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## Useful Victims: Symbolic Rage and Racist Violence on the Global Extreme-Right

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### Abstract

The extreme-right has long relied on false claims of anti-White violence and racialized victimhood narratives in order to promote violence and advance their ideology. By carefully curating a 'siege mentality' among adherents, extremist writers and 'philosophers' have positioned whiteness as something under attack, and mobilized the ideas of demographic peril and endangered whiteness in order to justify rhetorical and physical violence against people of color and minority communities. This mythology has been a constant feature of the publications and propaganda of far-right groups around the world, and has been used to further the constructed image of extremist racist organizations as protectors of both whiteness and womanhood. This rhetoric has been used to radicalize individuals to the point at which they see violence as acceptable and necessary – an oft-repeated process which reached its most recent tragic conclusion in 2016 when a white man murdered 9 worshippers at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, saying to one victim; "you rape our women... you have to go". This article analyzes the ways in which extremist right-wing groups in South Africa, the United Kingdom and United States have historically constructed the threat of anti-White violence and mobilized it in order to spread hate and radicalize individuals towards violent action. I argue that the extreme-right has consistently perpetuated a mythology surrounding race and sexuality in order to justify continued rhetorical and physical violence against communities of color, LGBTQ people, and the Jewish community.

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### Introduction

"I have to do it. You rape our women, and you're taking our country. And you have to go." – Charleston shooter Dylann Roof, 2016.<sup>2</sup>

"Facts, all of our enemies are pedophiles" – *Proud Boys: Uncensored*, Telegram (app), 15 November 2020

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<sup>2</sup> Ashley C. Rondini, 'White Supremacist Danger Narratives', *Contexts*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (2018) pp 60-62.

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In the extreme-right context, femininity has been constructed as something mystical, precious, pure and fragile.<sup>3</sup> The emphasis that activists around the world placed on the ‘lifegiving force’ of motherhood positioned white womanhood as something akin to an almost mythical energy, and created an idealized and imagined femininity that in reality belied the patriarchal and misogynistic nature of these groups. While on surface level it may seem that this gendered ideology has been largely contained within the extremist milieu and has had little impact on society more broadly, when combined with other elements of extreme-right ideology it becomes clear exactly how dangerous this ideology can be - and has been historically. The reliance of far-right ideology on racialized victimhood and a ‘siege mentality’ has positioned this imagined femininity as something under attack, and the ideas of feminine purity and the power of motherhood have been used to justify rhetorical and physical violence against people of color and minority communities. By mobilizing long-standing racist tropes of predatory black sexuality and white genocide conspiracy theories, the extreme-right have built a mythology of racialized sexual violence, in which white women and children are under constant attack by oversexualized and hyper-violent men of color. This mythology has been a constant feature of the publications and propaganda of far-right groups around the world, and has been used to further the constructed image of extremist racist organizations as protectors of both whiteness and womanhood. Furthermore this rhetoric has been used to radicalize communities and individuals to the point at which they see violence as acceptable and

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<sup>3</sup> For an introduction to the broader role of women within the far-right see Kathleen Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, Kathleen Blee, *Inside Organized Racism: Women of the Hate Movement*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, and Elizabeth Gillespie MacRae, *Mothers of Massive Resistance: White Women and the Politics of White Supremacy*, London: Oxford University Press, 2018. For a broader overview of the role of women in the radical-right and conservative political worldview see Melissa Deckman, *Tea Party Women: Mama Grizzlies, Grassroots Leaders, and the Changing Face of the American Right*, New York: New York University Press, 2016, Michaela Köttig, Renate Bitzan and Andrea Petö (eds.), *Gender and Far-Right Politics in Europe*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, Cynthia Miller-Idriss and Hilary Pilkington (eds.), *Gender and the Radical and Extreme Right: Mechanisms of Transmission and the Role of Educational Interventions*, New York: Routledge, 2018, Catherine E. Rymph, *Republican Women: Feminism and Conservatism From Suffrage Through the Rise of the New Right*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006; Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015; Emily Suzanne Johnson, *This Is Our Message: Women’s Leadership in the New Christian Right*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.

necessary – an oft-repeated process which reached its most recent tragic conclusion in 2016 when Dylann Roof murdered 9 worshippers at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, saying to one victim; “you rape our women... you have to go”.<sup>4</sup>

This article analyzes the ways in which extremist right-wing groups in the United Kingdom and United States have historically constructed the threat of anti-White violence – specifically violence against white women, white elderly, and white children – and mobilized it in order to spread hate and radicalize individuals towards violent action. By examining the publications, correspondence, and propaganda of these groups and their members, I argue that the extreme-right has consistently perpetuated a mythology surrounding race and sexuality in order to justify continued rhetorical and physical violence against communities of color and the Jewish community. By using caricatured images of men of color as predatory and violent, white supremacist propagandists constructed an imagined, racialized threat against white womanhood in particular. By packaging this imagined threat with a conspiratorial worldview which saw the white race as facing an existential threat, far-right activists further mobilized their pronatalist and patriarchal gender ideology in order to justify hate and violence.

### A Note on Terminology

It is first important to define exactly the groups and ideologies which this article examines. In this article I look specifically at violent extreme right groups in the United Kingdom, United

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<sup>4</sup> Rondini, ‘White Supremacist Danger Narratives’; This escalation to the point of ‘retributive’ violence relied on violent, aggressive constructions of far-right masculinity as much as it did the construction of passive, victimized femininity. A longer discussion of far-right masculinities is warranted but outside of the scope of this particular article. For an overview of the broader idea of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ that has informed the more violent masculinities of the rightward extreme, see Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995; C.J. Pascoe, *Dude, You’re a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011; Dennis K. Mumby, ‘Organizing Men: Power, Discourse, and the Social Construction of Masculinity(s) in the Workplace’, *Communication Theory*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 164-183; Michael Kimmel (ed.), *The Politics of Manhood*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995; Michael Kimmel and Amy Aronson (eds.), *Men & Masculinities: A Social, Cultural and Historical Encyclopedia*, Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2005.

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States, and South Africa. While many political scientists, sociologists and historians use the terms far-right, radical right and extreme right interchangeably, for the purpose of this study it will be important to note the subtle but critical differences between these definitions. While the term ‘far-right’ does relate to the subjects of this piece, I find it too broad a category for a study this specific. The term ‘far-right’ has come to incorporate many of the democratic political parties of Europe and certain factions of the Republican Party in the United States, which represent an iteration of the very establishment against which my subjects consistently rail. Political Scientist Cas Mudde defines these groups under the banner of ‘radical right’, that is the faction of far-right ideology that seeks to use democratic processes in order to advance ethno-centric, fundamentalist and populist political agendas. The radical right includes parties such as the *Rassemblement National* – formerly *Front National* - in France and *Alternative für Deutschland* in Germany, as well as individual actors such as Donald Trump and Stephen Miller in the United States. In contrast Mudde argues that the ‘extreme right’ (or extremist right) is explicitly anti-democratic and subscribes to the autocratic, Nazi-inspired ideas of the *Führerprinzip*.<sup>5</sup> This style of far-right politics is fundamentally revolutionary and lends itself to a more violent, militia-based style of political activism. While the ‘membership’ of the radical right is growing hugely around the world and finds itself entering the political mainstream, the extremist right remains a small but dangerous force that continues to lie at the fringes of society. The various organizations and movements I study in

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<sup>5</sup> Cas Mudde, *The Far Right in America Today*, New York: Routledge, 2018. The *führerprinzip* was a model of leadership and political activism described by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. It is widely accepted as the archetypical model for modern fascist organizing, and is fundamentally authoritarian in nature. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler stated that “the strength of a political party lies by no means in the greatest possible independent intellect of the individual members, but rather in the disciplined obedience with which its members follow the intellectual leadership. The decisive factor is the leadership itself... Only those should rule who have the natural temperament and gifts of leadership... the strength of a political party never consists in the intelligence and independent spirit of the rank-and-file of its members but rather in the spirit of willing obedience with which they follow their intellectual leaders ". It is this emphasis on full ideological reliance on intellectual and political leaders that defined the structure of the Nazi Party in Germany and defines, according to Mudde, the extreme-right today; Adolf Hitler. *Mein Kampf*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

