WHITE SUPREMACIST HATE ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

"WWW.HATE.ORG"
THE NORTH AMERICAN WHITE SUPREMACIST MOVEMENT:
AN ANALYSIS OF INTERNET HATE WEB SITES

By

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Abstract

This thesis is a qualitative study of North American white supremacist organisations, and their Internet web sites. Major issues framing the discussion include identity and racism. The thesis takes into consideration Goffman's concepts of 'impression management' and 'presentation of self' as they relate to the web site manifestations of 'white power' groups. The purpose of the study is to analyse how a sample of white supremacist groups present themselves and their ideologies in the context of the World Wide Web, and what elements they use as a part of their 'performances', including text, phraseology, and images. Presentation of self intersects with racism in that many modern white supremacists use aspects of the 'new racism', 'coded language' and 'rearticulation' in the attempt to make their fundamentally racist worldview more palatable to the mainstream. Impression management techniques are employed in a complex manner, in either a 'positive' or 'negative' sense. Used positively, methods may be employed to impress the audience with the 'rationality' of the arguments and ideas put forth by the web site creators. Such techniques include the use of euphemistic or pseudo-academic language, allusions to famous figures, non-violence and mainstream issues, and stylistic devices. When used in a negative sense, impression management tactics may be used to strengthen the view of the white supremacist movement as extreme and threatening, to mask what may actually be the weakness and powerlessness of these groups in reality. In this case, explicit and biological language is used, along with vilification, allusions to violence and racist symbolism. Other factors including materials used, size, appearance and interactivity of web sites may affect both the positive and negative performances in complex ways.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

The North American white supremacist movement is a mysterious phenomenon to many. Periodically, the media informs us that yet another 'incident' has occurred involving shadowy hate groups or their followers. But organised white supremacy, with its racist worldviews, multitude of groups, web of interconnections and long history is not well understood. With the growth and expansion of the Internet, increasing interest has been paid to the activities of hate groups in cyberspace. The Internet is a remarkable and revolutionary information transmission medium, allowing instantaneous and global communication. While the Internet has been used for positive and educational purposes, it has become to a certain extent a 'haven' for white supremacists, and arguably a more effective mode of transmitting their hateful message. The white supremacist dependency on racism and violence, as well as its growing use of the ever more accessible Internet, make it an intriguing subject to analyse and explore.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the activities and messages of white supremacists on the Internet, specifically in the context of the content of their World Wide Web sites. The major aim is to explore the ways in which white supremacist groups present themselves and their racist ideologies on the Internet. To this end, the analysis will focus on data collected from a sample of twenty-five North American white supremacist Internet web pages. The discussion will emphasise how North American

white supremacist organisations use 'positive' and 'negative' impression management tactics, as well as 'rearticulation' and 'coded' language, in order to shape the image and identity they present to their audience) As it will be shown, a number of elements including size, colour and allusions to such things as famous figures, violence and non-violence are variously used in the creation of hate web sites to promote a particular identity and impression.

Chapter one will involve a theoretical discussion and outline of the major issues in this thesis, namely racism and processes in the 'presentation of self'. Various terms will be defined, and it will be shown that racism and the presentation of self intersect in the process of rearticulation, and the use of coded language and impression management. Chapter two will outline the histories, leading figures and basic ideological tenets of organisations in the various categories of white supremacist groups. Next, chapter three will consider the scholarly and public debates on the social significance of the North American white supremacist 'movement'. Such elements as numbers, group cohesion, electoral forays, weapons and paramilitary activities and use of communication technologies will be evaluated to determine the significance and importance of the hate phenomenon. In this chapter, the Internet will be introduced and its place in the white supremacist movement will be explored. Chapter four focuses on the methodological concerns of this thesis, outlining the processes involving in creating the sample and performing the research and data analysis. Chapter five centres on an analysis and discussion of the research data, outlining the elements involved in the content and construction of Internet web sites that facilitate or deny both 'positive' and 'negative'

impression management attempts. Lastly, the thesis will close with a few concluding

thoughts.

CHAPTER ONE – A THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE MODERN WHITE SUPREMACIST MOVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an introduction to some of the theoretical issues that will be addressed in this thesis. The purpose of this study is to analyse the way that North American white supremacist groups present their racist ideas in the context of World Wide Web sites. This study of American and Canadian hate groups' Internet web site creations is centred around a theoretical discussion of the links between the 'presentation of self', impression management tactics and racism. In this chapter, I will consider theoretical issues regarding presentation of self and impression management, featuring concepts developed by Erving Goffman, as well as discuss various definitions of racism, including the work of van den Berghe (1978), Bolaria & Li (1988), Miles (1989), Feagin & Vera (1995) and Henry et al. (1995). Linking the two theoretical issues of presentation of self and racism will be a consideration of the idea of 'new racism', 'rearticulation' and 'coded' racial language, as described by Omi & Winant (1994), and Solomos & Back (1996). Ultimately, this thesis will analyse how white supremacist web sites utilise such elements as symbols, text, images, photographs, and colour in order to communicate a racist worldview.

PRESENTATION OF SELF & IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

Individuals and groups seek to present themselves in certain ways, in order to be accepted by and/or thought of in a particular manner by those with whom they interact. They seek to promote specific identities and images of themselves that will cause a specific reaction with their 'audience'. This is termed 'impression management', and it is a key element in processes of 'presentation of self' as originally conceptualised by Erving Goffman (Goffman 1973: 208; Ritzer 1988: 187). Specifically, 'impression management' involves techniques whereby "…people…may seek to present a self that seems to be what others wish it to be…that seems appropriate to the situation or that meets cultural requirements even though they are inwardly alienated from this presented self" (Hewitt 1997: 104). Indeed, Goffman (1973: 17) states that in impression management, the individual: "…offers his performance and puts on his show 'for the benefit of other people'". Essentially, impression management seeks to maintain a sense of stability and equilibrium in interactions, and attempts to avoid the detection by the audience of the assumed nature of the identity or presented self. Thus, impression management is "…oriented to guarding against a series of unexpected actions, such as unintended gestures, inopportune intrusions, and faux pas, as well as intended actions, such as making a scene" (Ritzer 1988: 190-1; see also Goffman 1973: 210, 212).

Goffman's observations about processes of 'self presentation', including the central concept of 'impression management', are framed by what is called the 'dramaturgical approach' (Goffman 1973: xi; Ritzer 1988: 188). This approach is useful in describing the ways in which social actors organise and manipulate identities and social interactions. The 'dramaturgical' approach understands the world as a 'theatre', explaining human

interaction and self presentation in terms of 'dramatic' elements: 'actors', 'audiences', 'performances', as well as 'front' and 'back' stage. It consists of a view of the self which is "...not as a possession of the actor but rather as the product of the dramatic interaction between actor and audience" (Ritzer 1988: 187). Essentially, the self is the product of performances, which may be disrupted by the audience, and which the actor tries to negotiate successfully. Impression management techniques come into play, to maintain performances that shape the sense of self that others see. 'Front stage' is the part of the performance that is seen and defines the situation. Goffman argued that 'fronts' are not so much 'created'; rather actors select from fixed or even institutionalised types of 'fronts', such as the characteristics and behaviour of a professor, or a doctor, or whatever persona they want to recreate (Goffman 1973: 28; Ritzer 1988: 188). The 'front stage' consists of a 'setting' and the 'personal front', which itself is made up of 'appearances' and 'manner' (Goffman 1973: 22-4; Ritzer 1988: 188). The 'back stage' is a place of concealment, where elements of behaviour and facts that might disrupt the formal performance are suppressed (Ritzer 1998: 188, 190).

Many sociologists have used Goffman's approach to frame their studies of social interaction, including Haas and Shaffir's (1982) study of medical students and Zurcher's (1985) examination of 'war games' (Ritzer 1988: 192-3). Turner & Edgley (1988: 139-152) use the dramaturgical approach to consider the role of the funeral director and the performance of the funeral ritual.

There is also a growing body of work on the creation or construction of identities in the context of the Internet. Nelson-Kilger (1993) discusses the effect of 'digital'

communication and technology on the construction of the 'Digital Individual', using

Mead's concepts of the 'I', 'Me', and 'Generalized Other'.1 Turkle (1995, 1996),

Rheingold (1993) and Bruckman (1992) discuss the construction and manipulation of

multiple virtual 'selves' and 'identities' on such Internet forums as 'MUDs', which are

'multi-user domains' or 'dungeons'.2 Indeed, Bruckman (1992) calls MUDS, which are

programs that enable role-playing and 'chat' within created virtual environments,

'identity workshops'.3 In Rheingold's (1993: 233) analysis of MUDs, he argues that

"...Goffman theorised that people are always onstage in a sense, always creating a

persona that they project to one audience or another".

Marks (n.d.) uses Goffman's dramaturgical and impression management approach

when he discusses 'performances' of 'passing' in cyberspace, where "...presence[s]

divergent from the body succeed precisely because they are credible representations of

socially accepted and recognisable roles...".4 Miller (1995), in an article subtitled

'Goffman on the Internet', argues that although electronic mediums enable interactions

that are more 'limited', and not as 'rich' as face-to-face encounters, that processes of the

presentation of self take place on the Internet within the context of homepages.5 Among

other things, Miller (1995) posits that various 'fronts' and impression management

techniques may be more effective on web sites, "...because Web pages are carefully set

up before presentation to the world, and are only slightly interactive".6 Likewise,

Chandler (1997) writes that the construction and exhibition of identities through the

process of Internet homepage creation, is an interesting departure from Goffman's

traditional face-to-face conception of presentation of self, with fewer gestures or cues

than those found in face-to-face interactions, and a much larger potential audience.**7**

Goffman's concepts surrounding presentation of self refer to face-to-face encounters, and

therefore applying them to the Internet, particularly web sites, involves altering and

manipulating these concepts to an extent. Web sites are less 'flexible', and are not as

capable of 'feedback' and interaction between site creators and the audience. Of the

intersection of identity and Internet web pages, Chandler (1997) says: "Creating such

pages offers an unrivalled opportunity for self-presentation in relation to any dimension

of social and personal identity to which one chooses to allude. Such a virtual environment

offers a unique context in which one may experiment with shaping one's own public

identity".**8** Ultimately, Chandler (1997) remarks that in creating a web site, identities are

constructed, exhibited and in the process, "…we are written".**9**

Despite a growing literature on Goffman and the 'Net, there seem to be few studies

of white supremacist Internet web sites, particularly using Goffman's dramaturgical and

impression management perspective. This thesis suggests that Goffman's approach may

also help us to understand the Internet hate phenomenon, as a more static, textual and

graphics-oriented form of 'performance' for an on-line 'audience'.

I argue that North American white supremacist organisations, specifically in the

context of Internet web sites, embody Goffman's concepts of presentation of self,

dramaturgy and impression management in unique ways. Essentially, the hate web site is

an electronic, computerised attempt at the presentation of a 'self' or image that particular

white supremacist groups want to promote. In the case of North American 'white power'

homepages, impression management is sometimes used to mask the groups' true racist

intentions and lend legitimacy and appeal to their worldview. Conversely, impression management tactics are also used by white supremacists to create a radical racist image, which may help 'mask' the relative real-life impotence and small size of some of the groups behind these web pages.

Fundamentally, white supremacist organisations are founded on ideas of racism, anti-Semitism, violence, and other anti-social ideologies. However, on their web pages, white supremacist groups manipulate text, symbols, images and colour, to create a particular picture of who and what they are for their prospective audience. They use these elements in specific ways, sometimes with the purpose of appearing as 'mainstream' and 'intellectual' in tone as possible, and other times with the apparent aim of gaining a feared and dangerous reputation through 'shock talk' and blatant racism.

White supremacists use impression management to promote certain reactions from their Internet 'audiences' about their web site 'performances'. In some cases, white supremacists try to create a sense of legitimacy for their ideologies, taking on the superficial characteristics of the academic or historian. While Goffman believed that 'fronts' are selected rather than created, white supremacists on the Internet seem to do a bit of both, manufacturing their own unique performances to fit into notions of what 'legitimacy' looks like. That is to say, hate site operators often put together quasi-intellectual arguments, phrases, data and statistics, as well as present themselves stylistically in certain ways, in order to support a view of themselves as learned and valid, like the genuine historian or academic. It would appear that for several white supremacist sites, there is a preconceived notion of what will look and sound legitimate, such as a

focus on plain pages and a predominance of text. Yet, at the same time, web site creators actively pick and choose certain themes, arguments and other elements in distinctive combinations to fit this general conception of what is 'acceptable' to the mainstream. For example, some Holocaust denial sites, such the Institute for Historical Review (IHR) and Michael Hoffman's Campaign for Radical Truth in History, favour a 'clean', uncluttered look for their pages, with a predominance of text, presumably to effect the atmosphere of a 'serious', academic forum.10 Similarly, the David Duke Official web site presents a variety of pseudo-academic articles to legitimise its views.11 In addition, the colours of the American flag, red, white and blue, are featured on many sites, in an apparent attempt to seem 'patriotic' in both their appearance and outlook.

When attempting to appeal to the mainstream and to people's real questions about their society, white supremacists' use of impression management techniques may be effective, but perhaps only to an extent. When impression management tactics are utilised in this way, they usually only partially mask the virulent racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and anti-government rhetoric that is the ultimate foundation of all of their ideologies. With a degree of analysis, exploration and 'reading between the lines', the arguments and ideas featured on the web sites that might sound reasonable at first glance turn out to be deliberate 'smokescreens' for the racist and anti-Semitic views that the hate-mongers really believe. There is often a very real 'breakdown' between 'front stage' and 'back stage' on the hate web sites, and oftentimes this is actually a physical division, with the introductory page(s) featuring a 'tidied up' version of their worldview, and subsequent pages deeper into the web site revealing the unaltered account. This

conception of 'back stage' differs somewhat from Goffman's original account, in that Goffman argued that the back stage is not accessible to the observer or audience. However, I argue that because some hate sites are extremely large, many observers and curiosity seekers may not delve deeply into such web sites, therefore essentially creating a back stage where more blatant ideologies may be presented to an interested few. The front stage/back stage division may conversely be thought of as consisting of the actual web site itself (front stage), while the 'real life' activities and existence of the hate group behind the web site (back stage) remain relatively hidden.

Thus, on several web sites, the use of euphemistic language and attempts to couch the associated individual or group's aspirations in neutral-sounding verbiage on the introductory page(s) breaks down as the visitor explores more deeply into the web site. For example, the David Duke Official site's table of contents divides the site into innocuous-sounding categories such as 'FAQ's', 'Introduction', 'Online Store' and 'Net Radio'.12 As well, the introductory page features pictures of such patriotic places and people as Mount Rushmore, the White House and Abraham Lincoln alongside a picture of David Duke himself.13 It is only farther into the site, in its various articles, editorials and excerpts, that social concerns such as immigration and crime are related to allegedly inferior non-white 'races', and that monopoly over the media and corruption in government are the domain of a grand international 'Zionist' or Jewish conspiracy. Likewise, the NAAWP site alludes to 'civil rights' and features an inoffensive-looking picture of a white tiger and her cub on the opening pages of the site.14 In later pages, however, crime is equated with non-whites, and society is argued to be under the control

of a 'Zionist' conspiracy. Can it be said then that the 'performances' of white supremacist groups on the Internet are successful? In the case of the uninformed and uninitiated, perhaps the code words and pseudo-academic language might lead some to accept the presentation of self and ideology that the hate groups put forth. White supremacists' allusions to noble-sounding concepts such as 'free speech', 'academic freedom' and 'special rights for none' may appear reasonable and divert attention from the real aspirations of the groups. However, upon closer investigation, the racism and hateful desires of these groups push through the mask of legitimacy, disrupting the performance and showing the true intentions just beneath the surface. One could argue that white supremacist web sites are ultimately unsuccessful performances, or presentations of self, at least when they attempt to appear 'mainstream' and reasonable.

It also must be admitted that oftentimes any apparent effort by white supremacists to mould their messages into a form more 'palatable' to mainstream folk is entirely absent. Quite regularly, white supremacy on the Internet is very blatant, complete with the use of racial epithets, undiluted allusions to violence and graphically racist 'jokes'. Some sites seem to revel in their marginal, stigmatised status, perhaps utilising impression management in a negative fashion by trying to be as ruthless, shocking and racist as many expect them to be, but which perhaps conceals the fact that this promoted identity is far more radical than what they are actually capable of putting into practice.

Organisations may lack the membership and power to instigate violence and the changes that they want in the 'real world', but they can still present a hardcore image in virtual reality. In addition, the Internet can be a useful impression management tool in

and of itself, lending white supremacists a level of legitimacy in terms of showing themselves to have the technological savvy to actually be on-line. It may also conceal what may really be a weak, lacklustre group trying to appear 'hardcore' and active. In turn, this image may help in the attraction and possible recruitment of the kinds of individuals who find this radical message appealing. When the sites present a more 'hardcore' image, there is arguably less difference between front and back stage, and perhaps they do successfully appeal to a small minority for whom a violent, racist outlook is legitimate and expected.

However, there are some problems with the strong, blatantly racist 'performances' that some white supremacist groups attempt to present. For example, several sites appeal for some kind of aid from interested visitors, including the Sheriff's Posse Comitatus site, which asks for donations of computer equipment and a van.15 Many sites exhibit other problems, such as 'links' not working, information being old and outdated, sites not being frequently updated and being perpetually half-finished and 'under construction'. As well, the allusions to 'victim' language apparent on many white supremacist sites, are often calculated attempts to show themselves (as whites) as 'underdogs' and the victims of racism and censorship, and not the culprits. However, these allusions can have the effect of weakening the sites' image as suitably vital, ruthless and dangerous. In addition, the pool of racist thinkers that the sample sites draw upon for their ideological themes is small and for the most part, full of theorists who are unknown and have no credibility in the mainstream. Although showing possible unity and strength in the movement through its interconnections, the small pool of thinkers also reveals that the basis for the

ideological 'punch' of the hate sites is in fact weak and marginal. These are just some of the problems apparent on the white supremacist web sites that would work against the successful utilisation of impression management tactics, to present a 'self' that is radical and to be feared.

White supremacist web sites try to manipulate their image and identity, whether they want to appear mainstream or defiantly marginal, to the extent that their desired audience will like what it sees. While the young, naïve or uninformed could possibly be swayed by these performances using both 'positive' and 'negative' impression management tactics, those with a degree of knowledge and capacity for critical thought would likely see through these performances occurring on white supremacist web pages and recognise them for the examples of racism and anti-Semitism that they are. Whatever the case, the dramaturgical framework does provide a useful look at the hate site phenomena, and the ways in which ideologies and images are created and manipulated. Therefore, the sociological concepts of impression management and the dramaturgical approach created by Erving Goffman provide an interesting, though complex, that can help to illuminate the workings of North American white supremacists on the World Wide Web.

RACISM

Academics tend to agree that the notion of 'race', as commonly interpreted today, came into being around the 18th century (Solomos & Back 1996: 32; Miles 1989: 30, 32). Prior to this, human differences were not considered 'inherent'; distinctive characteristics were often attributed to 'environmental' factors, or at least were not generally thought of as "...fixed and inevitable" (Miles 1989: 30). However, in the 18th and 19th centuries,

theorists such as de Gobineau, Chamberlain, and Gunther, all conceived of there being physically distinct groups of people, to which immutable characteristics were fixed, and which determined their level of evolution and culture, as well as intelligence and behaviour (Omi & Winant 1994: 64; Miles 1989: 36). Along with this idea, of course, was the concept of racial hierarchy, which usually rated 'whites' at or near the top of the social scale and 'non-whites' as beneath or inferior to them (Omi & Winant 1994: 63; Henry et al. 1995: 34). This early form of race thinking was an instance of 'biological determinism', as Miles explains: "...the Other was represented as a *biologically* distinct entity, as a 'race' apart, whose capacities and achievements were fixed by *natural* and *unalterable* conditions which were common to that collectivity..." (Miles 1989: 32, my emphasis). This type of racist thinking has also been termed 'essentialist' or 'primordial', in which differences between groups are seen as fundamental and innate (van den Berghe 1978: xvi; Omi & Winant 1994: 55, 64). Since then, theorists have seen race primarily as a socially constructed concept rather than as a biological reality, and have essentially left the primordialist conception of race in the ideological waste basket (Henry 1995: 8; Miles 1989: 71). However, racists, and especially hardcore white supremacists, are those who refer back to the essentialist view and whose conception of race is informed by 18th and 19th century assumptions.

There are many and various conceptions and definitions of just what racism is, what it includes and whom it affects. Most modern academics consider race to be a social construct, not a viable scientific or biological category (Omi & Winant 1994: 64-5; Solomos & Back 1996: 8; Daniels 1997:7). Indeed, as Henry et al. (1995: 4) state:

> Our theoretical perspective is that race is a socially constructed phenomenon...based on the erroneous assumption that physical differences such as skin colour, hair colour and texture, and facial features are related to intellectual, moral, or cultural superiority. The concept of race has no basis in biological reality and, as such, has no meaning independent of its social definitions. But, as a social construction, race significantly affects the lives of people of colour.

Likewise, Miles (1989: 71) states that 'races' are "socially imagined rather than biological realities". Omi & Winant (1994: 54) believe that it is wrong both to view race as an objective entity or as a purely ideological "illusion". Instead, they conceptualise 'race' as "...as an unstable and 'decentered' complex of social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle...a concept which signifies and symbolises social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies" (Omi & Winant 1994: 55). Ultimately, Omi & Winant (1994: 55) agree that "...racial signification is always and necessarily a social and historical process...there is no biological basis for distinguishing among human groups along the lines of race". To them, racial categories are "...at best imprecise, and at worst completely arbitrary" (Omi & Winant 1994: 55). Thus, the general direction of academic thought points towards a view of race as socially constructed and manipulated.

Ultimately, there are strengths and weaknesses associated with each definition of racism. Two problems associated with such definitions are 'conceptual inflation' and 'conceptual deflation'.

Some believe that definitions of racism should avoid 'conceptual inflation' (Miles 1989: 77, Solomos & Back 1996: 63). That is, definitions of racism should be concise, and take into account the fact that racist attitudes or ideologies are not the same as racial

discrimination or action, and that one does not necessarily entail the other. Thus, racism

is an ideological phenomenon, relating to cognition and attitudes, which may lead to and

legitimise, but do not inherently include, discriminatory racial practices. Miles (1989: 77)

explains:

> The inflation of the meaning of the concept [racism] has resulted in
> it being used to refer to not only ideologies but also to a very wide
> range of practices and processes…not only does such a concept have
> very little discriminatory power, but it also makes the identification
> of determinacy difficult…there is no necessary logical correlation
> between cognition and action.

Similarly, Solomos & Back (1996: 63) state that racism is an ideological construct,

distinct from action: "…racism can best be perceived as particular sets of ideological

values, which propound either biological or cultural explanations of racial difference.

From this perspective racial discrimination is a practice which may or may not be the

outcome of racist ideologies". Indeed, Lipset & Raab (1978: 340) believe that 'racism' is

made up of several distinct, yet connected 'phenomena'. Lipset & Raab (1978: 340) state

that:

> Racism, of course, has a number of alternate meanings: Racism 1. As
> Ideology: A formal, explicit articulated belief in the inherited superiority
> of one group over another and that group's inherent right to supremacy…
> 2. As Attitude: Negative affects and images about a population group as a
> whole, held by any number of individuals…3. As Social Behavior: Instit-
> -utional or sociocultural patterns of behavior which keep a population group
> disadvantaged.

Ultimately, they believe that racial ideology, attitudes and behaviour can exist without

each other. Meanwhile, Henry et al. (1995: 16) believe that racism as an ideology

incorporates more than simply attitudes or thoughts. They claim that "ideology may go

far beyond beliefs and attitudes, it carries with it a predisposition to behave in negative,

derogative, or discriminatory ways towards members of the targeted group. An ideology of racism therefore carries more power than a set of mere attitudes". In the case of white supremacist groups, there is a particularly slippery slope between the ideologies they believe in and the courses of action they promote. While some may claim explicitly to be non-violent and condemn the use of violent tactics, the extremely racist ideals they take as their own lead very quickly to the instigation of racially discriminatory or violent actions, whatever their intention. The sheer virulence of their feelings is a powerful fuel or impetus to act on those beliefs. This is not to say that Solomos & Back's (1996: 63) and Mile's (1989: 77) warning against conceptual inflation is erroneous, but rather it is an acknowledgement that while racist actions and attitudes can each exist without the other, they do often go hand and hand.

Another problem in defining racism relates to 'conceptual deflation'. Feagin & Vera (1995: 7) conceptualise racism: "…as the socially organised set of attitudes, ideas and practices that deny African-Americans and other people of color the dignity opportunities, freedoms, and rewards that this nation offers white Americans". This conception of racism is both too specific and too vague. The definition refers only to 'American' society and 'white' racism, conceiving of racism in a particularly limited way. At the same time, it is too vague in that it makes no mention of the fact that racist views are informed by an essentialist or deterministic view of race where difference is natural and inherent. As well, their definition is 'inflated': it jumps immediately from a conception of racism as an ideology to including both attitudes and discriminatory

practices. Racial ideology, attitudes and practices are often linked, but they are distinct phenomena.

A particularly problematic instance of conceptual deflation relates to the belief that racism is only a process that can be enacted by whites towards people of colour. Indeed, Feagin & Vera (1995) specifically refer to it as 'white racism'. It is true that historically people of 'white' European based cultures seem to have manifested the most visible and numerous instances of racism, to the extent of institutionalising the process in systems such as African-American slavery and segregation, and South African apartheid. However, the idea that the race-based bigotry is not a universal problem, but instead a derivation of one 'racial' group to the exclusion of others, is troubling. Instead, one should call racism an 'equal opportunity' dysfunction. As Miles (1989: 6) contends: "…it is mistaken to limit the parameters of racism by reference to skin colour, because various 'white' groups have been the object of racism. Furthermore, the expression of racism is not confined to white people". Can whites be the victims of racial discrimination, or racism? It would seem, logically, to be possible. Nothing precludes non-whites from the ability to judge on the basis of real or perceived physical heritable traits, and act in an accordingly negative fashion towards those labelled persons or groups. It is wrong and short-sighted to think that non-whites lack the capacity to be prejudiced and the power to act on those prejudices.

The 'white specific' idea of racism is itself based on the problematic claims that only white skinned individuals have the tendency toward racist behaviour and that there is something exclusive and innate within this particular group to make them act badly

towards others. But it must be conceded that the racism directed towards non-whites has

some serious societal implications that do not seem to affect whites as a group. That is to

say, do whites, as a group, experience racism in the same way as non-whites do, and does

racism towards whites usually have the same socio-political consequences as that which

affects non-whites? As well, do whites regularly suffer from the effects of racism,

particularly to the extent that white supremacist groups claim? This is hardly the case.

Thus, it has been stated that:

> ...black supremacy may be an instance of racism, just as its advocacy
> may be offensive, but it can hardly constitute the threat that white sup-
> -remacy has represented in the U.S., nor can it be so easily absorbed
> and rearticulated in the dominant hegemonic discourse on race as white
> supremacy can. All racisms, all racist political projects, are not the same
> (Omi & Winant 1994: 74).

North American society is arguably still a racially hierarchical system, where that

which is 'white' constitutes the 'norm', while non-whites struggle to achieve the same

rewards as whites, and make their voices heard in the marketplace of ideas. White

supremacists tend to take the smallest kernel of truth or legitimacy, for instance raising

the *possibility* of whites being the victims of racism, or latching onto mainstream debates

about the rightness of 'affirmative action' or 'multiculturalism', and stretching their

plausibility. As Ferber (1998: 4) states: "...this is the logic driving the white supremacist

emphasis on whiteness: whites are now the victims of racism". Quite simply, although it

is true that whites may be *possible* victims of racism, the white supremacist's claims of

universal white victimhood are simply not borne out by some statistics, at least in the

United States, on socio-economic status, and rates regarding joblessness, education, life

expectancy and infant mortality. Such statistics show a disparity in favour of whites (Henry et al. 1995: 2; Sitkoff 1993: 221-8; Daniels 1997: 13).

As Ferber (1998: 4) claims, white supremacists regularly engage in "...inverting the reality of racial oppression". Ignoring the statistics, white supremacists, through distortions and outright lies, twist and flip reality to suit a white-centred hierarchical view of the world where non-whites suffer from 'natural' inequities and where it is whites who are the true victims of policies and attitudes detrimental to their continued growth and prosperity. Generally, the idea of 'inverting reality' is used time and again by white supremacists in the attempt to create a unique worldview, that recreates reality in the image of both 'Aryan' superiority and white victimhood. These ideas surrounding 'reality inversion' will be fleshed out in more detail further on in chapter five of this thesis.

In attempting to find a suitable working definition of racism, Miles' (1989: 79) is more universally applicable, although it could be argued that it has its own problems and complexities. He states that racism as an ideology involves:

> ...signification of some biological characteristic(s) as the criterion by which a collectivity may be identified...the collectivity is represented as having a natural, unchanging origin and status, and therefore as being inherently different...a process of racialisation must be occurring. Second, the group so identified must be attributed with additional, negatively eval--uated characteristics and/or must be represented as inducing negative consequences for any other. Those characteristics may be either biological or cultural. Thus, all the people considered to make up a natural, biological collectivity are represented as possessing a range of (negatively evaluated) biological and/or cultural characteristics.

For Miles, it is not enough for a collectivity to be evaluated as being naturally and inherently different. This type of evaluation Miles (1989: 74) terms 'racialisation'. It is the process of 'negatively' evaluating a collectivity's inherent differences which is

'racist'. This idea may be problematic. Are not all evaluations of groups or individuals

racist, which are based on assumptions of inherent and biologically or culturally

determined difference? Who decides what is a positive or negative calculation of group

differences? However, Omi & Winant (1994: 71-2) maintain that:

> ...it is important to distinguish racial awareness from racial essentialism.
> To attribute merits, allocate values or resources to, and/or represent individ-
> -uals or groups on the basis of racial identity should not be considered racist
> in and of itself...In order to identify a social project as racist, one must...
> demonstrate a link between essentialist representations of race and social
> structures of domination.

Ultimately, Van den Berghe (1978: 11) posits a simple, concise definition of racism.

It strives to be universally applicable and alludes to the way that racist attitudes often lead

to racist actions, but it also delineates the separation between them, avoiding the problem

of 'conceptual inflation':

> Racism is any set of beliefs that organic, genetically transmitted differences
> (whether real or imagined) between human groups are intrinsically associated
> with the presence or the absence of certain socially relevant abilities or char-
> -acteristics, hence that such differences are a legitimate base of invidious
> distinctions between groups socially defined as races.

It is particularly interesting that van den Berghe (1978: xvii) makes the distinction

between 'real' and 'imagined' differences, because although 'race' is a socially

constructed paradigm, meanings are attached to different kinds of physical bodies in a

particular fashion or pattern. As van den Berghe (1978: xvii) elaborates: "...these

subjective perceptions do not develop at random; they crystallise around clusters of

objective characteristics that become badges of inclusion or exclusion". Thus, race and

racism involve the attachment of subjective meanings and significance to both totally

imagined differences, and to different types of physical bodies.

Whatever definition of racism is most useful, contemporary forms of racist discourse and behaviour have taken on distinctive characteristics. Omi & Winant (1994: 118, 123) raise the concepts of 'rearticulation' and 'code words' in speaking of a 'new racism'. 'Rearticulation' is the process by which 'code words', that is, euphemistic or more 'value-neutral' phrases or issues, are used to stand in for other potentially controversial and contentious racial arguments and ideas in various types of discourse. When successful, the use of code words defuses situations and allows racist arguments and behaviours to be accepted without conflict, and hides the racist intentions behind these arguments (Omi & Winant 1994: 118, 123). As Solomos & Back (1996: 27) state: "...racisms may be expressed through a variety of coded signifiers...Contemporary racisms have evolved and adapted to new circumstances. The crucial property of these elaborations is that they can produce a racist effect while denying that this effect is the result of racism". It is clear that in North America, voicing overtly racist claims and arguments has taken on a stigmatised status, thereby necessitating the use of 'rearticulation'. This process of rearticulation has also been termed the 'new racism', and the implications of this 'new' racism and its signifiers are the same. Thus, Solomos & Back (1996: 18-9) say that: "The writing on the new racism shows how contemporary manifestations of race are coded in a language which aims to circumvent accusations of racism".

Solomos & Back (1996: 18-9, 27, 98) state that as more modern forms of racist thought increasingly incorporate 'code words', racists frequently couch their arguments in such topics as 'immigration', or in issues surrounding 'cultural' or 'ethnic' problems.

This use of signifiers and code words is common among North American hate organisations, particularly within their web pages. As Daniels (1997: 8) states: "It is this process of rearticulation, of reasserting the very meaning of 'whiteness', which is central to racist ideologies and to the white supremacist project". Euphemistic language and noble-sounding phrases are the 'order of the day' for many white supremacist web sites. Thus, allusions to 'immigration nightmares' target non-whites through subtle references to preserving 'European culture' or the 'land of the Founding Fathers'. Problems specifying 'welfare mothers' and drug addicted criminals are 'coded' phrases for blacks and other non-whites, who happen to make up a majority of those in poverty, on the lowest rungs of society. In a similar way, Holocaust denial becomes 'revisionism', or an 'academic freedom' or 'freedom of speech' issue. The Anti-Defamation League (1997: 23) calls this 'rhinestone racism', an attempt to 'pretty up' the image of race hatred and hide its true ugliness.

The racism of the modern North American white supremacist movement reveals itself in two ways. Web sites present either an overt and crude biological or theological racism, with no effort to hide the obvious bigotry, or an attempt is made to be more covert, with a 'veneer' of what has been termed the 'new' racism superficially hiding an underlying mass of biological or theological racism. An analogy of an iceberg works well in describing the more covertly framed racism that modern hate groups use to try to coax their worldview into the mainstream. The veneer of 'new' racism, which uses coded, euphemistic or neutral language to mask its bigoted undertones, is usually just the 'tip of the iceberg', with a mass of more blatant racism submerged just under the surface.

