (1) when there was any evidence that a member or members of a specific group were arrested for committing or planning to commit a violent crime. The violent act had to be motivated by ideology and committed in order to further the objectives of the group. Twenty-one percent of the groups committed at least one violent act.

We also wanted to look more deeply into the nature of the violence committed by these groups. That is, there may be qualitative differences in the violence committed by these groups. Blomberg, Engel, and Sawyer found, for instance, that violent groups could be categorized as either one-hit wonders or recidivists.[103] Our second dependent variable therefore distinguishes groups that were rarely or sporadically involved in ideological violence from those frequently involved. We created a variable called *extreme violence* that only applies to groups that committed multiple homicides and serious violent assaults. These groups were linked to at least six violent crimes to further the objectives of the group, and, on average, they were linked to approximately twenty violent crimes. Nine percent of all groups were defined as having committed extreme violence.

Independent Variables. We examine several measures of organizational capacity, organizational constituencies, strategic connectivity, and structural arrangement. We also examine several other variables, including region, scope, area, and the primary ideological orientation of the group. The operationalization of these variables is discussed below.

The organizational capacity variables are *recruitment*, *funding*, *age*, *size*, and *military members*. Several dichotomous variables were created to document whether the group attempted to recruit using different types of tactics identified as being potentially important in past research. Specifically, we examine whether a group used the internet to recruit, targeted people to be involved through personal visits, recruited generally at protests, or specifically instituted recruitment strategies to target youth. Forty-five percent of the groups recruited using the Internet, 31 percent recruited at protests, 5 percent recruited using personal visits, and 5 percent specifically targeted youths.

Funding strategy is a dichotomous variable. It was coded as present (1) if a group attempted to raise funds through any legal means, such as charities, donations, membership dues, or businesses. This measure excludes sources of illegal funding. Few groups attempted to generate funds using multiple strategies, but approximately 42 percent of the organizations generated funds using at least one of these strategies.

Table 1
Description of variables

Variable	Mean	*SD*
Dependent variables		
1. Group violence	.21	.411
2. Extreme violence	.09	.293
Independent variables		
Organizational capacity		
Recruitment tactics		
Internet	.45	.498
Personal visits	.05	.213
Protests	.31	.463
Recruit youths	.05	.228
Funding	.40	.491
Age of organization	10.70	5.430
Size of organization	.18	.386
Members in military	.07	.248
Organizational constituencies		
Public legitimacy	1.87	1.56
Extremist legitimacy		
Ideological literature	.51	.501
Leafletting	.27	.446
Training	.05	.228
Strategic Connectivity		
Linked to domestic far-right groups	.57	.496
Linked to domestic far-right figures	.26	.438
Conflict with domestic far-right groups	.11	.308
Structural		
Charismatic leader	.09	.288
Leaderless resistance tactics	.03	.158
Operate in prison	.05	.220
Other variables		
Group scope		
Local scope	.69	.464
Group area		
Urban	.57	.495
Suburban	.22	.416
Rural	.20	.403
Primary ideological concern		
Race	.79	.411
Religion	.11	.312
Government	.10	.308
Region		
South	.40	.491
West	.27	.445
Midwest	.20	.398
Northeast	.13	.338

Age of the organization is measured as the number of consecutive years the group was noted in the SPLC reports. On average, groups existed for 10.7 years. It was a challenge to collect information about the size of an organization as this information was not typically provided in open source documents. Our coding scheme attempted to capture various size categories to represent small-, medium-, and large-sized organizations. Unfortunately, the specific size of the organization was rarely noted. We assumed, however, that if an organization was large (at least 200 members), then it was likely to have been noted in the open source materials. Thus, we created a variable comparing these organizations to all other organizations in the sample. Eighteen percent of the organizations were categorized as large. The final organizational capacity variable is a dichotomous indicator of whether the group included former members of the military. Approximately 7 percent of the groups had members with military experience.

Organizational constituencies were accounted for by creating variables to capture whether groups sought legitimacy among the broader public and/or other extremists. The measure we call *public legitimacy* is an eight-item scale that combines items measuring whether the group was active politically, had a website, had community or educational programming, had public member meetings, organized conferences, or specifically appeared in the media to promote the group. Over 80 percent of the groups attempted to engage the public using at least one of these strategies. More than 51 percent used one or two, 29 percent used between 3 and 5, and more than 6 percent used more than five strategies to promote the group.