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this piece all lie on these fringes, thus I will be using the term ‘extreme right’ to refer to the explicitly violent and revolutionary movements that this article explores.<sup>6</sup>

The nature of rightwing extremism is such that the landscape of the subculture is constantly evolving as groups succumb to infighting, proscription, and ideological metamorphosis, and as such it is necessary to cast a wide net and incorporate a variety of specific groups throughout the course of this study. These groups are bound by ideology and activism primarily adhering to neo-Nazi, fascist or rightwing accelerationist ideologies.<sup>7</sup> The groups addressed in this study include the National Socialist Liberation Front, White Aryan Resistance and various skinhead groups in the United States, and the British Movement, National Front, English Nationalist Movement and National Socialist Group in the United Kingdom. The majority of these groups and movements modelled their ideology and activism on Hitler’s pre-war program in Germany, following a dual-power model of paramilitary violence and metapolitical engagement, centering the narrative of victimhood and retributive violence. Indeed, these groups adopted violence as their primary mode of activism, whether it be physical violence or rhetorical assaults on communities of color, women, the LGBTQ community, and reproductive health facilities among other targets. While not all of the groups in this study advocated for terrorist violence against innocent populations or critical infrastructure, many surreptitiously promoted stochastic acts of chaotic violence such as mass shootings or sabotage through a process of directed self-radicalization. All of these groups, movements, and ideologies were bound by their disdain for the liberal democratic system, their overt racism, homophobia, xenophobia and bigotry, and their ultimate desire to impose an authoritarian, white-dominated system that violently persecuted any resistance. I explore

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<sup>6</sup> Cas Mudde, *The Far Right in America*, New York: Routledge, 2018.

<sup>7</sup> For an overview of the ideological underpinnings of post-war fascism see Carl Müller Frølund, *Understanding Nazi Ideology: The Genesis and Impact of a Political Faith*, (trans. John Irons), Jefferson: McFarland & Co., 2020; Alexander J. Carter, *Cumulative Extremism: A Comparative Historical Analysis*, London: Routledge, 2019; Phillip W. Gray, *Vanguardism: Ideology and Organization in Totalitarian Politics*, London: Routledge, 2019; Mark Sedgwick (ed.), *Key Thinkers of the Radical Right: Behind the New Threat to Liberal Democracy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2019; Ronald Beiner, *Dangerous Minds: Nietzsche, Heidegger, and the Return of the Far Right*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018; J.M. Berger, *Extremism*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2018.

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the social, political and ideological motivators that have driven people towards the extreme-right and ultimately dictate their actions and beliefs once they are firmly within the movement.

### **Birth of a Nation, Birth of a Mythology**

It is first important to note that the idea of the ‘black male rapist’ is neither new nor necessarily the reserve of the modern extreme-right. The ideas now propagated by neo-Nazis and extremist identitarians have been an ever-present trope of even mainstream, systemic racism over the last century, and have been driven by a cultural paranoia that dates back to emancipation and beyond. The ideology of modern extremist racism in the US, UK and South Africa builds off Jim Crow-era stereotypes and racialized products of the British and Dutch colonial imaginary which viewed black sexuality through the prisms of chattel slavery and systemic othering, constructing it as threatening and deviant. In the wake of emancipation in the United States, Tracey Owens Patton and Julie Snyder-Yuly argue, there was an irrational cultural fear among the former slaveholding class that rape - a gendered weapon that had been systematically used as a means of oppression and assertion of white dominance – would be turned back on them by their now free former slaves.<sup>8</sup> Spurred on by wartime narratives against emancipation and later reconstruction-era appeasement of the former slaveholding class, a cultural mania around the idea of the vengeful black rapist emerged.<sup>9</sup> In 1915 this idea was further ingrained in the American imaginary by D. W. Griffith’s now notorious film, *The Birth of a Nation*.<sup>10</sup> In the film - which valorized and arguably single-handedly revived the Ku Klux Klan’s reign of terror in the southern United States - the ultimately fatal pursuit and attempted rape of a upper class white woman by a man of color is used to justify vigilante

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<sup>8</sup> Tracey Owens Patton and Julie Snyder-Yuly, ‘Any Four Black Men Will Do: Rape, Race, and the Ultimate Scapegoat’, *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 6, July 2007, pp 859-895.

<sup>9</sup> Jennifer Wriggins, ‘Rape, Racism, and the Law’, *Harvard Women’s Law Journal*, Vol. 6, Issue 103 (1983), pp. 103-141., D. Kelly Wesiberg (ed.), *Applications of Feminist Legal Theory*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996.

<sup>10</sup> D.W. Griffith, *The Birth of a Nation*, Epoch Producing Co., 1915.

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violence, lynching and racist terror. Griffith portrayed black sexuality as inherently predatory and as a threat to the sanctity of white womanhood, and white upper-class womanhood more specifically. The film perpetuated the narrative of sexual danger that had been propagated in the reconstruction south, bringing it front and center in the white American conscious. The approval of the film by president Woodrow Wilson, and its status as the first ever film to have been screened at the White House, solidified its influence in American culture and helped mainstream the black rapist narrative.

The result was the emergence of a white cultural consensus surrounding black male sexuality and the threat that it presented. Black sexuality came to be seen as - in Angela Davis' words - 'wild, uncontrollable, bestial, and even criminal', and the myth of the black rapist became mainstreamed in American society.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, in the colonial world the propagation of myths about black sexuality was commonplace, and the same danger narratives around the protection of white womanhood were mobilized as a means of upholding white supremacy. In South Africa rape became a hugely politicized and racialized rhetorical weapon under apartheid. While women of color who were victims of sexual assault received little to no attention and even less state assistance, white victims whose assailants were men of color were catapulted onto front page headlines and were used to foster a 'moral storm' that was in turn used to justify the continuation of state-enforced segregation.<sup>12</sup> Thus through cultural bias and racist mobilization of stereotyped sexuality the conflation of blackness and sexual predation became so commonplace and culturally engrained in the postcolonial context that it led Frantz Fanon to say in the 1980s that 'whoever says "rape" says Negro'.<sup>13</sup>

The extreme-right rhetoric surrounding rape and sexual violence is built on this same set of myths and narratives, and relies on what Joy James has termed 'symbolic rage' - that is,

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<sup>11</sup> Angela Davis, *Violence Against Women and the Ongoing Challenge to Racism*, Latham, NY: Kitchen Table, 1985.

<sup>12</sup> Deborah Posel, 'Sex, Death and the Fate of the Nation: Reflections on the Politicization of Sexuality in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (2005), pp. 125-153.

<sup>13</sup> Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (tr. Charles Lam Markmann), London: Pluto Press, 1986.

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performative outrage at hypothetical, imagined or even occasionally real injustices in order to justify hatred or discrimination.<sup>14</sup> James argues that during the era of Jim Crow the rhetoric of ‘protecting women’ against a deeply racist imagining of black sexuality was used to justify ‘mob vigilantism, state malfeasance, and police violence’, and this same trend continued in post-war America, led by extreme-right groups such as the Ku Klux Klans and neo-Nazi groups.<sup>15</sup> Similarly pro-Apartheid paramilitary groups in South Africa and violent ultranationalist and fascist groups in the United Kingdom mobilized the language of black predation and white vulnerability to further propagate their message of hate, and to justify their physical and rhetorical violence against people of color. By constructing a rhetoric of an imagined existential threat and positioning white women as being targeted and vulnerable, extreme-right groups have sought to offer a justification for their continued violence and racism. Furthermore, this constructed threat has also served to limit the engagement and role of female members within these groups, entrenching male supremacy and patriarchal order within the extremist social schema and maintaining the ideological vision of passive femininity. Thus the rhetoric of white demographic crisis, white female vulnerability, and predatory black sexuality continue to form a tripartite mythology that underlies the very core of the sexual and racial politics of the far-right.

### **Sex Slaves and ‘Paedo Rings’: Symbolic Rage on the British Extreme-Right**

For British racist extremists, this ideological fascination with racialized sexuality and sexual danger narratives often focused on the South Asian and Caribbean populations who came to Britain during the height of post-colonial migration following the Second World War.<sup>16</sup> From

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<sup>14</sup> Joy James, *Resisting State Violence*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996, pp 133-147.