With a degree of web site searching and analysis, this overt racism becomes evident despite whatever cursory attempts have been made to 'clean up the image' of white supremacist ideology with a patina of civility and legitimacy. Evidence of this will be given more fully in chapter five of this thesis. What remains obvious, however, is that Omi & Winant's (1994: 118, 123) allusions to 'rearticulation' and 'coded words', as well as Solomos & Back's (1996: 18-9, 27, 98) discussion of the 'new racism', creates a theoretical bridge between the concepts of racism, presentation of self and impression management. The 'new racism' and 'rearticulation' are examples of the way impression management tactics have become key to the successful presentation of self and the (racist) ideologies which central to the white supremacists' worldview.

CONCLUSION

The questions this thesis seeks to answer are this: what themes and issues make up the ideology or ideologies of the white supremacist movement, and how does this movement manifest itself and these ideologies on the World Wide Web? What elements do hate groups use in presenting themselves on the 'Net', for instance text, images and colour, and are they ultimately successful?

There is a large body of work on racism in the academic literature, of which this theoretical chapter has only given a brief snapshot. Likewise, there are many studies on the racism of the 'organised' white supremacist movement (Barrett 1987; Ezekiel 1995; Daniels 1997), many of which will be alluded to in the course of the thesis. Many studies on race in the context of the Internet focus on the 'racial divide' between those who have access to the Internet technology, and those who are increasingly being marginalised by

their lack of access to the 'Information Superhighway'.**16** Other studies, such as the

article written by Nakamura (n.d.) talk about the incidence of racial, as well as gender

'passing' on the Internet, in the process of the construction of virtual identities.**17**

Similar to the studies about identity and impression management which were discussed

earlier on in this chapter, Nakamura (n.d.) posits that:

> ...it is possible to 'computer crossdress'...and represent yourself as a
> different gender, age, race, etc. The technology of the Internet offers its
> participants unprecedented possibilities for communicating with each
> other in real time, and for controlling the conditions of their own self-
> representations in ways impossible in face to face interaction.**18**

It will be interesting to see how the development of video technologies will have on the

way people interact in cyberspace. Once participants can 'see' each other in the course of

their Internet activities, presentation of self and impression management on the Net will

become more in tune with Goffman's original conceptions dealing with face-to-face

encounters.

In terms of the intersection between the North American white supremacist

movement and the Internet, fewer studies have been published, aside from the reports of

such social activist organizations as the Anti-Defamation League, the Simon Wiesenthal

Center and the Southern Poverty Law Center. However, Kallen (1997) does write

specifically on the subject of white supremacy on the Internet, analysing examples of hate

speech from various sources on the 'Net, to show that hate-mongers manipulate

'invalidation myths' to promote "...virulent hatred of and harmful action toward targeted

minorities".**19** Susan Zickmund has also written on the phenomenon of 'cyberhate'. This

study of the North American white supremacist movement and its Internet web sites will

hopefully add to the overall discussion of racism and the possibilities of the Internet. Specifically, it will contribute to the study of white supremacy on the 'Net, which seems to be an area that has not yet been explored fully.

CHAPTER TWO - AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROMINENT GROUPS, LEADING FIGURES AND IDEOLOGICAL TRADITIONS WITHIN THE NORTH AMERICAN WHITE SUPREMACIST MOVEMENT

In this chapter, some background information on the North American white supremacist movement will be offered in order to provide a sense of context for the arguments, observations and conclusions made in this thesis. While the study is mainly about the web site creations of various white supremacist groups, their ideological worldviews and their Internet 'performances', it is important to realise that a network of real human beings and history lies behind these ideas and performances. Internet web sites do not exist in a vacuum; they are created by individuals or groups with a certain historical past and connections to others in the 'real world' and that shapes their form and 'virtual' content. It is therefore vital to have some understanding of the 'actors' who make up these Internet 'performances', and to examine some of the other 'performances' that have led to these on-line endeavours. Contemplating the history and prominent personalities of this movement is key, as will be discussed more fully later on in this thesis, for often the worldviews and fates of hate groups hinge on the actions and leadership of individuals. George & Wilcox (1992: 351) remark that a key element in the history of hate groups is the 'biography' of their leaders. Similarly, Daniels (1997: 30) relates that: "…divisions within the white supremacist movement are often based on personalities rather than ideologies".

This chapter will be organised into sections using the categories of white supremacist organisations that form the Internet web site study sample. An explanation of the reasons for the particular categories will be discussed in chapter four. For now, it is enough to say that these sub-groupings have been used in one manner or other by experts in the field including Klanwatch, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center (Kronenwetter 1992: 104-5; Cooper 1997: 103).20 This chapter will consist of an historical overview of the various sub-groups within the 'white power' movement. The chapter will also introduce some of the 'major players' within the movement, and will touch upon some of the ideological elements that comprise each tradition within the hate subculture.

KLAN

In a history of the white supremacist movement, the most logical place to begin is with the Ku Klux Klan. The Ku Klux Klan is arguably the oldest and longest running hate group in North America (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 43-4; Landau 1992: 44; Lay 1992: 1). Indeed, George & Wilcox (1992: 20) say that the Klan was the "...premier extremist organisation of the nineteenth century...".

The Ku Klux Klan was formed by six young former Confederate soldiers in late 1865, in Pulaski, Tennessee (Kinsella 1994: 7; Barrett 1987: 120). The name of the group apparently came from the Greek word 'kuklos', meaning 'circle' (Kinsella 1994: 8; Barrett 1987: 120). The Klan was originally conceived to be a secret 'social club' dedicated to fun and the playing of pranks, wearing home-made costumes of sheets, masks and pointed hats (Kinsella 1994: 8; Barrett 1987: 120). By late 1866, the Klan had

grown and its activities became more ominous and hateful, including lynching and other forms of terrorism.

The Reconstruction Acts of 1867 'inspired' the rapid growth of Klan membership, and in April the Klan held its first convention in Nashville where Nathan Bedford Forrest was elected leader (Kinsella 1994: 8-9; Barrett 1987: 121). Two years after its formation, the Ku Klux Klan could boast over a half a million members across the American South (Kinsella 1994: 9; Barrett 1987: 121). By 1869 however, the Klan was being watched by an increasingly critical Congress and various Reconstruction-era governments. Later that year, Forrest shut down the Klan officially, although it was 1870 before the group 'collapsed' to a significant degree, and a 'remnant' of the group lasted until the turn of the century (Kinsella 1994: 10; Barrett 1987: 121). The institution of an anti-Klan law in the following year further devastated the Klan, and it was 1915 before it enjoyed a resurgence, lead by a profit-hungry Methodist minister named William Joseph 'Doc' Simmons (Kinsella 1994: 10; Barrett 1987: 121). This incarnation of the Klan grew to be its most successful and popular, particularly during the early 1920s (Daniels 1997: 5; Kinsella 1994: 11; Barrett 1987: 121). Indeed, MacLean (1994: xi) argues that the KKK of the 1920s was the most powerful movement in the history of the American far right. By mid-decade however, the Klan was in decline again, and by 1944 it was officially disbanded (Barrett 1987: 122).

The next revival of the Klan occurred during the Civil Rights era, and it was a significant force in the 1960s and 1970s (Landau 1992: 47; Stanton 1991: vii; Barrett 1987: 122). Important Klan leaders at that time included Robert Shelton of the United

Klans of America, James Venable, who had joined the Klan in 1924, and David Duke (Bridges 1994: 39-40; Lay 1992: 2; Stanton 1991: 200-1).

David Duke is a major figure in the North American white supremacist movement, and probably the best-known 'former' Klansmen of the modern period. Although he has publicly tried to downplay his Klan and neo-Nazi past, he has many links to racists in both the United States and Canada. As the Hate Watch web site states, Duke "…is the best known and most politically active racist in the United States and has one of the longest resumes on the far right".21 In his teens, he was involved with his local 'White Citizen's Council', and joined the Ku Klux Klan at 17 (Moore 1992: 43; Zatarain 1990: 78-81, 99-100). Duke was associated with an American Nazi Party-affiliated youth group called the National Socialist Liberation Front or 'White Student Alliance' while in college (Moore 1992: 43; Zatarain 1990: 131). As a young man he contacted William Pierce of the American Nazi Party and later the National Alliance (Bridges 1994: 43). Several authors mention Duke's commitment to the ideals of neo-Nazism and Holocaust denial (Rose 1992: xxiv; Rickey 1992: 73; Hill 1992: 94-5, 108; Sher 1983: 71). Indeed, Bridges (1994: 40) states that: "Duke…was to change the Klan's ideological focus and to usher in a new era- a Nazification of the Klan – based on his conviction that Jews posed the greatest threat to the white race. Many of his early Klan speeches were practically word-for-word recitals of speeches made by George Lincoln Rockwell". As well, Duke has had a complex relationship with the Christian Identity ideology. As Barkun (1997: 142) relates: "Duke has been careful never to identify himself with Identity or any other

religious position. On the other hand, he was lionised in Identity circles and cultivated Identity support...".

David Duke became the Imperial Wizard of the major, Louisiana-based Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1970s, and two of his lieutenants, who became Klan leaders after Duke's departure, included Don Black, currently the creator of the independent 'Stormfront' web site, and Thom Robb (Bridges 1994: 89; Zatarain 1990: 227, 250). For a time, Tom Metzger of the White Aryan Resistance was also associated with the Klan and Duke, as a Grand Dragon (Zatarain 1990: 228). Feagin & Vera (1995: 72) go so far as to call Duke Metzger's 'mentor'. Another of Duke's former Klan organisers, Bill Wilkinson, went on to form another major Klan organization during the 1970s (Bridges 1994: 57). In Canada, Duke oversaw the creation of a Klan in the late 1970s, headed by admirers Alexander McQuirter, and Wolfgang Droege, who later founded the Heritage Front (Bridges 1994: 73; Kinsella 1992: 83).

After his departure from the Klan, Duke founded the National Association for the Advancement of White People, or the 'NAAWP', which identifies itself as a white 'civil rights' organisation (Rose 1992: 13, 15; Sher 1983: 71; Zatarain 1990: 254).22 However, Bridges (1994) reveals that Duke retained close ties with several racist leaders, including Metzger, William Pierce, James Warner and Willis Carto (Bridges 1994: 90).

When he ran for President in 1988, Duke ran under the Populist Party banner, which is led by the ubiquitous Willis Carto (Bridges 1994: 44). Carto, also the leader of the Liberty Lobby, has associations with the Holocaust-denying Institute for Historical Review (IHR), and the neo-Nazi National Alliance. Duke's original running mate was the

far right-winger, 'Bo' Gritz (Barkun 1997: 211). Gritz's theological worldview has been linked to Christian Identity, and he is an important member of the survivalist and militia movement (Abanes 1996: 183-4). In the 1970s, Duke himself promoted the Posse Comitatus, an early militia-type organisation, as a viable alternative to his Klan.**23** The Klan has reportedly even had 'paramilitary training camps' of its own to prepare followers for a 'race war' (Feagin & Vera 1995: 5).

Several of the members of 'The Order', the violent racist group of the 1980s, were Klansmen, including Frank Silva and David Lane, creator of the white supremacist movement's rallying cry, the '14 words' (Coppola 1996: 33; Hamm 1994: 67). Lane has had written work published in 'The Klansmen', a publication of the Klan faction founded by David Duke. Lane is also connected with Aryan Nations, WAR and the World Church of the Creator.**24** Louis Beam, associated with the Aryan Nations and the militia movement, also got his start in the Klan. He was a member of Robert Shelton's Klan in the 1960s, and went on to have a leading role in the David Duke faction in the 1970s (Coppola 1996: 31). In the 1980s, under the leadership of Don Black, Beam was the group's second in command (Bridges 1994: 88).

Thomas Robb, another prominent Klansmen, progressed through the ranks of David Duke's former Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, joining the Klan in 1979, and becoming leader in 1989 (Barkun 1997: 112).**25** Thom Robb has 'close ties' with the 'religious' racist organisation, the Aryan Nations (Daniels 1997: 28).**26** Indeed, Robb was ordained as an Identity 'minister' by Aryan Nations leader Richard Butler, and at least one of Robb's former state Klan leaders is a 'staff director' for the Aryan Nations (Barkun 1997:

112; Levitas 1995: 184; Kleg 1993: 187).**27** Among others, Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 61) note Robb's long and varied history in the white supremacist movement: "In 1980, when the post of national chaplain of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan fell vacant, Duke appointed an Identity preacher, Thom Robb, later pastor of the Church of Jesus Christ and the Christian Identity Church, both in Harrison, Arkansas" (see also Barkun 1997: 210; Coppola 1996: 18, 119; Stanton 1991: 178).

James K. Warner is another associate of Duke's with a long history in the far-right movement (Zatarain 1990: 207). Warner had connections to the 'NSWPP' or National Socialist White People's Party, which is an offshoot of the American Nazi Party. He converted to Christian Identity and led an Identity organization called the 'New Christian Crusade Church' (Barkun 1997: 68). He was also involved with the far-right Christian Defense League, and became 'director of information' for Duke's Klan in 1975 (Barkun 1997: 62, 69-70, 210; Moore 1992: 48; Sims 1978: 175). Another author relates that Warner was in fact a grand dragon for Duke's Klan (Bridges 1994: 72).

Ideologically, the Klan has espoused anti-Catholic, anti-union, anti-Communist, anti-Black and anti-Semitic sentiments to the point of using violence and terrorist activities (Landau 1992: 48). Indeed, the Klan has been simply termed: "…an anti-black, anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant, violent group" (Anti-Defamation League 1982: 11). It has a penchant for vigilante behaviour. Some newer additions to the Klan's list of enemies include Muslims, Asians, homosexuals and abortion-rights activists (Landau 1992: 48). The Klan has been involved in paramilitary activities in recent years as well. Finally, the

racist theology of 'Christian Identity' has been called the modern Klan's unofficial

religion (Bridges 1994: 41).

RELIGIOUS

Many North American white supremacist groups are rooted in distorted 'religious'

traditions. The pseudo-Christian tradition of 'Christian Identity' is most often found at

the foundation of religiously-based hate groups, and the supposedly anti-Christian

'Creativity' perspective is another. This section is an overview of the histories, ideologies

and chief adherents of both the Creativity and Christian Identity sects.

Ezekiel (1995: xxvi) writes that in recent decades, Christian Identity has been the

'major energising element' of the white supremacist movement. Both Stanton (1991:

184) and Ezekiel (1995: xxvii) remark that Identity is very popular among hate groups,

and its concepts are a part of many such organisations. Christian Identity is a racist

offshoot of 'Anglo-Israelism', better known as 'British-Israelism'. Barkun (1997: xi, 17,

49) reports that British-Israelism originated in Britain in the seventeenth century, and that

by the late nineteenth century it had a presence in North America. Essentially, the main

tenet of the British-Israelist philosophy was that the people of the British Isles were

members of one of the 'Ten Lost Tribes' of Israel, and that as such, they as well as Jews

were among God's 'Chosen People' as foretold in the Bible. North America was

sometimes viewed as the 'New Jerusalem'. However, there are some key differences

between this tradition and the theology of Christian Identity, particularly the centrality of

the latter's anti-Semitism. As Barkun (1997: ix, 115-6) says, although British-Israelism

could display anti-Semitic tendencies, it viewed Jews in a different light than later

adherents of Christian Identity: "...British Israelism...had beliefs about Jews quite different from those held on the radical right. Where right-wing groups typically attributed the world's evils to a Jewish conspiracy, British-Israelism regarded Jews as brother Israelites, the descendants of different but related tribes". Conversely, according to Christian Identity, Jews were stripped of their Biblical status as the 'Chosen People', and the tribes of Israel were reinterpreted to consist of 'Aryan' nations only, including: "...Denmark, Norway, Finland, Germany, France, Italy, Holland, Spain, Iceland, Great Britain, Canada-U.S.A., and Sweden" (Kleg 1993: 191).

There are several slightly different accounts of what Identity Christians believe. Barkun (1997: x-xi) explains one notion of the basic belief structure of the Christian Identity movement:

> Christian Identity is built around three key beliefs. First, Identity
> believes that white 'Aryans' are descendants of the biblical tribes
> of Israel and thus are on earth to do God's work. Second, Identity
> believes that Jews are not only wholly unconnected to the Israelites,
> but are the very children of the Devil, the literal biological offspring
> of a sexual dalliance between Satan and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
> Third, Identity believes the world is on the verge of the final, apocal-
> -yptic struggle between good and evil, in which the Aryans must do
> battle with the Jewish conspiracy and its allies so that the world can
> be redeemed (see also Dees & Corcoran 1996: 12-3, Hamm 1997: 2;
> Stanton 1991: 184).

Ezekiel (1995: xxvi) argues that while for Identity Christians the Jews are the 'children of Satan', non-whites, also called the 'mud races', are the result of the mating of people and animals. Similarly, Abanes (1996: 155) also remarks that there are a few basic notions associated with Christian Identity, and that in part this involves a re-working of the Christian idea of the genesis of the world's people. Abanes (1996) outlines the main

aspects of the Identity theology in a slightly different way than Barkun (1997: x-xi) and

Ezekiel (1995: xxvi), saying that non-whites are the result of a botched first attempt at

'Creation', instead of being the later result of a coupling of humans and animals, or Eve

and Satan. He says that:

> ...most Identity believers agree on five basic premises...White people
> (Aryans) are the Israelites of the Old Testament...The Jews are literal
> descendants of Satan...Adam and Eve were not, as mainstream Christ-
> -ianity teaches, the first people. They were the first white people...All
> non-Whites (blacks, Asians, Middle Easterners, etc.) are descendants
> of pre-Adamic races and make up an entirely different species than
> Caucasians... Armageddon, which will be a race war between whites
> and non-whites, is fast approaching (Abanes 1996: 155).

Daniels (1997: 28-9) agrees with this explanation, saying that Identity teaches that

non-white races were created on the third day of Creation and therefore are considered

'pre-Adamic'. While white people, created on the sixth day were given souls, non-whites

were allegedly not given them. Identity adherents sometimes refer to non-whites as

'beasts of the field' (Dees & Corcoran 1996: 12-3). Thus, according to Identity

Christians, 'creation' occurred in one of several distinct ways, but in each the result is

clear: people of colour are inferior to white people, and Jews are considered inherently

evil. Therefore, as Merkl & Weinberg (1997: 236) argue, Christian Identity involves

"...a synthesis of nazi-like biological racism with an exotic biblical interpretation".

Ultimately, the racism of Christian Identity has caused at least one person to refer to it as

"...a religion by sociopaths, for sociopaths" (Abanes 1996: 154-5).

Barkun (1997: 47) reveals that between the 1930s and 1940s British-Israelism

underwent a 'transformation' in America that resulted in Christian Identity. As Abanes

(1996: 154-5) relates: "...Christian Identity...[is] a twentieth-century amalgamation of

racism and pseudo-Christian ideas. It is a complex doctrinal system that emerged in the 1940s and reached theological maturity by the 1970s...". A former Methodist preacher and Californian named Wesley Swift was largely responsible for the promotion and popularisation of the Christian Identity in the pre- and post-WWII period (Barkun 1997: 4, 49). In the 1950s and 1960s Swift was known as the central figure in the Christian Identity movement (Barkun 1997: 49). Swift was involved in the Klan, and associated with well-known racists and anti-Semites such as Gerald L.K. Smith and William Potter Gale (Barkun 1997: 54, 64, 130). Swift was also associated with the Christian Defense League, of which his ideological heir, Richard Butler, was first national director (Barkun 1997: 60-1, 66; Kleg 1993: 188-9).

Richard Butler, leader of the Idaho-based Christian Identity organisation called 'Aryan Nations', is a long-time racist. He has been called "...the patriarch of the militant right" (Dees & Corcoran 1996: 41). Now a senior citizen, Butler got his start as a member of William Dudley Pelley's National Socialist group of the World War Two era, the 'Silver Shirts' (Sargent 1995: 28; Barkun 1997: 93). His associates include the well-known racist Gerald L. K. Smith and Henry Beach, a Posse Comitatus founder.**28** During his life he has had connections to a number of other groups, including Posse Comitatus, Klan and other neo-Nazi oriented organisations. As an Identity 'minister', Butler has ordained several well-known racists, including Jim Wickstrom of the Posse Comitatus, Thom Robb of the Klan and Ralph Forbes, aide to David Duke and a former member of the American Nazi Party (Barkun 1997: 112; Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 61).**29**

From 1962 to 1965 Butler was the first president of the anti-Semitic 'Christian

Defense League', and through his involvement in this group he met Identity follower

William Potter Gale, who introduced Butler to Identity leader Wesley Swift (Barkun

1997: 68; Sargent 1995: 159).**30** This led to Butler's introduction to the Identity

Christian 'faith'. Since the 1970s, his central focus has been the Aryan Nations, which is

the better-known political arm of his Identity church, the 'Church of Jesus Christ

Christian (Barkun 1997: 70). Butler named his church after the church of his mentor,

Wesley Swift, who founded the original 'Church of Jesus Christ Christian'. The word

'Christian' is included to press Swift's Identity Christian view that Christ was never a

Jew (Barkun 1997: 63). It was in 1971, at Swift's death, that Butler established his Aryan

Nations organisation, and 1973 he moved it to Hayden Lake, Idaho, near Coeur D'Alene

(Barkun 1997: 70; Coppola 1996: 30; Kleg 1993: 189).**31** Butler considers his

organisation a continuation of Swift's church, although Swift's church apparently refused

to give Butler a charter (Kleg 1993: 188; Barkun 1997: 70). The Aryan Nations has been

called a 'virulently' racist and anti-Semitic organization (Ezekiel 1995: xxii, 257; Karl

1995: 56; Kinsella 1992: xi). Aryan Nations has been referred to as the 'Heavenly Reich',

indicating its neo-Nazi tendencies (Singular 1987: 41). According to Hate Watch, Butler

and his group have 'White Nationalist' leanings, as well.**32** Indeed, Abanes (1996: 152)

writes that: "The Aryan Nations describes itself as a 'Geopolitical Movement for the re-

establishment of the White Aryan sovereignty over the lands of Aryan settlement and

occupation".

As well as having ordained many racist leaders, Butler has also been linked to such individuals as Tom Metzger of the White Aryan Resistance. Several members of the infamous 'Order', including leader Robert Jay Mathews and David Lane have been affiliated with the Aryan Nations as well (Coppola 1996: 32; Barkun 1997: 209, 231). Lane was a 'propaganda minister' and organiser for the Aryan Nations in the early 1980s, and his work has appeared in the publications of diverse racist organisations. Former members of Thom Robb's Klan organisation have also been on the staff at the Aryan Nations.33 Through the Christian Identity faith and the Christian Defense League, Butler also has ties to former Klansman and Nazi Party member James Warner (Barkun 1997: 62). His Klan boss, David Duke, has 'cultivated Identity support' although he has never publicly identified himself with the religious tradition (Barkun 1997: 142). The membership of the Aryan Nations has been termed 'eclectic' by George & Wilcox (1992: 369), including followers of other hate organizations such as the Posse Comitatus, the Klan, and neo-Nazi groups. Indeed, Kleg (1993: 187; see also 192) remarks that the Aryan Nations is not an isolated group, and "…has followers who are Skinheads, neo-Nazis, and members of the Ku Klux Klan".

Observers wonder who will head the group after Butler dies; some believe the successor will be Louis Beam, who has been Aryan Nations' 'Ambassador-at-Large' since the 1980s (Abanes 1996: 180; Karl 1995: 116; Stanton 1991: 107).34 Interestingly, by 1984 he had built a computer bulletin board network for Aryan Nations, called 'Aryan Nations Liberty Net' which was one of the hate movement's first forays into the 'cyber' world (Dees & Corcoran 1996: 42; Martinez & Guinther 1988: 57, 234-5; Stanton 1991:

181). In 1995, Beam bought property near the Aryan Nations compound.35 He was a member of Robert Shelton's Klan in the 1960s, and joined Duke's Klan in the 1970s, becoming Texas Grand Dragon (Barkun 1997: 237). It is through Beam as well, that the Aryan Nations has some militia links. Indeed, Barkun (1997: 278-9) argues that a tract by Louis Beam on 'leaderless resistance' is one of the most influential readings in militia circles.

Aryan Nations has been termed a 'paramilitary' hate group itself, and indeed, the group has links to the militia movement. As Abanes (1996: 155) relates: "...many Christian Identity leaders and followers are closely affiliated with patriot movement groups and various militia spokespersons". Ezekiel (1995: xxxii) argues that some militias have been organized by members of Aryan Nations and other racist groups. Strangely, Karl (1995: 112) reports that Butler has said that he 'hates' the militia movement and believes that militia followers are 'traitors' to the white race. However, in the 1970s, Butler was a Posse Comitatus group leader for a time, and the Posse is widely considered a precursor to the recent militia phenomenon (Barkun 1997: 221). In addition, John Trochmann of the Militia of Montana has been a speaker at the Aryan Nations compound (Abanes 1996: 178; Barkun 1997: 275; Karl 1995: 57, 113).36 Other militia figures such as 'Bo' Gritz, William Potter Gale, Robert DePugh and James Wickstrom, have also been linked to Christian Identity (Abanes 1996: 183-4; Barkun 1997: 221; Dees & Corcoran 1996: 25). Barkun (1997: xii) and Merkl & Weinberg (1997: 236) state that Identity theology has influenced many radical right-wing groups, not the least being the militia forerunner, the Posse Comitatus. Indeed, the Aryan Nations has been called the

'best known' and most influential of the contemporary white supremacist groups (Sargent 1995: 146; Ezekiel 1995: 37).

Barkun (1997: 3) says that through organisations like the Aryan Nations, the theology of Christian Identity has become the white supremacist movement's: "...most important religious tendency" (see also Kleg 1993: 187). Ultimately, Dees & Corcoran (1996: 20) claim that Christian Identity has a key place as a unifying force in the racist movement: "Identity is the theological thread that binds the diverse – and oftentimes feuding – segments of the racist movement into a whole cloth. It allows white-robed Klansmen to mingle with plaid-shirted Posse members, and camouflaged survivalists to rub shoulders with brown-shirted neo-Nazis".

The pseudo-religious framework of 'Creativity' is another major underlying tradition for many North American racist groups. Creativity is a 'religion' based on the worship of all that is 'white', and its 'moral' principles are simply comprised of what Creativity adherents feel is good for the white race.37 Creativity is based on a reaction to, and sometimes a re-working of Christian doctrines. Merkl & Weinberg (1997: 236) say that 'Creativity' explicitly rejects the Christian faith as being a 'Jewish phenomenon'. Indeed, Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 60) reveal that the premier Creativity organisation, the World Church of the Creator, sees Christianity as a Jewish invention.

However, though it claims to be anti-Christian, Creativity also adopts a quasi-Christian stance on some issues. One example of this is found in Ben Klassen's tract, 'The White Man's Bible'. Hamm (1994: 203) calls it a "...reinterpretation of the Book of Genesis", in which:

> ...God created all the races, except one, on the third day of Creation.
> These races were seen as inferior in the eyes of God, however, and
> not an embodiment of God's true imagination and splendour. It was
> on the final day of Creation, according to this scenario, that God
> succeeded in making the perfect man. This was Adam, a white man.

In addition to this racist reinterpretation of the Creation story, Creativity adherents also believe with most other racists, including Identity Christians, that race-mixing is a Jewish plot to destroy the white race and turn them into mongrels (Hamm 1994: 204). Among Creativity's other, more traditional and patriarchal beliefs is a devotion to what is called 'salubrious living', sometimes referred to as 'anti-Semitic kosher':

> Creativity promotes strong conventional family values of matrimony,
> monogamy, and childbirth. Bearing children is viewed as a woman's
> supreme and holy task in life and is sacred...To pass on the healthiest
> Aryan seed possible, devotees are urged to keep strict dietary laws.
> These laws are consider to be 'anti-Semitic kosher' and they forbid
> pork, shellfish and catfish. This is called salubrious living, and drug
> abstinence is consider part and parcel of this dietary regime (Hamm
> 1994: 205).

The main 'creator' of the Creativity doctrine is the late Ben Klassen, founder of the racist World Church of the Creator. Klassen is the former 'Pontifex Maximus' of the 'religious' Church of the Creator (COTC), which he created in 1973 (Kleg 1993: 202-3).**38** Klassen was born in the Ukraine, immigrated to Canada as a child, and finally settled in the United States (Daniels 1997: 30). Before creating the COTC, he formed the Nationalist White Party (Daniels 1997: 30). The Anti-Defamation League reports that Klassen's COTC has "...close ties to other violence-prone extremist factions, including Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance and William Pierce's National Alliance, as well as to neo-Nazi skinheads".**39** Indeed, it was to Pierce that Klassen sold his COTC compound in 1992 for a paltry $100,000, a year before he took his own life (Braun &

Scheinberg 1997: 60; Daniels 1997: 30).**40** Klassen also promoted Pierce's racist

'Turner Diaries' and 'Hunter' novels in his COTC publication.**41** In regard to Tom

Metzger, in 1985 Klassen offered him a prominent title in the COTC and invited him to

form a California Church of the Creator.**42** Among Klassen's other associates was

George Burdi, who for a time headed up the Canadian contingent of the COTC (Kleg

1993: 203). The Church of the Creator claims to have activists in England, Sweden and

South Africa, as well as Canada.**43** 'Racial Loyalty', one of the COTC's publications,

has published works by writers from the Holocaust denial organisation 'Institute for

Historical Review', and former 'Order' member David Lane, who himself is linked to a

variety of different racist organisations. Enemies of the Church of the Creator include the

neo-Nazi Harold Covington, and Thom Robb.**44**

Matt Hale is the current 'Pontifex Maximus' of the World Church of the Creator.

The 'Reverend' Hale is one of the new generation of racists. Born in 1971, he became the

head of the COTC in 1996.**45** Before getting involved with the Church of the Creator,

Matt Hale was the leader of two white supremacist organisations, the 'American White

Supremacist Party' and the neo-Nazi 'National Socialist White American's Party'.**46** It

has been under Hale's guidance that the WCOTC has delved into activities on the

Internet in recent years; indeed, the WCOTC hosts numerous sites on the 'Net, including

a women's site and a web page devoted to children.**47**

WHITE NATIONALIST

While this thesis includes a category called 'White Nationalist', its inclusion is a

complex issue. While there are specific groups and web sites that identify themselves as

being 'White Nationalist', it is actually a concept and ideology that has a broad base

throughout the North American white supremacist movement. Thus, as Sargent (1995:

10) claims: "...the extreme right generally strongly favours racial separation. A

substantial part, but not all, of the extreme right identifies America as a quintessentially

white nation with its roots in northern Europe". Abanes (1996: 3) also states that is part

of the racist worldview that the white race will eventually establish an 'Aryan Republic'

in America.

'White Nationalism' consists of the idea that it is necessary and appropriate to have a

nation devoted to the white race, and that this outcome should be actively worked

towards. There have been variety of schemes put forth by various racists over the years,

but most advocate the division of the United States, and in some cases parts of Canada as

well, into separate racial states (Barkun 1997: 200).

Among the racists to propose the creation of a 'white nation' are Richard Butler,

David Duke, Robert Miles and Tom Metzger (Barkun 1997: 4, 234-6; Abanes 1996:

152). According to Abanes (1996: 152), Butler's Aryan Nations describes itself as a

"...Geopolitical Movement for the re-establishment of the White Aryan sovereignty over

the lands of Aryan settlement and occupation". The Hate Watch web site claims that

Butler has declared that his Aryan Nations compound in Hayden Lake, Idaho, should be

the future capital of a larger 'Aryan Nation' which would include Washington state,

Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Oregon.[48] Likewise, David Duke is said to have called

for a division of America into distinct nations based on race (Hill 1992: 106).

Barkun (1997: 234) argues that the initial suggestion for a white territory in the

American Northwest came from the racist 'pastor' Robert Miles "...as early as 1982".

The proposed territory was to bear the name 'Mountain Free State (Barkun 1997: 234).

Originally, the State was to include Washington, Oregon, and parts of Idaho, Nevada,

Montana and California, but by 1985, the potential nation had shrunk to only include the

states proposed by Richard Butler (Barkun 1997: 35). Levitas (1995: 189) describes

another scheme, also based on the parameters suggested by Butler, to be called the

'Northwest Territorial Imperative'...". It has also been referred to as the '10 percent

solution' (Singular 1987: 277).

Tom Metzger has been the most ambitious among the listed racists in his schemes for

a so-called 'White American Bastion' (Barkun 1997: 235-6). According to Metzger, this

'Bastion' should incorporate "...Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming,

Nevada, California, much of Utah and Arizona, B.C., Alberta, much of the Northwest

Territories, some of Saskatchewan and Alaska" (Barkun 1997: 235-6). Although some

call for America to be totally 'purged' of non-whites and Jews, Metzger apparently

allows for sections of the continent to be set aside for the 'Nation of Islam' and even

'ZOG', or the Zionist Occupational Government, provided there are 'buffer zones'

(Barkun 1997: 235-6).

March 1995 signalled the beginning of hate on the World Wide Web, with the

creation of Don Black's 'Stormfront' site, considered the first racist site on the

Internet.[49] While Black is "...currently not affiliated with any organised hate group...",

the Stormfront site is self-identified as a 'White Nationalist resource centre'.[50]

NEO-NAZI

Many contemporary white supremacist organisations have adopted Nazi ideas and symbolism into their racist agenda. While there were fascist and pro-Hitler organisations in Canada and the U.S. prior to the War, the so-called 'neo-Nazi' movement began shortly after the Second World War and began to attract notice in the United States in the 1950s (Kleg 1993: 200). George & Wilcox (1992: 351) provide a clear explanation of what groups fall under the neo-Nazi umbrella:

> For our purposes 'neo-Nazi' means an organization or party that generally adopts or advocates traditional Nazi symbolism, including the swastika or approximate equivalent; the wearing of uniforms or other paraphernalia, the use of the terms 'Nazi', 'National Socialist', or some variation in its name; and a demonstrated reverence for or appreciation of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich.

