Global Extremism:

Understanding the Factors Which Have Contributed to the International Rise of Right-Wing Extremism in The Last Decade

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This thesis examines various factors which have led to the international growth of right-wing extremism in the last decade. By analyzing which factors are the main contributors to the radicalization of an individual, lawmakers and law enforcement are better equipped to deal with this phenomenon. As of the writing of this thesis, there is no consensus among scholars in determining the main contributing factors which have led to the international rise of right-wing extremism in the last decade. Scholars frequently cite a multitude of factors, such as social hierarchy, immigration, religion, the internet and social media, the state of the economy, and many others, as contributing factors. This thesis fills this gap in the literature by providing a list of factors which have impacted the international rise of right-wing extremism. Process tracing is used in this thesis by examining the personal lives and manifestos of extremists who successfully carried out acts of violence in the United States, Germany, Norway, and New Zealand. This method of analysis allows for a comprehensive understanding of the factors which have contributed to the rise of right-wing extremism in the last decade.

The events which took place in Oslo and Utyøa, Norway; Charleston, South Carolina; Christchurch, New Zealand; El Paso, Texas; Hanau, Hesse, Germany; and the attacks on the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, each serve as stark reminders to the presence, and dangers, of right-wing extremism. The threat extremists pose has culminated to where FBI Director Christopher Wray testified before the House Homeland Security Committee in 2020, stating right-wing extremists have surpassed radical Islamic terrorists in terms of the security threat they pose. Since 2014, right-wing attacks have increased substantially. From 2014 to 2020, upwards of 234 right-wing extremist plots have been uncovered (Jones et al., 2020). Furthermore, The Center for Strategic and International Studies claims extreme right-wing groups have accounted for 41 out of 61, or 67%, terrorist plots and attacks in the first eight months of 2020 (Gross, 2020).

Right-wing extremism is not exclusively a threat in the United States, but rather it is a transnation-

al threat. In New Zealand, there are an estimated 60-70 extreme right-wing groups with around 150-300 known right-wing activists (Spoonley, 2020). The number of extreme right- wing activists may appear small, however, the proportion of New Zealanders involved in right-wing extremist activities is roughly equivalent to the proportion in Germany, which is facing a high volume of right-wing extremist attacks (Spoonely, 2020). Moreover, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) reported far-right extremism now makes up roughly 40% of its counterterrorism caseload ("Right-Wing Extremism Grows in Australia With More Young People Being Radicalized Online," 2020). Furthermore, the threat right-wing extremists pose at the international level has increased dramatically in recent years. Although there is an observed rise in right-wing extremism, scholars are not in agreement as to what is causing the worldwide increase in right-wing extremist activities.

Literature Review

Social Hierarchy and
The Great Replacement Theory

Carter and Pérez (2016) set forth to explain the underlying psychological roots of those who exhibit radical right-wing tendencies, specifically in White-dominated regions, such as North America and Western Europe. Carter and Pérez (2016) establish that due to the history of social dominance of White people in areas like North America and Europe, White people have established a social hierarchy, which places them at the top of the social totem pole (p. 497). The formation of this social hierarchy has prompted White people to create a strong national attachment, one which reinforces and legitimizes their exclusive position in the social hierarchy. As a consequence of such an attachment, Carter and Pérez (2016) identify a formation of an artificial national image that places White people as being the "exemplars of the nation" (p. 498). Carter and Pérez (2016) conclude that as a result of this exclusive national image, "in" and "out" groups have emerged, and are constantly shifting (p. 499). The "in" group is described as those who

fit the artificial national image, whereas the people in the "out" group are those who do not. The creation of "out" groups has established racial minorities as subordinates, demeaning their perceived value to society, which ultimately dehumanizes them. The rejection of people who do not fit the image of those at the top of the social hierarchy is extremely common, resulting in xenophobic anti-immigrant sentiments that attempt to ensure the established social hierarchy remains intact (Carter and Pérez, 2016, p. 501).