<sup>15</sup> James, *Resisting State Violence*, pg. 135.

<sup>16</sup> Kathleen Paul, *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997. The extreme-right in post-war Britain has seen significant scholarly attention in recent years. This work includes Graham Macklin, *Failed Führers: A History of Britain’s Extreme-Right*, London: Routledge, 2020; Nigel Copsey and Matthew Worley (eds.), *Tomorrow Belongs to Us: The British Far-Right Since 1967*, London: Routledge, 2018; Daniel Trilling, *Bloody Nasty People: The Rise of Britain’s Far-Right*, London:

the moment 492 Jamaican immigrants arrived in Tilbury Docks aboard the *Empire Windrush*, a concerted campaign of resistance through action and propaganda began on the burgeoning far-right.<sup>17</sup> For the rightward sections of the mainstream and the extremist fringe alike, the sexuality of men of color came under the spotlight of much of this propaganda, and so began an all-out rhetorical assault on immigrant communities that continues to this day.

The National Front, perhaps the most prominent far-right group in Britain's history, made racialized sexual danger narratives the core of their disinformation campaign for decades, combining real stories of sexual abuse and violence with fabricated stories and racialized generalizations and explanations in order to maximize the efficacy of their propaganda war. In the Young National Front's *Bulldog* magazine, sensationalized, tabloid-style headlines such as 'Sex Slaves!' were presented alongside racist depictions of men of color and subheadings such as 'Black Bastards'.<sup>18</sup> The contents of these articles were nearly always jarringly racist, making sweeping statements such as 'black Rastafarians are forcing white girls to become prostitutes' and using anonymous victims as their only sources. The inclusion of 'sample' pictures of a 'Rasta' and a 'P\*ki' - in reality a British-Jamaican man and

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Verso, 2012; Joe Mulhall, *British Fascism After the Holocaust: From the Birth of Denial to the Notting Hill Riots*, London: Routledge, 2020; Maria Sobolewska and Robert Ford, *Brexitland: Identity, Diversity and the Reshaping of British Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020; Paul Stocker, *Lost Imperium: Far-Right Visions of the British Empire, c. 1920-1980*, London: Routledge, 2020; Wendy Laverick and Peter Joyce, *Racial and Religious Hate Crime: The UK From 1945 to Brexit*, Cham (CH): Palgrave Macmillan, 2019; Luke LeCras, A.K. Chesterton and the Evolution of Britain's Extreme Right, 1933-1973, London: Routledge, 2019; James Loughlin, *Fascism and Constitutional Conflict: the British Extreme Right and Ulster in the Twentieth Century*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2019; Nick Brooke, *Terrorism and Nationalism in the United Kingdom: The Absence of Noise*, Cham (CH): Palgrave Macmillan, 2018; Shirin Hirsch, *In the Shadow of Enoch Powell: Race, Locality and Resistance*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018; Richard Griffiths, *What Did you Do During the War?: The Last Throes of the British Pro-Nazi Right, 1940-1945*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2017; Paul Jackson, *Colin Jordan and Britain's Neo-Nazi Movement: Hitler's Echo*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017; John E. Richardson, *British Fascism: A Discourse-Historical Analysis*, Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2017; Ryan Shaffer, *Music, youth and International Links in Post-War British Fascism: The Transformation of Extremism*, Cham (CH): Palgrave Macmillan, 2017; Hilary Pilkington, *Loud and Proud: Passion and politics in the English Defence League*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016; Nigel Copsey and John E. Richardson (eds.), *Cultures of Post-War British Fascism*, New York: Routledge, 2015; Nick Toczek, *Haters, Baiters and Would-Be Dictators: Anti-Semitism and the UK Far-Right*, London: Routledge, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Paul, *Whitewashing Britain*.

<sup>18</sup> 'Sex Slaves!', *Bulldog*, issue 35, n/d, c. 1983, SCH/01/Res/BRI/02/004/18.

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a Muslim hotel owner – further exemplified the racist narrative that the author was trying to push, and the description of the female victims as ‘tiny’ and ‘young’ further push the idea of female vulnerability and defenselessness. The use of sensational and salacious stories such as these was a deliberate tactic that sought to paint a picture of an organized and concerted assault on white womanhood by men of color.<sup>19</sup> These stories portrayed white women as vulnerable and in need of protection from the ‘immigrants’ who were supposedly victimizing them. The fact that both Caribbean and South Asian men were scapegoated by the paper belied the blanket racism of the organization, making it clear that the NF saw any men of color as a threat to white women and to the image of a white Britain.

Sexual violence was mobilized in a similar way by the National Socialist Group, a violent fringe group made up of activists deemed too extreme for the National Front or later the British Movement. The NSG connected with extremist groups around the world, and the sexual subjugation of white women by minority groups was a constant feature of their correspondence. In one letter sent to Eastern Georgia and addressed to ‘His Serene Highness’, the author used the language of racialized violence against women to relate to his recipient, claiming that the ‘Turks desire to furnish their harems with Georgian + Circassian women’, and that the ‘women of England’ experienced similar threats.<sup>20</sup> The letter was sent in search of funding and support from- presumably – a minor princely ruler in the Caucasus, and the emphasis placed on the abduction and abuse of women by people of color spoke to the international appeal of this racialized and gendered rhetoric. The rhetorical deployment of fearmongering around non-white sexuality transcended national and regional borders, and acted as a *lingua franca* of the extreme-right worldwide.

In the early 1980s the case of the Bradford 12 – a group of young British Asian men who had formed the *United Black Youth League* in response to ongoing racist attacks and had armed themselves with petrol bombs before being arrested – reignited many of the rhetoric around race and sexuality on the far-right. *Bulldog* published a front-page editorial entitled

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<sup>19</sup> ‘Sex Slaves!’

<sup>20</sup> ‘To His Serene Highness’, letter from K.L. Wood, National Socialist Group, SCH/01/Res/BRI/20/001.

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‘Self Defence is No Offence’ in which the author claimed that white communities in Britain were ‘the victims of violent attacks by immigrant gangs’. Framing the UBYL as a violent anti-white hate group, the article claimed that pensioners in particular were becoming victims of ‘mugging and raping’ and that ‘the police are too busy dancing with the Blacks at the Notting Hill Carnival to save old white ladies from Black muggers and rapists’.<sup>21</sup> In a side column on the same front page the author violently described the beating of a 65 year old white woman by a ‘black mugger’ in Wolverhampton, an attack on a 73 year old lady in Brixton by ‘two black youths’, and the ambushing of an 81 year old woman, also by two ‘black youths’ in Toxteth, the scene of high profile rioting earlier that year.<sup>22</sup> By fore-fronting and listing attacks on elderly women, seen culturally as an innocent and vulnerable group, the magazine framed the cases as part of a concerted campaign of violence against older white women, and resultantly framed the racist activism of the National Front as necessary community defense. Furthermore, by specifically centering the sexual assault of elderly women – albeit with no concrete examples or cases – the magazine sought to shock its readership and frame men of color as amoral and driven by an uncontrolled, violent sexuality that targeted vulnerable and defenseless groups. This tactic was used consistently by *Bulldog*’s editors, and from as early as 1978 front page stories about the ‘savage rape of a 92 year-old woman’ were being run alongside headlines like ‘Black War Cry: Kill White Trash’.<sup>23</sup> The vulnerability of elderly women was being used to fuel the image of a racially divided and conflict-ridden society, and the rhetoric and cultural hegemony of protective patriarchal norms were mobilized to once again imply the justice of retributive violence. This goal was made explicit later in the same article when the author claimed that ‘all over Britain White youths are standing up to Black arrogance and black violence. They are hitting back!’.<sup>24</sup> Using the language of ‘race war’ the author promoted racist violence and lauded

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<sup>21</sup> ‘Self Defence is No Offence’, *Bulldog*, Issue No. 30, 1982, SCH/01/Res/BRI/02/004/18.

<sup>22</sup> ‘We Must Defend Our Folk’, *Bulldog*, Issue No. 30, 1982, SCH/01/Res/BRI/02/004/18.

<sup>23</sup> ‘Black War Cry: Kill White Trash’, *Bulldog*, Issue No. 10, 1978, SCH/01/Res/BRI/02/004/6.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Black war Cry’.