Neo-Nazis have also been termed those who are violent, anti-Semitic, anti-black, anti-immigrant, and who pattern themselves after Nazi Germany in ideology and dress (Anti-Defamation League 1982: 11). In the United States, the forefather of neo-Nazism is undoubtedly George Lincoln Rockwell, the founder and leader of the 1960s group, the American Nazi Party (Kleg 1993: 200). Although Rockwell was murdered in the late 1960s, members of his Party, including William Pierce of the National Alliance, have gone on to promote his pro-Hitler message over the years.

William Pierce of the National Alliance, has been a racist for a very long time. His neo-Nazi affiliations stretch back at least to the 1960s, when he was a valued member and aide in George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party (Mintz 1985: 129). Indeed, he apparently still holds the copyrights to some of Rockwell's writings.51 According to Hate Watch, Pierce does not fulfil the popular image of the hardcore racist: "Highly

intelligent and refined, he shatters the stereotype of the redneck racist and commands uncommon respect from nearly every corner of the extremist movement in America".**52** In fact, Pierce received a doctorate in physics from University of Colorado, and taught 'briefly' at Oregon State U, before going on to pursue his racist career (Barkun 1997: 226; Coppola 1996: 35; Moore 1992: 48).

According to some authors, the precursor to the Pierce's National Alliance was formed, not by Pierce himself, but by 'Liberty Lobby's' Willis Carto. Some claim that it was Carto that formed the 'Youth for Wallace' campaign group which was renamed the 'National Youth Alliance' in 1970. Apparently, it was in 1968 that William Pierce left the 'National Socialist White People's Party', which was the successor to Rockwell's 'American Nazi Party', and joined the National Youth Alliance. By 1974, the NYA split into two factions, Carto's 'Youth Action' and Pierce's 'National Alliance' (Barkun 1997: 226; Dees & Corcoran 1996: 140; Singular 1987: 57). Pierce has led the 'National Alliance' ever since (George & Wilcox 1992: 358; Kleg 1993: 202; Mintz 1985: 129, 131).**53**

Karl (1995: 119) calls the National Alliance a 'neo-Nazi' organization. According to Kleg (1993: 202), the National Alliance's major concerns are Jewish conspiracy, Holocaust denial, racial pollution and the 'ZOG' or so-called 'Zionist Occupational Government'. In a 1998 report on the group, the Anti-Defamation League said that: '...the neo-Nazi National Alliance (NA) is the single most dangerous organised hate group in the United States today".**54** The League claims that the Alliance's membership has doubled since 1992 to over a thousand people, and that there is evidence of its

activity in at least twenty-six states.**55** It also claims that it has racist connections outside of North America.

Pierce is said to have been close to Ben Klassen, the late founder of the World Church of the Creator. Indeed, Pierce promotes a style of religion not unlike the COTC's 'Creativity' creed, seeing Christianity as a negative, Jewish-tainted tradition. As well, it has been mentioned that Ben Klassen sold his COTC compound to Pierce in the early 1990s before his suicide, and promoted Pierce's various racist novels.**56** As to who will eventually gain control of the National Alliance after Pierce's eventual death, some believe that Kevin Alfred Strom, a featured contributor to the National Alliance's 'American Dissident Voices' radio program, would inherit the role. However, Hate Watch claims that Strom left the Alliance, at least publicly, two years ago.**57** Yet Strom's contributions are still evident on the National Alliance web site, casting doubt on his true position in the organisation.**58** Another former National Alliance associate, Mark Weber, is a leading figure in the Holocaust denial organization, the Institute for Historical Review (Novick 1995: 269). Members of 'The Order' in the 1980s, were affiliated with the National Alliance, including leader Robert Jay Mathews, and were also affiliated with the Klan and the Aryan Nations (Barkun 1997: 229; Coppola 1996: 32; Stanton 1991: 184).**59**

As well as leading the National Alliance, William Pierce is the author of 'The Turner Diaries', which is the arguably the most well known and widely read white supremacist novel (Coppola 1996: 35; Dees & Corcoran 1996: 204). Pierce has a low opinion of Identity Christianity, but his Turner Diaries is very popular within Identity circles

(Barkun 1997: 225,7). Likewise, another of Pierce's novels, 'Hunter', is among the most

influential books in militia circles (Barkun 1997: 278-9). In 1995, Pierce began a 'Militia

Project'. Its purpose was to "...develop contacts with and exert influence over militia

organizations" (Dees & Corcoran 1996: 204). As well as Pierce and the National

Alliance, another important neo-Nazi endeavour has involved Tom Metzger and his

virulently hateful 'White Aryan Resistance' organisation.

Tom Metzger has a long history in the business of hate. In the early 1970s, he formed

the 'White Brotherhood' (Hamm 1994: 43; Zatarain 1990: 227-8). In 1974, Metzger

merged his organization with David Duke's Klan and became the Californian Grand

Dragon (Hamm 1994: 43; Barkun 1997: 210).**60** Although Metzger now claims to be an

atheist, in 1974 or 1975 (one author says 1979), he became a Identity Christian 'minister'

in the 'New Christian Crusade Church', led by a former American Nazi Party member

and Duke associate, James K. Warner (Hamm 1994: 44; Barkun 1997: 209; Moore 1993:

106).**61** James K. Warner was affiliated with the American Nazi Party, its later

incarnation the National Socialist White People's Party, and moved in neo-Nazi circles,

but converted to Identity and formed the 'New Christian Crusade Church' (Barkun 1997:

60-2, 68-70). Metzger broke with Duke's Klan in 1978 or 1979 and formed his own Klan

(Hamm 1994: 44; Barkun 1997: 210; Moore 1993: 106). From this organisation, he went

on to create his current group, the White Aryan Resistance, at first called 'WAPA', or the

'White American Political Association' (Hamm 1994: 46, 52; Moore 1993: 106). WAPA

distributed a variety of racist literature, including the 'White Man's Bible', 'White

Power', and the 'Turner Diaries' (Hamm 1994: 46).

Along with his connections to James Warner and David Duke, Metzger has ties to

the most violent racist group of the 1980s, 'The Order', particularly through Robert Jay

Mathews and David Lane, a former Klansmen and Aryan Nations member (Martinez &

Guinther 1988: 228). Lane was the Colorado organiser of the White American Political

Association in 1983. His written work has appeared in WAR publications, as well as in

the publications of the Church of the Creator and the Klan.**62** Metzger has also been

linked to Aryan Nation's Richard Butler and had a 'stormy' relationship with World

Church of the Creator's late founder, Ben Klassen. At one point, Klassen even offered

Metzger a role in the COTC movement, but Metzger declined. However, there was said

to have been mutual respect between them.**63** Metzger also has ties to Canadian racists

including Don Andrews, and Wolfgang Droege of the Heritage Front (Kinsella 1992:

102).**64**

Both Metzger and his son John have spoken at rallies for the Canadian hate group,

the Heritage Front.**65** John Metzger, as a leader of 'WAR Youth', has been involved in

WAR's central project of 'outreach' to and recruitment of skinheads (Ezekiel 1995: 69-

70; Landau 1992: 52).**66** Metzger's daughter Lynn led another skinhead-related WAR

organisation, the Aryan Women's League, or the 'AWL' (Coppola 1996: 85).**67** George

& Wilcox (1992: 375) argue that: "More than any other neo-Nazi or Klan leader, [Tom]

Metzger has promoted the growth of the 'Skinhead movement..." (see also Hamm 1994:

72; Kleg 1993: 207). This courting of skinheads led Metzger and his son to face a lawsuit

in the early 1990s, following the beating death of an Ethiopian immigrant in Portland,

Oregon, by WAR-affiliated skinheads (Kinsella 1992: 100; Landau 1992: 52).**68** The

Metzgers were ordered to pay several million dollars in damages, which put a damper on

their WAR activities.

However, there is evidence that WAR is still in operation, as they currently operate a

web site, which is one of the sites under study in this thesis. This web site is not

Metzger's first foray into cyberspace; indeed, as early as 1985, Metzger created the

'W.A.R. Board', an electronic bulletin board system which utilized his Commodore 64

and a single telephone modem to allow racists to download hate messages (Hamm 1994:

55). Later, in 1989, he had updated his equipment to include a 'multi-user 286 AT clone'

and then 'state-of-the-art' 'FidoNet' software (Hamm 1994: 69). Since then, Hamm

(1994) claims, Metzger has used more and more sophisticated computer systems and

software to peddle his hate (Hamm 1994: 69-70). His Internet web site then, is just the

latest metamorphosis of his many activities with computer technology.

HOLOCAUST DENIAL

Another increasingly visible aspect of the North American hate subculture has been

the Holocaust denial movement. Hate Watch defines 'Holocaust denial' in the following

terms:

> ...Holocaust denial is to affirm the following: that the Nazi government
> did not have a specific plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe, as well as
> other "undesirables" that fell under their occupation, through means that
> included but were not limited to death by poison gas, and that these actions
> resulted in the deaths of approximately six million Jews and nearly six
> million Russian POWs, Poles, Gypsies, homosexuals, political prisoners,
> and other perceived enemies of the Nazis.**69**

Furthermore, the Anti-Defamation League says that the purpose of Holocaust denial is to

provide "...contemporary legitimation through posthumous rehabilitation".**70** Holocaust

denial also involves the claim that the Holocaust was a hoax or myth created by Jewish leaders to garner sympathy and funds for the creation of the nation of Israel (Ebata 1997a: 19).

Willis Carto has long been associated with the racist right, particularly the fields of Holocaust denial and neo-Nazism. In 1955, Willis Carto created the 'Liberty Lobby' (Abanes 1996: 201; Martinez & Guinther 1988: 33; Rickey 1992: 62). The Lobby has been described as 'quasi-Nazi' (Abanes 1996: 201). He was a key player in the National Youth Alliance, which eventually became William Pierce's National Alliance (Martinez & Guinther 1988: 33). He was also the founder of the 'Noontide Press', a publisher of neo-Nazi and Holocaust denial material (Novick 1995: 275).71 He has sold the anti-Semitic 'classics', 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion', and 'Mein Kampf'. Carto has been called a 'disciple' of the neo-Nazi Francis Parker Yockey.72 He even recommended George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party during the 1960s.73

Carto was involved in the founding and running of the major American Holocaust denial organization, the Institute for Historical Review, which was created in 1978 (George & Wilcox 1992: 261; Mintz 1985: 125; Rickey 1992: 62). Hate Watch states that although the IHR was 'controlled' by Willis Carto and the 'Liberty Lobby', the late David McCalden was its true founder.74 Others claim that it was Carto who formed the group, and the IHR was 'closely' linked to the Carto and the Liberty Lobby (ADL 1982: 12; George & Wilcox 1992: 261; Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 63).75 The IHR has been referred to as "...the world's single most important outlet for Holocaust denial

propaganda".**76** It has been said that Holocaust denial 'took root' in America with the creation of the IHR.**77**

Whatever his true role, Carto was ousted or parted rancorously from the Institute for Historical Review in 1994 (Novick 1995: 248; Ebata 1997b: 225; Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 64).**78** He may also have lost control of his Noontide Press organisation.**79** He went on to found a new Holocaust denial group and publication, called the 'Barnes Review' (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 64).**80** Despite his activities, Carto maintains that he is not a neo-Nazi or an anti-Semite but rather, using 'coded language', an 'anti-Zionist'.**81** In 1988, David Duke ran for president under the banner of yet another Carto creation, the 'Populist Party'.**82**

Bradley Smith, the figure behind the 'Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust', is currently in his late 60s. In the mid-1980s, Smith himself worked for the Institute for Historical Review.**83** The 'CODOH' was formed in 1987 by Smith and Mark Weber, currently of the IHR.**84** Weber was news editor of William Pierce's 'National Vanguard' publication in the late 1970s, showing yet another link in the chain of North American hate (Novick 1995: 269). CODOH includes the work of other well-known Holocaust deniers, including Weber, as well as Michael Hoffman of 'Radical Truth in History' and a member of the Church of the Creator.**85** Michael Hoffman, creator of the 'Campaign for Radical Truth in History' site, was once employed by the Associated Press in New York.**86** He is linked to fellow deniers at the Institute for Historical Review and Canadian Ernst Zundel, through a book he wrote on Zundel's legal troubles, which was published by the IHR.**87** Incidentally, CODOH as well as Hoffman and the IHR are on

the Internet, and the CODOH web site alone is huge, reportedly including over a

thousand separate documents.**88** Smith has been known to advertise in college

newspapers listing only his e-mail and World Wide Web addresses, and using misleading

'coded' slogans such as 'Ignore the Thought Police' and 'Judge for Yourself'.**89**

As well as being an ideology put forth by specific individuals and groups, Holocaust

denial is a phenomenon that is becoming more and more commonplace among a variety

of hate organisations. As the Anti-Defamation League (1982: 91) has argued: "All the

extremist groups feature articles on the subject in their newspapers and magazines. In

addition they sponsor many books and 'learned' articles on the subject".

MILITIA

A section of the North American white supremacist movement that has attracted

increasing publicity during the past decade is the 'militia' subculture, sometimes referred

to using the term 'patriot movement'. While not all militias are fuelled by racist rhetoric,

increasing numbers are. Barkun (1997: 271-2) describes militias as: "...locally based

private armed groups that possess a command structure, engage in military training or

exercises, and claim to fulfil essential public functions: protection of the community

against 'tyranny', assertion of the right to bear arms, and defense of the Constitution".

Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 62) remark that it was only in 1994 that groups appeared

specifically calling themselves 'militias', but they and Ebata (1997a: 17) both argue that

"...such groups are not a recent phenomenon". Indeed, the Klan has been called an

'earlier' paramilitary group (Karl 1995: 113). As well, the 'Minutemen' organisation was

another forerunner to modern day militias during the 1950s and 1960s (Sargent 1995: 92-

3). The most well known precursor to the current militia movement is the still-active 'Posse Comitatus' movement (Coppola 1996: 88). Although the Posse Comitatus was formed in the 1960s, the Posse's heyday was in the 1980s (Coppola 1996: 88).

Karl (1995: 114) calls the Posse an 'armed offshoot' of the Ku Klux Klan. Others comment on the Posse and other militia groups' ties to Christian Identity theology (Abanes 1996: 155; Kleg 1993: 220).[90] Hate Watch specifically calls the Posse Comitatus a 'Christian Identity' organization.[91] Nizkor, a Canadian web site created to counteract racism and Holocaust denial, also links the Posse to the Identity 'religion', describing it as "…an intermittently active, group of 'Christian Identity' activists dedicated to survivalism, vigilantism, and anti-government agitation".[92] Significantly, Identity adherent William Potter Gale was one of the founders of the Posse Comitatus in 1969, along with Henry Beach (Barkun 1997: 221; Coppola: 45, 87-8; George & Wilcox 1992: 372).[93] One of its current leaders is Jim Wickstrom.[94] Wickstrom is an Identity minister and a visible Posse Comitatus organising figure, especially in Wisconsin (Barkun 1997: 221; Coppola 1996: 68). In addition, Richard Butler of the Aryan Nations "…led the Kootenai County, Idaho, Posse Comitatus from 1974 to 1976, when its members rebelled against what they considered his high-handed leadership" (Barkun 1997: 221). As well, in the 1970s, it was promoted by David Duke.[95]

The name 'Posse Comitatus', is Latin for 'power of the county' (Barkun 1997: 220; Coppola 1996: 87). The main ideological tenet behind the Posse worldview is that there is no higher political or legal authority than the county sheriff (Coppola 1996: 87-8). The Posse is supposed to represent the able-bodied adult males in the county that a sheriff can

call upon to help preserve 'order' (Coppola 1996: 87). The Posse Comitatus has also been termed an anti-government, anti-tax, racist and anti-Semitic organisation (Dees & Corcoran 1996: 16; George & Wilcox 1992: 372; Coppola 1996: 4). Other issues that the Posse objects to include "...gun control, government legislation and court actions related to education, schools, and environmental protection" (Kleg 1993: 220). According to the Posse, laws cannot be enforced unless they have been stipulated by the Constitution, and the only legitimate currency are gold and silver (Coppola 1996: 87-8). According to Dees & Corcoran (1996: 89), many militia groups in the 1990s embraced many aspects of the Posse Comitatus' dogma.

It has been already mentioned that not all militias are racist. James Aho, a sociologist at Idaho State University has said that: "...'the vast majority of people in militias are not violent or dangerous'" (Abanes 1996: 25). As well, Karl (1995: 157) adds that: "...the overwhelming majority of militia members are harmless". He adds that most militia leaders are "...intolerant of white supremacists in their midst" (Karl 1995: 117-8). While this may be true, Abanes (1996: 21) writes that: "...the recent militia movement was indeed begun by racist leaders from within the white supremacist community... today's paramilitary groups are far from innocent of all the accusations being levelled against them". According to Abanes (1996: 3) "...large segments of the patriot/militia movement are being driven by...racism...". As well, although the law is not always enforced, in 1996, forty-one states had statutes on the books banning militias or paramilitary activity of any kind (Abanes 1996: 69). Thus, inherently racist or not, militia activity is an illegal activity and too often associated with the far-right.

According to Abanes (1996: 22) and Dees & Corcoran (1996: 2), the present militia movement grew out of concern in the 'white power' movement over the shootings that occurred at Ruby Ridge, Idaho in August 1992. During that altercation, FBI officers and some of the family members of a white supremacist named Randy Weaver were shot, and Weaver's wife and son were killed. As a response to the killings, a 'Rocky Mountain Rendezvous' was held by Identity preacher Pete Peters in Estes Park, Colorado, where "...between 150 and 175 'Christian men' hastily convened on October 23, 24 and 25, 1992...to discuss 'how to respond to the Weaver killings'" (Abanes 1996: 22). High profile racists in attendance included Louis Beam and Richard Butler (Abanes 1996: 22).

Some aspects of the militia movement's doctrine include a suspicion of government and anti-tax sentiments, nativist tendencies and a dedication to paramilitary activity. As Abanes (1996: 2) explains, the four basic 'ingredients' of the militia mindset are:

> (1) an obsessive suspicion of the government; (2) belief in
> anti-government conspiracy theories; (3) a deep-seated hatred
> of government officials; and (4) a feeling that the United States
> Constitution, for all intents and purposes, has been discarded
> by Washington bureaucrats. Most patriots also harbour the notion
> that America rests in the hands of an illegitimate government.

A commitment to the Constitution as originally penned, without the 13th to 16th Amendments is also important to some militia members (Barkun 1997: 284-5). This is significant for it means that blacks, who were made full citizens as a part of the 14th Amendment, are not considered to be legitimate citizens by the militia thought processes (Abanes 1996: 32-3). Also central to the militia worldview is a belief in conspiracy, specifically one called the 'New World Order' (NWO) whereby an 'elite' will take over the world (Barkun 1997: 257).

Two of the most publicised militias are the Michigan Militia, and the Militia of

Montana. John Trochmann, who helped found the Militia of Montana in 1994, has been

linked with Aryan Nations and Louis Beam (Dees & Corcoran 1996: 81; Karl 1995: 116).

Indeed, Trochmann was a featured speaker at the 1990 'World Congress' at the Aryan

Nations compound in Idaho (Abanes 1996: 178; Barkun 1997: 275; Karl 1995: 57,

113).**96** However, as Karl (1995: 57) relates, Trochmann "…angrily denies that he is

racist or anti-Semitic". Although Trochmann downplays his racist connections, Richard

Butler of the Aryan Nations says that he was a frequent visitor to his compound (Dees &

Corcoran 1996: 90). Indeed, Aryan Nations itself has been termed a 'paramilitary' hate

group.**97** Aryan Nations leader Richard Butler has been associated with the Posse

Comitatus, although he claims to 'hate' the militia movement (Karl 1995: 112). Two of

the key writings for the militia movement have been written by racists - William Pierce's

novel 'Hunter', and Louis Beam's article on 'leaderless resistance' (Barkun 1997: 278-9).

James 'Bo' Gritz, who has ties to David Duke, Willis Carto and the Christian

Identity movement, is another important figure in the militia and 'survivalist' movement

(Abanes 1996: 183-4). In the 1990s, Gritz established a 280 acre survivalist compound in

central Idaho (Abanes 1996: 184; Novick 1995: 248). Gritz also served as a 'negotiator'

during the Randy Weaver stand-off in Ruby Ridge, Idaho (Barkun 1997:269). Ultimately,

Abanes (1996) says that: "Although Gritz claims that he is not a racist or anti-Semite, his

statements and the company he keeps indicates the opposite is true" (Abanes 1996: 184).

Militia activity is also apparent on the Internet. As well as there being Internet web

sites devoted to militia activities, including the 'Militia of Montana' homepage, there are

also militia newsgroups, including 'misc.activism.militia' and 'talk.politics.guns' (Karl 1995: 126).

SKINHEADS

According to Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 61) and Moore (1993: 1, 28, 46), the 'Skinhead' subculture originated in Britain in the 1970s, as an offshoot of another youth subculture called the 'hard mods'. Traditionally, skinheads could be recognised through their shaved heads, and their 'uniform' of blue jeans, suspenders, Doc Martin boots, leather jackets and t-shirts, although some skinheads do not adhere to this mode of appearance (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 49; Kleg 1993: 207-8; Landau 1992: 49). Although racist skinheads have become an important part of the white supremacist movement, not all skinheads are involved in racism (Moore 1993: 3; Landau 1992: 49). The racist skinhead subculture is thought to have reached the United States by the mid-1980s (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 61; Moore 1993: 3). The history of the skinhead movement is hard to track for, as the Southern Poverty Law Center comments: "'There is no single national organisation, [and skinheads] frequently move in and out of gangs, and gangs themselves split and merge'..." (Hamm 1994: 7).

In terms of their ideological leanings, some authors have maintained that skinheads have a sophisticated worldview, while others deny that they have much interest in anything other than beer, fighting and slam-dancing to violent 'white power' music (Moore 1993: 86). According to Hamm (1994: 7), the FBI believes that "...'Skinheads in and of themselves are not necessarily organised, nor do they share any common beliefs'...". Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 61) note however, that some skinhead groups

have appropriated symbols attributed to Nazism. Likewise, the Center for Democratic Renewal claims that "…'many racist skinheads have a straight-forward neo-Nazi political philosophy and a developed sense of political identity'…" (Hamm 1994: 7). Among the tenets of skinhead ideology is a commitment to white supremacy, anti-Semitism, anti-abortion and homophobia (Moore 1993: 84-5).

What is generally agreed upon is the violent nature of skinhead groups. Indeed, the Anti-Defamation League calls 'neo-Nazi' skinheads "…the youngest and most violence prone segment of the extremist underworld…".**98** Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 47) say of their position in the white supremacist movement that: "Neo-Nazi skinheads are undoubtedly the shock troops of right-wing extremism". Hamm (1994: 65) calls skinheads "…a terrorist youth subculture". Likewise, Moore (1993: 4) claims that: "By the end of the 1980s they [skinheads] achieved a reputation as the most violent extremist group in the country [U.S.]". Indeed, skinheads are known to have been involved in a medley of criminal activity, including vandalism, assault and murder (Moore 1993: 4; Landau 1992: 49).

Skinheads are linked to many racist groups, including the World Church of the Creator and Aryan Nations. Some feel that a symbiosis has developed between skinheads and more traditional white supremacist groups in that the traditional organisations provide skinheads with an ideological framework and set of meanings with which to organise their violent and racist tendencies, and skinheads provide new recruits and 'warm bodies' to fill out the membership rolls of the various organisations (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 47). Indeed, the Anti-Defamation League reports that by the early

1990s, skinheads were coming to the Church of the Creator's headquarters for 'indoctrination'.**99** According to Hamm (1994: 203): "…'Creativity' is at the very core of the American skinhead subculture". Besides the WCOTC, skinheads have been welcomed by other hate leaders, including Terry Long of the Alberta Aryan Nations, and Wolfgang Droege of the Heritage Front. Hate group leaders such as the late Robert Miles, the late Ben Klassen and Richard Butler have praised and recruited skinheads (Moore 1993: 103, 185; Coppola 1996: 59; Dees & Corcoran 1996: 93-4; Kleg 1993: 209). Moore (1993:106) and Hamm (1994: 42, 66-7, 72) have both argued that Tom Metzger of WAR has been a 'catalyst' for the American skinhead movement, and has played a pivotal role in providing leadership and organisational structure for the many scattered skinhead gangs (see also Kleg 1993: 207; Landau 1992: 52).

Skinheads have also been utilised as 'bodyguards' or security for a number of figures in the movement, including British Holocaust denier David Irving, Canadian far right-winger Paul Fromm and various Klan factions (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 47-8; Moore 1993: 99; Dees & Corcoran 1996: 93-4). Hamm (1994: 59) reports that skinheads have infiltrated the US Army, as well as law enforcement agencies across the country.

CANADIAN

As in the United States, the Ku Klux Klan is considered the 'forefather' of organised racism and white supremacy in Canada. Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 226-7) remark that although the Klan is no longer a strong force on the Canadian racist stage, it has enjoyed a "…long-established presence…". Indeed, during the heyday of Klan participation in the United States in the early 1920s, the Klan was also the biggest hate organisation in

Canadian history, with membership of the Saskatchewan chapters alone numbering in the tens of thousands (Kinsella 1994: 15). Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 44) argue that the Klan has lost most of its momentum in the 1990s, and that many prominent extremists apparently feel that it "...has outlived its usefulness". In addition to the Klan, 'British Israelism', the forerunner of the 'Christian Identity' movement, has had a long history in Canada, dating back to the 19th century (Barkun 1997: 49).

Throughout the 1930s, various fascist groups appeared in Canada (Betcherman 1975: 2). 'Swastika Clubs' appeared in Ontario for a time (Betcherman 1975: 45). As well, various 'shirt' organisations sprang up around the country. For example, the Canadian Union of Fascists wore blackshirts, and were linked to the British fascist Mosley; the 'Dominion State Party', affiliated with the American Pelley's 'Silvershirts', were also known as the 'Whiteshirts' (Betcherman 1975: 45, 76, 79). Undoubtedly the most well-known fascist leader was Adrien Arcand, a resident of Quebec. Arcand, who later was a mentor of Ernst Zundel, was unashamedly pro-Hitler, calling him a "...'champion of Christianity'..." (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 50; Betcherman 1975: 3, 20; Weimann & Winn 1986: 13).

Ernst Zundel has been referred to as the 'P.T. Barnum' of Holocaust denial. His work is supported by other Denial organisations, several of which are listed in the study sample, including Bradley Smith's 'Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust', Michael Hoffman's 'Campaign for Radical Truth in History', and the 'Institute for Historical Review'.**100** 'Bo' Gritz, who has been linked to the Christian Identity and

militia movement, has had Zundel as a guest on his radio show, 'American Town Forum' (Abanes 1996: 183-5).

Zundel, through his Toronto-based company Samisdat Publishing, has been a leader in the distribution of anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi materials throughout North America and Germany (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 222). According to Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 222): "In 1981 Zundel was named by West German investigators as one of the biggest suppliers of banned Nazi propaganda that had been seized in hundreds of raids on the homes of neo-Nazis in West Germany" (see also Sher 1983: 193; Weimann & Winn 1986: 13). According to Ebata (1997b: 225), Zundel has many contacts among German neo-Nazis, and has participated in a French Holocaust denial congress. Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 50) explain that Samisdat Publishing not only supplies works from a variety of Holocaust denial 'thinkers' to the white supremacist movement, but that it is a profitable enterprise in itself: "...Zundel distributes not only his own rather negligible works but all of the 'classic' Holocaust denial literature of Arthur Butz, Richard Harwood, Robert Faurisson, and others. He reportedly takes in more than six figure per annum from this enterprise".

An important affiliate of Ernst Zundel, is Ingrid Rimland, who has a doctorate in Education, and who runs Zundel's Internet web site. Hate Watch refers to her as being "...one of the most visible figures in Holocaust denial movement since 1995, when she appeared on the Internet and other media as the 'press secretary' for Ernst Zundel".101 Currently, Zundel is involved in hearings into whether he may be charged under Canadian hate crimes laws with regard to the 'Zundelsite' web page, which he maintains

is an American site run by Rimland. Regardless of the technicalities of the web site construction, observation of the web page makes it seem apparent that Zundel's stamp is on everything appearing on the 'Zundelsite'.102

Another of Adrien Arcand's disciples, John Ross Taylor, was himself a longstanding white supremacist on the Canadian hate scene (Betcherman 1975: 111). Taylor was a member of the Canadian Nazi Party, which was led by John Beattie and was active in the 1960s and 1970s (Kinsella 1994: 208, 269). Taylor continued to be active in the movement into the 1970s and 1980s in organisations such as the racist 'Western Guard', which he led for a time, and as a Canadian 'ambassador' to the Aryan Nations (Kinsella 1994: 190; Sher 1983: 80-1). He also had links to the Klan's David Duke and Alexander McQuirter, and to Wolfgang Droege (Kinsella 1994: 213; Sher 1983: 80-1). In a 1995 article, the Heritage Front homepage refers to the now deceased Taylor in a reverential and sentimental tone, regarding him as an important racist figure and "…a true gentleman of the old school…".103

The web of organised racism in modern Canada can be navigated with reference to one of its leaders, the Heritage Front's Wolfgang Droege. Born in Bavaria, Droege moved to Canada as a child and showed an early interest in the pro-Nazi stories of his grandfather and father (Kinsella 1994: 205). In his twenties, Droege joined the right-wing racist group the 'Western Guard', an offshoot of the 'Edmund Burke Society' (Kinsella 1994: 208-9). Through these groups Droege became associated with Canadian right-wingers like Paul Fromm and Don Andrews. Andrews apparently has connections to the American racist, Tom Metzger (Kinsella 1992: 102). Andrews went on to found the

'Nationalist Party of Canada', while Fromm leads far right groups like 'CAFE', the Canadian Association for Free Expression, and 'CFAR', Citizens for Foreign Aid Reform (Kinsella 1994: 35, 233, 321). By the late 1970s, Droege was a key member of the Canadian branch of David Duke's Klan, headed by Alexander McQuirter (Kinsella 1994: 220; Kinsella 1992: 83; Bridges 1994: 73).[104] As well as having links to David Duke, he has met with James Warner, former American Nazi Party member, and J. B. Stoner of the National States Rights Party (Kinsella 1994: 214). Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 46) claim that Wolfgang Droege even had ties to members of the American terrorist group 'The Order'. In the 1980s he was sent to prison, along with McQuirter and Don Black, for the attempted coup of Dominica (Kinsella 1994: 220; Bridges 1994: 74, 89). After he was released, he went on to co-found the Heritage Front, a white supremacist group with neo-Nazi tendencies, in 1989 (Kinsella 1994: 223).

The Heritage Front was probably the best known Canadian racist organisation in the early 1990s. Although it espouses neo-Nazi beliefs, it is difficult to pin the Heritage Front down ideologically. As Kinsella (1994: 237) argues, the Heritage Front "...operated as an umbrella for a large number of neo-Nazis and white supremacists with all manner of philosophies...". The Front was tied to many and various 'white power' groups, in Canada and the United States. Among the speakers at Front rallies, were Tom and John Metzger of the White Aryan Resistance, as well as Paul Fromm and members of the Klan and the Aryan Nations (Kinsella 1994: 235; Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 46). Skinheads also made up an important part of the Heritage Front. Through the Heritage Front, Droege is also linked to George Burdi, an important young Canadian racist. As well as

performing a stint as the Canadian head of the World Church of the Creator, Burdi has also been the Heritage Front's Youth leader (Kleg 1993: 203).105 Burdi has also been the head of 'Resistance Records', a white power rock label and magazine, which gave him further connections to racists in both the US and Canada.

It is unclear whether Burdi and Droege are still involved in the Heritage Front, and whether the Heritage Front is in fact still active. It is suspected that both have retained their ties, if not to the group, then to the white supremacist movement in some fashion. In any case, it seems clear that although the future of the Heritage Front is unknown, organised racism in Canada is not likely to totally disappear.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has sought to provide a look into the history of the far right in North America, introducing the 'major players' and groups, and their connections to one another. George & Wilcox (1992: 10) warn that: "Alliances and agreements among extremists are quite often transient, and to assume that A must agree with B as evidenced by the fact that they both know C, or any variation of this kind of reasoning may very well be unwarranted". However, the attempt has been made to draw out the connections that have been mentioned by various experts in the field, and to paint a picture of what the movement looks like as a network of people with histories, rivalries and friendships. As the discussion continues on to an analysis of the sample web sites, it is useful to consider the backgrounds, ties and other 'performances' of the white supremacists who have created some of these sites, gaining a sense of context that might not otherwise become evident.

CHAPTER THREE – THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF NORTH AMERICAN WHITE SUPREMACIST GROUPS

The North American white supremacist movement has a long history that is full of transitions, interconnections and complex personalities. Yet how significant is this extreme-right movement to North American society? Some believe the threat of the white supremacist movement is great, while others downplay or question its significance. This chapter will discuss of this question and consider such elements as numerical strength, internal cohesion, electoral activities, weapons possession, military expertise and the use of various communication media, including the Internet. How much overall significance and threat is posed by the white supremacist movement has no simple answer, although ultimately it appears that there is sufficient reason to remain vigilant against such groups.

