



PALGRAVE HATE STUDIES

Right-Wing Extremism in Canada and the United States

Edited by
Barbara Perry
Jeff Gruenewald
Ryan Scrivens

palgrave
macmillan

Palgrave Hate Studies

Series Editors

Neil Chakraborti, School of Criminology, University of
Leicester, Leicester, UK

Barbara Perry, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities,
University of Ontario, Oshawa, ON, Canada

This series builds on recent developments in the broad and interdisciplinary field of hate studies. Palgrave Hate Studies aims to bring together in one series the very best scholars who are conducting hate studies research around the world. Reflecting the range and depth of research and scholarship in this burgeoning area, the series welcomes contributions from established hate studies researchers who have helped to shape the field, as well as new scholars who are building on this tradition and breaking new ground within and outside the existing canon of hate studies research.

Editorial Advisory Board

Tore Bjorgo (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs)

Jon Garland (University of Surrey); Nathan Hall (University of Portsmouth)

Gail Mason (University of Sydney)

Jack McDevitt (Northeastern University)

Scott Poynting (The University of Auckland)

Mark Walters (University of Sussex)

Thomas Brudholm (University of Copenhagen).

More information about this series at

<https://link.springer.com/bookseries/14695>

Barbara Perry · Jeff Gruenewald ·
Ryan Scrivens
Editors

Right-Wing Extremism in Canada and the United States

palgrave
macmillan

Editors

Barbara Perry
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities
University of Ontario
Oshawa, ON, Canada

Jeff Gruenewald
Department of Sociology & Criminology
University of Arkansas
Fayetteville, AR, USA

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

ISSN 2947-6364

ISSN 2947-6372 (electronic)

Palgrave Hate Studies

ISBN 978-3-030-99803-5

ISBN 978-3-030-99804-2 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-99804-2>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2022

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors, and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Contents

Part I Thinking About Right-Wing Extremism in North America

- 1 **Introduction: Situating Right-Wing Extremism in Canada and the United States** 3
Barbara Perry, Jeff Gruenewald, and Ryan Scrivens
- 2 **Understanding Extremism: Frames of Analysis of the Far Right** 21
Randy Blazak
- 3 **Blurring the Boundaries of Mainstream and Extreme: Contexts and Contours of Right-Wing Extremism in Canada** 49
Barbara Perry
- 4 **Trump and the Alt Right: The Mainstreaming of White Nationalism** 67
Tanner Mirrlees

5	Asymmetric Coverage of Asymmetric Violence: How U.S. Print News Media Report Far-Right Terrorism	97
	<i>Erin M. Kearns and Allison Betus</i>	
6	Check All That Apply: Challenges in Tracking Ideological Movements That Motivate Right-Wing Terrorism	119
	<i>Erin Miller, Elizabeth A. Yates, and Sheehan Kane</i>	
Part II Diversity Within the Right-Wing Extremist Movement		
7	“We Are the News Now”: The Role of Networked Conspiracy and the Quebec “Tweetsphere” in Shaping the Narrative Around the Anti-COVID-19 Restrictions	155
	<i>Samuel Tanner and Aurélie Campana</i>	
8	Fantasies of Violence in the Patriot/Militia Movement in the United States	187
	<i>Sam Jackson</i>	
9	Birds of a Feather: A Comparative Analysis of White Supremacist and Violent Male Supremacist Discourses	215
	<i>Meredith L. Pruden, Ayse D. Lokmanoglu, Anne Peterscheck, and Yannick Veilleux-Lepage</i>	
10	They’re Not All the Same: A Longitudinal Comparison of Violent and Non-Violent Right-Wing Extremist Identities Online	255
	<i>Garth Davies, Ryan Scrivens, Tiana Gaudette, and Richard Frank</i>	
11	No Longer Alone: Lone Wolves, Wolf Packs, and Made for Web TV Specials	279
	<i>Jeffrey Kaplan</i>	

Part III Where the Action Is: Right-Wing Extremist Activities

- 12 Far-Right Extremist Violence in the United States** 301
Steven Chermak, Joshua D. Freilich, William S. Parkin, Jeff Gruenewald, Colleen Mills, Brent Klein, Leevia Dillon, and Celinet Duran
- 13 Pathways to Hate: Applying an Integrated Social Control-Social Learning Model to White Supremacist Violence** 327
Colleen Mills
- 14 Right-Wing Extremists' Use of the Internet: Emerging Trends in the Empirical Literature** 355
Ryan Scrivens, Tiana Gaudette, Maura Conway, and Thomas J. Holt
- 15 Far-Right Violence and Extremism: Global Convergence** 381
Arie Perliger and Joshua Mills
- 16 The Nexus of Right-Wing Extremism and the Canadian Armed Forces** 409
Philip McCristall, David C. Hofmann, and Shayna Perry