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those who targeted black communities in the East End of London, demonstrating how the image of vulnerable femininity could be mobilized to radicalize and inspire further violence.

In 1983 the publication was still following the same tack, this time profiling a ‘notorious black rapist’ who was accused of ‘raping several old age pensioners’. In a graphic and shockingly savored description of the accused’s crimes the author claimed that he ‘beat up, robbed and raped several old ladies, but he also forced them to undergo other sexual abuse including buggery’. The author argued that ‘nearly all the newspapers have chosen to ignore [these] horrific crimes’, calling into question the validity of the story. However this was instead framed as proof that ‘*Bulldog* [was] the only paper which [told] the whole ugly truth about Black Crime in Britain’.<sup>25</sup> Again the magazine’s editors chose to fore-front and amplify sexual crimes against elderly white women in order to justify their racist rhetoric, framing their activism as vigilante law and order in defense of their community. Furthermore, by naming the accused and including a photograph, the magazine opened the gate to and gave their implied support for vigilante violence. In another edition of the magazine the editors make their agenda even clearer, highlighting the ‘vulnerable groups’ who were, in their view, under attack in the new Britain of ‘multi-racial terror’. The four large, red headings on the full-page spread read ‘Young Mothers’, ‘Old Ladies’, ‘Old Men’ and ‘Teenage Girls’, and were accompanied by horrific stories of sexual violence, muggings, and murder, all at the hands of men of color.<sup>26</sup> The inclusion of only one male category in this list of ‘victims’ also illuminates the gendered thinking of the editors, who viewed personal victimhood and masculinity as incompatible. Only ‘Old Men’ were included, suggesting that they were viewed as vulnerable and possibly emasculated by younger men within the movement.<sup>27</sup>

The leading story on the page, however, focused on the ‘Young Mothers’ category, and told of a young woman who was accosted and told ‘your baby or your gold’ by ‘two black muggers’ in her apartment building. Stories like this appealed not only to the protective,

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<sup>25</sup> ‘Black Rapist on Blacklist’, *Bulldog*, Issue No. 32, March 1983, SCH/01/Res/BRI/02/004/20.

<sup>26</sup> ‘Who are the Victims of the Multi-Racial Terror?’, *Bulldog*, N/D (c. 1980s), SCH/01/Res/BRI/02/004.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Who are the Victims’.

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racialized toxic masculinity that drove this trend in publishing, but to the fear of racial extinction and the pronatalist tendency in extreme-right circles, and as such the ‘mother under attack’ was a trope commonly deployed by extreme-right publishers and authors.<sup>28</sup> Issue 39 of *Bulldog* led with a story along these same lines under the headline ‘Race Murder on Our Streets’.<sup>29</sup> The article once again described in shocking detail an attack on a young pregnant woman, including a gratuitously violent photograph of the woman holding her blood-soaked clothes. The woman, Jane P, was reported to have been ambushed and stabbed with a broken bottle, losing two pints of blood and her unborn baby. This time, however, the magazine was clearer than ever in its call to arms. In more than simply a dog-whistle the article finished by saying ‘with racial violence on the increase and a police force who seem unable or unwilling to bring these animals to justice, who could blame White communities for organizing to protect themselves and each other. SELF DEFENCE IS NO OFFENCE’.<sup>30</sup> The story of Jane P was clearly and deliberately being used by *Bulldog* and the Young National Front to radicalize and organize racist activists among their readership across the UK, mobilizing and weaponizing her perceived vulnerability and capitalizing on a horrific story that fit the pronatalist and violently patriarchal ideology of these groups.<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps the most common shock-tactic of the British extreme-right, however, was the political mobilization of pedophilia and child abuse. Much like the National Front’s concerted campaign around elder abuse and street violence, the innocence of childhood was easy fodder for the far-right’s propaganda machine. Accusations of pedophilia and child abuse were levelled at all of the ideological and racial enemies of groups across the far-right spectrum, and the publications of every group from the Third Positionists to the Neo-Nazis were filled with full page features decrying the ‘theft of innocence’ by leftists, politicians, and people of

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<sup>28</sup> ‘Who are the Victims’.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Race Murder on Our Streets’, *Bulldog*, Issue 39, c. 1984, p.1, SCH/01/Res/BRI/02/004/27.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Race Murder on Our Streets’.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Race Murder on Our Streets’.

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color.<sup>32</sup> Tapping into the same racialized and gendered ideas of innocence and purity, these groups mobilized horrific imagery and stories to anger and inflame their readership, promoting retributive vigilante violence and attempting to delegitimize and destabilize existing power structures. The neo-Nazi British Movement in particular dedicated pages to their ‘People Against Perverts’ column, and regularly published stories accusing immigrants, Jews and politicians of engaging in child abuse rings and secret pedophilic cabals.<sup>33</sup>

The Patriotic Women’s League – an ostensibly independent organization that was in reality an auxiliary of the British Movement – made child abuse a particular focus. Their *Valkyrie* magazine was consistently filled with vitriolic columns decrying ‘child rapists’ and ‘child murderers’, with one particularly jarring front page featuring a graphic depiction of a lynching, accompanied by the headline: ‘Bring Back the Rope! Protect our Children From Perverts and Child Murderers!’.<sup>34</sup> The eight-page newsletter was filled with columns about violence against women, child abuse, ‘ritual murder’ and pornography, carefully placed alongside articles calling for the ‘repatriation of all coloured immigrants and their descendants’ and ‘rights for whites’.<sup>35</sup> The positioning of these articles clearly racialized the issue of sexual violence, and suggested that a ‘white Britain’ would be free of the ‘monsters’ who threatened white femininity and childhood. The newsletter was adorned with images of frightened looking children alongside captions like ‘Save Me! I don’t want to live in a crime infested jungle’. The editors mobilized the innocence of childhood and using coded racist language as a means of demonizing people of color and painting minority communities as violent and criminal, and as an existential threat to whiteness.<sup>36</sup> While not outrightly calling for vigilante violence, the newsletter did call for the restoration of the death penalty for ‘murderers, child molesters, and all the other scum that threaten our children’, later claiming

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<sup>32</sup> ‘Paedophile: The Theft of Innocence Destroys Lives’, *British Movement Flyer*, c. 1992, SCH/01/Res/BRI/22/02.

<sup>33</sup> The Rose, ‘People Against Perverts’, *British Movement Women’s Division Newsletter*, c. 2001, SCH/01/Res/BRI/22/02.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Bring Back the Rope!’, *Valkyrie: Voice of the Patriotic Women’s League*, Issue 1, N.D., SCH/01/Res/BRI/TMP/007.

<sup>35</sup> ‘What we are fighting for’, *Valkyrie*, Issue 1.

<sup>36</sup> ‘What we are fighting for’.

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that ‘families were at risk from vile perverts’ and that readers should ‘keep fighting the sick system that allows this to happen’.<sup>37</sup> The language of the newsletter was vitriolic and violent throughout, and the editors clearly sought to anger their readership by racializing and weaponizing the protection of ‘vulnerable’ women and children.

The ‘protection’ of children came in many forms for these groups, and moral outrage was consistently deployed as a political tool in the columns of their publications, most often as a vehicle for their reactionary and ultra-conservative social politics. In a column in a 1976 issue of the British Movement’s *British Patriot* magazine Colin Jordan decried the ‘political porn peddlers corrupt[ing] British youth’, packaging his violent homophobia alongside a screed that accused the Sexual Law Reform Society [SLRS] of seeking to legalize incest and remove the legal definition of rape from British law.<sup>38</sup> In an eight-point ‘fact-sheet’ that mixed outright political disinformation and manipulated half-truths Jordan claimed that the Society sought ‘free access to pornography’, ‘the removal of the charge of indecent assault’ and ‘the reduction of the age of consent to 14 years’. In reality the groups stated goals were the advancement of gay rights and the relaxation of consent laws in cases where both participants were below the age of eighteen, however by including outrageous accusations of child endangerment alongside these manipulated facts, Jordan tapped into the moralistic patriarchal rage of his readership, bolstering their opposition to any reforms that the SLRS sought.<sup>39</sup> Jordan went on to speculate about the ‘further filth and degradation’ that might follow if the SLRS’s reforms were passed, suggesting that if his readership weren’t to ‘DO something’ Britain would spiral into a situation in which ‘no child [was] safe’.<sup>40</sup> Jordan mobilized the perceived innocence of white childhood and placed children on the rhetorical frontline in order to enrage his readership and radicalize them against progressive

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<sup>37</sup> ‘What we are fighting for’.