SCHOLARLY DEBATE ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HATE MOVEMENT

The literature on the far right 'movement' in North America, displays ambivalence about whether hate organizations pose a threat to mainstream North American society, and whether they deserve either scholarly or public attention. Some feel that hate group activity is a significant, dangerous and increasingly visible element in North American life. Ridgeway (1990: 182) suggests that there is "...evidence that the organized groups on the racist far right were alive and well in the 1990s", while Blee (1996: 681) argues that there has been a 'dramatic' increase in the number of racist organizations in the U.S. Daniels (1997: 4, 19) also argues that since the 1970s, the white supremacist movement

has grown 'steadily'. The Anti-Defamation League (1982: i) argues that the threat of hate activity is very real: "In the United States today, some of the most pernicious assaults against our society come from home grown, radical extremist groups on both the left and the right". However, Dees & Corcoran (1996: 101) see things differently, claiming that "…the white supremacist movement was in disarray at the beginning of the 1990s". Similarly, Rubin (1995: 120) argues that the white supremacist movement ultimately has little significance in any of the Western democracies.

In Canada, Kinsella (1994: 351) states that it would be erroneous to think of the Canadian far right as a 'mere lunatic fringe'. Barrett (1987: 3-4) claims that there has been significant growth in hate group activity in Canada over the past twenty years: "…since the Second World War there has been a slow but steady trickle of organized right-wing activity, and within the last two decades the dam has broken". Henry et al. (1995: 91) concur, saying that in the early 1990s, racist violence was on the upswing and that part of this increase was the result of organised hate group activity. However, Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 37, 52) posit that Canada's racist right falls far short of matching the scope or power of related movements in Europe or the United States. Levitt (1994: 308-9), in a similar vein, argues that it is difficult to determine whether or not hate activity is in fact expanding by looking at statistics alone, for there might be other explanations for increases in incidents. He suggests:

> It has been noted that in recent years the number of…racist-motivated reported acts have increased. However…1. How do we know when an act is motivated by racist attitudes? 2. We have no way of knowing the ratio of reported to unreported acts. In fact, it is possible that the number of acts in general has decreased while the number of reported acts has increased. This might be due to a change in climate, heightened concern

on the part of the community or even an oversensitivity on the part of
many.

Merkl & Weinberg (1997: 247) similarly caution that it is actually a "...low percentage of hate crimes [that are] committed by organised right-wing groups...".

In recent years there has been significant media coverage of far right incidents, or those perpetrated by persons or groups linked with or sympathetic to the far right cause. As Ebata (1997a: 12-3) claims, "references to right-wing extremism have been heard more and more frequently since the mid-1980s". Events include the bombing in Oklahoma City, FBI stand-off situations dealing with Randy Weaver at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, and the Montana Freemen (Barkun 1997: vii). Recently, various murders, including that of James Byrd, Jr. in Jasper, Texas, and shooting sprees around the US have been linked to far right-wingers. The actions of certain members of Canada's disbanded Airborne Regiment, the infiltration of Heritage Front members into the Reform Party, and the Grant Bristow-CSIS scandal have exposed the existence of the radical right to wider Canadian society. However, it is difficult to evaluate whether there has actually been an increase in racist incidents, or whether it may be attributed to an increased concern and awareness about the far right in general.

However, these publicised occurrences of hate have had an impact on the way some commentators view the organized racist phenomenon. As Ebata (1997a: 12) posits: "Many observers...are dismissive of what they consider an unfortunate but still peripheral problem. In stark contrast, other commentators seize upon the Oklahoma tragedy or draw parallels to the Nazi accession to power, invoking the spectre of the Third Reich". Likewise, Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 10) find greater significance in the

publicised tragedies in which far-righters have had a hand: "...the bombing of a federal building in Oklahoma City [is]...not [an] isolated incident...but symptoms of the threat posed by antidemocratic forces. It is essential to recognise the early warning signs and continue to struggle against extremism". As Novick (1995: 7-8) colourfully states: "The white supremacists will not go away if we ignore them; they will fester and take root, like a bad case of athlete's foot, poisoning those they organise". Daniels (1997: 3) argues that questioning the significance and threat of the existence of white supremacists overlooks the fact that even as a marginal subculture, "...white supremacist discourse has very real consequences for people of colour".

There is further polarisation of opinion over the impact of particular kinds of hate groups on North American society. Writing about the militia movement, Abanes (1996: 39) claims that there is a growing danger, saying that violence associated with militia members: "...has increased greatly since the early 1990s". Similarly, Dees & Corcoran (1996: 220) remark that militias are "Unregulated private armies [that] have no legal basis. Their threat is real. We cannot be timid or tardy when dealing with this danger". Karl (1995: 156-7) however, writes that: "We overestimate the militia threat at our own peril". Likewise, George & Wilcox (1992: 378) argue that society risks more in suppressing extremists than in allowing them to exist within the structures of the law, and they discount the power of the North American neo-Nazi 'movement', saying it is: "...highly fragmented, infinitesimally small relative to the population, and heavily watched by everyone from the news media to 'watchdog' groups to the U.S. Justice

Department and local police. It represents no threat to our political system and probably never did".

However, it is the violent tendencies of many of the groups that garner the most concern. Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 62) find it significant that Skinheads were reportedly involved in 35 killings between 1988 to 1997, as well as hundreds of assaults. Indeed, the National Council of Churches reported that in the mid-1980s, skinheads alone were thought to be responsible for over four hundred murders or assaults, most directed towards minorities (Kronenwetter 1992: 79). Similarly, Barkun (1997: x) argues that were it not for the Christian Identity movement's penchant for violence, it would be worthy of little concern as an otherwise marginal religious 'sect':

> Christian Identity as a religious orientation is virtually unknown...It goes
> unmentioned in all but the most encyclopaedic accounts of American rel-
> -igion. No one is sure how many believe in it...it is too fragmented to
> permit anything but rough estimates. These cover a wide range – from
> two thousand to over fifty thousand but the order of magnitude suggests
> a movement that claims the allegiance of only the tiniest fraction of the
> American population. So small a group would have little claim on our
> attention but for the fact that Christian Identity has created the most
> virulently anti-Semitic belief system ever to arise in the United States
> and that some of its believers are committed to the eradication of Amer-
> -ican political institutions.

Ezekiel (1995: xxiv) agrees, arguing the when the white supremacist movement is taken as a whole that: "Its impact is far greater than its numbers, because of the reputation for violence".

Perhaps the most satisfying and balanced viewpoints on the significance of organised racism comes from those who, while cautioning us not to overreact to the presence of

white supremacists, also remark that it is wise to be vigilant (Ebata 1997a: 33). Thus, as

Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 3; see also 2, 52) conclude:

> None of these radical right parties or individuals...have a good chance
> of gaining power in the established democracies...The issue, then, is not
> one of imminent danger but rather of the need for awareness of the pot-
> -ential for danger. Democracies should deal early with threats to freedom
> and security across the entire political spectrum, whether these emanate
> from skinheads, neo-Nazi groups, or an antidemocratic radical right.

NUMBER OF GROUPS

Statistics on far right numbers are problematic since group membership lists are

often secret, and the actions of some organizations, such as the now defunct 'Order', are

essentially 'underground' (Ridgeway 1990: 89, 146). Adding to the problem of

calculating hate group numbers is the fact that many groups are actually 'front'

organizations for other groups, and many individuals may be members of multiple groups

(Barrett 1987: 28, 33). In addition: "White supremacists often give media sources

numbers which are too high to boost their visibility, and those who wish to minimise the

impact of white supremacists often underestimate their numbers" (Daniels 1997: 4).

Estimating the number of groups, members, and especially non-active 'sympathisers' in

the hate movement is highly ambiguous and questionable.

A disproportionate number of hate groups originate in the United States; Merkl &

Weinberg (1997: 248) claim that forty percent of far right organisations in all the Western

democracies are based in the U.S. However, they believe that this profusion of hate

groups indicates weakness and a fragmentation of the movement, rather than strength.

Barrett (1987: 28) claims that there were between sixty and eighty 'radical' right-wing

groups in Canada in the late 1980s. However, he also claims that the average number of

members per group is approximately 4.5, putting the relative strength of those groups into doubt (Barrett 1987: 40). In the United States, Kronenwetter (1992: 104-5) mentions that in 1989, the Southern Poverty Law Center asserted that there were about 205 different white supremacist groups in America. Likewise, Klanwatch reported that there were more than two hundred hate groups in the years between 1989 and 1993, and that the Klan and Skinhead organisations represented the highest proportion of this total (Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 248; Daniels 1997: 4; Feagin & Vera 1995: 5, 77). Daniels (1997: 19) remarks that in 1991, the number of American far right groups increased to 346 from 273 the previous year, in an increase of twenty-seven percent.

There are discrepancies in the literature with regard to estimates of the numbers of groups in various sub-groupings of the hate movements, including Christian Identity, Skinheads and Militias. The Anti-Defamation League has estimated that there are about 200 to 300 Identity churches in the U.S. (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 61). However, Kleg (1993: 187) claims this estimate is too high; he counts only forty Identity churches in the beginning of the 1990s. With regard to specific Identity organisations, Coppola (1996: 58) states that the Aryan Nations suffered a decline in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but that by 1994 the organization was active in fifteen states. By 1995, Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 60) report the organisation was operating in twenty-two states.

In the mid-1990s, Ezekiel (1995: xxii) wrote that there were: "over a hundred Skinhead organizations...". Likewise, Moore (1993: 189) relates that in 1991, the number of skinhead organisations increased from 160 to 203. Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 61) argue that in the late 1980s and early 1990s, skinheads 'experienced marked growth'.

However, they claim that since then the number of groups in the Skinhead movement have dropped rapidly: "In the mid-1990s ADL maintained that skinhead numbers were holding constant, but Klanwatch reported a steep decline in the number of such groups from 144 in 1991 to 87 in 1993 and only 34 in 1994" (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 62). In 1995, the number of Skinhead groups reportedly dropped 61 percent from the previous year (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 252).

Hamm (1997: 241) argues that during the 1990s, as many as 45 of 224 active militias in the United States were linked to white supremacist groups in 39 states (see also Abanes 1996: 174; Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 12). Dees & Corcoran (1996: 202) however, calculate the numbers differently. But, according to their estimates: "Of the 441 militia and 368 Patriot groups that existed between 1994 and 1996, 137 had ties to the racist right..." (Dees & Corcoran 1996: 202). Additionally, Klanwatch estimates put the militia total at 328 in 1995, operating in forty-four states (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 252).

Current information relates an interesting story. In 1996, the Simon Wiesenthal Center was monitoring over 250 different U.S. hate groups (Cooper 1997: 102). In 1998, the Southern Poverty Law Center reported that there were 537 hate groups, up from a total of 474 groups in previous year.106 Of these, 163 were Klan, 151 were neo-Nazi and 48 were Skinhead groups.107 According to the SPLC, the Klan and neo-Nazi movements enjoyed a resurgence in 1998.108 The number of 'chapters' also increased in 1998 for such groups as the World Church of the Creator, National Socialist White People's Party and the National Alliance.109 However, apparently Christian Identity organisations and the NAAWP suffered a decline in 1998.110 Militias groups, including

those who are not known to be racist, declined to 221 in 1997 from 370 groups in

1996.**111** It is difficult to say whether an increase in the number of groups falling under a

particular category means that there has been a increase in the power, influence and

popularity of that category, or whether it signifies a fragmentation of that particular part

of the white supremacist movement. Next will be a consideration of the actual number of

members comprising the North American 'white power' phenomenon.

NUMBERS OF MEMBERS (ACTIVE/SYMPATHISERS)

In terms of the number of actual hate group members, one must make a distinction

between active members and 'behind the scenes' supporters or sympathisers (Barrett

1987: 31). Including active members and passive sympathisers, the size of the far right in

the United States might number in the realm of a few hundred thousand. The white

supremacist movement in Canada is much smaller, probably several thousand at most,

and "...proportionately lower...than in the United States" (Braun & Scheinberg 1997:

37). In the mid to late 1980s, Barrett (1987: 31, 40) learned the identity of 448 members

of the Canadian far right; however, he posits that in total the right-wing may be assessed

as being, "...in the range of thousands of individuals..." (see also Henry et al. 1995: 89).

Macdonald (1995: 34) asserts that there are in the region of 4,000 hard-core racists and

supporters across Canada.

There is a large range of estimates of the total number of white supremacists in the

United States. Most often, these estimates put hate group membership at between twenty

and thirty thousand hard-core, active members, although there is disagreement on this

point (Feagin & Vera 1995: 5; Levitas 1995: 172; Ezekiel 1995: xxi; Cooper 1997: 102).

In the mid-1990s, Feagin & Vera (1995: 77) noted that membership in racist groups could perhaps be as high as 50,000. As well, Daniel (1997: 19) argues that "...the most conservative estimates place the continued membership in white supremacist organisations at around 40,000 dues-paying members and growing...". Cooper (1997: 102) says that there may even be as many as 100,000 white supremacists in the U.S. Of course, sympathisers are more numerous, and are generally thought to be in the range of 150,000 to 200,000 (Feagin & Vera 1995: 5; Levitas 1995: 172; Ezekiel 1995: xxi). Ezekiel (1995: xxi) argues that an additional half million people may read hate movement literature although they will not actually purchase it or take part in white supremacist activities. The total of both hate group members and sympathisers is usually estimated though at less than half a million people. Keeping in mind that in 1998 there were approximately 270 million people in the United States and over 30 million in Canada, the white supremacist movement makes up only a small percentage of the overall population.**112**

Estimates for specific organisations are also widely variable. Christian Identity comprises a large percentage of the entire movement. Abanes (1996: 155) posits that: "Identity now claims approximately 20,000 to 30,000 adherents nationwide". Likewise, Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 61) say that there are probably 25,000 Identity adherents, with 150,000 sympathisers. A recent 1999 estimate puts Christian Identity numbers at between thirty-five and fifty thousand members.**113** While the Christian Identity movement as a whole may number in the tens of thousands in the U.S., Martinez & Guinther (1988: 29) estimate that the Aryan Nations, the most prominent Identity racist

organisation, only had about 200 members in the late 1980s. Likewise, in 1995, another

author called the group: "…a microscopic sect of hard-core racists" (Karl 1995: 111).

Therefore, it is difficult to say how cohesive and influential the Christian Identity

movement is because although the sect is thought to be in the tens of thousands, its

premier group is minuscule. That could indicate that while Christian Identity is a

prominent perspective in the racist movement, its followers are spread thinly over

numerous groups, decreasing its overall power.

Another important pseudo-religious element in the North American far right is the

'Creativity' movement. Its main organisation is the World Church of the Creator, which

in the late 1980s claimed a circulation of between twenty and forty thousand for its

monthly publication 'Racial Loyalty' (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 60). This figure

however, may have been inflated. In 1993, reports put membership in the WCOTC at less

than a thousand members, but warned that this figure was increasing.[114] Though the

World Church of the Creator's numbers may be relatively small, the Church has had

success in recruiting some of the most violent racists in the movement, the Skinheads,

which may increase their significance and threat.

The Skinhead movement was by far the fastest-growing segment of the hate

movement during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Landau (1992: 51) reports that in 1986,

there were only an estimated 300 'skins' in the United States. However in the course of

two years, that figure had jumped to between 1,000 and 1,500 (Moore 1993: 71; Merkl &

Weinberg 1997: 238; Hamm 1994: 11). By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Skinheads

had doubled again to become more than 3,000 strong (Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 238;

Hamm 1994: 11; Landau 1992: 51; Moore 1993: 71; Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 62;

Ridgeway 1990: 165). Indeed, Kleg (1993: 207) argues that there may even be as many

as 10,000 American skinheads, as skinhead numbers are difficult to verify due to their

loose-knit gang structure (see also Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 48). In Canada, the

skinhead movement is less developed than its American counterpart. In 1997, an estimate

of 350 'hard-core' skinheads was considered 'high' (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 48). In

any case, after a burst of rapid growth in the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a

'levelling off' of skinhead numbers in the early 1990s (Moore 1993: 183). A movement

of only a couple thousand members does not seem very significant in comparison to a

mainstream culture of over 300 million across Canada and the U.S.**115** However,

skinheads are involved in criminal activity to an extent out of proportion to their

numerical size (Kronenwetter 1992: 79; Moore 1993: 130).

In terms of militia numbers, the forerunner to many of today's paramilitary militia

organisations is the still-active Posse Comitatus. Ridgeway (1990: 115) states that FBI

estimates in 1976 put members of the Posse at between twelve and fifty thousand;

supporters amounted to ten to twelve times that total. Ridgeway (1990: 184) admits that

numbers are hard to determine, but he notes that in the 1980s, 'Spotlight', the Posse

Comitatus publication, had a reported circulation of 100,000. As well, the IRS reported

that there were approximately 52,000 Posse Comitatus tax protesters in 1986 (Ridgeway

1990: 184). In 1993, Posse numbers were estimated at between two and ten thousand

people (Kleg 1993: 219). The most often cited number for members of militias of more

modern origins is around fifteen thousand followers (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 62;

Abanes 1996: 22-3; Barkun 1997: 273; Karl 1995: 157). Others estimate that the figure is more likely between twenty and a hundred thousand (Karl 1995: 157; Abanes 1996: 22-3). Abanes (1996: 23) quotes a member of the BATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms) as saying militia membership could number in the millions of people. This figure however, seems likely to be an exaggeration.

In analysing these hate group numbers, it is important to realise that there have been major historical fluctuations in the number of followers of the far right. As much as several hundred thousand racists may be shocking to us today, levels of hate group participation are currently nowhere near the historical peak. The 'heyday' of racist activity in both the U.S. and Canada was in the 1920s, during the biggest surge in Ku Klux Klan history. This time period has never been matched in terms of sheer numbers of racist activists (MacLean 1994: xi). Various authors claim that membership in the 1920s Klan ranged from one to six million members in the U.S. (Kinsella 1994: 11; Feagin & Vera 1995: 5; Ridgeway 1990: 34; Landau 1992: 47; MacLean 1994: xi). An indication of the level of Klan activity in Canada is given by Kinsella (1994: 15) when he states that the Saskatchewan Klan of the 1920s and 1930s was: "...[at] close to 40,000 members - the single most populous white supremacist organization in Canada". The Klan reached its post-Civil Rights era peak in the late 1970s or early 1980s, and usually put this figure at between 10,000 and 12,000 members (Moore 1992: 49; Sher 1983: 72; Hamm 1994: 49; Singular 1987: 85; Seltzer & Lopes 1986: 95). In contrast, Thompson (1982: 35) puts his estimate at a much higher 20,000 members. The Anti-Defamation League (1982: 3) and Seltzer & Lopes (1986: 95) claimed that in the early 1980s, the number of Klan

sympathisers might total 100,000, ten times the amount of active members. However, Thompson (1982: 112) admits that: "The number of Klan members in 1980 was small compared to the thousands who belonged in the 1960s and the millions who were members in the 1920s".

In any case, between the mid-1980s and early 1990s, Klan membership had dwindled to somewhere around 5,000 (Singular 1987: 85; Hamm 1994: 49; Bridges 1994: 90). Others say the rosters had diminished to the 3,500 to 4,000 level, while Feagin & Vera (1995: 5) posit that the number was closer to 10,000 (see also George & Wilcox 1992: 409). Kronenwetter (1992: 53) states that by the early 1990s, Klan membership was down to 6,000, with thirty to sixty thousand sympathisers. Ultimately, George & Wilcox (1992: 29) contend that membership in the Klan in the early 1990s was 'minuscule'. In 1997, it was thought that the Klan had no more than 4,000 followers across the United States (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 58). However, in 1998 the Southern Poverty Law Center argued that Klan factions were enjoying a revival of sorts.**116**

The neo-Nazi movement has had mixed success historically. In the 1960s, George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party had only between ten to twenty members (Kleg 1993: 201). By the late 1970s, membership in various Nazi organisations had grown to as many as 2,000 members (George & Wilcox 1992: 351). In the mid 1980s, neo-Nazi groups suffered a downturn, with the number of followers dropping to no more than four or five hundred (George & Wilcox 1992: 351; Hamm 1994: 49). The most prominent American neo-Nazi group, the National Alliance, was estimated to have had no more than seven hundred members in the late 1980s (Martinez & Guinther 1988: 46). By 1995,

however, Nazi affiliated groups were thought to have between 500 to 1,000 members (Ezekiel 1995: xxi). In 1998, the ADL reported that since 1992, National Alliance membership had doubled, with its membership alone reaching over a thousand people. The Southern Poverty Law Center reports that the National Alliance has enjoyed increased growth throughout the U.S. in 1999.[117] It seems that the neo-Nazi movement, as well as other types of groups in the North American far right are subject to, and at the mercy of fluctuations in strength and numbers which affect evaluations of their overall significance.

Perhaps, as Levitt (1994: 304-16) implies, there is a somewhat 'alarmist' inclination on the part of some about the threat which hate groups pose. Although it is disturbing that current estimates put hate group membership in North America in the thousands or hundreds of thousands, again one must note that proportionally, this is a mere fraction of the overall populations of Canada and the United States (Kronenwetter 1992:103). At the same time though, terrorist incidents such as the Oklahoma City bombing clearly show that "...it only takes a couple of crackpots to wreak havoc within civilised society" (Lewis 1995: 2).

As Martinez & Guinther (1988: 7) caution, it may be the small numbers and marginality of the hate movement itself that pushes racists to commit terrorist acts. Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 37) argue that it is important to 'maintain perspective' on extremist groups, neither overestimating or discounting their significance. For instance, at the same time as Klan numbers are nowhere near the historical highs posted in the 1920s, and their followers constitute only a fraction of the North American population, it must be

admitted that even a handful of racists can cause violence and trouble in mainstream

society (Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 80; Sims 1978: 6; Anti-Defamation League 1982:

111). Thompson (1982: 318) argues that: "…as long as a single human lives under the

influence of fear and intimidation, we all live under that influence". Ultimately, Daniels

(1997: 4) eloquently explains that:

> …while it is true that white supremacists constitute less than 1 percent
> of the population [of the U.S.], let me suggest that what you consider a
> 'small enough' number to not constitute a threat has a great deal to do
> with positionality…If…you are a person of colour, and you are a target
> of white supremacists and their discourse, then white supremacists may
> represent a material threat to your life. Thus, the thought of 40,000
> avowed white supremacists mean that there are that many more threats
> in the world that you must deal with.

In the end, it may be argued that, to use the words of Abella & Troper (1983), 'none

is too many', although it would be impossible to root out radical thought and action from

any society in its entirety (Levitt 1994: 307). The next aspect of the far right to be

considered in analyzing its significance, relates to 'group cohesion'.

GROUP COHESION

Although some of the literature on the far right argues that hate activity is increasing,

the irony is that hate groups often suffer from problems with group cohesiveness. Braun

& Scheinberg (1997: 37) and Ezekiel (1995: xxii) characterise hate groups as being

'ephemeral', and their membership as being 'transient' and 'highly fluid'. Ezekiel (1995:

xxii-iii, 25) says that the white supremacist movement suffers from a whole gamut of

problems, including competition, rivalries, conflict, jealousies and lack of loyalty.

According to Ezekiel (1995: xxii), white supremacist organisations are perpetually

unstable, as: "recruits cycle in and out rapidly…". As well, Macdonald (1995: 35) states

that far right groups are "constantly splintering into warring factions..." (see also Sims 1978: 7; Barkun 1997: xiii; Dees & Corcoran 1996: 34). Barrett (1987: 286) claims that a great deal of squabbling takes place between the members and leaders of various Canadian hate groups: "The radical right...was divided internally to a remarkable degree".

Barrett (1987: 112) mentions that a 'power struggle' between Don Andrews of Nationalist Party of Canada, and Alexander McQuirter of the Klan was the underlying reason for the unsuccessful amalgamation of their groups in the early 1980s. According to Hate Watch, George Burdi, Heritage Front Youth leader and former Canadian head of the World Church of the Creator, left the 'Church' due to a feud with one of the American leaders.[118] In an example of the conflict within U.S. hate groups, the ADL says that the Church of the Creator counts neo-Nazi Harold Covington and Thom Robb's Klan among its enemies.[119] In the latter case, this may be due to the COTC's anti-Christian sentiments; Robb is an Identity preacher, and the Klan is usually rooted in a belief, albeit distorted, in Christianity.[120] Richard Butler and William Potter Gale, two major Christian Identity figures, were 'bitter' rivals and apparently 'fought for disciples' (Coppola 1996: 106). As well, the COTC's Ben Klassen is said to have had a 'stormy' relationship with WAR's Tom Metzger, although they are said to have 'respected' one another.[121] Daniels (1997: 31) states that though Tom Metzger of WAR kept close ties with David Duke 'at one time', he now thinks that Duke is a 'sell-out' to his 'political ambitions'. In addition, Ridgeway (1990: 131) claims that the right-wing Populist Party was divided by disputes and power struggles between executive members Willis Carto

and Bill Shearer. In chapter two, it was mentioned that Carto also suffered a hostile separation from the Institute for Historical Review in the early 1990s. As well, prominent Holocaust deniers such as Ernst Zundel, Robert Faurisson and David Irving have apparently allied themselves with the IHR against Carto and his new group, the Barnes Review (Ebata 1997b: 225). In the 1960s, American Nazi Party founder George Lincoln Rockwell was murdered by one of his own lieutenants (Ridgeway 1990: 68). These examples are just a few of the incidences of dissension within the white supremacist ranks. If these instances of internal strain and conflict are true, then that would have a negative impact on any attempts by the far right to gain power in the larger society.

As well, numerous examples are given within the literature of major hate group leaders and members who were in actual fact police informants, or traitors of some kind (Barrett 1987: 184). Kinsella (1994: 20, 30) states that 'Tearlach Mac a'Phearsoin', leader of the Alberta Klan in the 1980s, was a police informant. Barrett (1987: 128) mentions that a number of far right activists believed Klan leader Alexander McQuirter to be a police informer or 'undercover agent'. As well, both Kinsella (1994: 111, 186) and Cannon (1995: 44, 47) discuss the involvement of Carney Nerland of the Saskatchewan Aryan Nations with the police. In addition, Cannon (1995: 78-9) discusses the reported role of Heritage Front's Grant Bristow as a paid 'mole' for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, or CSIS. Across the border, Ridgeway (1990: 146, 148) mentions that David Duke was thought by some to be an intelligence agent; in 1980, Duke left his position with the Klan after reportedly making a deal to sell his secret Klan membership lists to a rival Klan leader, Bill Wilkinson (see also Bridges 1994: 51). In fact, Wilkinson

would later be exposed as having been an FBI informant since 1974 (Ridgeway 1990: 148; Bridges 1994: 88; George & Wilcox 1992: 43). Other American informers included White Patriot Party leader Glenn Miller and 'Silent Brotherhood' insider Tom Martinez (Ridgeway 1990: 98, 104-5).

Ridgeway (1990: 8) maintains that despite the internal discord, the American far right is "...a surprisingly enduring and resourceful movement". Likewise, Moore (1993: 102) states that "Although hate organisations have ordinarily experienced great difficulties at the national group level in working with each other over protracted periods, their memberships reveal considerable overlapping or interpenetration". At the very least, however, these actions of many important racist figures would indicate clearly that, whatever significance hate groups may have in North American life, their overall ability to act and influence is often severely curtailed by both in-fighting and the actions of 'traitors to the cause'.

As has already been discussed, there is evidence that many Canadian racist groups and members are in contact with their U.S. counterparts, thereby increasing the strength and potential influence of the far right across the continent (Macdonald 1995: 34-5; Lewis 1995: 2; Tesher 1997: A2; Barrett 1987: 183). This international communication has extended to contacts with racists in Europe and elsewhere. Feagin & Vera (1995: 77) state that: "One disturbing aspect of the modern white supremacy movement is its increasingly international character...Some U.S. white supremacy organizations have maintained ongoing international connections". Merkl & Weinberg (1997: 251) emphasise the importance of international connections between North American and

European racists, saying that: "There are increasing personal contacts between activists on both sides of the Atlantic. If a Euro-American radical right has not emerged as yet, one certainly appears to be on the horizon".

Thus, David Duke is one racist leader that has many contacts with extremists in Europe (Moore 1992: 50; Zatarain 1990: 210). The National Alliance is thought to have "…friendly, ongoing relations with right-wing extremist parties across Europe".122 The Alliance claims to have members in Holland, France, the United Kingdom and Germany, as well as in North America.123 The Church of the Creator is apparently active in South Africa, Canada and Sweden (Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 236). As well, the Aryan Nations has created alliances with militia groups and neo-Nazis through Europe and Canada (Coppola 1996: 58). European radical rightists have attended various Aryan Nations' functions, such as their 'World Congresses' (Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 239).

Many of the Institute for Historical Review's editorial advisors have been from Europe, as there are many links between American and European Holocaust deniers (Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 237). Indeed, Ernst Zundel has attended or been featured at at least one French Holocaust denial congress (Ebata 1997b: 225). As well, Martinez & Guinther (1988: 232) argue that: "American racists have attempted to establish relationships with countries that practice terrorism, including Syria, Iran and Libya". Martinez & Guinther (1988: 232) also claim that contact between neo-Nazis in Europe, the U.S. and Latin America is 'nothing new'. There is also evidence that North American neo-Nazi and Klan factions have attempted to branch out and organise in Britain, Germany and the Czech Republic (Ebata 1997b: 226-7; Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 11). As

well, neo-Nazis and the Klan have also provided international racists with funds and/or

propaganda materials to assist their growth and activities (Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 11;

Landau 1992: 48). Among others, Willis Carto, Tom Metzger and Ernst Zundel are

known to be important North American contacts of the illegal German neo-Nazi

movement (Ebata 1997b: 225).

Ebata (1997b: 220) is more cautious in evaluating the significance of international

racist relations, saying that for the most part, North American hate groups still operate

within their own national borders. Ebata (1997b: 228) goes on to say that:

> The international reach of right-wing extremists is no more
> remarkable than any other sociopolitical idea that has spread
> simply because of the general trend toward increasing global-
> -isation and communication. Although this international
> dimension of the extreme right is disturbing and potentially
> threatening, it does not seem to have affected the extreme
> right's effectiveness in increasing its support.

However, he does admit that what international connections do exist between global

racist organisations can have a 'positive' effect on the strength of those groups. In

essence, Ebata (1997b: 228) says: "The transborder links provide encouragement and

sustain their conviction of their own self-importance".

In evaluating the North American white supremacist movement's power and societal

impact, it has already been mentioned that there is a very real paradox when it comes to

understanding hate groups as a whole. The hate movement is definitely hindered by

fragmentation and conflict, with a strong tendency toward discord. But key ties can still

be found between certain leaders and groups. Thus, while there is a significant amount of

friction and political manoeuvring within the movement, which results in negative

consequences overall in terms of unrealised strength, cohesion and possible influence on the mainstream, there do exist important links between groups and various racist leaders that serve to create a loose 'family tree' or network of ideological similarities, sharing, and mutual admiration. Some of these links become evident only through reading the histories of these people and their hate groups in the available literature. Other connections become obvious in observing the web sites directly, in terms of the material they include, as well as what other sites they 'link' to. Ultimately, the movement exists on a sort of 'seesaw', suffering from in-fighting and yet forging ties to maintain a certain level of effectiveness. While this discussion has already touched upon some of the factional fights and tactical ties evident in the literature on the hate movement, it will be important later to consider the evidence of both co-operation and competition as it occurs on the Internet.

WEAPONS AND PARAMILITARY ACTIVITY

In analyzing claims about the size and internal cohesiveness of far right groups, the significance of the North American hate movement has been put into some doubt, or at the very least, it reveals the inconsistencies which plague the literature on the far right. Despite these problems, the literature does expose a troubling phenomenon dealing with the paramilitary and weapons activities of many hate groups (Guggenheim & Sims 1982). In the United States, the militia movement devotes itself to paramilitary activities and firearms possession with great intensity. As well, many groups, including the Klan, have sponsored military training camps (Lay 1992: 2-3). There is a key difference between the U.S. and Canada in terms of the degree to which such activities are able to take place

under law. While many states prohibit private militias but do not enforce the law,

Macdonald (1995: 35) states that: "Canadian gun-control laws prohibit U.S.-style private

militias". However, some paramilitary activity has occurred on Canadian soil; at least one

racist leader, the Canadian Aryan Nations' Terry Long, tried to set up a 'training camp'

for his members (Kinsella 1994: 142-3). In any case, organizations like the Ottawa-

Carleton police force and the Canadian Jewish Congress say that it would be wrong to

underestimate the danger of the far right in Canada, especially as there is some evidence

that Canadian groups have been stockpiling weapons (Macdonald 1995: 35).

Macdonald (1995: 35) mentions that: "...recent raids on right-wing hangouts have

produced alarming evidence of arms stockpiling". In a 1993 raid, police in Toronto

uncovered a cache of weapons in the home of Richard Manley, who has links to well-

known racist George Burdi as well as the Heritage Front (Macdonald 1995: 35). Cannon

(1995: 81) mentions another Toronto raid in 1992, which revealed a number of automatic

weapons. As well, according to a former 'Final Solution' skinhead, Edgar Foth, a

Canadian Klansman and Aryan Nations member with ties to the U.S. 'Order' taught

young skinheads in the Prairies how to construct bombs, destroy surveillance devices, use

lethal fighting tactics, and told them he could supply them with weapons (Kinsella 1994:

276-7). Kinsella (1994: 338) claims that Terry Long, leader of the Alberta Aryan Nations,

built an underground 'cellar' on his property in which he had dozens of guns and

ammunition stored. Sher (1983: 126) remarks that weapons training occurred within the

Canadian Klan.

In the United States, Ridgeway (1990: 139-40) mentions that in 1985, a raid on a

Nebraska Posse Comitatus compound revealed, among other things: "...more than thirty

semiautomatic and assault rifles, thirteen fully automatic pistols and rifles, a sawed-off

shotgun, camouflage gear, 150,000 rounds of ammunition, and at least one bunker

stocked with food and water and its own electrical system". In addition, before being

forcibly destroyed by the FBI, the underground group the 'Order' engaged in

counterfeiting, armed robbery and murder (Ridgeway 1990: 8). In one heist the Order

members managed to steal a record $3.6 million from an armoured van, much of which

was never recovered (Ridgeway 1990: 95). Some of the stolen money was donated to

other far right groups, while some funds were used to supply the group with weapons,

uniforms and other gear, and to begin a military training camp (Ridgeway 1990: 93, 95).