Part IV Responses to Far-Right Extremism

- 17 More Than Walking Away: Barriers to Disengagement Among Former White Supremacists** 445
Steven Windisch, Pete Simi, Kathleen M. Blee, and Matthew DeMichele
- 18 Confronting Online Extremism: Strategies, Promises, and Pitfalls** 469
James Hawdon and Matthew Costello

19 Criminal Justice Responses to Right-Wing Extremist (RWE) Violence in the United States	491
<i>Jeff Gruenewald, Katie Ratcliff, and Hayden Lucas</i>	
Index	515

Notes on Contributors

Allison Betus is a doctoral candidate at Georgia State University in the Communication department. Her current work is focused on US-based White supremacist and far-right violent extremism and US media representations of terrorism. Her work has been featured in *Justice Quarterly*, *Studies in Conflict in Terrorism*, and *The Washington Post*.

Randy Blazak earned his Ph.D. at Emory University in 1995 after completing an extensive field study of racist skinheads that included undercover observations and interviews across the world. He became a tenured sociology professor at Portland State University and currently teaches sociology at the University of Oregon. His co-authored book, *Teenage Renegades, Suburban Outlaws* (Wadsworth, 2001), and his edited volume, *Hate Offenders* (Praeger, 2009), have been widely adopted. Since 2002, he has been the chair of the Coalition Against Hate Crimes. He has worked with the National Institute of Justice and the Southern Poverty Law Center on hate crime research issues. He is currently the vice-chair of the steering committee in charge of implementing Oregon's new bias crime law. His scholarship on hate crimes and hate groups has

made him a regular commentator in media outlets from NPR and CNN to BBC and Al Jazeera.

Kathleen M. Blee is distinguished professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. She has written extensively about organized white supremacy, including *Understanding Racist Activism: Theory, Methods, and Research*; *Inside Organized Racism: Women in the Hate Movement* and *Women in the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*, as well as methodological approaches and the politics and ethics of studying racist hate groups and strategies for combatting racial hate. She has also studied progressive social movements, including *Democracy in the Making: How Activist Groups Form*, and, with Dwight Billings, the origin of regional poverty in *The Road to Poverty: The Making of Wealth and Hardship in Appalachia*.

Aurélie Campana is full professor of Political Science at Laval University. She held the Canada Research Chair on Conflicts and Terrorism between 2007 and 2017. She is associate director of the Canadian Research Network on Terrorism, Security, and Society (TSAS) and researcher at International Center for Comparative Criminology (CICC) (University of Montreal). Her research has focused for years on terrorism in internal conflicts; diffusion of violence across movements and borders, engagement in extremist movements, including Canadian far-right groups, as well as the use of digital platforms by extremist groups and anti-system activists. Her research appeared in numerous journals, including *Civil Wars*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *International Studies Review*, *News Media and Society*, and *Global Crime*.

Steven Chermak is a professor of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. Dr. Chermak's research on rare events focuses on activities in the area of school shootings, terrorism, and mass shootings. This research includes the development of four databases using open-source materials. First, he and Dr. Freilich developed The American School Shooting Study database. This database includes all fatal and non-fatal shootings occurring on school grounds since 1990 and includes characteristics of incidents, perpetrators, and schools. Second, he and Professor Joshua

Freilich have collaborated to create the Extremist Crime Database—the first of its kind National Database on criminal activities involving US far right, far left, and Jihadist extremists. Specifically, the database includes data on the violent and financial crimes of these extremists, characteristics of violent groups, and the nature of foiled plots. Third, the Mass Shooting Database includes all mass shooting events occurring in the United States since 1990. Fourth, he is in the process of building database of cyberterrorism incidents with funding from the Department of Homeland Security. Chermak's research has been published in *Justice Quarterly*, *Crime & Delinquency*, and *Terrorism and Political Violence*.