We created several dichotomous variables related to *extremist legitimacy*, such as whether the group published extremist literature, leafleted, or conducted training exercises. Fifty-one percent published extremist literature, 27 percent distributed hate leaflets, and 5 percent conducted training exercises.

The variables we use to operationalize strategic connectivity relate to specific linkages and/or conflicts with others groups. The first variable is *linkages* to domestic far-right groups.[104] This variable is measured dichotomously and coded as present (1) when we could establish that a group participated in specific activities with other groups, had friendships with other groups, were an off-shoot group, or received public support from other far-right organizations. Over 57 percent of the groups had established links with other far-right groups. Similarly, we created a variable that measures *linkages to high-profile* far-right figures. Twenty-six percent of the groups were linked to such figures. We also wanted to capture whether the group noted any conflicts or were *in competition* with other far-right groups. This variable is measured as a dichotomous indicator. Approximately 11 percent of the groups had conflicts with other far-right organizations.

Finally, we attempted to capture characteristics related to the structure of the group using three variables. The first coded whether the group was led by a *charismatic leader*. We primarily allowed the commentary about leaders found in open sources to define who was charismatic. We collected information about the leaders of these groups, and coded the group as having a charismatic leader when some individual specifically discussed the activities of the leader and defined him as charismatic. Nine percent of the organizations had a charismatic leader. The second variable is whether the group practiced and/or publicly advocated the use of *leaderless resistance tactics*. We borrow from Kaplan in defining leaderless resistance as those that "engage in acts of anti-state violence independent of any movement, leader, or network of support."[105] The open source materials often noted such characteristics and specifically described groups as being organized without leaders. Only 3 percent of the groups used such tactics. Finally, whether the group *operates in prison* was coded as a dichotomous variable. Five percent of the groups operated in prison.

Other Group Characteristics. We also included other general characteristics of the groups. These variables include scope of activities, type of area and region of location, and primary ideological orientation. Each variable is dummy-coded. *Scope* refers to the focus of the agenda of the group. Sixty-nine percent of the groups focused on local activities, and 31 percent focused on international, national or multi-state issues. The latter category of groups serves as the reference category. The *type of area* variable captures the general location of the group—urban, suburban, or rural. Over 57 percent of the groups were in urban areas, 22 percent in suburban, and 20 percent in rural. Rural serves as the reference category. We used the United States Census to create the *region* variable. Forty percent of the groups were in the South, 27 percent were in the West, 20 percent were in the Midwest, and 13 percent were in the Northeast. These regions were dummy-coded, and the South serves as the reference category. The final variable is *primary ideological concern*. Not surprisingly, nearly 80 percent of the groups were primarily concerned with racial issues. Eleven percent were primarily concerned with a religious issue, and ten percent were primarily concerned with antigovernment issues. These variables were dummy-coded, and the antigovernment group serves as the reference category.

Analysis

The dependent variables are dichotomous (violent/not violent; extreme violence/not extreme violence). Logistic regression is the appropriate technique for dichotomous dependent variables. To detect whether there were multicollinearity problems, we ran the models using linear regression and examined Tolerance and Variance Inflation diagnostic statistics. We did not find any concerns.[106] Below we present the results for the analysis of (1) Group violence and (2) Extreme violence.

In presenting the results for the two main dependent variables (Group violence; Extreme violence) in the tables, we present multiple models. We first present independent models that include each category of the independent variables (organizational capacity, organizational constituencies, strategic connectivity, structural, and other) separately. We then present a final model that includes only those variables that were significantly related to the dependent variable in the independent models.