The relatively new Skinhead movement has shown itself to be involved in firearms

possession, a violent evolution from their traditional use of fists, boots and bats. Landau

(1992: 51) reports that "'Skinheads have been arrested recently with a .30 calibre carbine,

a 12-gauge shotgun, a rifle silencer, an AR-15, and components for over 30 pipe

bombs...Some Skinheads have trained with semiautomatic weapons'". In addition,

accumulation of weapons is said to be a key part of Christian Identity group activities

(Martinez & Guinther 1988: 29-30). Instruction in urban guerrilla combat techniques has

been given to followers at the Aryan Nations 'World Congress', including lessons in the

bombing of bridges and railroad tracks, and how to ignite gasoline put into sewer systems

(Singular 1987: 219). Ridgeway (1990: 91) states that the Aryan Nations also has a

'prison ministry' of sorts, with links to the 'Aryan Brotherhood', a white supremacist prison gang (see also Martinez & Guinther 1988: 140).

There has also been evidence to show that many far right members and sympathisers have either had previous military experience, or are currently involved in the military (Ruckaber 1996: 7; Kinsella 1994: 274, 334-48; Ridgeway 1990: 81, 100; Tesher 1997: A2; Sims 1978: 4). For instance, Identity Christian leader William Potter Gale was a former Army Colonel (Martinez & Guinther 1988: 228). The American Nazi Party's George Lincoln Rockwell was a U.S. Navy Commander (George & Wilcox 1992: 354). Louis Beam fought in the Vietnam War, and Bradley Smith of the 'Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust' is a veteran of both the Vietnam and Korean Wars (Kinsella 1994: 9; Novick 1995: 67-8).**124** Bill Wilkinson of the Klan was in Naval Intelligence (Novick 1995: 67-8). WAR's Tom Metzger achieved the rank of Corporal in the U.S. Army (Hamm 1994: 42; Novick 1995: 67-8). Interestingly, it has been said that former Lieutenant Colonel James 'Bo' Gritz, who is America's most decorated Green Beret, was the model for the movie hero 'Rambo' (Abanes 1996: 183). The inclusion of military men within the ranks of the hate movement means that certain groups at least have 'disciplined' participants, schooled in the techniques of war.

It may be argued that in many cases authorities have found and confiscated weapons, charged hate group leaders and members, or have shut down groups such as the terrorist 'Order' (Ridgeway 1990: 98-9). However, revelations of such paramilitary, criminal and weapons activities among hate groups in North America are alarming. That sections of

the far right may be involved with weaponry is another complicating factor in gauging

the significance of the hate movement.

ELECTORAL FORAYS

The far right has yet to have much success in modern politics. It is true that in the

United States particularly, those who were members or sympathisers of the Klan attained

various elected positions even up until the Civil Rights era. However, while numerous

racists in recent decades have run for various types of political office in Canada and the

U.S., none have managed to be elected into the political mainstream in Canada at least

(Barrett 1987: 114-5; Kronenwetter 1992: 93). Long-time racist John Ross Taylor ran

unsuccessfully in the Toronto civic election in 1972 under the Western Guard banner

(Betcherman 1975: 103). In 1972, 1974 and 1976, Don Andrews campaigned

unsuccessfully for mayor of Toronto (Kinsella 1992: 103). In the early 1990s, Wolfgang

Droege ran for a seat on the Scarborough, Ontario city council. While he lost the election,

he did gather a surprising 14% of the ballots, or 870 votes (Macdonald 1995: 38). As

well, in 1993 several Heritage Front members managed to infiltrate and perform security

services for the Reform Party, although they were eventually expelled (Cannon 1995: 83-

5; Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 255). Such has been the extent of the Canadian far right's

'success' in the political sphere. In fact, Barrett (1987: 111) reports that as a direct result

of the racist Nationalist Party of Canada's attempt in 1977 to secure 'official' political

party status, "...the rules on party status were changed".

In the United States, almost every major racist figure in the white supremacist

movement has attempted to achieve some kind of political office. The anti-Semite Gerald

L.K. Smith ran for president in 1944 (Coppola 1996: 123). The far right has also thrown

its support behind the political campaigns of such figures as Barry Goldwater and George

Wallace (Ridgeway 1990: 17; Coppola 1996: 123; Daniels 1997: 30; Hamm 1994: 43).

WAR's Tom Metzger ran in a failed bid for San Diego County supervisor in 1978; in

1980, he won the Democratic nomination for a congressional seat, but lost in the general

election (Barkun 1997: 210). However, he did garner more than 32,000 votes in total

(Coppola 1996: 81). In 1982, Metzger managed to make it as far as the California state

Democratic primary for the US Senate nomination (Barkun 1997: 210). At one point,

Klansman Thom Robb attempted to run as a Republican for the Arkansas State

Legislature, but the party refused to place him on the ticket (Novick 1995: 249-50).**125**

Jim Wickstrom, a Posse Comitatus leader, ran unsuccessfully for the Michigan Senate in

the early 1980s and for governor of Wisconsin in 1982 (Barkun 1997: 209; Coppola

1996: 88).**126** However, the late Ben Klassen did have some success in the political

sphere. In 1965, prior to the formation of the Church of the Creator, he was a Republican

member of the Florida State Legislature (Daniels 1997: 30).**127** In 1967, he

unsuccessfully ran for the state Senate, but the next year Klassen was the Florida

chairman of the Wallace presidential campaign (Daniels 1997: 30).**128**

Far right-wingers Lyndon LaRouche and David Duke have been on the presidential

ticket, although neither have had success on that front (Kronenwetter 1992: 95, 98;

Ridgeway 1990: 149; Merkl & Weinberg 1997: 248). David Duke's political career

began when he ran unsuccessfully for the Louisiana Senate as a Democrat in 1975 and

1979 (Barkun 1997: 211; Zatarain 1990: 247-8). Tom Metzger was his campaign

manager for the 1975 bid (Bridges 1994: 55). For a time, Duke's 1988 presidential running mate was another racist, James 'Bo' Gritz, but he dropped out of the race to run unsuccessfully for Congress (Barkun 1997: 211). Ralph Forbes, a man well connected in neo-Nazi, Klan and Christian Identity circles, helped run Duke's presidential campaign (Novick 1995: 249-50; Moore in Rose 1992: 50; Zatarain 1990: 40). In 1989 however, David Duke was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives which, along with Ben Klassen's pre-WCOTC stint in the Florida Legislature, has been the high point of political activism by the radical racist right (Kronenwetter 1992: 98; Ridgeway 1990: 155). When Duke took office in the Louisiana legislature: "...[Willis] Carto's personal assistant became his legislative aide" (Barkun 1997: 211; see also Rickey 1992: 62). In 1990 Duke left his position to run for the Senate, but he was unsuccessful (Bridges 1994: 175). Duke was not without his supporters, however: "During the 1990 U.S. Senate campaign, he was supported by a 100,000-name mailing list that generated $2.2 million in contributions" (Moore 1992: 55). Don Black helped set up a computer system for the campaign (Bridges 1994: 175). In the 1990s as well, Matt Hale of the World Church of the Creator failed in a bid to earn a seat on the East Peoria, Illinois city council.129

Ultimately, it is clear from the literature that racists and their extremist ideologies have had little success in gaining the popularity needed to join the political mainstream. As Merkl & Weinberg (1997: 247) posit: "...as a party political factor, right-wing extremism is a negligible force in the United States". However, participation in the electoral sphere pays dividends, regardless of the outcome. According to the Anti-

Defamation League (1982: 2): "...by so involving themselves, these groups gain publicity and a respectability which would otherwise not be possible".

COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

A key theme emphasised in the literature is that though it may be scattered and consist of relatively small numbers, the far right possesses some undeniable significance through its use of information and other technologies, which brings its message to a much wider audience. These technologies include the written word through books, pamphlets, magazines and comics; phone-lines, cable television, videos, computer games, CDs, and most importantly, the Internet.

In the early 1980s, it was reported that the racist Liberty Lobby had a daily radio broadcast heard over four hundred U.S. radio stations. The Lobby also produced a weekly newspaper (Anti-Defamation League 1982: 12). Currently, white power comic books are being distributed from long-time racist William Pierce's National Alliance compound, directed at interesting young people in the movement (Mollins 1995: 42-3). George Burdi of the Heritage Front ran the Detroit-based 'Resistance Records', a white power music company which puts out racist CDs, and also edits a glossy racist magazine called 'Resistance', with an alleged circulation of 100,000 (Fennel 1995: 40; Shaw 1995: 40-2). Ernst Zundel has used a medley of communication technologies, including cable TV, written propaganda and short-wave radio to broadcast hateful messages to audiences in Canada, the United States and Germany (Ebata 1997b: 222-3; Braun & Scheinberg 1997: 50). Zundel, as well as the American Gary Lauck, are the world's leading publishers and global distributors of anti-Semitic, neo-Nazi, and Holocaust denial propaganda material

(Ebata 1997b: 222). Zundel has also appeared on a Christian Identity cable TV show with a reported audience of fourteen million Americans (Ebata 1997b: 222).

Novick (1995: 286; also 289) mentions the utility of using television to attract attention: "Cable TV casts a broad net that draws in new followers and potential sympathisers without exposing them to public identification...". Tom Metzger of W.A.R. and Ernst Zundel have both used U.S. cable TV to air racist programs (Hi-Tech Hate 1996; Ridgeway 1990: 176; George & Wilcox 1992: 375; Moore 1993: 189). Hamm (1994: 138) reports that by 1988, Metzger's show, 'Race and Reason', had "...penetrated cable television markets in at least thirty U.S. cities..." (see also Novick 1995: 284). Metzger and David Duke are two of the many racists who have appeared on mainstream talk shows, such as Oprah, Donahue, Larry King Live and Geraldo, to exploit the welcome publicity, at the same time as being used for the sake of the shows' ratings (Novick 1995: 289, 296-7; Rose & Esolen 1992: 233). As well, Metzger and Louis Beam have utilized video and audio tapes in the effort to inform and train white supremacists (Novick 1995: 288-90). Before his death in 1993, Ben Klassen of the Church of the Creator used a telephone message line to promote his racist tracts; Metzger has also used telephone hotlines in the United States and Canada (George & Wilcox 1992: 375; Ebata 1997b: 222; Hamm 1994: 56; Novick 1995: 288-9).

Abanes (1996: 103) writes that these communication technologies can have a 'positive' effect on the strength and cohesion of hate groups like some militias: "...the patriot movement's cohesiveness lies in its alternative system of communication: mail order book services, computer bulletin boards, gun shows, Bible camps, pamphlets,

periodicals and short-wave broadcasts knit the far right together". Of all the

communication technologies currently available to the white supremacist movement, the

Internet has proved the most effective and versatile tool to use in the promotion of hate.

INTERNET

The Internet has been the most significant among the communication technologies

used by the modern white supremacist movement. It is claimed that the United States and

Canada are the leaders in the exportation of racist propaganda over the Internet (Hi-Tech

Hate 1996).

The Internet has been termed a 'network of networks' (Cleaver 1997: 98). Rheingold

(1993: 3,5) also explains the Internet as being a system of computer networks, or an

'ecosystem of subcultures': "The Net is an informal term for the loosely interconnected

computer networks that use CMC technology [computer-mediated communications] to

link people around the world into public discussions". The creation of the Internet

resulted from developments in American military research. The first computer network,

called ARPANET, was created in the 1970s by Department of Defense researchers

(Rheingold 1993: 7).**130** The idea for ARPANET itself came from projects developed by

RAND, a 'think tank' based in Santa Monica. Originally, the content of the ARPANET

network was computer data and formulas rather than words, but it was discovered that the

network could handle this type of data as well. The original idea was to create a

communication network that could survive under extreme circumstances by having a

decentralised control structure (Rheingold 1993: 7).**131** From these origins, the current

medium of the Internet developed during the 1980s and 1990s.

Other communication forums under the electronic umbrella of the 'Internet' include

'IRC' (Internet Relay Chat), 'USENET' and mailing lists.**132** Of particular relevance to

this thesis, is the section of the Internet called the 'World Wide Web'. Essentially, the

'Web' consists of perhaps millions of electronic files, which form 'web pages' or 'sites',

which visitors can access and view on their computers using a cable line or telephone

modem. Cleaver (1997: 99) explains the make-up of this portion of the Internet:

> The Web is so named because it resembles a weblike interface of
> avenues of communication. The Web can be thought of as a city
> with many intersecting streets. Online service providers give their
> subscribers 'browsers', computer programs which can be thought
> of as cars, which subscribers can use to 'get to' locations in the city.
> Subscribers can drive their cars to good neighbourhoods or bad ones,
> as they choose.

There are some discrepancies in the literature as to the rate at which the Internet

community has grown in the 1990s. In the early 1990s one source estimates that there

were approximately thirty-five million Internet users across 160 countries (Hi-Tech Hate

1996). However, Rheingold (1993: 8) puts the 1993 Internet community at a more

modest ten million. Negroponte (1997: 26) remarks that the Internet community only

reached 30 million users in 1997, with thirty-five percent of American families owning a

computer at that time. Negroponte (1997: 26-7) also estimated that in 1997 the population

of the Internet was increasing at a rate of ten percent each month. In 1999, the ADL

estimated those logged onto the Internet to be in excess of 147 million, with seventy-nine

million users in the United States.**133**

Abanes (1996: 103) states that the Internet gives people the unprecedented ability to

access information. Indeed, it is the instantaneous global reach of information and

communication on the Internet that makes it so extraordinary (Roberts & Quade 1997: 63-4). Both Abanes (1996: 104) and Stoll (1997: 34) comment on the unique, even anarchistic character of the Internet, where information is free-flowing and largely unfiltered, and where "...the person who types the fastest is [often] the most influential". Anti-racist activist Rodney Bobbiwash claims that: "Perhaps the greatest danger of the Internet is, you often can't distinguish fact from fiction. Everyone is equal here. Absolutely anyone, qualified or not, may post their articles, with the same legitimacy" (Hi-Tech Hate 1996). Indeed, the Internet has the power to provide users with a great degree of political, social, intellectual and even commercial 'leverage', and further has: "...turned every user into a potential publisher" (Rheingold 1993: 4-5; see also Diamond & Bates 1997: 88).**134** While this medium can be used for productive and profitable enterprises, white supremacists have also seized upon the Internet as an effective 'tool'. As Cooper (1997: 101-2) relates:

> ...the very same tool which offers unprecedented opportunities to educate and uplift humanity can and is being utilised by a small but committed number of groups seeking to promote agendas ranging from terrorism to racial violence and derisiveness. The so-called lunatic fringe has embraced the Internet with a passion and frightening level of sophistication.

The Anti-Defamation League says that haters have always used a variety of media to promote their ideas, including magazines, radio and cable TV.**135** According to the ADL, white power activists have 'kept up' with advances in technology, and have seized upon the Internet as an effective new way to get their ideas across to a wider audience.**136** From the participation in BBSs (Bulletin Board Systems) to the use of e-mail and faxing, modern racists have integrated themselves into the world of computers

and the Internet (Martinez & Guinther 1988: 235; Novick 1995: 300). Indeed, the

Southern Poverty Law Center states that: "The Internet and other technologies have

strengthened the movement".**137**

With the use of the Internet, the far right's potential for influence expands

dramatically, potentially giving it a global audience and linking hate groups across

international boundaries (Ebata 1997b: 223, 228). This gives the hate movement

significance out of proportion with the size of its current committed membership. The

Internet also provides a great communication network both for committed racists across

the continent and indeed the world, but also for finding supporters or converting the

unsure. As Ebata (1997b: 223-4) says with regard to Internet 'newsgroups': "The ease

with which this medium can produce hate messages ensures greater proliferation and

repetition, which in turn enhance the chances of finding a willing listener and also of

convincing a sceptical one". Among other things, the Internet also facilitates the ability of

hate-mongers to more easily co-ordinate and organise themselves and their activities, and

such movement trappings as racist music lyrics and computer games may be downloaded

from the Internet (Ebata 1997b: 223; Talaga 1997: A4). As Cooper (1997: 103) explains,

the Internet provides racists with opportunities and advantages that they never had before:

> Prior to the Internet, traditional modes of communication left the hate
> messenger and his message on the fringes of the mainstream culture. Not
> anymore. Today, the Internet provides hate-mongers with a remarkably
> inexpensive means to promote their 'product' to a potential audience of
> tens of millions of people worldwide...in the past, limited funds meant
> that most extremists saw their messages relegated to unattractive flyers,
> pamphlets, or poor quality videos – hardly the type of material guaranteed
> to attract young people used to CDs and high-tech games. The currently
> available multimedia technologies (including audio and video) on Web
> pages ensure that the 'quality' of presentation and the 'attractiveness' of

hate and mayhem rival or surpass any other hi-tech presentation available
to audiences.

Ultimately, Rheingold (1993: 37) mentions the threat that racist Internet content pose

for society: "Words on a screen can hurt people. Although online conversation might

have the ephemeral and informal feeling of a telephone conversation, it has the reach and

permanence of a publication".

Currently, debates are being waged over whether the Internet, with its free market of

information, can or should be monitored or censored (Caragata 1995: 50-2). Often racists

such as Ernst Zundel try to avoid prosecution under current Canadian hate laws by

forwarding their information to the United States; where supporters post the materials

(Pazzano 1997: 58). This debate, unfortunately, is too complex to adequately detail with

here. However, issues of rights and responsibilities as regards Internet usage are sure to

be hotly contested now and in the foreseeable future.

Arguably the three most important figures responsible for the racist movement's

adoption of computer technologies, are Louis Beam, Tom Metzger and Don Black. As

mentioned earlier, Louis Beam created one of the first computer-related communications

tools in the hate movement, 'Aryan Nations Liberty Net', a computer bulletin board

network he built for the Aryan Nations in 1984 (Dees & Corcoran 1996: 42; Martinez &

Guinther 1988: 57, 234-5).138 The year after, Metzger put together his own bulletin

board system, called the 'W.A.R. Board', using a Commodore 64 computer and a single

modem. Over the years he has replaced his equipment with newer and more advanced

technologies (Hamm 1994: 55-6, 69-70; Novick 1995: 286-9). The first racist web site,

'Stormfront', is thought to have been created by former Klansman Don Black, in March

1995.**139** Ironically, Black apparently learned computer programming skills while in

prison for his part in an attempted coup of the island of Dominica in the 1980s.**140** Black

also runs a BBS (Bulletin Board System), several mailing lists, and provides web hosting

to other racists.**141** Besides Black's activities, there are several other racist web-hosting

services on the 'Net, according to Hate Watch.**142**

According to a New York Times article cited on the Hate Watch web site, Don Black

had much to say about the utility of the Internet for the white supremacist movement,

stating that the Internet "'…has had a pretty profound influence on a movement…whose

resources are limited. The access is anonymous and there is an unlimited ability to

communicate with others of a like mind'".**143** There are some indications that this usage

of the Internet has borne fruit for various hate-mongers. The Anti-Defamation League

reports that Don Black has estimated that his Stormfront web site has been accessed

"…more than a million times since its debut".**144** The ADL also reports that in part, the

neo-Nazi National Alliance's strength can be attributed to its "…skilful embrace of

technology…".**145** Indeed, Dees & Corcoran (1996: 205) claim that in recent years, the

Alliance's William Pierce has been able to reach an audience of thousands more than

non-Internet technologies would allow, by creating a web site for his organisation.

According to a self-report, and of course there is the strong possibility of exaggeration,

Pierce claims that after being on-line for as little as two months, that his site was being

accessed by more than five hundred visitors a day in 1995. If these reports are true, this

use of the Internet would point to the possible strengthening of the hate movement and

thus potentially troubling consequences. And indeed, the ADL reports that: "David Duke

has embraced the Internet as a key to the future of the white supremacist movement".

Duke hopes that Internet will go so far as to: "…'facilitate a world-wide revolution of

white awareness'".146 Many racists hope that the Internet will cause the destruction of

the control that the supposedly 'alien anti-White' media has over North American and

international society.147

Currently, the Simon Wiesenthal Center reports that there are more than 2,000 hate

web sites on the Internet, although this figure includes sources other than simply white

supremacist individuals and groups.148 The Southern Poverty Law Center claims that

the number of hate sites is much more modest, but admits that these extremist web pages

are increasing. The SPLC estimates that there were 254 hate homepages in 1998, up from

163 the previous year.149 The Anti-Defamation League also remarks that while there

were only three Holocaust denial sites in 1996, by 1999 there were reportedly

'dozens'.150 Likewise, the Southern Poverty Law Center reveals that in 1997, there

were 179 'Patriot' web sites and the number was growing 'weekly'.151 As well as

World Wide Web sites, racists also participate in other Internet forums, including

discussion groups like 'misc.activism.militia' and 'talk.politics.guns'" (Karl 1995: 126;

Abanes 1996: 103).

However, Ebata (1997b: 224) cautions that it would be foolhardy to exaggerate the

potential threat of hate group activity on the Internet. He argues that not only does the

hateful element of the Internet comprise only a fraction of its overall content, but that

white supremacists are not without their detractors. Ebata (1997b: 224) remarks that:

> …this concern over a larger potential audience must be tempered
> with caution of overexaggerating the potential danger, since hate

material is but one of millions of bits of information found on the Internet. In reality, the size of the audience receptive to the message of right-wing extremists is still small. Furthermore, communication technology can also be utilized by those opposed to right-wing extremists as an educational tool to fight anti-Semitism; for example British Columbian Ken McVay has used the Internet to refute Holo-
-caust deniers.

In addition, there is reason to believe that the growth of white supremacist hate on the Internet is simply a reflection or by-product of the overall rapid expansion of the Internet in general.152 As white supremacists are unfortunately a part of our 'real world', it is natural, or at least not surprising, that they would also be represented in the 'virtual' sphere of the Internet. In the end, Samuelson (1997: 49) argues that the Internet does not necessarily create evil, but rather reflects the differences evident in 'real life' society. Thus, he remarks that: "The computer will become (as it is already becoming) a democratic appliance that will increasingly resemble the kitchen stove. Almost everyone has a stove. But some of us make hamburgers, and others make fettuccini. Computers are the same; they reveal differences more than create them". Ultimately, as Ambrose (1997: 38) says: "Any technology is just a tool, and tools can be used for good or evil". While some may argue that hate on the Internet is unique or simply a reflection of the racism occurring in everyday life, it is clear that the Internet is an important new tool for the racist movement in its effort to make its voice heard.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to analyse the significance of the hate movement as a whole. Although many believe hate group activity is a significant and increasingly visible phenomenon, there is reason to question the overall significance of the far right. For one,

their numbers are small in both Canada and the United States in proportion to the overall population. As well, hate activists have had limited success in the electoral sphere, especially in Canada. Although the interconnections between racists are many, the far right is also torn by in-fighting and power struggles. On the other hand, evidence of weapons stockpiling and paramilitary training centres, particularly in the United States, is troubling. As well, there are indications that there is ongoing communication between not only groups in Canada and the U.S., but also the rest of the world as well, thereby strengthening the network of hate on the continent and beyond. The use of information technologies such as the Internet, as well as music, computer games and phone-lines, means the far right is able to reach a wider audience than before, possibly increasing the power and influence these arguably marginal groups have. Thus, the issue of overall significance is not simple. However, the history of extremist hate in North America is long, and its existence, although arguably marginal, is tenacious. Certainly, this chapter has exposed the fact that organized white supremacy in North America is a complex phenomenon, worthy of academic investigation. With this in mind, the discussion will now turn to a consideration of the methodological issues underlying this study of North American white supremacist organizations and their Internet web page.

CHAPTER FOUR – STUDY FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This is a qualitative analysis of North American white supremacist organisations and their Internet web sites. The purpose of this study is to analyse how a sample of these groups present themselves on the Internet and what methods and elements they use as a part of their 'performances', including text, phraseology, images and colour. An aim is to 'deconstruct' the web sites with the purpose of ferreting out just what components make up the presentation of their ideological worldviews which, as has already been discussed, are ultimately informed by an extremely racist perspective. This chapter will discuss the method and phases of this study, the sampling process, some of the initial hypotheses, and the potential limitations and problems not only with the construction of the study itself, but with the analysis of Internet sites both generally and specifically those relating to the white supremacist movement.

STAGES OF STUDY

The study involved several stages. An extensive literature review was conducted, referring to a variety of texts and journal articles. Many of these materials dealt with the history, structure and ideologies of North American white supremacist groups, as well as hate crime more generally. In addition, the review included reference to perspectives on racism, anti-Semitism, identity construction and the 'presentation of self'. Lastly, some

attention was paid to material on computers and the Internet. As well as using traditional printed texts and articles, this survey makes use of Internet resources, including Web-based documents and the web sites of such well-known 'anti-hate' organisations as the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, the Anti-Defamation League and Hate Watch. Several of these organisations were also contacted through the mail for additional information.

In concert with the literature review and the accessing of various anti-hate organisations, there was a continuous observation of the available white supremacist sites on the Internet. This 'surveillance' provided an initial glimpse of the sort of themes that might be useful in understanding the white supremacist worldview, as well as illuminating the kinds of elements, such as graphics, colour and imagery that hate-mongers use in the process of presenting their ideologies. This ongoing analysis of web materials was also useful in supplying information about which sites exhibited some degree of longevity and stability and which ones came and went.

Initially, the idea was to include in the sample those sites which had showed some stability and would therefore likely be available on the Internet for at least as long as data collection purposes necessitated. However, during the course of the study it became possible to use a computer program called 'Teleport Pro' which has the ability to capture whole web sites and store them on a computer hard drive. With the use of 'Teleport Pro', I was able to include more unstable and short-lived web sites; however, this program came into my possession only after the sample had already been chosen and data collection had begun. At this point, the 'Teleport Pro' program was useful in cutting

down the amount of time needed to actually work on the Internet itself, and captured a complete version of each web site at a particular point in time, which then could be referred to without having to deal with subsequent revisions made to the web sites. One of the admitted problems with the sample is that it is somewhat skewed towards the more stable and coincidentally, larger sites. This was partially due to the interest in longevity, and also due to the fact that there is more material in the literature on the groups and individuals who happen to command some of the larger, more stable sites, such as the 'Aryan Nations' and 'National Alliance' web pages. In hindsight, perhaps the 'Teleport Pro' program could have alleviated the former problem, enabling the storage of more unstable web sites until analysis was possible. Yet, the fact that every site in the sample has shown some longevity on the Internet will perhaps lend some added relevance and durability to the observations raised in this analysis. As well, by investigating the sites that have had a longer life-span on the 'Net', any conclusions or observations made by this thesis refer to those sites that have had the most visibility and have represented the presence of the white supremacist fringe movement on the Internet to a significant degree.

The extensive literature review and the initial analysis of white supremacist web sites were conducted between January 1998 and January 1999. The later stages of the study involved the finalisation of the sample, the process of data collection and analysis of the hate web sites. This took place between February and June of 1999.

The preliminary and informal observation of the available Internet sites culled a number of themes and concepts that provided some organising structure for the formal

data collection and analysis. Throughout the data collection process, observations, arguments and quotes were recorded and labelled according to the theme or concept they best represented. However, some of the underlying ideological concepts and themes that became evident in the process of collecting and analysing the Internet data included use of euphemistic/pseudo-academic language and symbolism, violence, 'warrior fantasy' and 'inversion of reality'. In addition, the Internet data was replete with many examples of racism, voiced in either a covert or overt manner. Impression management tactics were evident during the data collection process, including not only the types of language and symbolism encountered, but also the use of colour and the inclusion and exclusion of certain types of 'proof' and information.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The collection and analysis of data was approached in an informed, yet exploratory manner. The search engine 'Yahoo' was used to initially form the sample and gather information. Web sites were discovered using key words such as 'white racist', 'nazi', 'Ku Klux Klan' and 'skinhead'. Other sites were uncovered using the 'snowballing effect', where for instance the 'links' of one site led to other similarly racist sites, and so on. I tried to create a sample that was suitably representative, although I was particularly drawn to sites of groups that I had found information on during the review of the literature. I explored the sites for aspects of their belief systems or doctrines, and looked for patterns in the both the kind of claims web sites were making, and the methods by which the sites went about making these claims. Various indicators of 'rearticulation' and 'impression management' were noted, including the use of pseudo-academic or

euphemistic language, the inclusion and exclusion of particular types of evidence and information, and specific stylistic choices. Thus, in reviewing the literature and collecting the data, a set of ideological themes and a particular pattern and method of 'claims-making' was uncovered, that proved useful in informing the ultimate analysis of the web sites.

One of the patterns that became evident in analysing the web sites, was the incidence of 'slippage'. There was an attempt on the part of many sites, using impression management techniques such as the use of pseudo-academic or euphemistic language, to tone down their racist beliefs in an effort to be more subtle and therefore appear more legitimate to the mainstream viewer. However, this mask of 'respectability' was often eventually dropped, either by design or by 'accident', to show the true intentions and hateful belief structure behind the web sites. The term 'slippage' may be a misnomer, implying an inadvertent nature to the shift from concealed racism to the revelation of true intentions. However, this in fact may be a conscious tactic on the part of white supremacists on the Internet to craftily 'draw in' converts to the cause or other sympathisers. 'Slippage' sometimes occurred in a particular place in the overall structure of the web site. The initial introductory page or pages might feature a 'cleaned up' or abbreviated version of the particular group's worldview, while a more detailed and more blatant version was exhibited on pages 'deeper' within the web site.

Another key pattern found in analysing the web sites, was the significance of 'links'. The majority of the web sites in the sample listed other Internet homepages to which they were 'linked' electronically. The orientation of the 'linked sites', whether they were 'neo-

Nazi', 'Skinhead' or 'Klan' affiliated, was an important indicator of the ideological and organisational ties between the initial group and others within the white supremacist movement. It could also serve to indicate the level of cohesion among organisations using the Internet, and their sophistication in utilising this new communication medium. Other distinguishing characteristics, such as colour schemes and the symbols and graphics utilised on the web sites were also noted, and analysed as to their possible meaning and significance. In addition, the Internet sites' web 'counters' were taken into account as a possible indicator of 'web traffic' on the sites, although because they can be altered and their numbers manipulated, their readings were noted cautiously.

Thus, the analysis of the sites was approached with initial thoughts and themes firmly in mind, but additional themes and patterns were attributed to the web sites as the data collection process proceeded. Of particular interest were the ways in which the sites in the sample compared and contrasted with one another; both the similarities they shared were considered, as well as the distinctive features that set each of them apart from one another. Ultimately, as will be detailed in chapter five, the patterns and themes that were uncovered in the process of data collection and analysis were consistent with there being an effort on the part of web creators to present a controlled image of their worldview to their Internet audience. In the end, despite attempts at 'rearticulation' and the use of 'coded' language and other 'impression management' techniques, this worldview is revealed as essentially and fundamentally one of racism, violence and other extremist views.

SAMPLE

The sample for this study was divided into eight categories, with a survey of three web sites per category, for an initial total of twenty-four web sites. After the data collection and analysis process had begun, one additional site was added to the sample, and one category was revised and altered, for reasons that will be discussed shortly. In the end, twenty-five web sites were subject to scrutiny for the purposes of this thesis. Initially, as many as thirty-two or forty sites were considered for the study, but this number proved to be prohibitive. The final total of twenty-five sites was decided upon as an acceptable sample size, as it was thought to be fairly representative of the types of sites available on the Internet. As well, this quantity of web sites seemed to be a more manageable size of sample to work with, allowing for a deep analysis of each site within the time constraints of this project.

The sample was divided into the following categories: (1) White Nationalist, (2) Ku Klux Klan, (3) Holocaust Denial, (4) Neo-Nazi, (5) Religious, (6) Militia, (7) Skinhead and (8) Canadian. This particular set of white supremacist categories has its origins in the literature on the movement. According to Kronenwetter (1992: 104-5), the Klanwatch Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center has divided the white supremacist movement into five distinct categories: (1) Klan, (2) Neo-Nazi, (3) Christian Identity, (4) Skinhead and (5) 'Other'. Since that time, the Southern Poverty Law Center web site has added a section on 'Militias'.153 In 1996, the Simon Wiesenthal Center classified the sites it monitors on the Web into six categories. These categories include (1) Holocaust Denial; (2) Nationalist/Secessionist; (3) Neo-Nazi/White Supremacist; (4) Conspiracy; (5) Militias; and (6) Explosives/Anarchist/Terrorist (Cooper 1997: 103). The categories used

in this study are based on an amalgamation of these two frameworks, with a few alterations. It must be admitted that these categories may be somewhat arbitrary in nature. It must also be admitted that it may be somewhat unorthodox to use the categories decided upon by a social movement's opponents to organise the study of such a movement.

While the Southern Poverty Law Center refers to 'Christian Identity' organisations, it appears to be more useful to consider 'religious' sites more generally, although the 'Christian Identity' movement does make up a significant part of the 'white power' movement. A broader-based 'religious' category would be more relevant, as there are sites that consider themselves to be 'Christian' but not necessarily 'Christian Identity', as well as 'non-'Christian' and anti-'Christian' based hate organisations available on the 'Net', including the 'World Church of the Creator'. Two of the group types from the Simon Wiesenthal Center framework are especially useful, particularly the 'Holocaust Denial' and 'Nationalist/Secessionist' categories. 'Holocaust Denial', often referred to by its instigators using the deceptively neutral term 'historical revisionism', has become an increasingly visible element in the news, as well as on the Internet. As well, the 'White Nationalist' perspective, with its specific focus on a homeland for whites or racial separation of some kind, is an arguably distinctive hate group type and an intriguing 'organising principle' for certain white supremacist organisations. Two of the categories proposed by the Simon Wiesenthal Center are not as useful, namely the 'Conspiracy' and 'Explosives/Anarchist/Terrorist' classifications. This is because these categories describe ideological elements and modes of action that are evident and visible in the 'white power'

movement as a whole, and not limited to any single type of group. The last category that proved necessary to include was the 'Canadian' category, and to follow is an explanation of the reasons why the Canadian sites were included as a separate category.