Maura Conway is Paddy Moriarty professor of Government and International Studies in the School of Law and Government at Dublin City University and professor of Cyber Threats in the School of Law at Swansea University. She is also coordinator of VOX-Pol, a EU-funded project on violent online political extremism (voxpol.eu).

Matthew Costello is an assistant professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology & Criminal Justice at Clemson University. His research focuses on online hate and extremism and domestic and cross-national political violence and rebellion.

Garth Davies is an associate professor in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University (SFU) and is the associate director of the Institute on Violence, Extremism, and Terrorism at SFU.

Matthew DeMichele is a senior research sociologist in RTI's Applied Justice Research Division. He is the director of the Center for Courts and Corrections Research and has conducted criminal justice research on correctional population trends, risk prediction, terrorism/extremism prevention, and program evaluation.

Leevia Dillon is a doctoral candidate in Criminal Justice at John Jay College the Graduate Center; City University of New York. Her research focuses on violent extremism, online radicalization, and risk/threat assessment.

Celinet Duran is a co-principal investigator for the United States Extremist Crime Database and a Doctoral Candidate in the Criminal Justice Program at John Jay College. Her research focuses on domestic terrorism and extremist violence. Currently, she is a visiting scholar at SUNY Oswego as a PRODiG Pre- Doctoral Fellow.

Richard Frank is an associate professor in the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University and director of the International CyberCrime Research Centre.

Joshua D. Freilich is a professor in the Criminal Justice Department and the Criminal Justice Ph.D. program at John Jay College, and a Creator and co-Director of three open-source database studies: US Extremist Crime Database (ECDB), The American School Shooting Study (TASSS), and the US Extremist Cyber Crime Database (ECCD). Freilich's research has been funded by DHS and NIJ and focuses on the causes of and responses to bias crimes, terrorism, cyberterrorism, and school shootings; open-source research methods; and criminology theory, especially situational crime prevention.

Tiana Gaudette is a Ph.D. student in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University and a research associate at the International CyberCrime Research Centre at Simon Fraser University (SFU). Tiana earned an MA in Criminology from SFU.

Jeff Gruenewald is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology & Criminology and Director of the Terrorism Research Center at the University of Arkansas. He serves as a principal investigator for the *American Terrorism Study (ATS)*, *Bias Homicide Database (BHDB)*, and *US Extremist Crime Database (ECDB)*. His research examines the nature of terrorism and violent extremism and criminal justice responses to ideologically motivated crimes.

James Hawdon is a professor of Sociology and director of the Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention at Virginia Tech. He researches how communities influence the causes and consequences of violence. Most recently, he has focused on how online communities influence political polarization, online hate, extremism, and cybercrime. He has

published extensively in the areas of online hate and extremism, criminology, community responses to violence, the sociology of policing, and the sociology of drugs. His recent work has been funded by the National Institute of Justice, the National Science Foundation, and the Commonwealth Cyber Initiative Program.

David C. Hofmann is an associate professor of Sociology at the University of New Brunswick and a research fellow with the Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society. He has published extensively on Canadian far-right extremism, terrorist radicalization, criminal and illicit networks, and charismatic leadership.

Thomas J. Holt is a professor in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. His research focuses on cybercrime, cyberterrorism, and the policy response to these problems.

Sam Jackson is an assistant professor in the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security, and Cybersecurity at the University at Albany. His research focuses on antigovernment extremism in the United States, conspiracy theories, extremism online, and contentious activity on the internet more broadly. His book, *Oath Keepers: Patriotism and the Edge of Violence in a Right-Wing Antigovernment Group*, was published by Columbia University Press in 2020.

Sheehan Kane is the data collection manager for the Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States (PIRUS) project at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). Prior to joining PIRUS, she was the Perpetrator Identification manager on the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). Before joining START, Sheehan lived in Cairo, Egypt, where she studied Arabic and pursued her Master's degree.

Jeffrey Kaplan has published some twenty books and anthologies and over 100 journal articles and anthology chapters since his graduation from the University of Chicago in 1993. His most recent books include *The 21st Century Cold War: A New World Order?*, *Apocalypse, Revolution, and Terrorism: From the Sicari to the American Revolt Against the Modern World*, and the first volume in the Routledge distinguished

author series, *Radical Religion and Violence: Theory and Case Studies*. He has researched and taught in many countries, most recently China, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Hungary. He is currently a Distinguished Senior Fellow at Danube Institute and a visiting Professor at Óbudai University, both in Budapest, Hungary.