Onraet, van Hiel, and Cornelis (2013) can be connected to the work of Carter and Pérez (2016) as their research discusses the consequences of the creation of "in" and "out" groups on society. In an attempt to explain the rise in extreme right-wing attitudes, the research conducted by Onraet et al. (2013) establishes a perceived threat level certain groups of people are associated with. Their study shows individuals in the "in" group who perceive the world as "dangerous" contain low levels of social solidarity, live in fear of an imminent terrorist attack, are associated with problematic social or economic situations, or view the presence of the "out" group as a threat to social dominance or national security (Onraet et al., 2013, p. 791). As a result, these people exhibit higher levels of right-wing extremist attitudes (Onraet et al., 2013, p. 791). Onraet et al. (2013) call upon the theories of Rentfrow, Gosling, and Potter (2008) to connect the relationship of the perceived threat level to the individual and domestic levels of analysis (pp. 800-801).

Furthermore, the emergence of political parties that appeal to those with extreme right-wing political stances has created an atmosphere of legitimacy and acceptance, as they rationalize violence against those in the "out" group. Moreover, the work of Windisch, Simi, Blee, and DeMichele (2018) explains that people are able to suppress their cognitive and emotional controls when committing violent acts against members of the "out" group. Due to the perceived threat members of the "out" group pose, as outlined in the works of Onraet et al. (2013), the creation of an "in" and "out" group dynamic empowers people in the "in" group to commit acts of violence against members of the "out" group, as such actions are seen as socially ac-

ceptable (Windisch et al., 2018, p. 23). Windisch et al. (2018) state the dehumanization, or what they call "deindividuation," of the "out" group by those at the top of the social hierarchy is partially responsible for the increase in right-wing violence in Western states (p. 24). The findings of Carter and Pérez (2016), Onraet et al. (2013), and Windisch et al. (2018) are all interconnected as they find the formation of "in" and "out" group dynamics have contributed to the acceptance of violence against the "out" group, leading to the rise of right-wing extremism.

An extension of Carter and Pérez's (2016) social hierarchy is The Great Replacement theory. The Great Replacement theory is closely linked to the desire to maintain the established social hierarchy, as it proposes predominantly White societies are being invaded and destroyed by both "Black and Brown immigrants" from Africa and South America (Ramakrishna, 2020, p. 3). The theory was originally conceived by French philosopher Renaud Camus in 2012, and has since permeated into Western societies (Ramakrishna, 2020, p. 3). The Great Replacement theory has become a call to action for right-wing extremists, resulting in attacks targeting members of the Asian, Black, Hispanic, Jewish, LGBTQ+, and Muslim communities (Auger, 2020, p. 90). The Great Replacement theory is the dominant ideology among individuals sympathetic to right-wing extremism, and is closely linked to social hierarchy.

Anti-Immigrant Sentiment

The anti-immigrant sentiment attributed to most right-wing groups in the West has been explored in research by Carter and Pérez (2016). Many who subscribe to extreme right-wing ideologies in Western states have developed a deep desire to maintain social dominance in their society. In addition to establishing "in" and "out" group dynamics, Carter and Pérez (2016) find that White immigrants tend to be accepted into society more frequently than non-White immigrants (p. 506). Carter and Pérez (2016) find this occurs subconsciously, due to the "in" group's innate desire to remain at the top of the social hierarchy.

Furthermore, Koehler (2018) focuses on the role of anti-immigration and anti-refugee sentiment in right-wing extremist circles as he analyzes Germany. Koehler's (2018) findings suggest the large influx of refugees in 2015 and 2016 was an incredibly polarizing event for the German people, as reflected in the increase of crimes against refugees during that time span (p. 78). Violent crimes, including arson and explosive attacks, against refugees and immigrants increased substantially in 2015 and 2016 (Koehler, 2015, pp. 80-81). This finding prompted Koehler (2018) to suggest the sudden and significant influx of refugees and immigrants has contributed to the increase of sympathetic views towards the sentiments of right-wing extremists in Germany (pp. 80-81).