Findings

Table 2 presents the six models for the Group violence variable. Groups that recruited at protests, specifically targeted youth, were large, and were older were significantly more likely to be involved in violence; using other recruitment tactics and legal funding strategies, and having members in the military were not related to violence (Model 1). In Model 2, groups that leafleted were significantly more likely to be involved in violence, as were groups involved in multiple public legitimacy strategies. As the number of strategies increased, so did the likelihood of being involved in violence. However, groups that produced ideological literature were significantly less likely to be involved in violence. Training had no relationship to a group being involved in violence. In Model 3, two of the three strategic connectivity variables were significant: Groups that were linked to other far-right groups and groups in conflict with other far-right groups were significantly more likely to be involved in violence, but groups linked to specific far right figures were not. All three structural variables in Model 4 were related to violence. Groups that had a charismatic leader, organized or advocated leaderless resistance, or operated in prison were more likely to be involved in violence. Finally, two of the other variables in Model 5 were significant.

Table 2
Independent measures on any group violence

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Capacity						
Internet	–.619					
Personal visits	1.52					
Protests	.909**					.314
Recruit youths	1.61					
Funding	–.603					
Age	.090***					.078**
Size	.963**					.51
Military experience	–.194					
Constituencies						
Public legitimacy		.370***				–.004
Ideological literature		–.854**				–1.279**
Leafletting		.876**				.678
Training		.321				
Strategic connectivity						
Links to far-right groups			1.069**			.279
Links to far-right figures			.042			
Far-right conflicts			.862**			.784
Structural						
Charismatic leader				1.733****		1.48**
Leaderless resistance				2.207***		2.37**
Operate in prison				2.097***		1.19
Other variables						
Local scope					–1.52****	–.682
Urban†					–.074	
Suburban					–.367	
West‡					.990**	1.087**
Midwest					.184	.511
Northeast					1.142**	1.547***
Primary racial§					–.565	
Primary religion					–1.152	
Constant	–2.556****	–1.939****	–2.140****	–1.731****	–.217****	–2.934****
Chi Square	44.070****	22.895****	17.642***	32.640****	26.133***	56.135****
–2 Log	215.850	263.059	265.220	253.314	233.629	197.142
Cox and Snell R Square	.163	.08	.06	.112	.096	.196
Naglekerke R Square	.251	.124	.10	.173	.152	.313

****$p < .001$; ***$p < .01$; **$p < .05$.
†Rural is the reference category.
‡South is the reference category.
§Antigovernment is the reference category.

Groups that focused on local issues were significantly less likely to be involved in violence compared to groups that had a broader, national agenda. In addition, groups headquartered in the West and the Northeast were significantly more likely to be involved in violence compared to groups in the South.

Model 6 includes only the significant variables discussed above. Five of these indicators remained significant in this model. Groups that specifically recruited youth and groups that advocated or participated in leaderless resistance tactics were more likely to be involved in

violence. Groups that distributed ideological literature were significantly less likely to be involved in violence. In addition, two of the region variables were significant. Groups in the West and Northeast were significantly more likely to be involved in violence compared to groups in the South. None of the other variables that were significant in the independent models remained significant.

Extreme Violence

Table 3 presents the results for the extreme violence variable. In general, the variables that were related to groups' involvement in any violence were also related to involvement in extreme violence. In Model 1, funding, age, and size of the organization were significant. Groups that were older or large were significantly more likely to be involved in extreme violence, and groups with legal funding strategies were significantly less likely to be involved in extreme violence. In Model 2, groups that used multiple public legitimacy strategies were more likely to be involved in extreme violence but those that published extremist literature were significantly less likely to be involved in extreme violence. In Model 3, groups that were linked to other far-right groups and those that articulated specific conflicts with other groups were more likely to be involved in extreme violence. Groups that advocated leaderless resistance and operated in prison were also more likely to be involved in extreme violence (Model 4). Finally, several of the other variables were significant (Model 5). Groups with a local/state agenda were significantly less likely to commit extreme violence compared to those with a national or international agenda. Groups that were headquartered in the Northeast were significantly more likely to commit violence compared to groups from the South.

Each of the variables that were significant in Models 1 through 5 was included in the final model presented in Table 3. Seven variables remained significant in Model 6. First, groups that were older or large were significantly more likely to be involved in extreme violence. Second, groups that produced ideological literature were significantly less likely to be involved in extreme violence. Third, groups that had conflicts with other far-right groups were significantly more likely to be involved in extreme violence. Fourth, groups that practiced and/or advocated for leaderless resistance tactics were significantly more likely to be involved in extreme violence. Finally, the region variable was also significant. Groups in the Northeast and West were significantly more likely to be involved in extreme violence compared to groups from the South.