<sup>38</sup> C. Jordan, ‘Political Porn Peddlers Corrupt British Youth’, *British Patriot*, No. 42, Feb/March 1976, pp. 5-6, SCH/01/Res/BRI/22/001.

<sup>39</sup> Jordan, ‘Political Porn Peddlers’; David Minto, ‘Mr Grey goes to Washington: The homophile internationalism of Britain’s Homosexual Law Reform Society’, in Brian Lewis (Ed.), *British Queer History: New Approaches and Perspectives*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013, pp. 219-243.

<sup>40</sup> Jordan, ‘Political Porn Peddlers’, pg. 5.

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organizations to the point that violence was a possibility. The open ended but clear call to ‘DO something’ was an obvious call to arms, but in the longstanding style of leaderless resistance and self-radicalization kept Jordan himself distanced enough from any illegal action.

Later in the same magazine another unnamed author linked the ‘moral decay’ of the SLRS and other progressive groups to a communist plot, combining the ideological pillars of conspiracy theory, anti-communism and moral outrage that are central to the social politics of the far-right. In the tradition of the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, the author constructed a story of a ‘found document’ that proved that the ‘peddling of pornography’ was a communist plan to destabilize the west. Claiming that Stalin was quoted saying “if we can make one generation of any nation immoral and sexy, we can easily capture that nation”, the author argued that homosexuality, pornography, sexual promiscuity and ‘carnal mindedness’ were being deliberately pushed on the young by communists to distract them from ‘patriotism, purity and morality’.<sup>41</sup> The author positioned progressive social politics as inherently anti-British, attempting to legitimize their regressive and reactionary stance on social issues by tying together anti-communism with their homophobia and misogyny, calling on their readers to ‘drive out the Trojan horse of communism [in this case meaning liberalism or progressivism], or drive them underground with the rats with which they belong’.<sup>42</sup> The veil of anti-communism has consistently been used by far-right groups to mask their true political leanings, and the rhetoric of the author in this case demonstrates the extent to which anti-communism was used as a justification for authoritarian and ultra-conservative social politics.<sup>43</sup>

In the first decade of the twenty-first century the British National Party made the issue of racialized sexual violence a core pillar of their manifesto, focusing on the case of Angela Sinfield, a resident of Keighley whose 12 year old daughter had been abused by a group of

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<sup>41</sup> ‘And America Too!’, *British Patriot*, No. 42, Feb/March 1976, pg. 5, SCH/01/Res/BRI/22/01.

<sup>42</sup> ‘And America Too!’.

<sup>43</sup> Kyle Burke, *Revolutionaries for the Right: Anti-Communist Internationalism and Paramilitary Warfare in the Cold War*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

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British-Asian men. Sinfield was avowedly opposed to the policies of the BNP, eventually successfully standing against them in a local election, however the national attention garnered by her daughter's case was co-opted and racialized by the far-right. The BNP, led by former National Front activist Nick Griffin, founded an action group called Mothers Against Paedophilia, which operated under the slogan 'the powerful maternal instincts of womanhood awaken'. Mobilizing the fascist tropes of non-white sexual deviance and a powerful, mystical white motherhood, Griffin's party made pedophilia and 'Asian child sex rings' the focus of their Islamophobic campaign until Griffin's appearance on the BBC's *Question Time* and the resultant cataclysmic decline of his party.<sup>44</sup> This was a direct continuation of the language and imagery deployed by the British Movement and National Front during the 1970s and 80s, and belied the ideological origins of a party attempting to mainstream itself and ingratiate a more moderate electorate.

### For my Beloved Country: White Rage and 'Righteous Violence' in South Africa

In South Africa a fringe right-wing extremist group calling itself *Die Brandwag* -echoing the WWII-era fascist group, *Die Ossewabrandwag* - propagated similar stereotypes surrounding racialized sexual violence in many of their publications, specifically referencing supposed attacks on Afrikaner farmsteads by ANC militias. In a flyer published by the group in the early 1990s the author asked 'Gaan ons toekyk hoe ons vrouens aangerand word?', which translates to 'are we going to stand by and watch our women being assaulted', specifically mobilizing tropes of violence against women in order to justify retributive violence.<sup>45</sup> The use of the possessive in this sentiment belies the misogyny that underlies it, and demonstrates the extent to which the 'vroue' in the extreme-right mindset is an imagined, symbolic figure that embodies the same mythologized vision of whiteness and femininity that underlies far-right ideology around the world. Similarly, groups like the Brandwag mobilized graphic language

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<sup>44</sup>Trilling, *Bloody Nasty People*, pp. 148-149.

<sup>45</sup> 'BRANDWAG' (flyer), Pretoria, c. 1992, SAHA, DeWet Potgieter Collection, AL3283.B2.3.

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that related to violence against children, making statements like ‘Gaan ons batjies se koppe hierdie keer teen Taxi-wiele verbrysel word?’, or “will our babies’ heads continue to be smashed under taxi wheels?”, most likely relating to casualties arising from the infamous Taxi wars that began in the early 1990s and continue today.<sup>46</sup> The flyer makes the racial element of its argument clear when it claims that ‘Swart taxi’s se onbedkoftheid is al berug’ (‘The rudeness of these black taxis is notorious’), clearly constructing the issue of violence against children as a racialized conflict. The use of children in this rhetoric again evokes images of purity and innocence, and conflates innocence with whiteness and violence against this purity with blackness.

But in South Africa blackness was seen as predatory and dangerous in and of itself, and correspondence between Afrikaner nationalist segregationists and extreme-right activists elsewhere suggested that protecting women and children from contact with black South Africans was the true motive of the movement in the region, rather than preventing ‘crime’ or sexual violence as their propaganda suggested. In a letter from a South African National Socialist Movement activist to John Tyndall, all pretense was dropped when the writer claimed that she was ‘disgust[ed] at seeing our white women and children jammed [on buses] with n\*\*\*\*\*s’.<sup>47</sup> The author saw blackness as threatening and dangerous, while she constructed white femininity and youth as being vulnerable and easily corrupted. Even benign proximity between a black man and a white woman or child was seen as scandalous, and blackness itself was constructed as an existential threat to white ‘purity’.

In 1991, Dutch channel *Holland Doc 24* produced a documentary called ‘My Beloved Country’, in which producers interviewed and followed a number of extremist Afrikaner nationalists, including AWB leader Eugene Terre’Blanche. The issue of ‘protecting’ women was a strong theme throughout the documentary, and the threat of sexual violence against

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<sup>46</sup> ‘BRANDWAG’; Londeka Princess Ngubane, ‘From Political Wars to Taxi Wars: Investigating the transition of taxi violence in a low-income urban community in the Mpumalanga Township, South Africa’, Masters Thesis, University of Kwazulu-Natal, 2016.

<sup>47</sup> Letter from Mrs. G. W. to John Tyndall, March 9 1966, National Socialist Movement Correspondence, SCH/01/Res/BRI/20/001.

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Afrikaner women was a major focal point of the activists' ideology, fitting well with the cultural paranoia around farm murders that was ever-present among Afrikaners during the 1990s. One unnamed female activist gave an interview in which she spoke about having a gun by her side any time her husband was not in the farmstead. She spoke of how her friend was raped on her own farm recently, spurring her to by the weapon, going on to say that she was 'not afraid, but prepared' for 'whatever might happen'.<sup>48</sup> As Ivan Evans notes, farms were sites of shocking racist violence during apartheid. Black farm workers were routinely beaten and murdered by Afrikaner farm-owners, and sexual violence against Black South Africans was at epidemic levels.<sup>49</sup> Not unlike the cultural fear of retributive physical and sexual violence in the Reconstruction US South, it was this history of violence and oppression that fueled the cultural hysteria around sexualized and racialized revenge in the post-emancipation and post-apartheid nation. Fuel was thrown on the embers of this cultural paranoia in 2010 when Terre'Blanche was murdered by two workers on his farm in Ventersdorp, reinvigorating the discourse around retributive violence and the threat posed to White South African farmers. The violent rhetoric of Julius Malema and the Economic Freedom Fighters, who regularly chant 'shoot the Boer, shoot to kill' at rallies has only intensified this cultural fear,

Similarly, paranoia around Black sexuality drove opposition to the integration of education. In a later scene in 'My Beloved Country', two Boer families talk about the perceived dangers presented by integrated schools, focusing on the 'threat' of sexual violence posed by black students, citing rumored cases in which 7 year old white girls 'lock themselves in the toilet' to avoid sexual abuse at the hands of '15-year-old Black boys'.<sup>50</sup> This rhetoric echoed the anti-desegregation movement of the 1960s in the United States, and deployed familiar tropes around 'insatiable' Black sexuality, its inherent violence and the threat it posed to white children.