Additionally, McAlexander (2020) argues the increase in immigration has directly led to an increase in right-wing violence in Western Europe (p. 193). McAlexander (2020) specifically states the increase in right-wing attacks are correlated to immigration, however, only pertaining to non-European immigrants (p. 193). McAlexander (2020) explains this phenomenon by arguing the link between non-European immigrants and right-wing extremists has more to do with grievances regarding the perceived change in the social hierarchy, rather than the sheer existence of immigrants residing in their state (p. 193). McAlexander's (2020) work adheres to the theory proposed by Carter and Pérez (2016), as right-wing groups are galvanized by the prospect of a changing social order in their respective states. Furthermore, McAlexander (2020) argues the influx of immigrants can also predict right-wing attacks, citing large influxes of non-European immigrants are frequently met with opposition by certain groups within the populace (p. 183). This reinforces Koehler's (2018) claim that an influx of refugees is responsible for the increased activity of right-wing groups in Germany. McAlexander (2020) and Koehler (2018) also agree that right-wing extremists intend to intimidate foreigners, and ultimately drive them out of their state (McAlexander, 2020, p. 183).

Koehler (2016) finds that the recent and ongoing refugee crisis has created a strong anti-immigrant sentiment, giving nationalists and far-right parties major electoral success in recent European elections (p. 87). The broad anti-immigration

and Euro-skeptic rhetoric of right-wing parties has further influenced the ways in which people vote. Koehler (2016) establishes that extreme, right-wing, anti-immigration talking points have permeated into mainstream political jargon, creating a sense of normalcy for racist and xenophobic rhetoric (p. 88).

The State of the Economy and Immigration

Some scholars believe the state of the economy in Western states has led to an increase in right-wing sentiment among the population. Hagtvet (1994) finds that right-wing extremism and violence thrive among the lower class, especially during economic recessions and stagnation (p. 243). As a result, Hagtvet (1994) establishes that those who are economically vulnerable perceive foreigners as unwanted rivals in the job market (p. 243). Semyonov, Raijman, and Gorodzeisky (2006) reinforce Hagtvet's findings (1994), as Semyonov et al. (2006) conclude those who are economically vulnerable during times of economic downturn are more susceptible to exhibiting anti-immigrant sentiments (pg. 444). It is frequently asserted within existing literature that immigration and the state of the economy are closely intertwined. The relationship between immigration and the state of the economy can be best described as a causal relationship: as the economy gets progressively worse, people are quick to project immigrants, members of the "out" group, as the cause of the failing economy.

The findings in Hagtvet (1994) still apply today, as shown by Winders (2016). Perhaps one of the most common dog whistles right-wing groups prefer to utilize is that immigrants take jobs away from "hard-working" people. Winders (2016) primarily focuses on the 2016 Presidential election in the United States. Winders (2016) finds then-Republican nominee Donald Trump's view that immigrants are threatening to put American workers out of jobs resonated with the far-right, leading them to support his candidacy (p. 294).

Cochrane and Nevitte (2014) provides additional support for anti-immigrant sentiment amidst economic downturns. Cochrane and Nevitte's (2014) analysis find there is a correlation between the unemployment rate and the levels of anti-immigrant sentiment (p. 20). According to data collected from 20 Western states, Cochrane and Nevitte (2014) it is found that the presence of right-wing political parties in the state is a variable responsible for the level of anti-immigrant sentiment amidst economic downturn (p. 22). Without right-wing political parties, there is no statistical increase in anti-immigrant sentiment among the populace during an economic downturn (Cochrane and Nevitte, 2014, p. 20). Moreover, Cochrane and Nevitte's (2014) analysis finds the recent emergence of far-right wing parties has significantly impacted anti-immigrant sentiment during economic downturns, as they are the sources of such sentiment, and frequently project it. Prior to the mid-1980's, there was no relationship between unemployment and anti-immigrant sentiment, as far-right wing parties were essentially irrelevant in the political landscape (Cochrane and Nevitte, 2014, p. 20). Following the mid-1980's, anti-immigrant sentiment rose amidst surges in unemployment, with the only new variable being the rise in the prevalence of extreme right-wing parties in the West (Cochrane and Nevitte, 2014, p. 20).