Discussion

According to the SPLC, there were at least 6,000 hate groups in the United States between 1990 and 2008. The vast majority of these groups did not survive more than a year. Further, as this study demonstrates, most of the groups that had some longevity are not linked to violent crimes and even fewer commit multiple acts of violence. Of the groups that participated in violence, some of the groups studies here were linked to a single or a couple of acts of violence, but other groups were linked to multiple ideological acts intended to accomplish the goals of the organization. An important question then is: In what ways are groups and/or their members who turn to violence different from groups whose members do not. Further, how are the variables that predict involvement in violence similar and different for groups that commit few acts of violence to those that have a sustained capacity? The findings presented here provide a good start to answering these questions.

Table 3
Independent measures on extreme violence

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Capacity						
Internet	.065					
Personal visits	.795					
Protests	.701					
Recruit youths	–.681					
Funding	–1.226					
Age	.126**					.155**
Size	1.572***					1.940**
Military experience	.600					
Constituencies						
Public legitimacy		.587****				.389
Ideological literature		–1.396**				–1.973***
Leafletting		.129				
Training		.635				
Strategic connectivity						
Links to far-right groups			1.41**			.701
Links to far-right figures			–.128			
Far-right conflicts			1.328***			1.792***
Structural						
Charismatic leader				.772		
Leaderless resistance				2.445***		4.294****
Operate in prison				2.075***		1.78
Other variables						
Local scope					–.974**	.760
Urban†					.082	
Suburban					.130	
West‡					1.179	1.889**
Midwest					.580	1.67
Northeast					1.878**	3.968****
Primary racial§					.128	
Primary religion					–.845	
Constant	–4.291****	–2.990****	–3.448***	–2.692****	–2.594***	–8.297****
Chi Square	27.171***	18.475***	16.31***	20.356****	13.262	68.389****
–2 Log	121.402	153.637	155.002	151.755	146.523	91.292
Cox and Snell R Square	.104	.005	.058	.071	.05	.23
Naglekerke R Square	.230	.140	.124	.153	.109	.51

****$p < .001$; ***$p < .01$; **$p < .05$.
†Rural is the reference category.
‡South is the reference category.
§Antigovernment is the reference category.

There were several variables that were consistently related to a group's propensity for violence even when controlling for other variables. First, of the organizational capacity variables, age, and size were related to a group's propensity for extreme violence, and age was related to the group violence variable. That is, more durable or older groups were more likely to be involved in violence. This might be consistent with expectations, as older groups and of course their members have the opportunity to learn and expand their repertoire over time. The significance of size may be linked to the fact that there are simply

more members of a group, which increases the odds of a member engaging in violent acts. Larger organizations also have a more diverse body of members with different skills and expertise, and this diversity may translate into an ability to evade capture for a period of time and thus the opportunity for its members to commit more violent crimes.

The only organizational constituency variable that was related to violence was publishing ideological literature. That is, groups that published ideological literature, such as newsletters or pamphlets, were significantly *less likely* to be involved in violence. Such literature is used to attract potential members to the organization, and perhaps these groups realize that the publication of their rhetoric will bring increased attention to their group and thus decrease the likelihood of being involved in violence. Contrary to our expectations, most of the organizational constituencies variables had no relationship to the two measures of violence studied here.

Of the strategic connectivity variables, the conflict variable was related to only extreme group violence. That is, groups that had some specific conflict with another group were significantly more likely to be involved in extreme violence. Groups that had conflict with others and participated in many acts of violence clearly set out to distinguish their groups from others and the nature of the conflict was often the result of other extremists noting that such activities were not supported. In contrast, groups that were positively linked to other far right groups did not relate to violence or extreme violence. These results do indicate that these groups are not isolated from each other, and many cooperated with other groups in different ways and others were openly critical. It will be important for future research to look more closely at the type of information that is actually shared, the nature of the linkages, and what and how information is diffused across different organizations.