Erin M. Kearns is an assistant professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and the National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education (NCITE) Center of Excellence at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Her primary research seeks to understand the relationships among terrorism, media, law enforcement, and the public. Her publications include articles on why groups lie about terrorism, media coverage of terrorism and counterterrorism, public perceptions of terrorism and counterterrorism practices—particularly torture—and relationships between communities and law enforcement. Her work has been funded through a number of sources, including the Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate, and has been featured on numerous media outlets including CNN, The Economist, NPR, the Washington Post, and Vox. She is currently a National Strategic Research Institute (NSRI) Fellow. She serves on the editorial boards of *Criminal Justice & Behavior*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, and *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* and has served as a consultant for the National Police Foundation and the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

Brent Klein is an assistant professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of South Carolina. Dr. Klein's professional and research interests center on generating more refined explanations of aggression and violence and producing empirical evidence to guide public policy. His interdisciplinary research draws from developmental and life-course criminology, situational theories, and decision-making processes to better inform understandings of aggressive actions, including homicide, gun violence, school violence, mass violence, bias crimes, and political extremism. His recent research has appeared in *Crime & Delinquency (C&D)*, *Criminology & Public Policy (CPP)*, the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence (JIPV)*, the *Journal of School Violence (JSV)*, and *Justice Quarterly (JQ)*, among other refereed journals.

Ayse D. Lokmanoglu is a post-doctoral fellow at the Center for Communication & Public Policy at Northwestern University. Her work focuses on malign digital campaigns (hate speech, extremism, disinformation) and utilizes qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine harmful narratives and digital messaging. She has published in journals including *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, *Journal of Health Communication*, and in edited volumes including *Islamist Approach to Governance, Radicalization and Counter-Radicalization*, and others.

Hayden Lucas received his Master of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of Arkansas in 2021. His research focuses on violent extremism, interpersonal violence, murder-suicide, and mental health.

Philip McCristall is a post-doctoral fellow in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities at Ontario Tech University. He served in the combat trades of the Canadian military in the 1980s and 1990s, and has since published chapters and articles exploring cultural issues surrounding gender, inappropriate and discriminatory behavior within the Canadian military. He is currently conducting an exploratory study examining male veterans and their experiences while serving in the Canadian military as well as a scoping review of Canadian veterans, assessing barriers of access to drug and addiction service.

Erin Miller is the principal investigator for the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) at the University of Maryland. She has been part of the GTD team since 2004, developing efficient and effective data collection strategies and training, and producing accessible analysis that provides context for current events in terrorism and counterterrorism. She frequently consults with users of the database, including researchers, policy makers, analysts, journalists, and students.

Colleen Mills is an assistant professor of Criminal Justice at Pennsylvania State University, Abington, and she is a co-principal investigator on the US Extremist Crime Database (ECDB). Her research focuses on hate crime, far-right extremism and terrorism, racism, and group conflict.

Joshua Mills is a Ph.D. student in the School of Criminology and Justice Studies at University of Massachusetts Lowell. Before his arrival at UML, Joshua spent five years working with the Midland Police Department as a Community Service Officer. At UML, his current research involves study of the extreme-right with a more specific focus on domestic extremist actors within the extreme-right, extremism in correctional settings, perceptions of perpetrators of racial violence, and the efficacy of CVE techniques.

Tanner Mirrlees is an associate professor in the Communication and Digital Media Studies program in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities at Ontario Tech University. Mirrlees is the author of *Hearts and Mines: The US Empire's Cultural Industry* (UBC Press, 2016), *Global Entertainment Media: Between Cultural Imperialism and Cultural Globalization* (Routledge, 2013), co-author of *EdTech Inc.: Selling, Automating and Globalizing Higher Education in the Digital Age* (Routledge, 2019), and co-editor of *Media Imperialism: Continuity and Change* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), *The Television Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2012), and *Media, Technology, and the Culture of Militarism* (Democratic Communique, 2014).

William S. Parkin is an associate professor in the Department of Criminal Justice, Criminology, and Forensics at Seattle University. He conducts research on ideologically motivated violence, violent victimization, community public safety, and the relationship between the media and the criminal justice system.

Arie Perliger is a professor and the director of the graduate program in security studies at the School of Criminology and Justice Studies, University of Massachusetts Lowell.