The scapegoating of immigrants as a way to reconcile economic slumps is generally accepted among scholars to be a contributing factor in the rise of extreme right-wing attitudes in the West; however, there are scholars who suggest otherwise. McAlexander (2020) suggests anti-immigrant sentiments and the state of the economy being interconnected could be a potential factor leading to the rise of extreme right-wing groups in Western Europe, yet McAlexander (2020) proposes an alternative explanation (p. 183). McAlexander (2020) finds anti-immigrant sentiment and attacks against immigrants in Western Europe are more broadly related to the population's desire for immigrants to not reside in their respective state (p. 182-183). Moreover, McAlexander (2020) argues the volume of immigrants is a stronger indicator of right-wing sentiment and attacks, rather than the state of the economy (p. 183). McAlexander's (2020) conclusions contrast many scholars' explanation that the state of the economy is one of the factors contributing to the increase in right-wing extremism.

Religion and Anti-LGBTQ+ Sentiment

Religion plays a critical role in the anti-LGBTQ+ movement exhibited by those on the far-right. Lienesch (1984) examines the role Christianity plays in right-wing politics. There is a heightened focus on what Lienesch calls "The New Right," as a way to explain the permeation of religion into right-wing politics. Lienesch (1984) discusses the successful attempts by American conservatives to recruit popular televangelists, such as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and James Robinson, into conservative corners to grow their base (p. 409). Since the 1980's, Lienesch (1984) argues evangelical Christianity and conservative politics have become interconnected, resulting in christian-conservative coalitions, which are commonly referred to as the "religious right" (p. 409). These coalitions are still present today, and are fundamental to the bedrock ideologies of today's political right. Due to the incorporation of evangelical Christianity into right-wing politics, the lines between religion and politics have become blurred.

Equality for, and acceptance of, the LGBTQ+ community has become increasingly popular in Western states. Even though the West is making great strides towards equality, there is a sizeable minority who oppose same-sex marriage, as well as other pro-LGBTQ+ initiatives. Whitehead and Perry (2015) predominantly focus on the opposition to same-sex marriage by the far-right. Those on the far-right who oppose same-sex marriage hold firm beliefs that the United States is a Christian nation, and to be a true "American," one must adhere to Christian beliefs (Whitehead and Perry, 2015, p. 424). Whitehead and Perry (2015) identity three points to help explain this rationale: (1) the United States is God's chosen country, (2) the United States must uphold God's commands in order to prosper, and (3) same-sex marriage is in conflict with God's commands (p. 434). As such, fear of God has motivated people to oppose same-sex marriage, and many other LGBTQ+ initiatives that serve to promote equality for the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, Kourou (2020) establishes the repudiation of LGBTQ+ rights are ingrained in the desire to maintain the traditional family structure (p. 6).

The Internet and Social Media

The worldwide availability of the internet is a new phenomenon whose effects we are seeing only recently. According to Val Burris, Smith, and Strahm (2000), the internet has been paramount to the extreme right-wing movement, as it provides a medium for sharing beliefs and recruiting members. Furthermore, Val Burris et al. (2000) finds the internet has the ability to create a sense of community for people who sympathize with extreme right-wing sentiments, regardless if they are from poor rural areas or affluent suburbs (p. 232). The ability to communicate with anyone in the world aids in the founding of a virtual community of like-minded thinkers, making up for the lack of people with similar right-wing extremist ideologies wherever one lives.

Of the various uses of the internet, the use of social media has skyrocketed over the last half decade, allowing people from all walks of life to further engage and connect like never before. Social media has presented right-wing groups the ability to reach out and connect with others on a global scale, while broadcasting their message to a mainstream audience, rather than just in forums and websites infrequently visited by mainstream internet users. Crawford and Keen (2020) discuss the importance of social media and forum sites, such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and 8chan, where they find right-wing groups are taking advantage of the access social media sites provide in order to grow their ranks and operate transnationally (p. 4). Crawford and Keen (2020) also express concern over the ability to live stream acts of violence, citing examples of shootings streamed on Facebook and Twitch, a popular streaming platform for gamers (p.4). Live streaming these acts are of concern due to the perpetrators contributing to "propaganda by deed," or the demonstration effect (Crawford and Keen, 2020, p. 4).