Initially, the eighth category was to be called 'Other', and was to include sites that did not fit into the other categories as racist 'organisations' per se, such as a pro-white publishing group, a Nazi-inspired merchandise site and a record company. However, problems developed in accessing some of these sites, and more importantly, it became evident that there was a lack of sites originating in Canada in the sample, as well as on the Internet more generally. Out of the less than half a dozen Canadian sites that could be found on the Internet as of May 1999, three representative sites were chosen for the sample, representing Holocaust denial, Skinhead and White Nationalist/Neo-Nazi perspectives. The paucity of Canadian sites made it difficult to find one representative site from each of the other categories, and so the decision was made to include a small sample of Canadian sites as a category unto itself, in order to ensure that this study would truly be an analysis of *North American* hate web sites, and not simply *American* ones.

So far, little has been said yet about the criteria by which the web sites in the sample were attributed to each category, for instance 'Neo-Nazi', 'White Nationalist' or 'Skinhead'. As it will be discussed further in chapter five, the division of hate web sites into totally distinct ideological groupings is problematic. It is true that the specific categories did turn out to be less than perfectly useful or applicable, as there is an enormous amount of ideological cross-over and 'sharing' of themes and imagery within the hate movement, at least in terms of the ways in which white supremacists present

themselves and their worldviews on the Internet. Whatever the eventual limitations of the categories chosen for this survey, the categorisation process was determined both through a process of analysis, and through a consideration of the 'self-identification' of each site. In some cases, web creators would actually name their web sites according to a particular ideological perspective. For instance, one page in the sample is called 'Stormfront *White Nationalist* Information Center', another site is labelled '*Skinhead* Pride' and yet another site is named 'United *Klans* of America – *KKKK*.net' (my emphasis). In the case of 'self-identification', a particular ideological commitment or leaning was explicitly expressed somewhere on the site, whether in the title, or elsewhere in the body of the web page.

In other cases where the orientation of the site was not specifically articulated, I analysed that site, and looked for 'clues' as to its proper placement. In some cases, this was a fairly easy process; on the 'for Folk and Fatherland' web site, a swastika was clearly visible in the graphic situated at the top of the introductory page, and the site boasted sections on 'Mein Kampf', 'Hitler Speeches' and 'National Socialism'. Another site, 'Be Wise As Serpents', marks itself as a hate site by referring to the anti-Semitic 'Protocols of Zion', and further distinguishes itself as a religious site by repeatedly referring to 'Yahweh', a term used by many white supremacists, especially 'Christian Identity' adherents to denote 'God' (although this particular site claims that it is 'not' an Identity group). Other sites were not as easy to place. The 'National Alliance' site, for example, which is listed in the 'Neo-Nazi' category, does not openly bandy about swastikas and other Nazi paraphernalia. It is only in the literature that the National Alliance is referred to as a Neo-Nazi site, and its historical link with the American Nazi

Party of the 1960s becomes evident (George & Wilcox 1992: 358, 363-68; Mintz 1985: 129, 131). Further, the 'Zundelsite' was termed a 'Canadian' site although it originates in the United States, because of the obvious centrality of Canadian resident Zundel's ideas and suspected input in the site. Further complications arose when sites incorporated the imagery and arguments, as many did, of several varieties of hate group at the same time. For instance, the placement of the 'Nova Scotia Skinhead' site sounds fairly straightforward; however, this site included video and audio clips of Adolf Hitler, and featured scanned photographs of various skinheads with their arms raised in a 'Sieg Heil' salute. In such cases as these, a judgement was necessary to decide which category was most relevant and acceptable overall. All in all, the process of categorising the web sites involved a degree of 'subjectivity', but it was also firmly based in the knowledge gleaned from the literature on the white supremacist movement.

The following is a complete record of the web sites utilised in this thesis for the purpose of analysis:

White Nationalist

(1) Crosstar The Nationalist Movement Homepage (http://www.nationalist.org/)
(2) Stormfront White Nationalist Information Center (http://www.stormfront.org/defaultf.htm)
(3) The Occidental Pan-Aryan Crusader: Internet White Separatists (http://www.crusader.net/index.html)

Ku Klux Klan

(1) David Duke's Official Web Site (http://www.duke.org/)
(2) Imperial Klans of America (http://www.kkkk.net/index.html)
(3) KKK.com Homepage (http://www.kkk.com/)
(4) NAAWP – National Association for the Advancement of White People (http://naawp.com/)

Holocaust Denial

(1) Bradley R. Smith/CODOH Homepage - Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust (http://www.codoh.com/)
(2) Independent History and Research: Michael A. Hoffman II's Campaign for Radical Truth in History (http://www.hoffman-info.com/)
(3) IHR - Institute for Historical Review (http://www.ihr.org/index.html)

Neo-Nazi

(1) for Folk and Fatherland (http://home.earthlink.net/~centurion88/)
(2) National Alliance (http://www.natvan.com/)
(3) WAR - White Aryan Resistance Hate Page (http://www.resist.com/)

Religious

(1) Aryan Nations (http://www.nidlink.com/%7Earyanvic/)
(2) Be Wise As Serpents (http://www.iahushua.com/BeWise/)
(3) WCOTC - World Church of the Creator Headquarters (http://www.creator.org/)

Militia

(1) Liberty or Death's Homepage (S.A.R.A. – Second American Revolutionary Army) (http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/2945/)
(2) MOM – Militia of Montana (http://www.nidlink.com/~bobhard/mom.html and http://www.logoplex.com/resources/mom/)
(3) Sheriff's Posse Comitatus (http://www.possecomitatus.org/)

Skinhead

(1) Plunder and Pillage - United Skins homepage (http://www.unitedskins.com/home.htm)
(2) Skinhead Pride (http://www.skinheadpride.com/)
(3) White Pride Network (http://www.whitepride.com/index2.html)

Canadian

(1) Freedom-Site Homepage - Heritage Front (http://www.freedomsite.org/)
(2) Nova Scotia Skinheads (http://www.surf.to/novaskin/)
(3) Zundelsite (http://www.webcom.com/ezundel/index.html)

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Certain problems or limitations were encountered during the course of this study. For instance, it became necessary to make alterations to the sample. The addition of the 'Canadian' category, for example, has already been explained. However, the reasoning behind the addition of the twenty-fifth site to the sample within the 'Klan' category was that, based upon the literature review, it at first appeared that there might be an ideological significance to the progression of organisations that well-known former Klansman David Duke led or founded. As was mentioned earlier on in chapter two, David Duke was the grand wizard of a major Klan organisation in the 1970s, who moved on to found and develop the National Association for the Advancement of White People (NAAWP) in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Bridges 1994: xvii, 85). It seemed possible that there was an ideological, as well as historical connection between these two groups, and so the 'NAAWP' web page, as well as Duke's current incarnation on the 'Web', 'David Duke's Official Web Site', were included as 'Klan' sites in the sample. It later turned out that with a bit of analysis of their content, the NAAWP and Duke sites were found to be largely devoid of Klan material and had little ideologically or visually in common with regular Klan sites, such as 'KKK.com', the third site in the Klan category. There was enough of an ideological separation between the two groups and the Klan 'perspective' that in the end, it became apparent that the inclusion and analysis of another Klan site would be necessary to provide a clear and cohesive picture of the Ku Klux Klan presence on the Internet. Therefore, the 'KKKK.net' site was chosen and added to the category and the sample total reached its final count of twenty-five web sites. As well, the 'Occidental Pan-Aryan Crusader' site was a late substitution in the sample when the

well known hate web site that was to have been part of the 'White Nationalist' category, 'ALPHA HQ', was shut down by its Internet Service Provider.

This is just one incidence of the general instability suffered by white supremacist sites on the Internet which, as has already been mentioned, had some consequences for how the sample was put together and the data was collected and analysed. The Hate Directory web site is useful in exposing this instability of white supremacist sites specifically, and 'hate' sites more generally. The Hate Directory is described by its creator as: "…an historical document as well as a current reference and includes current sites as well as those no longer in operation".154 The web site paints a negative picture of the lifespan of hate groups on the 'Net'. A majority of hate sites listed on the Hate Directory are unavailable, the addresses given for many of sites being of no use, or at the very least outdated. Fully sixty-six percent, or 280 sites of a total of 427 web pages listed do not link to a currently available hate web site.155 This site therefore gives some indication as to the number of hate sites that were at some point on the Internet, that are now defunct, and the general precariousness of hate sites' Internet status.

Ultimately, there are certain limitations to this study of Internet hate web sites. There are questions that are difficult, if not impossible to answer effectively or objectively. One, is the question of just how effective a recruitment tool the Internet actually is for white supremacist organisations. It has been already discussed how people within the 'movement', and web creators themselves may opine that their forays onto the Internet have successfully garnered numerous new members for their groups over the last few years, but these people have obvious vested interests, and their subjective self-reports are

not reliable sources of information by any stretch of the imagination. So too, legitimate

organisations may suggest that in recent years there has been an increase in hate crimes,

numbers of hate organisations or the white supremacist movement's membership as a

whole, but it is difficult to pinpoint how much of this posited increase is made possible

through Internet activities. Certainly, as has been pointed out earlier in chapter three, the

Internet is a very efficient and cost-effective communication medium, with a potential

audience of millions. The Internet undoubtedly has the capacity to facilitate growth and

communication for many organisations, not the least the white supremacist movement.

However, it is difficult to quantify the Internet's effects. Indeed, it is even tricky to

estimate how many visitors 'white power' web sites themselves attract, as the web

'counters' used on many sites may be manipulated or tampered with. An Anti-

Defamation League (1995a: 4) report details some of the problems measuring the

effectiveness of hate groups' Internet forays:

> The Web sites can record the number of people who access the home
> page but outsiders cannot. Even counting the number of 'hits', or con-
> -tacts, made with the site would not provide the number of new members
> that each site generates. The relatively low cost of maintaining a Web
> page make it possible to 'show the flag' even if the harvest of new
> members is low.

Also, it may be entirely possible that web counter numbers may be inflated by the

accessing of these sites by watch groups and anti-racists themselves in the course of

investigation or monitoring.

It is also impossible to know how much of the resources and manpower of a

particular hate group is devoted to maintaining a web site. Is the cost of maintaining a

web page prohibitive to some groups, is it the primary focus of a group's activities, or it

is just one of its methods of promotion, activism and communication? Is the 'group'
behind the web site a large one, or does a web site represent just one lone figure typing
away at a keyboard? There are clues, of course, in what web sites both mention and
exclude, but these are some of the hard questions to answer, which are beyond the scope
of this study.

This study is also framed by the limitations of the author, who has little technological
expertise in the area of computers, and is by no means a 'computer whiz'. This study is
more of a content- and image-driven evaluation than a technical investigation,
deconstructing the sites according to the themes and arguments presented rather than
according to the 'nuts and bolts' of the web pages' construction. Therefore, a particular
site may be thought to be fairly complex and sophisticated looking, but this is more a
layman's evaluation of the presentation of the site than a precise technical evaluation.
Admittedly, this may be a limitation to the study, although, as most readers will not
necessarily be computer specialists, this type of evaluation will perhaps be more
accessible and relevant to the average person and his or her knowledge of the Internet.

HYPOTHESES

Finally, it will be useful to reiterate some of the initial hypotheses about this study of
Internet sites, before proceeding to chapter five. Initially, it was felt that white
supremacist groups could be divided into distinct categories, and that these categories
would have some meaning and significance, as different categories of hate groups would
exhibit certain distinct and unique ideological features. As well, it was thought that the
use of 'coded' language would be widespread on hate web sites, with a minority of sites

exhibiting truly blatant racism, including expletives, epithets and explicit allusions to violence. It was believed that because the Internet is such a global communication tool, that the Internet would serve as a 'bridging' mechanism for white supremacists, and that there would be indications of increased co-operation and unity among hate groups. However, the literature refers so much to the in-fighting within and conflict between white supremacist organisations that the hypothesis also acknowledged that although the Internet could bring many hate-mongers together, there would still be evidence of divisive competition and bickering at the same time.

Stylistically, it was foreseen that the colours black, red and white would predominate on hate web sites, as an Anti-Defamation League (1995a: 1) report indicated this would be the case. In the course of chapter five, arguments as to the meaning and significance of the use of particular colours will be considered. Ideologically, I speculated that sites in the 'Skinhead' category would be the least ideologically sophisticated or coherent, given the youth and violence-driven nature of the subculture. The impetus for white supremacist web sites was felt to be mainly for simple 'recruitment' purposes, and not necessarily to serve as ideologically complex 'resource centres' for white supremacists and their followers, as turned out to be the declared motivation in some cases. Ultimately, it was thought that a good portion of hate web sites would be unimpressive and badly-constructed; in hindsight this was most likely based on a personal, but common prejudice - a stereotype that radical racists would be technologically backward and ignorant, embodying the 'redneck' image. Also, I wanted to explore the extent to which on-line information and dogma was created specifically for the Internet, or simply 'recycled'

from the more traditional communication media used by white supremacists, such as leaflets, tracts and racist books.

CONCLUSION

This section has attempted to present some of the methodological aspects of this study of North American white supremacists and their Internet web sites. In the end, this study utilises both secondary sources in the form of texts, journals and other information, as well as primary material in the form of the actual white supremacist Internet web sites. There may be some defects in the sample categories and construction of the sample itself; it may also be impossible for this study to answer certain questions. However, this study embodied a sincere effort to provide as representative a look at white supremacist hate on the Internet was could be done within constraints of time and technical expertise. While there were a number of initial hypotheses and thoughts as to what the study would find, ultimately this study was approached most of all as an opportunity for discovery and learning. Accordingly, the next two chapters deal with the analysis of the Internet sample, and details the findings and conclusions that may be drawn from an observation of a selection of white supremacist hate web sites.

CHAPTER FIVE - AN ANALYSIS OF THE HATE WEB SITE DATA

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will involve an analysis of the research findings, based on the scrutiny

of twenty-five World Wide Web sites. The main purpose of this study is to analyse the

ways in which North American white supremacist hate groups present themselves and

their racist ideologies in the context of the 'cyberspace', through a deconstruction of the

content of a selection of web sites. Impression management tactics and 'coded language'

are used as a part of this 'presentation of self' to create particular identities for the

audience. In their web site performances, white supremacist groups often use impression

management techniques in a 'positive' sense; that is, they attempt to make their messages

appear legitimate and palatable to the mainstream. Cloaking and camouflaging

procedures are used in the attempt to successfully package their 'product' for a modern,

technologically savvy audience. Among the tactics employed by 'white power' activists,

is the use of euphemistic or pseudo-academic language, stylistic points, and allusions to

non-violence, famous figures and mainstream issues, such as 'free speech' and academic

freedom. However, this created mask of 'legitimacy' is prone to 'slippage'. Hate groups

also use impression management techniques in a 'negative' sense, to create an identity so

radical and ruthless that while their extremism is blatantly exposed, the power they

possess and the threat they pose may be overestimated by the audience, masking what

may in reality be weakness and marginality. Negative impression management

techniques include the use of explicit language rather than 'rearticulation', symbolism,

allusions to violence and use of 'links' to other hate web sites. In addition, many

elements have consequences for the success of performances being created by hate

propagandists, whether it is a 'positive' or 'negative' image that is being attempted. Such

aspects as size, the type of material used, the particular pool of thinkers referred to, and

the complexity and level of interactivity in a specific web site may have important

implications for, and pose particular problems in, creating a specific type of image.

This discussion will consist of an analysis of the ways in which words and images are

manipulated to create the particular 'impression' that hate web site creators want to

project. It will also consider the level of success with which white supremacist groups

present themselves and their worldviews on the Internet.

THE PRESENTATION OF SELF ON HATE WEB SITES AND THE USE OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

This discussion focuses on the presentation of self exhibited by North American

racists in the context of Internet web sites. However, impression management tactics,

particularly positive ones, have been in use for a long time in the hate movement. Since at

least the late 1970s and early 1980s, racists such as David Duke, Tom Metzger and Louis

Beam have been leading the way in cultivating new modes of operation and action

(Hamm 1994: 45). This shift from the radical to the legitimate has paved the way for

impression management techniques to be used on the Internet.

David Duke has been called the 'Image Maker of the Klan' (Moore 1992: 48). In the

late 1970s he was seen to move his Klan events and rallies "…from the cornfields to

hotel meeting rooms..." (Rose 1992: 13,15). Wearing suits and taking advantage of his clean-cut good looks, Duke promoted a new version of racism that appeared more mainstream and legitimate. Says Esolen (1992: 214) of Duke's manner: "...Duke continued his strategy of making himself look friendly and virtuous. He relied on references to Jesus Christ and to Christian culture, images of himself with his attractive daughters, and his polite manner". In promoting this new version of what a racist is and how he behaves, Duke became known alternately as the 'Rolls Royce of Racism' and the 'Teflon racist' (Zatarain 1990: 41, 279). As a part of this movement to 'normalise' the racist movement, David Duke was a forerunner and leader in the use of 'coded words' (King 1992: 245). His influence spilled over to affect the hate movement more generally.

Thus, it became increasingly popular for Klan members to argue that they 'light' rather than 'burn' crosses, in the attempt to 'illuminate the principles of Jesus Christ' rather than cause fear and dread (Daniels 1997: 16; see also Zatarain 1990: 208; Abanes 1996: 173). Hate mongers also began referring to themselves by the more neutral and academic-sounding term 'racialists', instead of more loaded terms such as 'racist' or 'white supremacist' (Abanes 1996: 173).

Therefore, impression management and the practice of consciously crafting a specific 'presentation of self' have been pursued in the real as well as 'virtual' cyber world. However, the hate web site is a unique medium on which to practice impression management and create particular images, being a new, electronic type of propaganda 'brochure' that the novice or sympathiser can peruse at leisure and visit again and again. Although it is not as interactive as face-to-face performances and there are perhaps fewer

'cues', web sites' imagery and content are manipulated in specific ways to make a

particular impression on its audience. In this chapter, various elements of hate web sites

will be discussed in order to ascertain how positive and negative identities and

impressions are created by white supremacists for consumption by their audiences.

PART ONE - 'POSITIVE' IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

'Positive' impression management is here defined as the use of impression

management tactics to enable the creation of a legitimate and positive image for a

particular audience. In the case of white supremacist Internet sites, the attempt is

sometimes made to conceal more overt expressions of racism and anti-Semitism, and to

promote a view of such sites as being more moderate, legitimate and palatable to the

mainstream. Among the positive impression management tactics uncovered in this

analysis include the use of 'euphemistic' and 'pseudo-academic' language, allusions to

patriotism, religion, mainstream issues famous figures and non-violence. Furthermore,

stylistic devices and the inversion of reality are also utilised.

(1) EUPHEMISTIC LANGUAGE & ALLUSIONS TO MAINSTREAM IDEAS

In attempting to create a positive image of themselves as purveyors of legitimate and

important ideas, North American white supremacists use 'euphemistic' language and

allusions to mainstream issues. Euphemistic language refers to words or phrases that

conceal controversial or stigmatised ideas by sounding neutral, legitimate and different

than the underlying argument. In the context of white supremacist groups, the ideas being

concealed are usually racist and anti-Semitic. As noted in chapter one, the euphemistic

phraseology used to hide racist ideologies is called 'coded language', 'rearticulation', or

the 'new racism'. As Omi & Winant (1994: 123) mention, coded language is comprised of "...phrases and symbols which refer indirectly to racial themes, but do not challenge popular democratic or egalitarian ideals (e.g., justice, equal opportunity)". Essentially, this language "...aims to circumvent accusations of racism" (Solomos & Back 1996: 18-9).

There are many examples of the use of euphemistic language, as well as attempts to conceal racist ideas in the discussion of 'mainstream issues' on hate groups' Internet web sites. White supremacists on the Internet couch their beliefs in what they hope will be considered more acceptable terms, hiding their bigotry to present an image to the public that will attract favourable attention and possibly new recruits.

The National Alliance organises its site into mostly innocuous-sounding sections, including 'What's New', 'Online Publications', 'Print Your Own Leaflets' and 'Foreign Language Section'.156 Its online bookshop also features mundane categories like 'American History', 'Western Art' and 'European Legend, Myth and Religion'.157 The Heritage Front tries to neutralise its aims by supporting "...equal rights for Euro-Canadians and special privileges for none".158 While it brings up 'race', it attempts to sound reasonable through its claim to support 'equal rights'. The 'KKK.com' site views itself simply as 'politically incorrect' instead of racist.159 The NAAWP web site also uses value-positive phrases and ideas such as 'civil rights' and the concept of protection for the family, children, heritage and values.160 The National Association for the Advancement of White People specifically calls itself a "...not for profit, non-violent, civil rights, educational organization".161 On his personal site, its former leader David

Duke calls the NAAWP a 'civil rights' organisation.**162** In this way, its real, racist

motivation is covered over and avoided. As well, the graphic of the white tiger is a more

subtle reference to the white supremacy that underlies NAAWP ideology.**163** The site

tries to frame its discussion of white rights in terms of a 'culture war', avoiding the more

loaded references to a 'racial war' that characterise the World Church of the Creator's

arguments, for example.**164** Significantly, the site tries to avoid sounding anti-Semitic

by referring only to 'Zionists' as the manipulators of society.**165** The David Duke

Official site also makes reference to Zionists instead of 'Jews'.**166** This use of

euphemism is significant, as Weimann & Winn (1986: 19) explain:

> The 'new' anti-Semitism employs anti-Zionism as a cloak for traditional
> anti-Jewish hate. Zionists are sometimes contrasted with Jews. Zionists
> are portrayed as militarists, racists, and manipulators of public opinion
> while Jews are nonpolitical and keep their religious beliefs to themselves.
> The new anti-Semites sometimes indicate that they are not anti-Jewish,
> only anti-Zionist. Jews may be tolerable so long as they do not inhabit
> Israel and feel no affection for the country.

As well as using euphemistic language, white supremacist also try to elbow their way

into the mainstream by latching onto mainstream debates and controversy. As the Anti-

Defamation League (1982: 6) argues: "...hate groups try to attract support by playing on

people's legitimate concerns about certain economic and social issues". Anxieties over

immigration and welfare are used as a 'wedge' to join white supremacist thought to the

mainstream. The David Duke Official site makes the point that: "We must remove drug

sellers and users from welfare rolls and public housing, root out welfare fraud, and

require work for every able bodied welfare recipient".**167** Many people would agree

with these arguments, but what is missing is that Duke is using these issues to criminalise

and negatively affect non-white persons, who happen to be disproportionately represented amongst those in poverty.

Disputes over the fairness of 'affirmative action' policies are another point at which hate mongers enter mainstream discussions. Again, the David Duke site pushes the 'hot button' of affirmative action to subtly and 'legitimately' advance its white supremacist agenda.**168** The 'KKKK.net' site echoes the opinions of many non-extremists when it says: "Stop reverse discrimination by doing away with Affirmative Action. If you or I went for a job, and a non-white was there for the same job, who do you think would get it? Even if we were better qualified for that job[?]".**169** The anti-abortion movement is yet another arena where white supremacists have joined part of the 'mainstream' (Novick 1995: 154). The 'KKKK.net' and Posse Comitatus sites highlight this issue, and through it they gain a bigger audience than perhaps they would gain through their racial arguments alone.**170** The Crosstar site attempts to engage mainstream values and interests by featuring a 'Petition for Safe Schools'.**171**

As Feagin & Vera (1995: 13) posit, the use of euphemisms can have serious implications on the way white supremacist ideology is understood and reacted to: "the layers of euphemisms and code words that often cover racist acts today can make it difficult to demonstrate that such acts are in fact intentionally discriminatory". While those 'in the know' about hate groups may be able to see through the ideological obstacles caused by white supremacists' use of euphemism and allusions to mainstream issues, average Internet users may not. It is difficult to know how effective these positive

impression management tactics are, but the potential is there to make a successful 'performance'.

(2) PSEUDO-ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

Many white supremacists try to bring an 'intellectual', pseudo-academic tone to their web sites in the attempt to lend legitimacy to their ideas. This is often done by adopting 'highbrow' language, referring to the supposed work of academics, and by arguing for the protection of 'freedom of speech' and of 'academic freedom'.

Very often these sites are tedious to read, with a multitude of long tracts and articles within their electronic pages. Only the very committed or serious followers it would seem, would have the patience or stamina to work through these sites. Although such a plethora of material might scare off some novice white activists, perhaps the creators of the sites were counting on the sites' many articles to insure that their sites would encourage multiple visits. Indeed, some sites, such as the Stormfront white nationalist site, the Canadian Heritage Front site and the 'KKK.com' web page, claim to be 'resource' centres or libraries, rather than 'quick stop' sites.172 Says the 'KKK.com' site: "The intent of this website is to become a virtual museum of Ku Klux Klan history and artifacts".173 The Militia of Montana argues too that it is an 'educational organization', and the 'KKKK.net' states 'education' as its purpose as well.174 Also, perhaps the very volume of materials included in some of the sites serves as a conscious textual message that there is, from the white power activist's perspective, a lot to say and plenty of materials to back it up. Thus, as the Be Wise As Serpents web site claims: "All others will realise the important contribution that this *diversity of information* offers, and

will respect the *substantial documentation* contained herein" (my emphasis).175

Therefore, at the same time as hate site creators utilise pseudo-academic language to lend

a sheen of 'quality' to their creations, the 'quantity' of materials also is used to endow

sites and their messages with an image of legitimacy.

Many outrageous claims are made using euphemistic or academic-sounding phrases;

however, critical analysis reveals the true implications of the assertions. 'Rearticulation'

is a process of making racial claims without alluding to racial language or rhetoric.

Surely the claim of multiple human ancestors is an example of an 'intellectualised'

argument with very racist undertones. In asserting that the human races do not have a

common historical or biological ancestor, pseudo-scientific language is often used to hide

the blatantly racist nature of the claim. The Stormfront white nationalist page argues that

there is plenty of unspecified 'evidence' to cast doubt on the idea of a common human

ancestor for all 'races'. Indeed, with a multitude of 'scholarly' words, the site claims that:

> ...proponents of the doctrine of biological evolution have found it simply
> impossible to trace the five primary races back to a single human type. To
> account for the biological differences in evolutionary terms, it is necessary
> to assume the existence of five different species of pre-human anthropoid –
> to conclude, in other words, that racial differences antedate humanity and
> the earliest kind of life that can be called human.176

This claim has serious implications because it questions the very 'humanness' of

non-white races by positing different originators for each race. Presumably the original

ancestor of the 'white race' is considered the most 'human' of the races. The implication

of multiple human ancestors is that difference is fundamental and inalterable, and that

unequal treatment is justified by denying non-whites their commonality with whites on a

species level. As Omi & Winant (1994: 64) state: "...claims of species distinctiveness

among humans justifie[s] the inequitable allocation of political and social rights, while still upholding the doctrine of 'the rights of man'".

The strength of the National Alliance has been said to lie in its 'deceptively intellectualised propaganda'. And indeed, the National Alliance homepage tries to couch its racism in pseudo-scientific language when it says that:

> ...the racial dependence of abstract reasoning abilities is no secret. Anatomists have been aware for many years of the morphological differences, between the brains of Blacks and Whites, and neurologists and psychologists today understand that it is in precisely those portions of the brain which in Blacks are less developed than in Whites that abstract reasoning takes place.177

While it refers to 'racial' themes, the National Alliance tries to legitimise its views by appealing to the expertise and legitimacy of unnamed 'neurologists' and 'psychologists'. The National Alliance also utilises 'highbrow' words like 'etymology', presumably to impress viewers and downplay the stereotype of the racist as 'redneck'.178 Similarly, the Heritage Front refers to word 'Holocaustology' in order to both delegitimise the Holocaust and sound academic, and the Crosstar site invites its audience to view its 'synopsis' of Nationalism.179

The National Alliance also refers to 'statistics', particularly about the allegedly high representation of non-whites among AIDS carriers and as criminals.180 While the National Alliance alleges that it receives its information from legitimate FBI, Department of Justice and Census Bureau statistics, a tendency of many web sites, as will be mentioned in the section on 'vilification', is to attempt to appear academic by citing statistics, but to avoid citing the sources for those figures.181 This avoidance of citing

sources is one reason why white supremacists' attempts at intellectualisation and positive impression management ultimately fail.

The David Duke Official site also includes pseudo-scientific articles. A few include 'Innate Intellectual and Psychological Differences' and 'Egalitarian Fiction and Collective Fraud', and essays by the controversial Canadian academic J. Phillipe Rushton called the 'Genetic Basis for Criminal Behaviour' and 'Race as a Biological Concept'.182 In this way Duke attempts to make his racist views acceptable by using a legitimating veneer of 'academia'. The Militia of Montana attempts to look legitimate and academic through the 'activities' of its leader, John Trochmann. The site claims that Trochmann has 'lectured' at various universities, appeared on 'dozens' of television shows and radio programs, and testified before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism.183 It neglects of course to say in what context he was involved in such activities, and how his hosts and audiences in those cases viewed his opinions and participation. However, the uninitiated may be misled by these self-reports.

In addition, the Institute for Historical Review actively cultivates a professional, academic image. That is to say, the Anti-Defamation League (1982: 12, 90) specifically remarks about the IHR being a 'pseudo-academic' organisation 'masquerading' as a 'professional' group of historians or academics. Braun & Scheinberg (1997: 63) agree which this characterisation of the IHR. Indeed, the IHR web site is replete with coded imagery and language in keeping with its parent organisation and printed materials. It claims to be a collection of 'revisionist' material meant for "...the enjoyment and edification of all...".184 The site also claims scholarly objectivity: "The Institute for

Historical Review is non-ideological, non-religious and non-political".**185** Of course, it does not admit to being a Holocaust denial site; it uses the academic-sounding and value-neutral term 'revisionism' as most denial sites and groups do. In discussing the Holocaust specifically, the IHR claims that the 'orthodox' account of the Holocaust is academically unsound: "Extensive forensic, demographic, analytical and comparative evidence demonstrates the impossibility of such a figure. The widely repeated 'six million' figure is an irresponsible exaggeration".**186** It also posits that 'no researcher' has been able to prove a German policy of extermination in the concentration camps, as well as arguing that there were no such things as gas chambers.**187** It cites a study done by a Fred Leuchter on the subject of the disputed gas chambers; however, Leuchter is affiliated with racists such as Zundel and his report was sponsored by far-right figures.**188** Ultimately, the IHR claims to be "…at the center of a worldwide network of scholars and activists who are working, sometimes at great personal sacrifice – to separate historical fact from propaganda fiction by researching and publicizing suppressed facts about key chapters of history, especially twentieth-century history, that have social-political relevance today".**189**

The IHR also claims legitimacy in that it argues that leading universities such as Harvard, Princeton and Yale subscribe to the IHR Journal of Historical Review.**190** In addition, it seems to be the tendency for Holocaust denial sites, the IHR and Hoffman's Radical Truth in History in particular, to give the appearance of a serious academic forum by featuring an uncluttered, simple, text-based site presentation, similar to the presentation of an academic article or reports.

Hoffman's Radical Truth in History homepage also attempts to sound as well as look legitimate and academic, referring to its writings as "...investigative reporting and critical analysis...".**191** Michael Hoffman, the author of many of the site's reports, is lauded on the site for his supposedly "...magnificent research, iconoclastic journalism and worldwide educational outreach...".**192** Hoffman's former position on the staff of the Associated Press is also used to lend further legitimacy to his claims.**193**

The Be Wise As Serpents homepage voices a defence of Holocaust denial and positions denial (read 'revisionism') as an academic freedom issue: "The widely held opinion that any doubts about the dominant view regarding the 'Holocaust' and the Six Million must be treated, from the outset, as the expression of a wicked and inhumane outlook, and, if possible, banned...[it] is absolutely unacceptable, and indeed must be rejected as an attack against the principle of scholarly freedom".**194** Positing that Holocaust denial is a legitimate scholarly endeavour has key implications. As Ebata (1997a: 16) explains: "...the emergence of Holocaust denial as an 'academic' enterprise has obfuscated the boundaries of anti-Semitic hate speech, bringing ostensible credibility and legitimacy to the extreme right" (Ebata 1997a: 16).

The tendency of some white supremacists to cloak their racist arguments in the guise of academia and freedom of speech is a conscious effort to legitimise and validate their arguments and their actions:

> A recent strategy used by these groups is to defend their activities
> by presenting themselves as defenders of free expression. Since they
> consider themselves to be promoting the principles of civil libertar-
> -ianism, any attempts to curb their activities are portrayed as censor-
> -ship and therefore anti-democratic (Henry et al. 1995: 90).

Thus, the Zundelsite and National Alliance, jumping on the 'free speech' bandwagon, feature images of the blue ribbon of the 'Free Speech Online' campaign.**195** In addition, the David Duke site tries to neutralise and intellectualise its arguments by claiming that it is simply providing the: "…anti-establishment point-of-view".**196** The Heritage Front claims that if it and other such groups are not allowed to express themselves, it will cause "…a fatal blow to the fundamental democratic tenet of free expression and lead to intellectual paralysis of the worst kind".**197**

While viewers may catch on to the implications of the above passage and other intellectualised arguments made by white supremacists, the 'rearticulated' and intellectualised tone may in fact cause audience members to evaluate it favourably.

(3) STYLISTIC POINTS

Stylistic devices, or the structure and appearance of words and images, are used in hate web sites to transmit racist ideas without necessarily being obvious. The most telling stylistic point was the strategic use of upper and lower case letters in referring to whites, non-whites and Jews. Inconsistent use of capitalisation was the norm among several hate web sites. The word 'White' was often capitalised, thereby showing the importance of that race to white supremacists. Conversely, lower case letters were used to signify 'blacks' and 'jews', thus stylistically marking the difference in status attributed to the different racialised groups by hate-mongers.