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<sup>48</sup> 'My Beloved Country'.

<sup>49</sup> Ivan Evans, *Cultures of Violence: Lynching and Racial Killing in South Africa and the American South*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009.

<sup>50</sup> 'My Beloved Country'.

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## The American Extreme-Right's Danger Narratives

For American activists the theme of racialized sexual violence and white female vulnerability was also ever-present.<sup>51</sup> Much of the rhetoric was very similar to that of the British extreme-right, and it was ultimately the same fears around racial precarity that drove the movement's frenzied obsession with Black sexuality. Similarly to South Africa, however, it was a nostalgia for segregation that really defined the nature of this obsession, and recent cultural experiences with an apartheid-style system that guided the separationist and segregationist ideas of the extreme-right in the United States. Whilst activists in the United Kingdom sought to put an end to immigration and begin the process of mass-deportation, the perceived domestic threat posed by African Americans pushed many on the extreme-right to advocate for a more violent campaign - often articulated as RAHOWA, or Racial Holy War - whose ultimate goal was the establishment a white ethnostate, very similar to the concept of a *Boerestaat* envisioned by extremist Afrikaner nationalists in South Africa.

This nostalgia for social segregation and the vision of a future national-segregation drove much of the rhetoric and action of extremist groups in the US, and as a result many groups focused their vitriol on contested spaces of integration. For racist campaigners who lived through the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, the classroom was one such space, and remained a primary focus for American extreme-right publications through the latter half of the twentieth century. In the late 1960s groups like the *National Socialist White People's Party* – formerly known as the American Nazi Party – attempted to capitalize on anti-

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<sup>51</sup> The corpus of work on the American far-right, and more specifically the extreme-right, is extensive. Recent work on the modern American violent right includes Matthew N. Lyons, *Insurgent Supremacists: The U.S. Far Right's Challenge to State and Empire*, Montreal: Kersplebedeb, 2018; Matt Kennard, *Irregular Army: How the US Military Recruited Neo-Nazis, Gang Members, and Criminals To Fight the War on Terror*, London: Verso, 2015; Alexandra Minna Stern, *Proud Boys and the White Ethnostate: How the Alt-Right is Warping the American Imagination*, Boston: Beacon Press, 2019; Arlie Perliger, *American Zealots: Inside Right-Wing Domestic Terrorism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2020; David Niewert, *Alt-America: The Rise of the Radical Right in the Age of Trump*, London: Verso, 2017; Sam Jackson, *Oath Keepers: Patriotism and the Edge of Violence in a Right-Wing Antigovernment Group*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2020; Shannon E. Reid and Matthew Valasik, *Alt-Right Gangs: A Hazy Shade of White*, Oakland: University of California Press, 2020.

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integration fears and the resentment of conservative white America towards the Brown ruling and the growing busing controversy by pushing anti-Black narratives around classroom violence and racialized sexual violence. The issue was - quite literally - front and center for the NSWPP, who led with a story about classroom violence in the second issue of their newsletter, the *National Socialist Liberator*. The story claimed that public school teachers in the Washington D.C. area were being “beaten, robbed, raped, and sodomized by their students so regularly that they’ve more or less gotten used to it”. The author made sure to clearly and unequivocally tie this issue to race, noting falsely that the public school system in Washington was made up of 95% black students. The article went on to claim that “several especially severe classroom beatings, three gang-rapes, and the recent murder of an assistant principal during a robbery by junior-high students have moved school administrators to try a technological innovation”, suggesting that all public school teachers in the Capital region were to be issued with walkie talkies which were to be used in such cases of violence.<sup>52</sup> The article mobilized blatant disinformation alongside Jim Crow-era stereotypes to present blackness - and particularly young, black men – as inherently violent. By falsely claiming that 95% of the school system was made up of Black students the author was able to present Washington classrooms as Black spaces, allowing the presumably partially radicalized or at least racist reader to infer that violence was endemic in all Black spaces, and therefore conclude that white spaces should be protected against this ‘threat’. The inclusion of sexual danger narratives in particular was an attempt to tap into the same fears around the protection of White femininity against Black sexuality that British groups mobilized in the late 1970s, and spoke to the deeply sexualized nature of the anti-integration anxieties that were so common even across mainstream conservatism at this point in American history.

These ideas were echoed – in even more extreme terms – by the *National Socialist Liberation Front* six years later. The NSLF had been launched as a youth wing of the NSWPP in 1969, and was initially tasked with bringing the Nazi propaganda campaign to college and

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<sup>52</sup> ‘Washington Teachers Require Walkie-Talkies’, *The National Socialist Liberator*, Issue 2, October 1969, La-RC-1102, Box 2.

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high school campuses across the United States. Concerned that colleges and high schools had become “focal points of activity by... racial and national enemies”, NSWPP leader and successor to George Lincoln Rockwell Matt Koehl was determined to instead turn these spaces of education into “potential sources of new recruits for the continued growth of the National Socialist Movement”.<sup>53</sup> By the mid 1970s the group had become largely independent of the floundering NSWPP thanks to a split between Koehl and rising star of the movement Joseph Tommasi. Tommasi was seen by many – including James Mason - as a potential rival to Koehl, and after a sting operation that targeted his Los Angeles home Tommasi was expelled from the party on the grounds of having one too many ‘vices’.<sup>54</sup>

Tommasi’s NSLF, much like William Pierce’s *National Alliance* a few years earlier, was then given the freedom to develop its own program, independent of the traditionalist vision of Koehl’s NSWPP. Tommasi and his group became fixated on political violence, and soon adopted its own dual approach of propaganda and terror. The NSLF was linked to a number of terrorist attacks in California, including two bomb attacks on the Socialist Workers Party HQ and Book Store, a bay area bombing of a radar station, and another on a San Francisco TV station. They also claimed responsibility for a “tear gas incident” at a political rally in Santa Monica.<sup>55</sup> Much like their tactics, the group’s rhetoric became increasingly extreme over the course of their existence, and the propaganda which targeted schools and colleges made no attempt to hide the virulent and violent racism that underlay their ideology. In a 1975 flyer directed at California-area high school students the group attempted to link teenagers’ natural anxieties about school to integration and, more specifically, to their classmates of color. The flyer, grotesquely titled “Uptight about school... Or just about the n\*\*\*\*\*s?”, mobilized the same fears about Black sexuality in schools that the ANP/NSWPP had half a decade earlier, asking readers if they were “uptight because White girls have to

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<sup>53</sup> ‘NSLF Launched at Arlington Conference’, *The National Socialist Liberator*, Issue 1, May 1969, La-RC-1102, Box 2.

<sup>54</sup> Mason, *Siege*, pg. 5.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Nazis Claim Credit For Two Bombings’, *Santa Monica Evening Outlook*, February 7 1974, La-RC-1102, Box 2.