In addition to propaganda and other various recruitment devices, extreme right-wing social media pages and Internet sites are frequently filled with conspiracy theories that circulate rapidly within right-wing communities. Crawford and Keen (2020) claim the reason why these conspiracies circulate rapidly is due to their ability to, "explain

complex events within the framework of a titanic struggle between the forces of Good and Evil," and that the truth is being deliberately withheld from the public by some secretive, often Jewish or government-related, authority (p.5). Crawford and Keen (2020) also find that as individuals gradually become indoctrinated, it is easier to latch onto these conspiracy theories and believe them to be true (p. 5). It is the case that conspiracy theories frequently combine talking points in which extreme right-wing feel strongly about. Crawford and Keen (2020) draw upon a conspiracy theory the Pittsburg Tree of Life Synagogue shooter believed in: that the Jewish American non-profit HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) was orchestrating a plot to increase non-White immigration into the United States as a way to sabotage the White race (p. 5). This single example demonstrates that conspiracies play into the conscious fear of losing one's spot in the social hierarchy, as described in the works by Carter and Pérez (2016), unveiling why conspiracy theories spread like wildfire within far-right communities.

Foreign Influence

Unfortunately, there are gaps in the literature regarding the extent to which right-wing movements are being aided by foreign states; however, there is enough scholarly literature present to discern whether there is an occurrence of foreign influence (Bevensee and Ross, 2018, p. 3). According to existing literature, the biggest international perpetrator guilty of encouraging extreme right-wing groups is Russia (Bevensee and Ross, 2018; Bryc, 2019; Ware, 2020). Perhaps the most common form of encouraging extreme right-wing groups is Russia's policy of spreading disinformation online, predominantly through social media bot accounts (Bevensee and Ross, 2018, p. 3; Bryc, 2019, p. 169). The disinformation presented to far-right groups is overwhelmingly in the form of conspiracy theories which ultimately reinforce an individual's worldview.

Bevensee and Ross (2018) establish Russia's policy to promote disinformation originates from Russian fascist Alexander Dugin, who, in 1997, called for disorder in American society as a way to reduce America's foreign influence in the world (p. 3). Russian President Vladimir Putin gravitated towards Dugin's policy proposal and took it one step further. Putin intends to sow discord not only in the United States, but in all NATO states. Russia's main target of disinformation is predominantly far-right groups and politicians who are typically anti-globalist, anti-liberal, anti-immigrant, and who adhere to conservative values, nationalism, and xenophobia (Bryc, 2019, p. 171). Gradually, Russian disinformation has permeated into the far-right, as shown by the connections Dugin has made with former Youth for Western Civilization organizer Matthew Heimbach and conspiracy theorist Alex Jones (Bevensee and Ross, 2018, p. 4). Additionally, scholars attribute Putin's relationship to leaders of European far-right wing groups, such as France's Marine Le Pen, as an indication that Russia is enabling right-wing extremists abroad (Bryc, 2019, p. 171).

Russia does not exclusively enable far-right groups by promoting disinformation as scholars have shown Russia to provide safe haven for extreme right-wing groups. Ware (2020) finds that leaders of neo-Nazi groups in the United States have been living and operating within Russia (p. 11). Furthermore, Russia has also served as a training ground for transnational right-wing extremists, similar to jihadists traveling to Syria and Iraq for training (Ware, 2020, p. 11).

Mental Health

There are occurrences of scholars claiming that mental health is a minor, but important, contributor to the rise of extreme right-wing activity in the West. Koehler (2016) claims the United States has seen an influx of lone-actor attacks, and proposes mental health as a contributing factor (p. 90). Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, and Sanford (1950) claimed in the early days of extreme right-wing research that authoritarian tendencies are a mental syndromes, and is closely associated with mental illness (as cited in Ornraet and van Hiel, 2014, p. 36). Bakker and De Roy van Zuijdewijn (2016) identify there are gaps in the literature which empirically determines personal characteristics of lone-actor perpetrators. Furthermore,

they presume these lone-actors exhibit some form of minor mental illness, as they are typically social outcasts who prefer to live in solidarity, but nevertheless desire attention from others (p. 43).

Although Koehler (2016) identifies mental health as a potential factor, some scholars seem to claim the contrary. Onraet and van Hiel (2014) state extreme right-wing supporters do not show poorer mental health than any other group of people (p. 37). Analysis from Jah and Khoshnood's (2019) sample size of 37 lone-actor terrorists from the United States and Europe shows 9 people, or 25%, had confirmed mental health issues prior to, or at the time of, their attack (p. 32). However, Bakker and De Roy van Zuijdewijn's (2016) sample size of 120 perpetrators from Europe show only 42, or 35%, of perpetrators had mental health issues, leading them to claim mental health is a relatively unimportant factor (pp. 43-45).