In the past 20 years, Dr. Perliger was engaged in an extensive study of issues related to terrorism and political violence, security policy and politics, politics and extremism of the Far Right in Israel, Europe, and the United States, Middle Eastern Politics, and the applicability of Social Network Analysis to the study of political violence. His studies appeared in nine books and monographs and in numerous articles and book chapters and were cited in more than 1700 academic texts. His recent

book, *American Zealots—Inside Right-Wing Domestic Terrorism*, which was published by Columbia University Press, provides an in-depth analysis of the history and contemporary trends of the violent American far right. Dr. Perliger was also engaged in training practitioners from various agencies such as the FBI, CIA, and ICE. Additionally, he provided professional briefings to high-rank officials from the government and military, such as The Secretary of the Army, Army Chief of Staff, and SOCOM, AFRICOM, NORTHCOM, and JSOC commanders. Dr. Perliger is also engaged in informing the public via contributions to various media platforms. His articles/interviews appeared, among others, in the NY Times, BBC, and Newsweek.

Barbara Perry is a professor in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities at Ontario Tech University, and the director of the Centre on Hate, Bias and Extremism. She has written extensively on hate crime. She is currently working in the areas of anti-Muslim violence, antisemitic hate crime, the community impacts of hate crime, and right-wing extremism in Canada. She is regularly called upon by policy makers, practitioners, and local, national, and international media as an expert on hate crime and right-wing extremism.

Shayna Perry was recently awarded her Master of Arts Degree in Sociology. Her research interests are extremism, terrorism, security, and public safety. She has a passion for helping people and is now pursuing a career focused on security and public safety.

Anne Peterscheck is a Ph.D. student based at the Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence (CSTPV) at the University of St Andrews, and is affiliated with the Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST). Her work focuses on the intersection between misogyny and violent extremism.

Meredith L. Pruden is a post-doctoral research associate in the Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life (CITAP) at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, as well as a Fellow with The Institute for Research on Male Supremacism and an affiliate with The Media Effects, Misinformation & Extremism Lab and at University of Buffalo.

Her interdisciplinary and mixed-method research is rooted in feminist media studies with specific attention to digital cultures and uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative computational techniques to explore white and male supremacy, extremisms, violent misogyny, and far-right politics, including the mis/disinformation and conspiracy thinking associated with these groups.

Katie Ratcliff is the associate director and research program manager of the Terrorism Research Center (TRC) and a course instructor in the Department of Sociology and Criminology at the University of Arkansas.

Ryan Scrivens is an assistant professor in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. He is also an associate director at the International CyberCrime Research Centre at Simon Fraser University and a Research Fellow at the VOX-Pol Network of Excellence.

Pete Simi is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at Chapman University. He has published widely on the issues of political violence, social movements, and street gangs. His co-authored book with Robert Futrell, *American Swastika: Inside the White Power Movement's Hidden Spaces of Hate*, received a 2010 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Book Award. His research has received support from the National Science Foundation, Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation and Department of Defense.

Samuel Tanner is a full professor and director of the School of Criminology at the University of Montreal. He is also a regular researcher at the International Center for Comparative Criminology (CICC), as well as at the International Observatory on the Societal Impacts of AI and Digital (OBVIA) and researcher at the Center for International Studies and Research of the University of Montreal (CÉRIUM). His work focuses on the relations between media (including digital) and social movements, digital activism, and in particular on the use of digital technology by the radical right as well as by protest groups (in particular against the health measures deployed to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic), as well as violent extremism. He is also interested in the impact of security technologies.

Yannick Veilleux-Lepage is an assistant professor of Terrorism and Political Violence at the Institute of Security and Global Affairs at Leiden University. He holds a doctorate in International Relations from the University of St Andrews in Scotland. Dr. Veilleux-Lepage's research interests include the creation of online narratives and propaganda which fosters or normalizes terrorism; historical antecedents to terrorism; far-right extremism and the transnational links of far-right groups; ideological and technical diffusion; and the application of evolutionary approaches to social sciences. Dr Veilleux-Lepage is also an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and a Senior Research Associate of the Canadian Network for Research on Terrorism, Security, and Society.

Steven Windisch is an assistant professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at Temple University. His research relies upon developmental and life-course criminology and symbolic interactionist perspective to examine the overlap between conventional criminal offending and violent extremism. His interests are primarily at the individual-level and focus on how the negative consequences of physical/psychological trauma, identity formation, and interpersonal violence intersect with political extremism.