For instance, the National Alliance consistently uses capitalisation to emphasise the importance of the 'White Race': "We must have White schools, White residential neighborhoods and recreation areas, White workplaces, White farms and

countryside".**198** The skinhead White Pride Network consistently refers to 'Whites',

while treating Jews in an inconsistent manner, leaving the word 'jew' uncapitalised in

certain parts of the site, and capitalising it in others.**199** The World Church of the

Creator is likewise inconsistent.**200** The Sheriff's Posse Comitatus web page habitually

refers to Jews in a stylistically demeaning, but perhaps not an obviously apparent way, in

neglecting to validate the Jewish identity with the capitals it restricts to the 'White

Race'.**201** Lastly, the Nova Scotia Skinheads site uses an asterisk as well as a lower case

'j' to refer to Jews: "...the only safe j*w to be around is the lobotomized j*w".**202** It is

unclear what the purpose of the asterisk is. While the views expressed may be blatantly

racist, the point here is that by using capitalisation and lower case lettering, white

supremacists may emphasise a particular white-centred view of the world in a very subtle

way.

This specific use of capitalisation and lower case lettering was a telling, yet fairly

subtle use of impression management. It is considered a 'positive' impression

management tactic because although it is obviously a conscious stylistic choice, many

audience members might overlook the inconsistency in capitalisation and consider their

arguments without pause.

(4) ALLUSIONS TO FAMOUS FIGURES

In order to make a 'good impression', people may allude to others' opinions to

provide proof and legitimacy to their own claims. It is particularly useful to refer to the

ideas of figures who are 'famous' or well-known and respected within mainstream circles

in order to create a more open and accepting atmosphere for one's own arguments. The

allusion to famous figures is a ploy often used by white supremacists to skilfully deflect criticism and legitimise their racist claims by attributing similar claims to the well-known personages.

Among the famous figures alluded to most often were Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson. Diverse web sites such as the Militia of Montana, the Posse Comitatus, the World Church of the Creator and the National Alliance, refer to these men who, although popularly known for their liberal and egalitarian efforts, are alleged by these sites to have spoken against racial equality.**203** The Posse Comitatus alleges that Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson made anti-Semitic remarks.**204** The WCOTC also claims that Ben Franklin held derogatory opinions about Jews, calling them a 'menace'.**205** In addition, it says that George Washington remarked that: "They (the Jews) work more effectively against us than the enemy's armies. They are a hundred times more dangerous to our liberties and the great cause we are engaged in. It is much to be lamented that each state, long ago, has not hunted them down as pests to society and the greatest enemies we have to the happiness of America".**206**

Ironically, both the skinhead Plunder and Pillage web site and the militia Liberty or Death homepage feature a quote from Goethe about truth and freedom, implying that they are sources of awareness and veracity: "None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free".**207** As well, it is typical on militia sites such as Liberty or Death and the Militia of Montana, to give reference to the Constitution and Declaration of Independence to back up their belief systems.**208**

In its 'Quotes of the Week' section, the Stormfront white nationalist web page has archived passages from such diverse characters as Benjamin Disraeli, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Charles Lindbergh, H.G. Wells, Aldous Huxley, Alexis de Tocqueville, Herbert Spencer, Galileo and Bill Clinton.**209** The National Alliance alludes to George Bernard Shaw and Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as including such books as Plato's 'Republic' and Homer's 'Illiad' and 'Odyssey' for sale on its site.**210** Aryan Nations uses the writings of Carlyle and Locke to justify the use of violence and force against its enemies.**211** The David Duke Official site also refers to the allegedly anti-Semitic comments of actor Marlon Brando on the Larry King Live television program in attempting to legitimise its far-right views.**212** The World Church of the Creator uses the words of David Hume, and cites a quote apparently made by Benjamin Disraeli: "All is race; there is no other truth, and every race must fall which carelessly suffers its blood to become mixed".**213** The point to be made here is that whether some of these famous figures made questionable remarks is beside the point; whoever voices racist comments is guilty of injustice and faulty judgement.

White supremacists use the words or selective distortions of the thoughts of famous figures to prepare the foundation for their own ideas as presented on the Internet. By alluding to well-known and respected people, hate mongers try to make a good impression by having their ideas ride on the coattails of the ideas of the legitimate figures. They may divert the real issue, which is the legitimacy of their own ideas, by arguing that since a famous person allegedly said a particular thing, it must have merit.

(5) INVERSION OF REALITY & THE WARRIOR-VICTIM DICHOTOMY

White supremacists attempt to rewrite reality, and position themselves as victims, in order to make their worldview more legitimate to the mainstream. Racists posit their myths as reality, while maintaining that what most believe as reality, is in actuality, myth. While there may be a 'continuum' of racism, the racism that white supremacists exhibit is also a worldview set apart from more commonplace instances of prejudice and bigotry. While one could argue that all racism is based on ignorance, the elaborate parallel realities that white supremacists construct for themselves are such that one could say that white power is not built upon ignorance in a simple way, but that hate mongers have developed a reality based on a totally inverted reality that is fully believable to them in some conscious matter. Hardcore activists believe that their worldview is correct, and it is mainstream society that is based upon myth and fantasy, not the other way around. Thus, while Ebata (1997a: 32) argues that white supremacists "...subvert the notion of truth...", he also admits that: "right-wing extremism represents an alternative worldview...".

Omi & Winant (1994: 88) argue that this difference in reality is to a certain extent part of the experience of a social movement: "...social movements create collective identity, collective subjectivity, by offering their adherents a different view of themselves and their world; different, that is, from the characteristic worldviews and self-concepts of the social order which the movements are challenging".

Conversely, Barkun (1997: 247-8) refers to the concept of the 'cultic milieu', where the conception of the world is the mirror image of what is popularly thought to be 'real'. The cultic milieu refers to "...society's 'rejected knowledge'..." (Barkun 1997: 247). The white supremacist movement seems to be both a 'social movement' and an example of

the 'cultic milieu'. This thesis has already touched upon the centrality of the 'Jewish conspiracy' myth in the white supremacist worldview. There are other examples in the sample web sites of the inversion of reality, including the view of whites as victims.

One example of inversion of reality relates to the Ku Klux Klan. The 'KKK.com' site tries to rehabilitate the Klan identity by inverting reality and reinterpreting its history. The site argues that: "The KKK movement provided for the people of the south the leadership and rallying point to begin their arduous struggle to regain their lost dignity and indeed, the values of Western Civilization".214 The 'KKK.com' homepage equates the Klan with the 'morning sun', which arose from the '...abyss of human misery and despair...".215 The Stormfront white nationalist site calls the 'Reconstruction' era Klan a 'campaign of resistance'.216 In speaking of the Klan symbol and ritual of the burning cross, the 'KKK.com' webpage reconstructs the meaning and reality of the act:

> We light the Cross with fire to signify to the world that Jesus Christ
> is the light of the world. Where the Holy Light shall shine, there will
> be dispelled evil, darkness, gloom and despair. The Light of the Truth
> dispels ignorance and superstition as fire purifies gold and silver, but
> destroys wood and stubble. So by the fire of the Cross of Calvary, we
> cleanse and purify our virtues by burning out our vices with the fire
> of His Word.217

There are yet other examples of inversion of reality. The 'KKKK.net' site claims that among the reasons to join the Klan is the fact that: "...there comes a time in every person's life when he/she must choose between the right or wrong in life".218 The Be Wise As Serpents site argues that: "we can't stress it enough, that **ALL** seekers of Truth shall be welcomed here!"219 Lastly, the National Alliance urges: "Be a winner. Work with the winners in the National Alliance. Don't wait".220

One aspect of reality inversion that white supremacists utilise in legitimising their

worldview, is the claiming of victimhood for the 'white race'. For instance, the

Occidental Pan-Aryan Crusader claims that it is whites who suffer most in North

American society:

> Burdensome racial preference schemes in hiring, racial preference
> schemes in university admissions, racial preference schemes in gov-
> -ernment contracting and small business loans. Beyond quotas there
> is the denial of rights of free speech and of due process to Whites
> who are critical of these governmental policies. We have special
> punishments for assaults committed by Whites if the motives might
> be racial. In addition, White pay a proportion of the costs of the
> welfare state that is disproportionate to what they receive in benefits
> …The more Whites sacrifice, the more non-Whites demand.**221**

Likewise, the NAAWP web site warns that: "It's not illegal to be white…yet!"**222** The

organisation claims that 'Whites' have been wronged by 'discriminatory practices'.**223**

Images of 'inferiority' can be used as a strategic impression management tactic, in

the hope of getting the white supremacist 'word out' without bringing down censure on

themselves. Thus a potentially controversial viewpoint becomes an example of 'little',

underdog truth under pressure of being quashed or suppressed by big, monopolistic

'ZOG' lies. The web sites try to neutralise the message they are promoting by pretending

to simply be an 'underground', 'unpopular', or politically incorrect worldview. For

example, White Pride Network says that its aim is to "…offer material that is normally

banned, censored and shunned from mainstream media outlets".**224** It calls the Internet

the "…very last place left for the 'little guy' to speak out…".**225** Hoffman's Radical

Truth in History site has as its purpose the presentation of "…news suppressed by the

establishment press".**226** David Duke's Official homepage also claims to simply be

'anti-establishment'.227 If the attempt to invert reality and claim victimhood seems acceptable to a viewer, then a site can be said to have made a successful positive impression management performance. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to ascertain the likelihood of success in this case, but merely to voice the possibility.

Trying to understand the white supremacist movement and its racism involves seeing racism in a different way than perhaps it is normally viewed. When the connotations of the concept 'racism' are considered, usually the focus is on the idea of superiority: racism is an ideology in which one group believes itself to be superior in relation to another group or groups. Yet, in analysing the North American white supremacist movement, it becomes evident that there is another element to take into account. The hate sites considered within this study, indeed, provide a multitude of instances in which the imagined superiority of whites is proclaimed. Whites are alternately seen as noble, intelligent, fierce, warrior-like, uniquely compassionate and even endowed with divine characteristics. However, there is an inherent insecurity to the ideologies of the white supremacist movement, which, it could be argued, is present in all instances of racism. That is to say, there is a flip side to the 'superiority complex' that racist individuals, parties or groups possess; that is a subtle, yet unmistakable undercurrent of inferior feelings.

While white supremacist groups are inherently guided by a belief in the supremacy of 'whites', there is also a sense that they feel they are weak, 'less than', under attack and potentially at risk of total destruction. As Daniels (1997: 37) describes, this anxiety has connections with gender and the 'warrior fantasy':

White men are not uniformly depicted in white supremacist discourse as the embodiment of strength which the warrior imagery indicates. The very notion of 'warrior' is one that exists within a dualistic construction and depends on its juxtaposition to the view of white men as 'victims'. White men depict themselves as victims of racial discrimination, of class oppress--ion, and as the special victims of race, gender, and class oppression at the hands of the racial state. The white warrior who protects his family may find himself a victim of the state, and his family may be the victim of racial Others. And, in an ironic twist on the traditional depictions of white women as sexual victims of Black men, white men also depict themselves as victims, or potential victims, of both physical and sexual assault by Black men.

According to hate groups, race mixing will 'destroy' the white race, whites are at the mercy of 'black' crime, the Jews 'control' the world, including the media, and white 'racialists' cannot get the 'truth' out to the masses. It would seem that this 'inferiority complex' is present in every instance of racism. Behind every claim of superiority lies a worried doubt. For racism is more than a proclamation of superiority and the advocacy of maintaining that state of being by any means necessary, including the oppression of so-called 'inferior' groups. It hides a counter-current of anxiety. As well, Satzewich (1989: 311-25) refers to these feelings of ambivalence and racial anxiety in the context of Chinese labourers in western Canada during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The Chinese were considered culturally and racially inferior in certain ways, yet admired and even feared because of the competition they posed as wage labourers and merchants.

Why is it necessary to vehemently declare the superiority of a group unless members are anxious that it is not obvious to all observers? Why advocate the oppression or destruction of any other group, unless one feels that that group actually poses a potential threat to the status of the first group? By admitting that another group poses a so-called threat, is that not an admission of weakness itself? It would seem that while racism does

certainly revolve around claims of imagined superiority, there is a key undercurrent of insecurity present in manifestations of racism, in this case the existence of organised white supremacy on the World Wide Web. A useful label to refer to this concept of concurrent feelings of racial superiority and inferiority could be the term, 'warrior-victim dichotomy'.

(6) ALLUSIONS TO NON-VIOLENCE

Another important positive impression management tactic used by racist groups is the assertion of non-violent principles. The 'KKK.com' homepage asserts a commitment to law and order: "The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan is a strictly law-abiding organization. Every member is sworn to uphold the law and the principles of justice, and that he will not conspire with others to commit any unlawful or violent acts".**228** The Liberty or Death site insists that it also is a lawful organisation: "We do not advocate the violent overthrow of a constitutionally lawful government. We do not make bombs, and we do not blow up buildings. We do not possess unlawful weapons. We do not discuss, advocate, or agree to any unlawful act".**229** The 'catch' of course, is that militias such as Liberty of Death do not believe that the current government structure is constitutionally lawful, thereby allowing for violence to take place.

The Heritage Front maintains that: "we do not condone any violence or hate activity directed at so-called visible-minorities".**230** The Front purports to be interested in creating a new, disciplined class of racial 'activists' that show maturity and restraint in order to make a positive impression on its mainstream audience and to reach its 'lofty'

goals.**231** Likewise, the 'KKKK.net' web site warns its followers of the consequences of violent or illegal conduct:

> The Imperial Klans of America Knights of the Ku Klux Klan are a legal and law abiding organization that will NOT tolerate illegal acts...If you take it upon yourself to violate the law, you do so on your own, If you commit an illegal act it will result in your membership with the IKA to be on supension and you may be banished. We cannot and will not be responsible for any member commtting any illegal acts...We need a rock solid foundation upon which to build our organization. We cannot do this in jail...If anyone starts to talk [of] illegal acts to you, tell them to STOP, walk away and report it to the International Office ASAP. I REPEAT, ANY MEMBER COMMITTING ANY ILLEGAL ACT DOES SO ON THEIR OWN, YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED! (emphasis in original).232

In its 'Requirements for Membership' the National Alliance remarks that it will not allow prisoners to apply for membership in the group, as it "...does not advocate any illegal activity and expects its members to conduct themselves accordingly...".**233** Similarly, the World Church of the Creator site features a disclaimer, which says that the Church "...neither condones violence or unlawful activities nor do we promote or incite them".**234** Later in the web site it also warns its followers to avoid illegal actions: "***Do not resort to any illegal means or methods***! Anyone who advocates actions outside of the limits of 'reasonable self-defense' and outside the law can be assumed to be an agent provocateur and would be subject to being expelled from the organization" (emphasis in original).**235** The WCOTC also asserts that:

> No, we don't want to kill anybody. Nowhere in our books or our literature do we say we plan on killing anybody. If you have taken the time to read our Bibles, you will find that instead of being prone to violence, as our enemies would like to portray us, our creed and program is fully committed to law and order, to the constitution, and to obeying the law.**236**

The Occidental Pan-Aryan Crusader site says that it is not necessary to use violence to achieve the white nationalist 'objectives' of some members of the hate movement.237 While all of these example sound laudatory, the truth is much different. As it will be shown in part two, the World Church of the Creator and the Occidental Crusader are just two examples of sites that pay initial lip service to the idea of non-violence, while promoting violence deeper into their pages. The 'positive' impression that hate groups may make on some in their audience by identifying themselves with non-violence ultimately breaks down under further investigation. For instance, the Militia of Montana site maintains that it "…does not advocate the breaking of any law…", and that the books it sells are for 'informational purposes only', and yet, these materials, including manuals on 'Tactical Shotgun' and 'The Ultimate Sniper', suggest a different ideological commitment.238

In pressing a non-violent stance, it is clear that the sites are asking the audience to engage in a re-ordering of reality. The Zundelsite, for example, maintains that its figurehead is committed to non-violence:

> Those of you who know Ernst Z=FCndel (sic) personally know without
> a shred of doub=t (sic) that to accuse this man of violence or of inciting
> violence in others is desperation and panic on the part of his mendacious
> opposition, because nothing will be harder to prove, and hundreds will
> confirm and verify the opposite. For almost forty years, Ernst Zundel
> has made pacifism not only a person=al (sic) creed but a studied political
> stance that has served him as a tool in his activism on behalf of his own
> race and his own people. To say that he is violent or that he can and will
> cause violence is organized and orchestrated government character assass-
> -ination by using anonymous bureaucrat stooges.239

Interestingly, while WAR's Tom Metzger proclaims war to be natural, he also calls it negative, a 'racket' and a waste of resources.240 It is intriguing then that he chose the

organisational name that he did. Both examples show an interesting twisting of logic and manipulation of reality.

Skinhead Pride maintains that it does not advocate violence, saying that: "We have no messages on our page that incite any kind of violence, racial or otherwise, and we don't advocate cowardly acts like shooting up a highschool then putting a bullet in one's head".241 The web site questions the practicality of violence; however, it does so in a blatantly racist manner: "Going to prison for beating some mongrel is not going to help the white race prosper".242 'Micetrap', the host of the White Pride Network site, likewise 'condemns' violence and illegality although he too seems to focus on the tactical disadvantages of violence rather than moral concerns:

> I would like to use my position as the webmaster of this website to
> strongly warn against the participation in criminal acts with the notion
> that these feeble-minded events would benefit the movement in any
> way. Vandalism, harassment and assaults by people linked to 'racism'
> or 'racist organizations' will result in jail sentences and highly public-
> -ized trials that will never be worthwhile or beneficial.243

Despite this admonishment against violence, both sites are full of allusions to violence, as will be discussed in part two. This illuminates the fact that the use of non-violent talk as a mode of positive impression management is often a very precarious phenomenon, with the true, violent nature of racists revealing itself from behind a superficial mask of commitment to non-violent aspirations. The claim of commitment to non-violence is yet another tactic used by racists to appear legitimate and mainstream, although critical analysis of sites declaring devotion to non-violence usually turns up conflicting examples of blatant or implied violence within the content of these sites.

SOME THOUGHTS ON POSITIVE IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

It would seem that the groundwork for the impression management apparent on the Internet hate web sites was laid long before, in the printed publications and physical presence of David Duke and other racists who traded their hoods for suits, and epithets for 'coded' language. Before the advent of the Internet, certain racists were capitalising on a presentation of self that seemed more acceptable and legitimate to the mainstream: an avoidance of racist language, violence, and a polished appearance all combined to make their underlying racism more appropriate to average folk.

Through mechanisms such as the use of euphemistic and pseudo-academic language, allusions to non-violence and famous figures, and inversion of reality, white supremacists on the World Wide Web attempt to produce sympathy for their worldviews and create a legitimate identity for themselves in the mainstream. It many cases, this is done through 'rearticulation' and the use of coded signifiers. Certainly, this thesis argues that attempts at positive impression management and rearticulation fail more often than they succeed. With a degree of analysis into the content of these homepages, ideological 'slippage' is typically seen to occur in the presentation of the web sites, and the positive impression that has been consciously crafted is thereby confounded. Often it is the case that 'rearticulation' in some form is used on the introductory pages of a site, while more explicit racism is found deeper into its pages. It is difficult to say how effective this use of positive impression management tactics is among average visitors to hate web sites, who may be less likely to critically analyse the messages they are receiving from a site.

PART TWO - 'NEGATIVE' IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

So far this chapter has discussed some of the elements of positive impression management that white supremacists use on their Internet web sites. They do this to create a view of themselves as legitimate and close to the mainstream. However, another mode of 'presentation of self' is used by hate mongers on the 'Net: 'negative' impression management. That is to say, some white supremacists appear to desire to present themselves in an extreme light, and to show themselves to be ruthless, radical and fully racist. This may just be a case of racists showing their true stripes on a communication medium that allows them to speak their mind, but may also be a conscious ploy to cover up real-life weaknesses and to gain the attention of the mainstream through fear and loathing. Various types of explicit language and arguments, and the use of particular hyperlinks and symbolism, are some aspects of negative impression management that will be explored here.

(1) BLATANT & EXPLICIT LANGUAGE

In attempting to create an extreme image of themselves for their audience, certain hate groups utilise brutally racist language. Others appear to fail in their attempt to create a positive impression management 'performance' by 'slipping' from euphemistic language and arguments to more explicit ones. While the previous section focussed on the more subtle modes of the transmission of racist ideologies on hate web sites, there are numerous examples in the sample of more blatant racism, anti-Semitism and homophobia.

The WAR homepage refers to itself as a 'Hate Page'.244 The World Church of the Creator remarks that: "We Creators take this stand: Yes, we are proud to be racists. Yes,

we are prejudiced in favor of the White Race at all times, in all things".**245** Most hate

web sites do not specifically refer to what they believe as being 'hateful', but in many

instances, this is very clear nonetheless. White supremacist web sites can be explicitly

racist, as the following quote on intelligence from the World Church of the Creator site

clearly shows:

> He is shiftless, lazy and dumb. The average pure black African nigger
> has an I.Q. about 40 points lower than the average White. This puts
> his average well below the moron class. The average American nigger,
> having assimilated a large quantity of White blood and actually being
> a mulatto, has a somewhat higher I.Q., somewhere at approximately
> 80, a good 20 points below the average White. This puts him just on
> the borderline of the moron classification, with a large percentage
> being actually in the moron category.**246**

The WCOTC also says that: "…niggers, undoubtedly, are at the very bottom of the

ladder, not far above monkeys and chimpanzees".**247** The introduction to the skinhead

Plunder and Pillage site proclaims to its audience that: "If you don't like it [the site]

you're free to take your Red faggot ass outta here".**248** The White Pride Network lauds

Hitler as a 'great man', and the WAR web site calls Arabs 'sand niggers', blacks 'talking

monkeys', Asians 'gooks', and refers to non-whites generally as 'mud' people.**249** The

World Church of the Creator uses the terms 'nigger' and 'jungle dwelling cannibal' to

refer to blacks.**250** It says quite explicitly that the root of evil lies with the Jews.**251**

Any number of racial slur words are also used on the Stormfront white nationalist

site.**252**

Another example of the explicit and violent nature of some of the hate web sites'

content, refers to the use of cartoons and 'humour' to shock audiences and entertain

followers. As Hamm (1994: 140) relates: "…perhaps the most outstanding feature of

WAR is its...use of racist cartoons. The purpose...is to bring humor to the skinhead style of terrorism". Both the WAR site and the White Pride Network page utilise racist cartoons to present their views on non-whites and Jews. The White Aryan Resistance site features a number of themed cartoons, on such topics as Jews, non-whites and gays.**253** There is very little subtlety; the cartoons picture non-whites as dirty and criminal, Jews as parasites and manipulators, and gays as limp-wristed, disease-ridden perverts. Likewise, a violent cartoon on the White Pride Network site shows a newly married Klan couple in robes driving away from the church dragging two blacks by the neck instead of the traditional tin cans.**254** Another, animated cartoon on the same site shows a sieg heiling stick figure hitting a 'Jewish' female figure in the head with a bottle, leaving her on the ground and bleeding profusely.**255** Similarly, an image called 'Winner of the 1999 Miss Africoon Pageant' shows a caricature of a swimsuit-wearing black woman with a chimpanzee's head superimposed over the woman's face.**256**

Graphic 'jokes' are also utilised by white supremacists, particularly on the White Pride Network site, to transmit racist, homophobic and anti-Semitic ideologies to the viewing audience in a particularly blatant and distasteful manner. Examples of the use of twisted 'humour' includes the following 'jokes': "Why does the nigger carry a turd in his wallet? I.D.", "What is the American dream? All the niggers go back to Africa with a Jew under each arm" and "Why was the faggot fired from his job at the sperm bank? For drinking on the job".**257** Lastly, the words to John Lennon's song 'Imagine' are re-worked on the Occidental Crusader site to reflect blatant racist ideas: "Imagine there's no

Jews, It isn't hard to do, No-one killing the unborn, And no pornography too; Imagine all the people, Living free of sleaze...".258

Further examples of the white supremacists' attempts to frame racist messages in the form of frightening and crude 'jokes', will be discussed in the next two sections on the vilification of minorities and the use of violence. It is apparent however, that white supremacists use explicit language in the attempt to create an identity for themselves that is extreme, ruthless and worthy of fear. It is a clear example of 'negative' impression management at work.

(2) VILIFICATION

White supremacists also use blatantly racist language to deliberately vilify non-whites and Jews. Typically, this is done through the 'criminalisation' of race and the use of 'biological' language to describe non-white and non-Christians. Criminalisation refers to the process of linking a group or individual, usually in some 'inherent' fashion, with the tendency to commit criminal acts. Biological language refers to the utilisation of words or phrases of an animalistic or viral nature to describe a group. There are plenty of instances of both criminalisation and biological language in the sample web sites.

Daniels (1997: 94) writes that: "The association between Black masculinity and criminality is a basic one in white supremacist ideology...". She argues that the 'criminality' of Black men is viewed as innate as well as 'savage' (Daniels 1997: 84). The David Duke Official site attributes jail, violence, and the 'slavery of crack and heroin' to blacks, and mass alcoholism to Native peoples.259 Likewise, the National Alliance homepage refers to black and Hispanic crime.260 The Heritage Front says that

in Canada: "...there is far more crime against Euro-Canadians committed by non-Whites than the other way around!"**261** The NAAWP emphasises the incidence of 'minority hate crimes on whites', and says that: "...minority crime is destroying the social fabric of America".**262** Without mentioning where it found its figures, the NAAWP site argues that: "On a per capita basis blacks commit 50 percent more violent crimes than Whites".**263** So too the World Church of the Creator claims without citing its sources that: "Most are aware of the facts of life – that niggers cause 85 percent of all crimes of violence...that most of the welfare money is going to niggers".**264** The Occidental Crusader site allegedly refers to FBI statistics to claim that blacks are: "...16 TIMES AS LIKELY TO MURDER A WHITE, THAN VISA (sic) VERSA" (emphasis in original).**265** The White Pride Network includes a disturbing 'joke' about incest in its efforts to criminalise blacks.**266**

This criminalising attitude toward non-whites can have serious implications. Thus, the WCOTC promotes the genocidal idea that:

> Since the black race commits the overwhelming majority of all violent (and other) crimes, it is plain that if we shrink their numbers we will shrink crime. The same principle applies to ignorance and poverty. Therefore, if we want to reduce crime, poverty, filth, slums and ignorance, the best and most effect--ive program is to shrink the number of niggers in America. The racial prog--ram of the World Church of the Creator therefore, is clearly spelled out: expand the White Race, shrink the coloreds.**267**

The White Pride Network site proclaims that lynching is the best way to stop what it calls the "...drug use, excessive rape, laziness, destruction of our language and culture..." that blacks supposedly bring to society.**268**

Jews are also seen as the purveyors of all things criminal and negative, usually as part of a general belief in a 'Jewish conspiracy'. For instance, the Posse Comitatus site argues that Jews are responsible for 'war crimes', the distribution of drugs, and have 'extorted' reparation monies from various nations for the Holocaust.269 The site adds that Jews: "lie, cheat, swindle, distort, extort, exploit, spy, sabotage, murder, assassinate, terrorize, victimize, pay anyone to do the above...".270 Hoffman's Radical Truth in History web page refers to Jews as drug traffickers, and instigators of fraud.271 Several sites feature fabrications from or distortions of the Talmud to back up their claim that Jews are evil and contemptible.272

There are also many instances where biological language is used to describe and dehumanise non-Whites and particularly Jews. In observing the sample of hate web sites, there are repeated instances where Jews as a group are labelled in terms of 'parasitism' or 'disease', or attempts are made to condemn them by linking them with the process of decomposition.

For example, the Aryan Nations web page boldly proclaims that: "The Jew is like a destroying virus that attacks our racial body to destroy our Aryan culture and the purity of our Race".273 In another section of the same site, Jews are objectified as a poison obstructing Aryan nationalist aspirations: "Only when this Jewish bacillus infecting the life of Aryan peoples has been removed can we establish a co-operation amongst the nations which shall be built upon a lasting understanding".274 The World Church of the Creator web site comments on the allegedly negative effects of Jewish presence, saying that: "...a strange malaise infected the White Race. A Jewish fungus on the brain

intruded upon its thinking".**275** The WCOTC describes the Jew as a "slithering",

"…chameleon-like parasite…".**276** The Posse Comitatus homepage voices the anti-

Semitic opinion that Jews are 'demonic, bloodsucking, parasitic kikes' and 'bloodsucking

vampires'.**277** The White Pride Network homepage also refers to Jews as 'parasitic'.**278**

The National Alliance labels Israel itself as a "…a gigantic, swollen parasite".**279**

Likewise, the 'Stormfront White Nationalist Information Center' site equates the Jewish

nation with disease when it calls Israel: "…the cancer of our earth…".**280** Lastly, the

Nova Scotia Skinhead site, says that the Jewish people actively destroy all that is positive

and thriving, when they claim that Jews "…slowly decompose all life".**281** Jews,

however, are not the only victims of white supremacists' racist wrath. Thus, the

Stormfront white nationalist site refers to blacks as: "…carbuncles on the American body

politic".**282** On the For Folk and Fatherland site, a passage by the late neo-Nazi George

Lincoln Rockwell equates non-whites with "…the lowest spawn of the jungle…".**283**

Another devaluation tactic used within many of the racist web sites involves

reference to animalistic terms; this is especially the case when referring to non-whites.

The Nova Scotia Skinhead site dehumanises non-whites as well as Jews, by referring to

them as being like 'work animals': "Starting at the bottom is the simian. He is not a

human being, but is useful as a work animal, albeit more unruly. These races consist of

certain 1) black Negroes, 2) Hispanics (sic) cross breeds, 3) Negroid Amerindians and 4)

Negroid Asians and 5) j*ws".**284**

Whichever labelling technique is used, the end result is to 'inferiorise' non-whites

and Jews, and in so doing, setting the stage for the legitimisation of possible violent acts

and violations of the rights of non-'Aryan' peoples. As Feagin & Vera (1995: 76)

comment: "Typically, the person of colour becomes a dehumanised thing, even an animal

or insect, and this dehumanised status may be used to legitimate violence". Both non-

whites and Jews are victimised by the language and labelling techniques used by many

white supremacists on their Internet sites. Although white supremacists may try to use

'positive' impression management techniques to mould their image into a form palatable

to the mainstream, these 'performances' are ultimately unsuccessful, for the use of

criminalisation and biological language exposes their racist orientation. However, if this

language is actively employed on a site as a 'negative' impression management

technique, in order to make the particular group look more ruthless and dangerous than it

really is, it may have some effect on the audience.

(3) ALLUSIONS TO VIOLENCE

Another example of the use of blatantly racist and explicit language by some white

supremacists to promote a particular impression of themselves for their viewers, is the

use of implied or unconcealed allusions to violence as part of the content of their web

sites. It was discussed earlier that allusions to non-violent principles are often utilised by

white supremacists as positive impression management tactics to promote a legitimate

and more mainstream vision of organised racism. However, this non-violent stance is

usually confounded by allusions to violence elsewhere in the web sites. This could be an

accidental instance of impression 'slippage', or else an indication of unconscious

hypocrisy. However, this thesis argues that many white supremacists seem to actively

choose a radical and ruthless image of themselves in order to impress upon their audience

their real or imagined power, vitality and influence. As Ebata (1997a: 16-7) posits: "The purpose of violence appears to be to display the virility and power of right-wing extremists, along with the vulnerability of others; to instil fear and panic; and to earn respect". To this end, there are many examples of violent verbiage in the sample sites. Allusions to violence occur on a variety of web sites, cutting across sample category lines.