Methodology

Currently, there is no clear consensus amongst scholars as to why we are seeing an uptick in extreme right-wing activities in the last ten years. As such, this thesis will attempt to fill this gap in the literature by analyzing the various factors scholars have attributed to the emergence of right-wing extremism in the West in the last decade.

This thesis will fill this gap via process tracing, which includes analysis on the personal lives and manifestos of right-wing extremists. In conducting a process tracing thesis, factors outlined in the literature review will be applied to the following five cases: Anders Behring Breivik, Dylann Roof, Brenton Harrison Tarrant, Patrick Crusius, and Tobias Rathjen. The goal is to test the legitimacy of each factor by assessing their prevalence in the personal lives of each case, as well as the subject matter within each case's manifesto.

The cases aforementioned have been chosen due to their attacks being conducted within the last ten years, the time period in which this thesis rests. Furthermore, there are two cases from the United States, one from Norway, one from New Zealand, and one from Germany. These cases were chosen with the intent to identify a general trend of this phenomenon within different Western states. Initially, a total of eight cases were to be analyzed, however, the material available for three of the cases did not provide the necessary substantive information on their radicalization and prejudicial ideologies. Furthermore, all direct quotes are exactly as they appear in their respective manifestos, with no correction made to spelling or grammatical errors. Lastly, one issue pertains to the accessibility of Brenton Harrison Tarrant's manifesto, in that a spaced-out, 87-page manifesto is the only one readily available, rather than the original 74-page manifesto. As such, citations have been adjusted accordingly to reflect the 87-page version.

Lastly, the following material includes writings produced by individuals who feel strongly in what they believe. As such, there are strong racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic, and misogynistic quotes present throughout the remainder of this thesis. Some of the more egregious language has been censored out of respect for those who might find such language to be offensive. However, I have elected to abstain from completely sanitizing the thesis, as the mere presence of such language is critical in understanding each case's worldview.

Research

Case Study 1: Anders Breivik

Anders Behring Breivik was 33 years old when he detonated a fertilizer bomb and committed a mass shooting in Oslo and Utøya, Norway on July 22, 2011 ("Profile: Anders Behring Breivik," 2012). The bombing in Oslo, Norway resulted in the death of eight people and left at least two hundred people injured. ("Anders Behring Breivik: The Indictment," 2012). Breivik also committed a shooting at a children's camp on the Norwegian island of Utøya, which resulted in sixty-nine deaths and left thirty-three people injured ("Anders Behring Breivik: The Indictment," 2012). In total, Breivik's carnage amounted to seventy-seven deaths and left hundreds injured.

Prior to committing the attacks at Oslo and Utøya, Breivik had a troubled upbringing as a child. His father was a diplomat who was frequently absent from Breivik's life, and his mother was

a "depressive, self-destructive woman" who frequently wished to send her children to an orphanage (Buruma, 2015). Due to the lack of attention from his parents, Breivik was a needy child, and frequently took his pain out on others (Buruma, 2015). Breivik targeted those who were physically weaker than him to bully, especially his younger sister and the family pets (Buruma, 2015). Due to Breivik's repulsive social tendencies, he had trouble making friends throughout his life. Breivik eventually made a friend, Ahmed, who was the son of Pakistani immigrants (Buruma, 2015). Breivik admired Ahmed and his friends, as they were considered "Pakistani street kids," who were perceived to be "tough guys" (Buruma, 2015). Breivik attempted to fit in with Ahmed and his friends by imitating their slang and began dressing like them, but was ultimately mocked (Buruma, 2015). Furthermore, Breivik failed at finding a wife, even resorting to a mail-order bride from Belarus in which nothing came of that relationship (Buruma, 2015). Due to a lack of companionship throughout his life, Breivik often sought acceptance from various groups of people, making him susceptible to online communities.