Elizabeth A. Yates is a senior researcher on the domestic radicalization team at START. She works primarily on the suite of datasets associated with Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States (PIRUS) and Bias Incidents and Actors Study (BIAS), which use publicly available data to empirically analyze extremist radicalization trends in the United States. She is also a co-principal investigator on a multi-year NIJ-funded project studying extremist offender reintegration. Dr. Yates focuses especially on far-right violence, extremism, and hate crimes and has authored research in these areas. In addition, Dr. Yates has taught undergraduate classes in Terrorism Studies and Sociology at the University of Maryland and the University of Pittsburgh, respectively.

List of Figures

Fig. 1.1	Typology of right-wing extremism	9
Fig. 8.1	Norm Olson testifying at a congressional hearing	189
Fig. 8.2	Oath Keepers tab-style logo. U.S. Army Ranger tab	190
Fig. 8.3	Image of the Oath Keepers “stack,” circled in red, on the Capitol steps. Photo from a criminal complaint filed against one of the participants	206
Fig. 9.1	Comparison of common words between white supremacist and masculinist texts	230
Fig. 9.2	The sentiment in white supremacist corpora is overwhelmingly negative	233
Fig. 9.3	Male supremacist sentiment analysis	237
Fig. 10.1	Total number of posts—2002–2017	265
Fig. 10.2	Number of posts related to adversary groups—2002–2017	266
Fig. 10.3	Proportions of posts related to adversary groups—2002–2017	266
Fig. 10.4	Average sentiment scores for posts related to adversary groups—2002–2017	267
Fig. 12.1	Far-right ideologically motivated homicides, 1990–2019	310

Fig. 12.2	Lone actor versus part of formal group	314
Fig. 19.1	Gender of violent RWE defendants	498
Fig. 19.2	Average age of violent RWE defendants	498
Fig. 19.3	All charges against violent RWE defendants	499
Fig. 19.4	Conventional charges against violent RWE defendants	499
Fig. 19.5	Reference to violent RWE defendant's terrorist affiliations by federal prosecutors	501
Fig. 19.6	Prosecutorial outcomes for violent RWE defendants	502
Fig. 19.7	Median sentence length in months by gender	504
Fig. 19.8	Median sentence length in months by age category	505
Fig. 19.9	Median sentence length in months by conviction type	506
Fig. 19.10	Average sentence length in months by prosecutorial strategy	507

List of Tables

Table 5.1	Descriptive statistics	107
Table 5.2	Amount of news coverage by terrorism episode	109
Table 5.3	Does the article mention terrorism?	110
Table 5.4	Amount of news coverage by terrorism episode between far-right motives	112
Table 5.5	Does the article mention terrorism between far-right motives?	113
Table 9.1	Top words in white supremacist texts	246
Table 9.2	Top words in male supremacist manifestos	247
Table 12.1	Incident characteristics	311
Table 12.2	Suspect-level characteristics	313
Table 12.3	Victim-level characteristics	315
Table 13.1	Open-source documents	332
Table 16.1	List of known CAF members involved with RWE (1991–2020)	416
Table 18.1	Logistic regression analysis of enacting self-help online	482
Table 19.1	Percentage of violent RWE defendant convictions by age and gender	503
Table 19.2	Percentage of violent RWE defendant convictions by prosecutorial strategy	503

Part I

**Thinking About Right-Wing Extremism
in North America**



1

Introduction: Situating Right-Wing Extremism in Canada and the United States

Barbara Perry, Jeff Gruenewald, and Ryan Scrivens

As we toiled—individually and collectively—to bring this volume to fruition, events were unfolding on both sides of the border that ensured the relevance of our work. In both Canada and the United States, the COVID-19 pandemic was providing renewed impetus for extreme right-wing extremist (RWE) appeals to an array of conspiracy theories, bringing the mainstream closer to the extreme. In Canada, the

B. Perry (✉)

Faculty of Social Science & Humanities, Ontario Tech
University, Oshawa, ON, Canada
e-mail: barbara.perry@ontariotechu.ca

J. Gruenewald

Department of Sociology & Criminology, University of Arkansas
at Fayetteville, Fayetteville, AR, USA

R. Scrivens

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

number of active extreme right groups leapt dramatically, again triggering a mass murder of Muslims by an unaffiliated adherent of extreme right ideologies. In the United States, the Trump administration came to a close, with accusations of a “stolen” election further galvanizing the extreme right movement that had become empowered throughout Trump’s administration. In short, attention to right-wing extremism in North America has become possibly more crucial than ever before.