Of the structural variables, groups that had charismatic leaders were significantly more likely to be involved in violence but not extreme violence. In addition, group with charismatic leaders in suburban areas were more likely to be involved in violence. Groups that advocated or used leaderless resistance tactics were significantly more likely to be involved in violence and extreme violence. These are not surprising findings perhaps considering previous literature, but they are important. For example, the use of leaderless resistance tactics by White supremacist organizations in particular appears to have increased since far right leaders like Louis Beam began publicly endorsing this tactic. Damphousse and Smith have found that—consistent with leaderless resistance tactics—the size of right-wing groups prosecuted federally has decreased.[107] One thought might be that the discussion of such tactics is merely rhetoric, an empty threat. Perhaps groups endorse this tactic to appear stronger and more threatening than they actually are in practice. The reality, however, is that the advocacy and use of such tactics produced something more than rhetoric—groups that organized in this way apparently were successful in encouraging their members to commit violence.

This finding is important for two reasons. First, in addition to far-right organizations advocating the use of such tactics, there has also been discussion among the far-left about the need to use such tactics. Second, groups that are leaderless are more likely to be invisible—only identified after being involved in violence. Many hate groups and hate group members are easily identifiable by their tattoos, dress, ceremonies, and other public declarations (e.g., protests, websites). But the invisibility of the groups using leaderless resistance tactics are a particular challenge for law enforcement agencies in developing strategies to identify, monitor, and prevent their involvement in violent acts. Charismatic leaders, on the other hand, are media savvy and thus perhaps more easy to monitor. One of the next steps in this research would be to examine how the rhetoric of charismatic leaders of violent groups is similar to and different from charismatic leaders whose groups do not commit violence.

Several other variables were tested. Interestingly, region consistently impacted a group's propensity to be involved in violence. Specifically, the groups that were headquartered in the West and Northeast were significantly more likely to be involved in violence compared to groups in the South. It is difficult to pinpoint the reasons for why region appeared to matter, but it opens up avenues for future research. We discuss this further below.

Although this study illuminates differences between violent and nonviolent far-right hate groups, it should be considered a first step in better understanding the impact of group characteristics on violence. There are several limitations to the study and related future research needs. First, it is important to remember that all of the groups in the study must have built some organizational capacity that resulted in them surviving for at least three consecutive years. The maturity of these organizations is, on the one hand, an advantage of the study because the groups had time to become functional entities. But it is also a disadvantage in that they are not representative of the "typical" hate group. Most hate groups only exist for a short length of time. There are many reasons why so many groups struggle initially and die young. It may be that one important reason for an early death is because their members commit and then are arrested for committing crimes. There is a need for additional research that looks at groups with short lives, comparing those that commit crimes and those that end for other reasons. Such a study would contribute to the growing body of scholarship that examines the life course of organizations as well as our understanding of the organizational factors related to group participation in violence.

Second, we were able to study a large number of variables and the consistency of the results, especially within the independent models, indicate that what we studied is relevant to understanding differences between violent and nonviolent hate groups. There would be added value, however, if future research considered additional variables and more concisely captured some of the variables discussed here. For example, the focus of this study was primarily on the internal structures of these groups, although we also looked at linkages and conflicts. However, the results related to region highlight the importance of looking at whether other variables, such as political conflict, economic indicators, and demographic characteristics affect an organization's propensity to commit violence. Future research should identify the county where these groups reside and investigate the relationship between county-level political, economic, and demographic variables and violence. In addition, the findings related to the linkages of far-right groups are surprising. There is a need to explore the nature of these linkages. Such an analysis would allow us to investigate whether the nature of the linkages impact violence. Futrell and Simi's powerful work on the "free spaces" of the White Power Movement highlights some of the challenges of identifying types of "free spaces" and offers solutions for capturing some of the nuances related to the networks that sustain extremist cultures.[108] Future research should attempt to operationalize these types of free spaces using quantitative data and look at how they relate to the strength of movements and these movements' propensity for violence.