Even sites that typically rely on positive impression management techniques to get their point across suffer from ideological 'slippage'. Although the World Church of the Creator tries to promote a view of itself as non-violent, its commitment to violence can be found throughout its site, not the least in its motto, 'RAHOWA' or 'Racial Holy War'.285 The National Alliance implies violence in several parts of its web site. In the section on the 'goals' of the National Alliance, the implied violence and genocide is all too clear: "We must have no non-Whites in our living space, and we must have open space around us for expansion. We will do whatever is necessary to achieve this White living space and to keep it White".286 The Alliance also refers to a Nazi-esque 'final cleansing', to occur in the coming racial revolution.287 The National Alliance's attempt at a positive identity breaks down totally in two violent passages: "We all ought to be in the mood for getting out our rifles and beginning a general cleanup in America".288 And even more blatantly: "Keep your firearms out of sight, but within reach. The day will come for using them. The day for a great cleansing of this land will come. Until that day, keep your powder dry".289

Implied advocacy of genocide is present in many allusions to violence. For instance,

the NAAWP's claim that whites will become a minority if "high, illegitimate, minority

birthrates..." are 'allowed' to continue, seems on the verge of advocating some sort of

genocidal program.290 Likewise, the WCOTC claims that not only are blacks 'obsolete',

but that: "throughout Nature the laws are clear: in order to survive when a menace or

danger threatens, that menace is attacked and destroyed. We must therefore make it our

prime goal to expunge the Jews and the riggers (sic) from America, in fact from all other

White areas".291 One of its '16 Commandments' relates that: "it is our immediate

objective to relentlessly expand the White Race, and keep *shrinking* our enemies" (my

emphasis).292 The site explicitly says that: "it is our deliberate goal for the White Race

to inhabit this Planet Earth in its entirety".293 It refers to a Latin phrase, 'Delenda est

Judaica', several times throughout the site, which apparently means 'Judaism/Jews must

be destroyed'.294 The Stormfront white nationalist site also proclaims that genocide and

violence are acceptable means:

> The thing we should do about starving niggers in Africa is let them starve,
> the only way to prevent the number of hungry niggers from exceeding the
> world's capacity to feed them". The Stormfront site goes on to claim vio-
> -lence as a feasible and noble mode of action: "We are Americans. This is
> our country. He who would take it from us, by force or by stealth, is our
> enemy. And it is our purpose – nay, it is our duty to our children and to
> their children and to our yet unborn posterity – it is our duty to use all
> feasible means to destroy him.295

The Posse Comitatus site is most explicit of all in advocating violence and genocide

against Jews: "The are no good jews and bad jews...they are ALL the many anti-Christs

in the land and there will be no Peace on earth until they are all exterminated!" (emphasis

in original).296 Relating to the Holocaust, the Posse site argues that: "since the jews

have squealed and lied so much as to the 'ovens' during World War II, perhaps they need some real live experiences to really get in the mood…".**297** The Posse advocates shooting Jews, and deporting them to Israel.**298** Similarly, through the neo-Nazi White Aryan Resistance web site, leader Tom Metzger says of Holocaust denial that: "As for me, I would spend the money proving the Nasty Nazis did it, and grumble because they only brought 6 million to Aryan Justice".**299** Ultimately the WAR site claims, it will be "…the group having the most blood on their hands" that will take control of the 'System'.**300** The Posse Comitatus site also calls for the 'late term abortion' of abortion doctors and their families.**301**

A preoccupation with violence in the Militia of Montana's worldview is implied in the inclusion of violent-sounding texts and videos offered for sale by the site. The site sells products with such titles as 'Hand to Hand Fighting', 'Booby Traps', 'Manstoppers' and 'Advanced Ultimate Sniper'.**302** As well, the official publication of the Militia is called 'Taking Aim'.**303**

Of all the categories of white supremacist groups in the sample, skinhead sites were found to be the most likely to promote a violent image as part of a larger commitment to negative impression management. The skinhead commitment to violence is shown particularly in the titles of 'white power' music the sites offer for sale or for immediate listening as audio clips. On the Skinhead Pride site, such titles include 'Holocaust 2000', 'Coon Shootin' Boogie' and the album 'When the Ropes Stretch Tight', and leave no doubt as to the violent and radical orientation of the group.**304** Likewise, the White Pride Network site features music like 'Terminate', 'Piece of Shit Cop' and 'Hate Filled

Mind'.**305** The Plunder and Pillage skinhead site offers music reviews for racist groups

like 'Bully Boys', whose songs include 'Fire up the Ovens' and 'Six Million More'.**306**

Plunder and Pillage also highlights a section of its site called 'Storytime with Warren', a

violent skinhead-written tale of alcohol and beatings.**307** Skinheads are quite upfront

about their violence; the Plunder and Pillage site advises followers that: "When in doubt

knock-em out!".**308**

Violent 'jokes' and imagery are also a part of skinhead sites. The White Pride

Network offers its audience 'humour' of a particularly vile and violent nature: "What do

you call three blacks at a skinhead barbeque? Charcoal. Kentucky Fried Nigger", "What's

the difference between a jew and an apple pie? An apple pie doesn't scream when you

put it in the oven", and "A nigger, a jew and a spic get shoved off a building at the same

time – which one hits [the] pavement first? Who cares".**309** As well, centred on the top

of the White Pride Network's front page is a large cartoon graphic of a burly skinhead

crashing through a computer screen, about to strike the young Jewish man sitting at the

computer.**310** This site also admires violence-prone pitbull dogs as a skinhead's 'best

friend'.**311** Likewise, the Nova Scotia Skinhead homepage features what appears to be a

picture of a body inside an oven, with the caption 'Communists wanted here'.**312** A

blurry photo of a skinhead kicking and balling his fists graces the main page of the site,

leaving no doubt as to the inclinations of the group.**313** Skinhead sites particularly seem

to revel in their radical status.

References to violence seem to be utilised by white supremacists as 'negative'

impression management techniques, in order promote an image of themselves that is

Another of the implications of Internet use by racist and other groups is that it can make communication and unity between scattered organisations possible and effective to a previously unheard of degree. Cooper (1997: 103) posits that:

> ...the interactivity of the Internet has led to the emergence of an 'on-line subculture', where different sites promote and reinforce agendas of hate anarchy, and terrorism. For example, a Web page devoted to Hate Music may be promoted by another venue which provides explicit and all-too-accurate data on how to build a car bomb or make napalm. That same location would then encourage the user to 'visit' another site which serves as a clearinghouse of information for on-line extremist groups.

In fact, most sites in the sample featured 'links' to other far-right homepages. For example, the Heritage Front links to National Alliance, Stormfront and the Zundelsite.**314** Interestingly, the neo-Nazi For Folk and Fatherland site ties itself to skinhead and Holocaust denial sites.**315** The 'KKK.com' web page links to a medley of other organisations, including the Occidental Crusader, the National Alliance, Stormfront and the Militia of Montana.**316** It also links to international groups such as Britain's 'Nationalist Party'.**317** The Occidental Pan-Aryan Crusader links to WAR, Stormfront, the Church of the Creator, National Alliance, David Duke, and Aryan Nations.**318** It also features a 'phone list' for contacting various 'white power' groups, and links electronically to overseas organisations such as the Afrikaner Resistance Movement and Le Pen's 'Front National'.**319** The following sites also link to a variety of racist web pages: Skinhead Pride, World Church of the Creator, Plunder and Pillage, Aryan Nations, and 'KKKK.net'.**320**

Some sites do however, attempt to distance themselves ideologically from their list of linked sites, saying that they do not necessarily support the opinions expressed on

other sites. For instance, White Pride Network uses this caveat in its site, although it links to a multitude of sites, including many in the sample, such as Stormfront, National Alliance, Heritage Front, NAAWP, the Occidental Crusader, Plunder and Pillage and Zundelsite.**321** However, sites reveal their stripes by the company they keep.

These links are a way by which the radical and ruthless ideological commitments of hate sites are exhibited. The racist links most of the sample sites include may indicate a conscious attempt on the part of these web sites to appear technically sophisticated, and to show that there is communication and unity of thought within a viable Internet hate 'community', and beyond. In fact, by following the links of sites in the sample, most sample sites were interconnected, and a medley of other 'non-sample' white supremacist sites could be found, within a complex system of Internet hate. This may be an indication of 'negative impression management'; an effort to reveal the 'reality' of a supposedly strong and connected hate movement, while exposing an extreme picture of their ideological commitments that warrants mainstream fear and respect.

A small but significant segment of the Internet hate movement is 'isolationist', committing itself to advertising only its own particular message without attempting to promote the hate movement as a whole by including mention to other white supremacist worldviews. That is to say, certain sites link to only sites of a similar nature, letting other types of pro-white sites fend for themselves, and leaving visitors to find these sites on their own. The National Association for the Advancement of White People homepage, for instance, links only to other NAAWP chapters across the country.**322** The Nova Scotia Skinheads site links mainly to other skinhead sites, including all of the skinhead sites in

the sample - Plunder and Pillage, White Pride Net and Skinhead Pride.**323** Strangely, one of the most blatantly racist sites in the sample, the Posse Comitatus, is very 'coy' when it comes to its hyperlinks, linking to such innocuous sites as 'USA Journal', 'World Net Daily' and 'Tech Talk'.**324** The Zundelsite links to a variety of other Holocaust denial sites but, interestingly enough, attempts to appear 'objective' by including links to the 'Nizkor' Holocaust remembrance and anti-denial site, and the Simon Wiesenthal Centre homepage.**325** Hoffman's 'Radical Truth in History' site links mainly to other Holocaust denial homepages, but also includes a mixture of Jewish, Palestinian and children's sites.**326** Uniquely, the White Aryan Resistance, Institute for Historical Review, Militia of Montana and Liberty or Death homepages are the only hate sites in the sample that appear to have no links at all to other sites. Perhaps this habit of linking to similar groups, or none at all, stems from a desire to hold visitors' loyalties, without diluting their attentions by mentioning other sites that may not have shared in all aspects of their particular ideological viewpoints.

As was mentioned previously, in the case of the Militia of Montana site, which claimed to be non-racist, it is only the inclusion of the name 'John Trochmann', the co-founder of MOM, that would 'tip off' an educated observer to the links the group has to such racist organisations as Aryan Nations through Trochmann's activities as a speaker at various racist events.**327**

The racist links that most of the sample sites utilise in presenting themselves and their identities, points to the idea that racists may use these links to back up their claims to strength and significance as a radical ideological movement.

(5) SYMBOLISM

A particular use of symbolism is present on white supremacist web sites, which points to the idea that the creators of such sites welcome and encourage an extreme image of themselves being formed on the part of their audience. Some imagery is more subtle, such as the NAAWP site's use of pictures of exotic white tigers to promote its pro-white message.**328** However, in most cases, symbolism was a key indicator of racist and violent sentiments.

According to the Simon Wiesenthal Center (1998: 14-6), Viking 'rune' symbols are very popular among white supremacists, and this attraction to runes is observed on the Internet as well. The 'Yggdrasil', which looks like a vertical limb with three branches, is a symbol prominently displayed by the National Alliance web site.**329** The name is also used by contributor to several sites in the sample, including Stormfront, the Occidental Pan-Aryan Crusader and Nova Scotia Skinheads pages.**330** 'Yggdrasil' is the name of the rune denoting 'Life' (Simon Wiesenthal Center 1998: 14).**331** It is very ironic that racist and genocidal white supremacist ideologies are being promoted under the symbol of 'Life'.

Also used are the 'Death' rune, which is a upside down 'yggdrasil', and the 'Sol' or 'Sun' rune, both of which are often the subject of tattoos. The 'Life' and 'Death' runes are also important in relation to Nazism, as they were used to mark the dates of birth and death on SS soldiers gravestones (Simon Wiesenthal Center 1998: 14-15).**332** The 'Odin' rune is also used by various far-righters to refer to an identification with 'Odinism', which is apparently not a racist religion in itself (Simon Wiesenthal Center

1998: 16).**333** This distortion of Viking symbols plays into the central importance of 'whiteness' and its purported relation to 'civilisation' in white supremacist dogma. The Vikings are seen as a tough, resourceful and adventurous culture of 'white' people, and therefore racists often adopt their imagery and hold on to their history as a ideal to which whites can aspire to and take inspiration from (Hamm 1994: 119).

The initial expectation was that the categories used to organise the web site sample would have some relevance in terms of the ideology and imagery found in analysing each type of site. For example, neo-Nazi sites would be unique in the use of Nazi emblems and accoutrements. However, Nazi symbols are frequently used in a large variety of white supremacist sites, including use of the swastika, of course, and similar, swastika-like symbols. For instance, the swastika itself is featured on sites including the Nova Scotia Skinheads and the For Folk and Fatherland.**334** Another popular symbol is the Celtic cross, sometimes referred to as a 'sunwheel', 'crosswheel' or 'Odin's cross' (Simon Wiesenthal Center 1998: 14). This symbol, looks like a cross centred within a circle with its four points extending outside of the circle. It looks like a closed off swastika. Often the words 'White Pride World Wide' will be written around the crosswheel.**335** It is a popular Klan symbol, but it is also used throughout the movement, often by skinheads (Simon Wiesenthal Center 1998: 14).

A variation on the crosswheel is used by some Klan groups, with an image of a droplet of blood in the centre of the circle (Simon Wiesenthal Center 1998: 16). The crosswheel is the dominating feature on the Stormfront introductory page, and the White Pride Network site includes it as well.**336** The Aryan Nations symbol is somewhat

similar in appearance to the swastika, including a vertical sword intersecting an elongated 'N' shape, with a crown over top.**337** As well, the Crosstar site symbol is a cross with arrow points at each of the four ends.**338** It is reminiscent of a swastika, and in actual fact, was a symbol utilised by Hungarian Fascists.**339**

Other Nazi-related images include 'SS' lightning bolts, the 'SS' 'Death's Head' skull symbol and the stylised 'SA' or 'Storm-trooper' logo (Simon Wiesenthal Center 1998: 15). Some sites boast 'graphics' sections, like the Occidental Pan-Aryan Crusader and Stormfront sites, from which a variety of symbols, including the swastika, can be downloaded.**340** Runes, crosswheels, swastikas, skulls and other symbols, are included on several graphics pages. Crests and banners from various groups, such as WAR and 'The Order' are also available to download.**341** Some sites included National Socialist history and dogma in the content of their sites while others, though not referring directly to Adolf Hitler and the Nazi perspective, would include downloadable graphics or photographs of racists extending their arms in the Nazi 'sieg heil' salute.**342** This incorporation of Nazi imagery was especially true of skinhead sites.

Thus, symbolism is often used by white supremacists to show their racist inclinations, in combination with other negative impression management tactics, or in contrast to unsuccessful attempts to promote a viable and legitimate image or identity among its Internet audience.

SOME THOUGHTS ON NEGATIVE IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

As has been discussed, a variety of negative impression management tactics are utilised by white supremacists on their Internet sites, to promote an image of themselves

that is radical, ruthless and openly racist. It is surmised that they do this consciously, and that they do this to both attract serious recruits and to gain 'respect' through fear. Surely, allusions to violence, explicit language and blatantly racist rhetoric will garner few supporters in the mainstream. It may even bring the condemnation of society upon them, which to a certain extent it has, as the activities of groups like Nizkor and the Southern Poverty Law Center show. However, negative impression management, when successful, may mask what may be the real-life weakness of certain hate groups, or indeed the movement itself, in a show of virtual strength.

Which sites are more likely to use positive versus negative impression management tactics? Skinhead sites, compared with the other categories of the sample, were sites that focused their appeal on the 'lowest common denominator', and on attempts to use negative impression management tactics. They generally tended to avoid the positive impression management tactics and pseudo-academic tone of other, particularly Holocaust denial sites, omitting long tracts and articles and incorporating articles about beer and the 'fun' of violence and fighting. Skinhead sites usually showed their racist stripes blatantly in the Nazi graphics they liked to display and the particular epithets they chose to use. These sites were not totally without ideological forays; however, on the whole they were less inclined to voice a coherent set of guiding principles. While Holocaust denial sites stand out as those that more typically utilised positive impression management techniques, it was hard to pinpoint in terms of the other hate group categories which ones would make an attempt at a legitimate image and which would promote a radical, extreme image. This discussion will turn next to a consideration of

elements that either have the same impression management effect, whether positive or negative, or that have differing consequences depending on the situation.

PART THREE – FACTORS AFFECTING POSITIVE & NEGATIVE IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

This section will consist of those elements of hate web sites that may have either positive or negative impression management results, depending on the composition of the element (i.e., colour) or the circumstance or context in which they are considered. The factors under investigation here include size of site, colour, materials and pool of thinkers used, and the appearance and interactivity of the site.

(1) SIZE OF SITE

The size of white supremacist Internet homepages varies from site to site, although most are quite large. The 'size' of web sites as described here is loosely defined as how many pages of text and graphics there are in a site, where a page would be roughly equivalent to the amount of information that could be placed on an 8 ½ X 11" piece of paper. With that definition in mind, some sites, such as the 'KKKK.net' Klan site and the National Association for the Advancement of White People homepage, are comprised of under ten pages of information and graphics. Others, such as the Crosstar white nationalist site or the World Church of the Creator religious site, spanning what appears to be the equivalent of several hundreds of pages of data, making analysis particularly gruelling. As the Anti-Defamation League (on-line) reports and observation of the site confirms, the Zundelsite itself features around a thousand archived 'Z-gram' editorial-style messages, each usually a couple pages in length.**343**

Most sites seem quite extensive, featuring a number of articles and tracts on various topics, and a fairly detailed account of their overall worldview. A rough estimate of the size of most sites in the sample would be between ten and one hundred 'pages'. For example, the White Aryan Resistance site presents many pages of short diatribes on the group's thoughts on various topics, from women to the environment to abortion to government, as well as editorials and other pieces of writing on the state of race and the status of 'Whites'.**344** The Stormfront site goes further, incorporating a collection of articles from a well-known racist writer named Revilo Oliver, spanning three decades, from the 1960s to the 1990s, on a variety of subjects.**345**

The size of the majority of web sites is particularly interesting. It would seem that where white supremacists are concerned, size does matter. The idea would appear to be that size equals legitimacy or respectability, since an avalanche of information would seem to say 'there must be something to this issue, if so much can be said about it'. The racist assumes that quantity overrides quality, and that overwhelming the viewer with a cascade of information and 'facts' will cause him to view the site with potentially more respect and interest.

(2) COLOUR

The majority of sites used a distinctive set of colours, usually a combination of red, white and blue, or red, white and black. In 1995, an Anti-Defamation League (1995a: 1) report indicated that black, red and white predominate on many hate web sites. Fully

eighty-eight percent or twenty-two of the twenty-five sites in the sample concentrated on

some combination of the above-mentioned colours.

The meanings that can be attached to this use of colour are significant. Red, white

and blue are the colours of the American flag, and therefore a ploy to appear 'patriotic'

and legitimate. Neutral colours, such as the yellow and turquoise used by the Be Wise As

Serpents site, the yellow used by the National Alliance, and the green, white and black

used by the Institute for Historical Review homepage, may have the same legitimising,

normalising effect. Conversely, the use of red and black though, appears to show the

white supremacists in a different light, that of a potentially dangerous, deadly and violent

force. Red may symbolise passion and blood, and while black may represent solidity,

toughness, death and violence. Significantly, red, black and white are also the traditional

Nazi colours.

(3) *MATERIALS USED*

Another interesting idea relates to the materials used in the composition of hate web

sites. Are the articles, tracts and other text original to the homepage, or has the

information been recycled from other hate group sources, like pamphlets, posters and

books? Is the material on North American white supremacist World Wide Web sites new,

modern and created purposefully for the Internet medium, or is the content essentially

'old wine in new bottles'?

In analysing a sample of sites, it would appear that the content of the sites is a

mixture of new material with a large amount of 'recycled' data. It is generally easier to

ascertain what material has been used before, as usually it is derived from the printed

literature of the hate organisations. In analysing the sample of web sites, it is clear in at

least fourteen sites of the twenty-five, or roughly fifty-six percent, that information has

been 'recycled' in some manner or other. For instance, at least five sites, including

Heritage Front, Crosstar, Be Wise As Serpents, WAR and the Institute for Historical

Review, utilise material from printed newsletters, magazines or reports put out by those

groups. White Aryan Resistance features editorials from its monthly called the WAR

newspaper.**346** As George & Wilcox (1992: 375) reveal, the virulent racism of the WAR

web site is simply an electronic reflection of Tom Metzger's overall worldview and the

views he exhibits via other types of propaganda: "...Metzger publishes a tabloid entitled

WAR. In its pages...[is] some of the most outspoken and vehement racist and anti-Jewish

rhetoric in the neo-Nazi movement". Likewise, the Heritage Front publishes articles from

its 'Upfront' magazine and 'Heritage Front Report' 'journal'.**347** The Institute for

Historical Review includes text from volumes of its 'Journal for Historical Review'.**348**

Crosstar uses material from what it calls "...'All the Way' – The Fighting Journal of the

Nationalist Movement...".**349** Lastly, Be Wise As Serpents incorporates articles from

1994 to 1996 from a newsletter named 'Smyrna'.**350** Michael Hoffman's Campaign for

Radical Truth in History features articles and reports that Hoffman has previously

published.**351** In addition, web sites often present material that has been published

elsewhere or written by now deceased racists. For instance, the For Folk and Fatherland

neo-Nazi site regurgitates old Hitler and George Lincoln Rockwell speeches as part of its

web site.**352** As well, the Aryan Nations site uses articles by old Christian Identity

'theorists' to back up its points.**353** Finally, David Duke's Official site boasts 'academic

studies' from a variety of controversial authors, including Canadian academic J. Phillipe Rushton.**354**

While the World Church of the Creator features information previously published by its late founder Ben Klassen, it also has made attempts to incorporate new mediums and materials into its Internet repertoire.**355** For example, viewers can subscribe to two 'e-zines' put together by the Church.**356** National Alliance followers can subscribe to an e-mail mailing list.**357** Likewise, the Stormfront white nationalist site boasts three Internet mailing lists to which its audience may subscribe, including the 'Stormwatch' newsletter, the 'Stormfront-L' discussion forum and the 'NNA' news distribution list.**358** As well, the WCOTC, Heritage Front, National Alliance and David Duke homepages are among the sites that use Internet 'radio' and audio files to present material that, while it may not be original to the Internet, uses Internet technology to transmit it in an innovative new way.**359** These are the most obvious examples of hate groups using the Internet technology to its potential, to involve and 'enlighten' its audience in new and distinctive ways.

The implication is that when old material is recycled, it may have less relevance and interest to its viewers, if they realise that it is 'old news'. However, hate groups may use older material because it has had some positive results for the organisation in printed form. Because it has been used before, the web site may appear more coherent and organised because the message is more 'practiced'. This may help the web host in creating either a positive and 'legitimate' impression, or a negative yet 'powerful' identity. However, recycled material may also show that interest, skills or resources

prohibit hate groups from coming up with newer or original material, thereby weakening the overall impression. Using new and innovative methods to transmit ideas may show sophistication on the part of the particular web site, whether a positive or negative impression is being pursued.

(4) POOL OF THINKERS

The works of particular racist figures are featured again and again on the sites in the sample. These works include articles, quotes, speech transcripts of speeches and on-line catalog offerings. Making frequent appearances on white supremacist web sites are the works of the Louis Beam, William Pierce, David Duke, American Nazi Party founder George Lincoln Rockwell, Michael Hoffman, Ingrid Rimland and Ernst Zundel, 'Yggdrasil', Eustace Mullins, Mark Weber, European Holocaust deniers David Irving and Robert Faurisson, and the controversial Canadian academic J. Phillipe Rushton. A medley of other authors appear to a lesser degree on various web sites, including Bradley Smith, Lothrop Stoddard, Arthur Butz, Harold Covington, Bertrand Comparet, Revilo Oliver and Charles Coughlin.

While to the average person this list of names may have little relevance, some of these personalities have already been referred to in chapter two. Those with some knowledge of the history of white supremacy in North America quickly realise that these figures are or were among some of the most committed adherents to radical right-wing and racist ideas. Eustace Mullins is the racist and anti-Semitic author of, among other tracts, the 'Proof of Negro Inferiority' (Abanes 1996: 198; Barkun 1997: 289). Robert Faurisson is a former French academic.360 Bertrand Comparet was a significant Identity

preacher (Barkun 1997: 54, 60). Lothrop Stoddard has been called an 'influential racial theorist' whose work included a racial analysis of Jewish features (Barkun 1997: 127,138). Revilo P. Oliver, now deceased, was an Illinois-based professor of Classics who wrote racist tracts between the 1960s and the 1980s.**361** The Anti-Defamation League calls Oliver a Holocaust denier, and he was linked with the Institute for Historical Review and the World Church of the Creator.**362**

Some of these racist figures appear only on sites of a particular ideological focus or category. Reference is made to Holocaust denier Robert Faurisson and his work on three of four Holocaust denial sites in the sample, including Zundelsite, IHR, and CODOH.**363** Likewise, the late neo-Nazi George Lincoln Rockwell is included on sites with a distinctly neo-Nazi emphasis, including WAR, National Alliance, For Folk and Fatherland and Aryan Nations.**364** However, other racists appear to have a more universal appeal, including Louis Beam, a man who has been associated with a variety of white supremacist causes, including Christian Identity, Klan and Militia groups. His thoughts appear on variety of web sites in the sample; Aryan Nations, the Occidental Pan-Aryan Crusader, For Folk and Fatherland and CODOH all feature Beam's writings, and represent the categories of 'Religious', 'White Nationalist', 'Neo-Nazi' and 'Holocaust denial' respectively.**365** As well, Mark Weber's work is presented on the Zundelsite, CODOH and Weber's headquarters at the Institute for Historical Review, but is also in evidence on the pseudo-religious Aryan Nation site and the white nationalist Stormfront page.**366**

This evidence of the works of particular authors being featured on several theoretically 'distinct' types of sites could either point to some degree of universal appeal in their message that spans differences in worldview, or a degree of ideological homogeneity among white supremacist groups as a whole. There seems to be evidence of 'borrowing', or at least a level of ideological consensus among a variety of white supremacist groups, as particular articles and authors appear repeatedly in different sites. This unity in thought may strengthen a view of the hate movement as being powerful, cohesive and organised. As well, many audience members may not be aware of the racist backgrounds of the theorists listed above, and be encouraged to believe that the messages the authors are sending are legitimate. However, a bit of knowledge of the figures in the hate movement will sound warning bells in the minds of enlightened viewers and frustrate attempts by racists to promote a positive impression.

It also seems that there is a somewhat 'finite' pool from which the white supremacist movement draws its ideas and ideology. While there is an additional number of lesser known writers on some of the web sites, there is still a discernible pattern as to which ideas get used the most, and who is referred to as a source or accepted 'expert' in the field. The web sites refer again and again to certain authors, and depend on these few writers to back up their racist claims. This may weaken the effectiveness of the web sites to create a strong, militant, broadly based image for its audience.

(5) APPEARANCE & INTERACTIVITY OF SITE

The appearance and functionality of web sites can obviously have a serious effect on the impression that audience members receive, whether positive or negative. Such aspects

as 'updatedness', completeness, interactivity and sophistication can determine whether a white supremacist group's attempts to present a positive (legitimate) or negative (radical) identity will be likely to be successful. Problems that crop up with the proper functioning of hate web sites potentially cause viewers to disregard the impression management tactics of the site and discount it.

For instance, the National Alliance features a membership application to download and ready-made pamphlets to print out.367 Viewers can also subscribe to an e-mail mailing list.368 National Alliance has a foreign language section, incorporating German, Swedish, Dutch and French files, which broadens its level of sophistication and possible appeal.369 The Zundelsite, Aryan Nations and World Church of the Creator also boast foreign language capabilities. The National Alliance site is also relatively interactive with a regularly updated 'Letters from Browsers' section.370 Most of the site is well updated, which increases its 'relevance'. One problem lies with the 'American Dissident Voices' radio broadcast text files. The National Alliance site archives features many such files from 1993, 1994 and 1996, but except for the text of 'this week's' broadcast, none of the files are recent.371 This could indicate a lack of resources, and it makes the site lose some of its strength. The Heritage Front site tells a similar story. It is innovative and interactive in that it offers audience members the chance to download their very own 'zipped' copy of the entire web site.372 It is also fairly well updated. However, the issues of its 'Heritage Front Report' featured on the homepage are from at least as far back as 1997.373

Other examples from the sample include Crosstar, the white nationalist site, which is a fairly complex site with moving graphics and audio, and is quite well updated. However, various hyperlinks do not work on the site. The Stormfront and Plunder and Pillage sites appear to be frequently updated, perhaps weekly.374 The Zundelsite site boasts daily 'z-gram' messages.375 The Institute for Historical Review and the Occidental Crusader site on the other hand, had not been recently updated when they were accessed for analysis in this study. However, the Occidental Crusader site, as well the 'KKKK.net' homepage, feature 'audio'. The NAAWP site includes a 'guest book', a questionnaire, and allows viewers to set up an e-mail account with the web site.376 Several of the graphics on the site are also animated. Skinhead Pride also features a guest book, and a 'comments' survey.377 The World Church of the Creator invites visitors to subscribe to an online 'e-zine'.378 The Plunder and Pillage skinhead site boasts an 'IRC' chat room.379 A significant aspect of the David Duke Official site is that it includes an 'Online Store', offering such things as video and audio tapes, and hats, pins, t-shirts and pop can holders for sale.380 Other sites such as the Aryan Nations, Militia of Montana, Hoffman's Radical Truth in History and the Posse Comitatus all offer products for sale. The Militia of Montana site promises that: "If you have a question about your order you may call and talk to a representative from 8:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday".381 The Stormfront white nationalist site even accepts credit card payments.382

Ultimately, the presentation of a web site can affect its evaluation by an audience, either in terms of its use of 'positive' or 'negative' impression management. Innovation, sophistication, 'updatedness', completeness and interactivity can determine whether a

white supremacist site's performance will be accepted or rejected. The web sites in the sample show positive characteristics, and yet are plagued by problems as well.

SUMMARY

Internet communication technologies, particularly World Wide Web pages, have been called 'less rich' sites for interaction, impression management and the presentation of self, because they lack many of the gestures, cues and interactive elements most face-to-face encounters possess. But while the Internet homepage is a more static and text-oriented site of identity creation and performance, this chapter has shown that there are a medley of elements that play a role in creating and manipulating impressions about organised white supremacy for Internet audiences. In presenting themselves on Internet web sites, white supremacists manipulate elements such as size, colour, language and arguments to control and create a particular version of themselves for public consumption.

This identity may be the result of 'positive' or 'negative' impression management, where hate mongers attempt to make themselves look either rational and legitimate or radical and threatening, depending on their assessment of which image will prove most effective, successful and profitable. Ultimately, there are problems with both identity constructions. Even when successful in creating a radical and ruthless image, negative impression management tactics may bring increased and unwanted surveillance and condemnation of hate group activities on the 'Net and elsewhere. Negative impression management may conceal a reality of weakness and marginality among the hate movement. As well, even where coded language, rearticulation and positive impression

management tactics are utilised, 'slippage' into 'stigmatised' racist arguments and ideas may defeat attempts to appear legitimate to the mainstream. Critical analysis and a degree of scrutiny collapses most attempts on the part of white supremacists to 'normalise' their messages. However, positive impression management may fool younger and less critical viewers who 'buy into' the promoted image and pseudo-legitimacy of certain web sites. Both types of impression management may be problematised by factors underlying the sophistication of a site, including its appearance, level of interactivity and degree of 'updatedness'.

Thus the question remains: is the appeal of hate limited to the fringes and the marginalised, no matter what method is used to put the message forth? Are the hate groups still, even if their message is more accessible and technologically modern, essentially 'preaching to the choir?' Does the Internet facilitate unity and increase recruitment among hate mongers? In the end, these questions are hard to answer. Ultimately, the impact of the Internet on the North American hate movement may be that it increases the likelihood of organisation, communication, accessibility and growth, whatever its current reality.

This chapter, and indeed the entire thesis, has sought to show that the Internet web site performances of North American white supremacist organisations are complex, meaningful, and socially significant. Groups use ideological tools of rearticulation, coded language and impression management to manipulate their impact on their audience and to shape their identities, which ultimately hinge fundamentally upon racist and anti-Semitic claims and arguments.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to provide a coherent picture of the North American white supremacist movement, particularly as it relates its use of World Wide Web sites. That is to say, the purpose of this discussion has been to determine the way in which white supremacists present themselves and their racist and anti-Semitic identities in the context of Internet sites. In manipulating and shaping the image of themselves that their audience will encounter in cyberspace, hate groups use 'rearticulation', 'coded language' and 'impression management'. While Goffman's original ideas concerning presentation of self and impression management dealt with face-to-face interactions, I argue that with some alteration and within certain limits, web sites, and specifically white supremacist hate web sites, may be analysed with reference to the use of impression management tactics. While web sites are less flexible and interactive than face-to-face encounters are, 'text-based cues' may be used to present a particular image to an Internet audience. For example, 'white power' racists use positive impression management techniques such as the use of euphemistic and pseudo-academic language, allusions to non-violence and famous figures, and stylistic devices and inversion of reality to create an impression of themselves that attempts to appear legitimate and palatable to mainstream folk. 'Negative' impression management involves the use of elements such as the use of explicit language, allusions to violence, use of symbolism and links, and the vilification

of minorities to form an image that corresponds to a view of themselves as powerful, blatant and ruthless racists, who are worthy of fear and attention. This may be used to conceal real-life weakness in virtual shows of strength. Ultimately, many white supremacist sites use a combination of positive and negative impression management techniques in their content and presentation. There appears to be conflicting tendencies in whether to use positive or negative impression management, and it is difficult to say which categories of hate sites are more likely to use one type over the other. However, skinhead sites appear more likely to present a negative identity, while Holocaust denial sites seem more liable to promote a positive image.

The question is do average people visiting these sites actually see the discrepancies, and see past the 'smooth talk'? Does the use of euphemisms on some sites lull them into complacency about racism on the 'Net? Conversely, does the 'shock talk' of certain other sites throw other visitors into a panic regarding the real-life power of the hate movement? How effective is the modern brand of racist rhetoric that the white supremacists promote? Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to answer these very important questions. What may be hypothesised is that, for those who already have strong feelings of alienation and prejudice, the motivation to be critical of the messages of the hate web sites will presumably be low or non-existent. For these people, the impression management tactics of the white supremacist groups on the Internet will only make the messages that much more appealing. Despite the fact that white supremacists' use of impression management is sometimes inconsistent, negative or unsuccessful, these groups do manipulate imagery, text and other elements to present a certain view of

themselves, whether it be positive and legitimate or negative and rebellious. It is this apparent use of impression management, rearticulation and coded language, and the white supremacists' manipulation of Internet identity and image that motivates this study. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said most eloquently: "Injustice anywhere means injustice everywhere". It is for this reason that studying hate groups is not only academically intriguing, but also morally important. Whatever the level of its actual significance in mainstream society, the far right is a continuing and persistent element on the North American landscape.

While the size, power and influence of the hate movement is debatable, what is entirely evident is that the groups which comprise this subculture promote racial conflict and division, as well as advocating, either directly or by implication, the use of violence against those who lie outside the white racialist in-group, whether they be Jews, blacks, homosexuals, or white 'race traitors'. It is because of this advocacy of conflict and violence towards minority members of the community that studying, understanding and 'keeping tabs on' this social movement is important. Given the destructive ideologies and violent tendencies of the far right, it is necessary that further study take place that we may better understand its motivations and goals. If we, as a whole, enjoy a certain standard of rights, freedoms and privileges in our North American society, we must be ever vigilant towards those who would threaten that standard when it relates even to a small part, or minority. Thus, while it may or may not be wise or even possible to outlaw hate groups, it must be the case that these groups be monitored, studied and prevented from doing damage to the lives of minority citizens. Whatever threatens the potential security and

enjoyment of life of members of part of the community, threatens the well-being of the community as a whole. Thus, it is important to understand that part of our social reality in order to fully 'know ourselves', and to ensure that the far right cannot threaten the stability of our social life and institutions. Perhaps in understanding the origins and ideologies of the extreme right, we may be better equipped to avoid or constrain racism in our society. In that light, this thesis is presented as a small contribution towards understanding, knowledge and a hope for racial harmony.

ENDNOTES

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