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submit to being “felt up” in the halls by crowds of grinning Black monkeys?”.<sup>56</sup> The group sought to tap into the sexual anxieties of vulnerable teenage boys and radicalize them, turning those anxieties into a racist rage in a way which foreshadowed the online radicalization of young men by groups and individuals who straddle the online extreme-right and misogynist-incel movements today. Similarly, the group also sought to capitalize on the fears and anger of students who had experienced bullying, again pushing the narrative that school bullying was a racialized issue and that White students were overly victimized by students of color. Hoping to strike a nerve among even a tiny number of readers, the flyer asked: “Have you “had it” with Black animals following you home to beat you up, or pushing your head in the toilet when you go to the john, or “holding” your lunch money for you? Are you “up to here” with Black bastards who steal your clothes, your wallets, your pocketbooks?”.<sup>57</sup> The group deliberately and carefully latched on to what were likely the lived experiences of a small minority of students, framing these experiences as inherently racialized and reflective of broad societal ‘problems’. By mobilizing the inherent unease of youth and funneling it into directed ideological anger, the group hoped to spur readers towards violent action. This process of directed self-radicalization did not rely on broad success, rather it was more concerned with individual cases that could cause significant damage on a local level. Even one fully radicalized teen with access to firearms could cause widespread suffering within a community, as later exemplified by the steady succession of school shootings that followed the Columbine murders in 1999.

David Duke, the erstwhile Grand Dragon of the largest Klan group in post-war America, mobilized the same message of inherently violent Blackness and the supposed threat that it presented to White children over a decade later, however unlike the NSLF he aimed his efforts at parents rather than the children themselves. In a flyer distributed across the deep South in the early 1980s, his newly formed *National Association for the Advancement of White People* tried to tap into anti-busing and anti-integration anxieties by tying together more

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<sup>56</sup> “Uptight about school... Or just about the N\*\*\*\*\*s?”, NSLF Flyer, c. 1975, La-RC-1102, Box 2.

<sup>57</sup> “Uptight about school... Or just about the N\*\*\*\*\*s?”, NSLF Flyer, c. 1975, La-RC-1102, Box 2.

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moderate fears about the impact of busing on quality of education with radical claims about Black violence, arguing that “forced integration hurts educational quality and endangers white children”.<sup>58</sup> Much like the other groups who targeted the classroom with their racist propaganda, Duke and his organization sought to frame Blackness as inherently violent, and to frame all school-based violence as inherently racialized. Duke’s propaganda war was not limited to narratives around busing, however, and his newsletters often preached a much more broadly segregationist gospel. Arguing ultimately for full social segregation, Duke made the claim that America was facing a “horrible plague of minority violence”, arguing that something had to be done to protect those “least able to defend themselves, our women and elderly”.<sup>59</sup> Duke’s newsletters mobilized war-like language to tie violence to Blackness, claiming that “the future under nonwhite occupation” would bring “rapes, murders, robberies multiplied a hundred fold”, clearly portraying Blackness as a threat to the perceived virginal purity of Whiteness and to White society more broadly, in and of itself.<sup>60</sup> Duke’s narrative tapped into the same anxieties that the BNP and National Front exploited in Britain, taking the real threat of violence against women – and the also real but arguably minimal threat of violence against children and the elderly – and racializing it by making it one of anti-White violence at the hands of an inherently violent Black population. Like the message of the NSLF, this propaganda was aimed primarily at a minority whose lived experiences or existing biases made them susceptible to such dubious claims. By radicalizing a small minority who would then be vocal – or even potentially violent – on a local level, the group would seem larger and more influential than it actually was. The mobilization of racialized narratives around danger to vulnerable populations and violence was an effective radicalizing tool, and tapped into existing anxieties that had been endemic in much of the South since the Jim Crow era.

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<sup>58</sup> Flyer, ‘Start a Revolution for White Rights’, NAAWP, c. 1980, La-RC-1102, Box 1.

<sup>59</sup> David Duke, Memorandum, National Association for the Advancement of White People, c. 1980, La-RC-1102, Box 1.

<sup>60</sup> David Duke, ‘NAAWP Newsletter’, 1983, NAAWP, La-RC-1102, Box 1.

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Perhaps the greatest purveyor of the myth of anti-White violence in the United States however, was William Luther Pierce, a self-appointed member of the global far-right intelligentsia who was highly influential in the formation and training of the NSLF. Pierce - who ultimately went on to start his own racist organization and even founded his own White Supremacist religion in the 1970s - was driven primarily by ego and his utterly racist worldview, however the impact that his ideas and concepts had on the global extreme-right cannot be understated. Writing initially under the penname 'Andrew MacDonald', Pierce wrote both *The Turner Diaries* and *Hunter*, which have together formed a spiritual canon for the extreme-right and have inspired over 200 murders and a number of violent acts of terrorism from Oklahoma City to Cologne to Christchurch.<sup>61</sup> Pierce consistently mobilized the same tropes around Black sexuality and violence that were deployed by extremist movements in the United Kingdom and South Africa, weaving them into his fictionalized apocalyptic vision of the United States. On the second page of *The Turner Diaries* Pierce tapped into both these racialized and sexualized anxieties and the anxieties of the pro-gun right when he claimed that through the 'Cohen Act' – a clear anti-Semitic dog whistle – the government had confiscated all guns from civilians, resulting in 'groups of Blacks forcing their way into White homes to rob and rape, knowing that even if their victims had guns, they wouldn't dare use them'.<sup>62</sup> Pierce took an opportunity in the opening paragraphs of his book to lay the groundwork for his later advocacy of 'retributive' violence, presenting a familiar image of violent, sexually driven Black men encroaching upon 'White spaces' and white women. It was this same image that drove the Ku Klux Klan's violent campaigns in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and later in the 1920s, and Pierce indisputably knew that this trope had been an effective means of radicalizing white men towards violence over the course of the previous hundred years.

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<sup>61</sup> J. M. Berger, 'The Turner Legacy: The Storied Origins and Enduring Impact of White Nationalism's Deadly Bible', *ICCT Research Paper*, September 2016, <https://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ICCT-Berger-The-Turner-Legacy-September2016-2.pdf>, accessed June 10, 2020.

<sup>62</sup> Pierce, *The Turner Diaries*, pg. 2.

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Throughout the book Pierce played on this trope time and time again, each instance described in more graphic detail than the last. Sexual violence was exclusively perpetrated by men of color and Jewish characters in the book, while violent White men were portrayed as the protectors of femininity and ultimately the White race. Pierce depicts sexual violence and rape in particular both as a symptom of liberalism and as inherent to Blackness, constructing a dystopia in which rape laws were taken off the books because they ‘disproportionately convicted Black men’ and ‘presumed differences between the sexes’. In the reality constructed by Pierce ‘one in two American women could expect to be raped in her lifetime’, and it was clear that by ‘American’, Pierce meant ‘White’.<sup>63</sup> Pierce constructed rape almost as a weapon being used in an ongoing dystopian race war between an alliance of feminists and people of color against ‘White America’. In one shockingly racist and misogynistic excerpt Pierce wrote:

Gangs of black thugs hang around parking lots and school playgrounds and roam the corridors of office buildings and apartment complexes, looking for any attractive, unescorted White girl... gang rapes in classrooms have become an especially popular sport. Some particularly liberal women may find that this situation provides a certain amount of satisfaction for their masochism, a way of atoning for their feelings of racial “guilt”, but for normal White women it is a daily nightmare.<sup>64</sup>

These racialized depictions of sexual assault were used to justify violent racist retribution throughout the book, culminating in the chillingly-named ‘day of the rope’, an orgy of violence in which ‘black rapists’ and mixed-race couples were executed en-masse.<sup>65</sup> Deliberately reminiscent of Jim Crow era lynchings, the ‘day of the rope’ functioned as a

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<sup>63</sup> Pierce, *The Turner Diaries*, pg. 58.

<sup>64</sup> Pierce, *The Turner Diaries*.

<sup>65</sup> Pierce, *The Turner Diaries*, pp 162-167.