Finally, this research focused on far-right hate groups' participation in violent ideological activities. Most of the organizations that participated in extreme violence would not be defined as terrorist organizations. Thus, some could argue that the variables found to be significant here might not be significant if they were extended to terrorist organizations. Terrorism research usually examines organizations with a top-down structure to the participation in violence—leaders decide to act, give orders, and then violent acts are carried out to further the goals of the organization.[109] There was a similar top-down decision-making structure to commit violence for many hate groups studied here. On the other had though,

some of the violent acts examined here may have been committed by group members on their own to further the organization's ideology. In other words, these members did not commit these acts under the orders of the group's leadership. This is why our literature review on the variables examined here outlined how they could be associated with group violence committed both by its members acting under the orders of the leaders, as well as acts committed by members on their own to further the organization's ideology.

It is also possible that terrorist organizations and the hate groups studied here are similar in that some violence occurs following commands by leadership but also, like hate groups, many terrorists turn to violence independent of specific commands. Future research would benefit from examining whether the organizational predictors of violence vary depending on whether the violence was at the command of leadership or member initiated.

Finally, one of the challenges of studying terrorism and terrorist groups is in the availability of data, but scholars have responded by increasingly relying on open sources to create event-level databases on terrorism. Examples include the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), the International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE) data set, Hewitt's book on domestic terrorism, and the Extremist Crime Database (ECDB).[110] This study demonstrates that the use of open sources to study groups has great potential. We gleaned rich data about the characteristics of these groups from available documents. One challenge of accessing open sources is managing the variation in the amount of information available about groups. For example, some of the groups included in the study are well known, and have been discussed in the media, government documents, and scholarly articles and books. Thus, we had multiple sources of information for many of the variables in the database for these groups. At the same time, there was a limited amount of information available for other groups, and for this reason we had to exclude certain indicators. There would be great value to study the strengths and weaknesses of various open-source databases and to also triangulate open source data interviews with law enforcement, prosecutors, reporters, and extremists, and the collection of official documents not accessible online such as court documents. Research in both of these areas would enhance our understanding of group-level violence and the strengths and weaknesses of using open sources for terrorism research.

Notes

1. We borrowed from existing literature to define far-right (see Joshua D. Freilich and Steven M. Chermak, "Preventing Deadly Encounters between Law Enforcement and American Far-Rightists," *Crime Prevention Studies* 25 (2009), pp. 141–172; Joshua D. Freilich et al., "Open Source Research and Terrorism Studies: Introducing the United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB)" *Terrorism and Political Violence* (forthcoming). The far-right subscribes to aspects of the following ideals: They are fiercely nationalistic (as opposed to universal and international in orientation), antiglobal, suspicious of centralized federal authority, reverent of individual liberty (especially their right to own guns, be free of taxes), believe in conspiracy theories that involve a grave threat to national sovereignty and/or personal liberty and a belief that one's personal and/or national "way of life" is under attack and is either already lost or that the threat is imminent (sometimes such beliefs are amorphous and vague, but for some the threat is from a specific ethnic, racial, or religious group), and a belief in the need to be prepared for an attack either by participating in paramilitary preparations and training and survivalism. The mainstream conservative movement and the mainstream Christian right are not included.

2. Our sampling design of hate groups relied on reports from the Southern Poverty Law Center. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, "Hate Map" (2011). Available at http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/hate-map (accessed 1 March 2012), "all hate groups have beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable

characteristics." Critical to this study was that there was a complete listing of hate groups that participated in various types of activities, including "criminal acts, marches, rallies, speeches, meetings, leafleting or publishing." By using this source for sampling, we are able to compare the organizational characteristics of hate groups that participated in violent criminal activities to those that participated in other hate group activities.

3. Freilich et al., "Open Source Research."

4. Andrew Blejwas, Anthony Griggs, and Mark Potok, "'Terror from the Right': Almost 60 Terrorist Plots Uncovered in the U.S.," S*outhern Poverty Law Center Intelligence Report* 118 (2005).

5. K. Jack Riley, Gregory Trevorton, Jeremy Wilson, and Lois Davis, *State and Local Intelligence in the War on Terrorism* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2005).

6. Joshua D. Freilich, Steven M. Chermak, and Joseph Simone Jr., "Surveying American State Police Agencies about Terrorism Threats, Terrorism Sources, and Terrorism Definitions," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21 (2009), pp. 450–475. See also Joseph R. Carlson, "The Future Terrorists in America," *American Journal of Police* 14 (1995), pp. 71–91.