It is particularly timely given the recent rise in political populism in countries around the globe that has engendered renewed activism from extreme right contingents. The 2016 U.S. presidential election, in retrospect, seems to have been a key spark for the mainstreaming of hateful and divisive rhetoric in both the United States and Canada. Donald Trump ran a campaign built in part on racist, sexist and xenophobic messaging, fashioning himself as a right-wing populist man of the “people,” defined in very narrow terms that pitted “us” versus “them”: progressive Democrats, feminists, academics/scientists and other liberal elites, Muslims, immigrants, and other minorities. White supremacists embraced his campaign and new administration, in which he helped to engender a climate that in their view provided permission to hate. RWE adherents seemed to grow bolder over the course of the Trump presidency, culminating in the January 6, 2021, assault on the Capitol which saw a loose coalition of white supremacists, ethno-nationalists, patriots, anti-statists, and others wreak havoc in the name of solidarity with Trump’s claims of a stolen vote.

The Trump Effect, as it has become known, also had implications for Canada. As a favorite maxim goes, when the United States sneezes, Canada catches a cold. Thus, it has become apparent that the American politics of hate spurred on by Trump’s right-wing populist posturing has also galvanized Canadian white supremacist ideologies, identities, movements, and practices. Online and offline, RWE groups and individuals increased their visibility and activism through a burgeoning number of social media platforms and widespread public rallies and protests. Most striking, between 2014 and 2021, at least 25 homicides—mostly mass murders—can be attributed to the influence of RWE ideologies. As in the United States (Carrega and Krishnakumar, 2021), hate crimes targeting Black Indigenous, persons of color (BIPOC), Muslim and

Jewish communities, in particular have reached unprecedented levels (Moreau, 2021). Canadian RWEs vowed their solidarity with those Americans who stormed the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021.

Of course, amid Trump's administration, the world faced the devastating spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. This, too, provided fodder for extreme right ideologues and activists. Wildly outrageous conspiracy theories played on public fear and uncertainty about the deadly virus, attenuating already existing narratives of racism, xenophobia, and anti-semitism. Conspiracies that lay the blame for the virus on intentional plots by the Chinese or by Jews, either individually or collectively, resonated with extreme right definitions long propagated about "alien" threats. By turns painted as a plot by the Chinese to eliminate all white people, or a Jewish plot to facilitate their world control, or Microsoft founder Bill Gates's strategy to inject microchips via the vaccine, the extreme right's manipulation of COVID-19 has provided a means by which they could integrate mainstream and populist anxieties about health, employment, income, and government overreach into their more extreme worldview.

In short, the decade bridging the 2010s and 2020s has been a fertile breeding ground for extreme right narratives and organizing. Trump's right-wing populist political platform catering to white nationalism and exacerbated by COVID-19-related conspiracy theories has galvanized Canadian and American white supremacist ideologies, identities, movements, and practices. Both Trump's election victory and election loss reenergized white identity politics as a mainstream form of political expression in both countries. Consider also the backlash to the visibility of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in both countries and the Indigenous Lives Matter movement in Canada, the apparent Russian intervention in political and public discourse, and we have a perfect storm that makes a close consideration of Canadian and North American adherents timely and important. Thus, we bring together in this volume leading Canadian and American scholars to explore an array of current contexts, dynamics, patterns, and characteristics associated with the movement in each country. While not a comparative text, as contributors focus largely on one country or the other, this collection of works allows comparisons to be drawn out from the distinct treatments.

Defining Far-Right Extremism

From the outset, it is important to note that we have chosen to use the phrase “right-wing extremism” as a unifying heuristic device. Across North America, an array of terms is used by policymakers, the media and researchers. Broad terms like far right, extreme right, radical right, and right-wing terrorism are common and in fact, often used interchangeably. More specific terms like white supremacist, white nationalist, Nazi/neo-Nazi, fascist, and alt-right have also been used as collective monikers, but are perhaps best reserved for specific elements of the movement. As the latter implies, and as the discussion below highlights, the difficulty is that the movement is wide-ranging in focus and ideological orientation. For our purposes, we have encouraged contributors to consider the consistent use of right-wing extremism as what Miller-Idriss (2022) refers to as the “best bad term” (p. 17).