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saturnalia of deadly racist violence, and Pierce clearly reveled in the details as he graphically described the ‘dangling corpses’.<sup>66</sup> Pierce’s work was designed to radicalize its male readership towards violence, and he deliberately tapped into the masculine anxieties and bloodlust of the extreme-right milieu in order to promote vigilante, lone-wolf violence against men of color. His book offered a catalogue of invented crimes against the White race, and a blueprint for mass ‘retribution’. He deliberately used sexual violence and the perceived vulnerability of white femininity to arouse anger and ultimately promote violence. Sadly this proved effective, as demonstrated by a number of high profile lynchings and acts of racist terror in the decades that followed the publication of the novel. Aside from the well-covered influence that the book had on Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh, the book directly inspired decades of violence, beginning with the formation and activities of *The Order*, a far-right terror cell founded and run by former Klan leader Robert Mathews. Mathews’ organization was modelled on a violent group of the same name that featured prominently in Pierce’s novel, and was styled as an accelerationist vanguard that would hasten the downfall of society. The real-world *Order* embarked on a violent two-year terror spree between 1983 and 1985, during which they “went on a rampage”, robbing numerous banks, counterfeiting millions of dollars, bombing the cars and homes of political opponents and, in perhaps their most high profile act of violence, assassinating Alan Berg, a prominent Jewish radio host.<sup>67</sup> The deadly radicalizing impact of *The Turner Diaries* was tragically seen a decade later, during the violent lynching of James Byrd Jr. in Jasper, Texas in 1998. One of Byrd’s murderers was heard shouting ‘we’re starting the Turner Diaries early’ as he dragged Byrd’s body behind his pickup truck along asphalt roads.<sup>68</sup> Pierce, seen by many both within the extreme-right and those studying it as the foremost modern philosopher of the movement, directly inspired decades of violence through his use of sensationalist racialized sexual danger narratives and his outright promotion of retributive action. His work is perhaps the clearest

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<sup>66</sup> Pierce, *The Turner Diaries*, pg. 163.

<sup>67</sup> Scott Klug, ‘Architect of the American Reich’, *City Paper*, Vol. 7, No. 20, May 15-21, 1987, La-RC-1102, Box 2.

<sup>68</sup> Phil Miller, ‘Black Man’s Killer Said: ‘We’re Starting the Turner Diaries Early’’, *the Scotsman*, Feb 23 2000.

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example of sexual violence being deliberately mobilized in order to galvanize and radicalize a racist extremist movement, and demonstrates the violent potential of this rhetoric, particularly when carefully and deliberately aimed at the gendered and racialized anxieties that are so endemic on the racist fringe.

### A Continuing Problem

This trend continues in extremist right-wing circles today, as highlighted by a recent exposé article on the rightwing accelerationist *Feuerkrieg Divison* (FkD) put together by an antifascist group in Eugene, Oregon. The article contains screenshots from FkD Telegram channels that show members claiming that African-Americans ‘molests kids’ (sic) and see ‘rape as the spoils of war’.<sup>69</sup> The idea of pedophilic cabals also remains constant on the fringe of American politics, as was viscerally demonstrated during ‘Pizzagate’, when an armed extremist raided Comet Pizza in Washington DC, where he believed leading Democrat politicians and celebrities were running a child sex ring.<sup>70</sup> With the emergence of the ‘QAnon’ phenomenon after the election of Donald Trump in 2016 this concept gained a larger following, and Hillary Clinton, among others, was labelled as a pedophile by the movement.<sup>71</sup> The language of sexual violence and violence against children is still routinely weaponized by the far-right, who use it to discredit political opponents and demonize men of color.

Likewise in the United Kingdom, the issue of ‘Muslim Child Sex Rings’ has become a major rally point and focus of propaganda for the far-right today. After a police investigation in 2014 found that over 1400 children in the South Yorkshire town of Rotherham had been

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<sup>69</sup> ‘Feuerkrieg Division Exposed: International Neo-Nazi Terrorist Network’, *Eugene Antifa*, <https://eugeneantifa.noblogs.org/post/2020/02/24/feuerkrieg-division/>, accessed 26 Feb 2020.

<sup>70</sup> Anna Merlan, *Republic of Lies: American Conspiracy Theorists and their Surprising Rise to Power*, New York: Metropolitan Books, 2019, pp 57-78.

<sup>71</sup> Adrienne LaFrance, ‘The Prophecies of Q: American Conspiracy Theories are Entering a Dangerous New Phase’, *The Atlantic*, June 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/06/qanon-nothing-can-stop-what-is-coming/610567/>, accessed June 10, 2020.

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sexually abused by a group of men tied to a Mosque, far-right groups Britain First and the English Defence League began a concerted campaign linking Islam to child sexual abuse.<sup>72</sup> The term ‘Muslim Grooming’ entered the far-right lexicon and soon became the major focus of propaganda for the EDL’s Stephen Yaxley-Lennon in particular. Yaxley-Lennon, known by his supporters as Tommy Robinson, rose to prominence as a result of his activism on this issue, soon becoming the star of Britain’s far-right scene. Five years later Yaxley-Lennon again mobilized long-standing far-right tropes around sexual violence when he posted a picture of a leaflet published by a Buckinghamshire rape crisis center. The leaflet, which was specifically targeted at ‘black, Asian, and minority ethnic women who have experienced sexual violence’, was posted alongside a caption reading “I guess it’s ok to rape white women then??!?!?”.<sup>73</sup> Yaxley-Lennon’s post mobilized the same victimhood narratives and white genocide myths that have been a cornerstone of the sexual politics of the far-right for the last 50 years, and when seen alongside the rhetoric of predatory sexuality that underpinned the Muslim grooming controversy the agenda of Britain’s modern far-right becomes clear. Most recently, in late 2019 a report published by the British government’s Commission for Countering Extremism claimed that far-right groups were ‘distorting truth’ around racialized sexual violence as a means of mainstreaming their Islamophobia.<sup>74</sup> The report stated that groups routinely decried sexual violence as a symptom of migration and multiculturalism, and that marches and leafletting campaigns carrying this message and blaming minority populations had attracted support from across the social spectrum. However, in the sample

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<sup>72</sup> Ewan Palmer, ‘Rotherham Child Abuse Scandal: EDL and Britain First Stage Protests Following Appalling Report’, *International Business Times*, 29 Aug 2014, <https://www.ibtimes.co.uk/rotherham-child-abuse-scandal-edl-britain-first-stage-protests-following-appalling-report-1463039>, accessed 7 May 2020.

<sup>73</sup> Stephanie Wareham, ‘Tommy Robinson Supporters Attack Wycombe Rape Charity for Advice Leaflet’, *Bucks Free Press*, 15 Feb 2019, <https://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/17437321.tommy-robinson-supporters-attack-wycombe-rape-charity-for-advice-leaflet/>, accessed 7 May 2020; ‘Rape Charity Gets Abusive Calls After Tommy Robinson Post’, *BBC*, 16 Feb 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-47260020>, accessed 7 May 2019.

<sup>74</sup> Commission for Countering Extremism (UK), *Challenging Hateful Extremism (Report)*, October 2019, London, pg. 70; Lizzie Dearden, ‘Far Right poses as protectors of women to target Muslims, official extremism report finds’, *Independent*, October 6 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/muslims-extremism-women-far-right-tommy-robinson-rape-a9143671.html>, accessed May 28, 2020.

area covered by the investigation, almost 85 percent of those convicted of sexual offences were white. The report found that far-right actors and organizations deliberately used the language of sexual violence to bolster their support, tapping into anxieties around vulnerability and portraying violence against women as a racialized issue.

In South Africa, fuel was thrown on the embers of Afrikaner cultural paranoia in 2010 when Eugene Terre'Blanche was murdered by two workers on his farm in Ventersdorp, reinvigorating the discourse around retributive violence and the threat posed to White South African farmers. The violent rhetoric of Julius Malema and the Economic Freedom Fighters, who regularly chant the revolution-era song 'Dubul' ibhunu' – which translates to 'shoot the Boer' - at rallies has only intensified this cultural fear, reinvigorating extremist separatist movements and contributing to the re-emergence of the AWB after years of insignificance and cultural invisibility.<sup>75</sup>

The over-amplified and often imagined threat of anti-White violence – and racialized sexual violence in particular – has arguably been the core message of racist propaganda globally over the last sixty years. The violent extreme-right have relied on these narratives to justify their own message of retributive racist violence, and have pursued a campaign of disinformation and symbolic rage in order to advance their vision of global race-war. By taking real victims of violence and manipulating their stories to fit an agenda of racism and violence, the extreme-right have created a set of useful victims whose pain has been capitalized upon and turned into hate.

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<sup>75</sup> 'Reaction to Malema 'Shoot the Boer' Ruling', *TimesLive.co.za*, September 12, 2011, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/politics/2011-09-12-reaction-to-malema-shoot-the-boer-judgement/>, accessed June 15, 2020

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