7. Pete Simi, *Radicalization and Recruitment among Right-wing Terrorists. An Exploratory Approach* (Washington, DC: United States Department of Justice, 2009), p. 29.

8. Mark S. Hamm, *Terrorism as Crime: From Oklahoma City to Al-Qaeda and Beyond* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2007); Cynthia Lum, Leslie W. Kennedy, and Alison J. Sherley, "The Effectiveness of Counter-Terrorism Strategies: A Campbell Systematic Review" (2009). Available at www.campbellcollaboration.org/lib/download/53/ (accessed january 2010); Aerial Merari, "Academic Research and Government Policy on Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3 (1991), pp. 88–102; Andrew Silke, "The Devil You Know: Continuing Problems with Research on Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13 (2001), pp. 1–14.

9. Gary LaFree and Laura Dugan, "How Does Studying Terrorism Compare to Studying Crime?" *Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance* 5 (2004), pp. 53–74; Robert S. Leiken and Steven Brooke, "The Quantitative Analysis of Terrorism and Immigration: An Initial Exploration," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18 (2006), pp. 503–521; Jeffrey I. Ross, "Structural Causes of Oppositional Political Terrorism: Towards a Causal Model," *Journal of Peace Research* 30 (1993), pp. 317–329; Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Silke, "The Devil You Know," pp. 1–14.

10. For important exceptions see Victor Asal and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "The Nature of the Beast: Organizational Structures and the Lethality of Terrorist Attacks," *The Journal of Politics* 70 (2008), pp. 437–449; Joshua Freilich, *American Militias: State-Level Variations in Militia Activities* (New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing, 2003); John Horgan and Tore Bjorgo, *Leaving Terrorism Behind: Individual and Collective Disengagement* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Gary LaFree and Erin Miller, "Desistence from Terrorism: What Can We Learn From Criminology?" *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 1 (2008), pp. 203–230; Victor Asal, Gary Ackerman, and R. Karl Rethemeyer, "Connections can be Toxic: Terrorist Organizational Factors and the Pursuit of CBRN Weapons," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 35 (2012), pp. 229–254.

11. Asal and Rethemeyer, "The Nature of the Beast," p. 447. See also Randy Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism* (Tampa: University of South Florida, 2004); Rex A. Hudson, *Who Becomes a Terrorist and Why?* (Guilford: The Lyons Press, 1999); Brian Lai, "Explaining Terrorism Using the Framework of Opportunity and Willingness: An Empirical Examination of International Terrorism," Department of Political Science, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA, 2004.

12. Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of White Supremacist Movements," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 1 (1989), pp. 409–434; Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Groups and Law Enforcement Agencies: The Lessons of Waco," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 6 (1994), pp. 75–95; Randy Blazak, "White Boys to Terrorist Men: Target Recruitment of Nazi Skinheads," *American Behavioral Scientist* 44 (2001), pp. 982–1000; David Brannon, "The Evolution of the Church of Israel: Dangerous Mutations," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 11 (1999), pp. 106–118; Martha Crenshaw, "How Terrorism Declines," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3 (1991), pp. 69–87; Audrey K. Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups," *International Security* 1 (2006), pp. 7–48; Martin Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15

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13. Asal and Rethemeyer, "The Nature of the Beast," pp. 437–449; Jeff Victoroff, "The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49 (2005), pp. 3–42.

14. See Freilich, *American Militias*; Joshua D. Freilich and William A. Pridemore, "A Reassessment of State-Level Covariates of Militia Groups," *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* 23 (2005), pp. 527–546; Sean O'Brien and Donald P. Haider-Markel, "Fueling the Fire: Social and Political Correlates of Citizen Militia Activity," *Social Science Quarterly* 79 (1998), pp. 456–465; Nella Van Dyke and Sarah A. Soule, "Structural Change and the Mobilizing Effect of Threat: Explaining Levels of Patriot and Militia Organizing in the United States," *Social Problems* 49 (2002), pp. 497–520; Rory McVeigh, "Structured Ignorance and Organized Racism in the United States," *Social Forces* 82(3) (2008), pp. 895–936.

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