Even accepting an artificial consensus on the terminology, we are left with the challenge of defining what is meant by “right-wing” extremism. A U.S. team of scholars has adopted a broadly descriptive conceptualization of the term:

We define the American far-right as individuals or groups that subscribe to aspects of the following ideals: They are fiercely nationalistic (as opposed to universal and international in orientation), anti-global, suspicious of centralized federal authority, and reverent of individual liberty (especially their right to own guns, be free of taxes), and they believe in conspiracy theories that involve a grave threat to national sovereignty and/or personal liberty, 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 in the need to be prepared for an attack by participating in paramilitary preparations and training, and survivalism (Adamczyk et al., 2014: p. 327).

This is perhaps an apt characterization of the right-wing movement in the United States, but may not resonate with Canadians. There has historically been much less emphasis here, for example, on libertarianism,

gun rights, or survivalism. Other observers have identified key pillars of right-wing extremism that are likely more descriptive of the movement in both countries. Jamin (2013) suggests that the core tenets are:

- a. The valorizing of inequality and hierarchy, especially along racial/ethnic lines,
- b. Ethnic nationalism lined to a mono-racial community,
- c. Radical means to achieve aims and defend the “imagined” community.

Perliger’s (2012) list adds some elements:

1. Nationalism,
2. Xenophobia, racism, exclusionism,
3. Traditional values,
4. Anti-democratic.

Miller-Idriss’s (2022: 18) conceptualization is similarly inclusive and suggests that right-wing extremism embeds “beliefs that are antidemocratic, antiegalitarian, white supremacist, and embedded in solutions like authoritarianism, ethnic cleansing or ethnic migration, and the establishment of separate ethno-states or enclaves along racial and ethnic lines.” There is, of course, considerable overlap across these definitions, and collectively, they emphasize nationalism and exclusion, along with a reactionary ethos that provides the foundation for potential action/reaction in defense of their ideals. Previously, Perry and Scrivens (2019) distilled these tenets into the following definition: right-wing extremism is a loose reactionary movement, characterized by a racially, ethnically, and sexually defined nationalism. This nationalism is often framed in terms of white power and is grounded in xenophobic and exclusionary understandings of the perceived threats posed by such groups as non-whites, Jews, immigrants, homosexuals, and feminists. As a pawn of the Jews, the state is perceived to be an illegitimate power serving the interests of all but the white man. To this end, extremists are willing to assume a defensive

stance in the interests of “preserving” their heritage and their “homeland.” Most of the contributors to this volume also weigh in on defining right-wing extremism, while still capturing most of the key themes noted above, either implicitly or explicitly.

Different extreme right sectors might well emphasize one of these tenets over others or integrate additional concerns. Indeed, given this menu of potential animating worldviews, it is no surprise that the extreme right movements in both Canada and the United States are diverse. The term right-wing extremism as used here is best understood as an umbrella term that subsumes a wide array of distinct yet overlapping ideological and strategic positions. Derived from the ongoing work on the Canadian landscape by Perry, Scrivens, and Hofmann, we offer here a “typology” of the movement as it is currently characterized. This is not intended necessarily as an exhaustive list, and it is certainly not a static list. The RWE movement is in a constant state of flux with new elements emerging and old ones receding. Nonetheless, the following provides a “snapshot” of the core elements that define the movement as we write in 2021 (see Fig. 1.1).

White Supremacists believe in the superiority of whites over non-whites and advocate that white people should be politically and socially dominant over non-white people. This can extend to a belief in the need for violence against or even the genocide of non-white people (e.g., Ku Klux Klan).

Neo-Nazis, as the name implies, find their roots in the tenets of early twentieth-century national socialism, with particular reverence for Hitler. They are explicitly and unashamedly motivated by race hatred, antisemitism, and, often, anti-statism (e.g., Aryan Strikeforce).

Racist Skinheads adopt variants of white supremacist and neo-Nazi ideologies, but are most distinguishable by their subcultural markers which include neo-Nazi tattoos and symbology, shaved heads, and Doc Marten boots. They are also more aggressive and violent in their orientation. While racist Skinheads are dwindling in number as adherents opt for more “sanitized” versions of neo-Nazism and white supremacy, they still populate music scenes in such cities as Portland OR and Montreal QC (e.g., Hammerskins).