Breivik gradually became radicalized through online websites, such as Robert Spencer's Jihad Watch and the Neo-Nazi Stormfront forum, as well as becoming an avid reader of a Norwegian blogger with the pseudonym of "Fjordman" (Buruma, 2015). Breivik eventually reconstructed his persona in cyberspace, where he called himself "Andrew Berwick" (Buruma, 2015). Following his radicalization, Breivik wrote his 1,518-page manifesto, titled 2083: A European Declaration of Independence. Breivik sent his manifesto to more than a thousand email addresses less than ninety minutes prior to his attack (Taylor, 2011).

To preface, Breivik's lengthy 1,518-page manifesto was heavily plagiarized from the Unabomber's manifesto, as well as including literary works by other authors. Although Breivik's manifesto does not exclusively include works written by himself, it nevertheless provides a perspective into how Breivik internalizes and views the world around him.

Breivik initially opens by discussing ways in which his followers can proliferate his manifesto through the use of the internet. Roughly nine pages into his manifesto, Breivik begins to voice one of his many grievances with Western culture: "Cultural Marxism," which he blames for the degradation of Western society. Breivik defines Cultural Marxism as, "Marxism translated from economic into cultural terms" (Breivik, 2011, p. 13). According to Breivik, Cultural Marxism was established by The Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, with the intention of supplanting the fundamental bases of Western culture, such as Christianity, capitalism, sexual restraint, and ethnocentrism (Breivik, 2011, p. 16).

Breivik attempts to display the long-term consequences of Cultural Marxism by painting a romanticized image of how splendid the 1950s were. Breivik argues public schools were excellent, people did not lock their doors at night, and women were the primary caretakers of children (Breivik, 2011, p. 12). Breivik compares his image of 1950s society to today, in which he disavows. Breivik states children must go through metal detectors to enter schools, voices frustration pertaining to rampant drug use in today's society, and complains one cannot praise the hiring of a "colored" person, even if meant to positively highlight diversity in the workplace (Breivik, 2011, p. 12). The comparisons between the way of life of the 1950s and today sets up Breivik's reasoning as to why Cultural Marxism is to blame for the degradation of society. Breivik argues Cultural Marxism is enforced by the state, which forces people to accept cultural outsiders, hence leading to some of the repulsive changes in Western society, such as the "Islamisation" of Europe and the acceptance of "immoral" sexual acts (Breivik, 2011, p. 14).

Breivik further places blame on immigration for the majority of problems facing Western European states by arguing the annual increase in the immigration of Muslims serves as "cultural suicide" for European countries (Breivik, 2011, p. 9). Furthermore, Breivik (2011) attempts to demonize Muslims by citing Bernard Lewis' Islam and the West:

Since the creation of Islam in the 7th century and up to this day, the Islamic Jihad has systematically killed more than 300 million non-Muslims and tortured and enslaved more than 500 million individuals... . This trend will continue as long as Islam continues to exist. (p. 39)

The aforementioned quote from Lewis further displays Breivik's anti-Muslim sentiment as it provides insight into Breivik's worldview. In his own writing, Breivik claims Western colonial history was, "nothing compared to the 1,400 years of Islamic Jihad" (Breivik, 2011, p. 41). Breivik also writes, "Muslims enslaved and forcefully converted more than 300 million people" (Breivik, 2011, p. 41).

Breivik voices frustrations with the recent feminist movements within Western countries as well, once again drawing a distinction between the past and present. Breivik differentiates the feminism of the late 19th and early 20th century to today's feminists by proclaiming the feminists of the past advocated for suffrage and the strengthening of traditional family values, while present-day feminists have been successful in supporting "mass Muslim immigration" in an attempt to "destroy traditional European structure" (Breivik, 2011, p. 29). Breivik continues to assert that the present-day feminist movement has also been largely successful in feminizing men, as Breivik argues men are becoming increasingly feminine. The feminization of men is expanded upon within his manifesto by declaring that current men's magazines, such as GQ, Men's Health, and Men's Fitness, place an emphasis on men becoming, "less strong and silent, and more worried about making themselves pretty" (Breivik, 2011, p. 29). Breivik suggests the modern-day feminist movement has been successful in achieving the emasculation of men, furthering their goals of eroding traditional Western European structures in the name of Cultural Marxism (Breivik, 2011, p. 29).

The breakdown of sexual norms is yet another offense to traditional social values, which Breivik believes is caused by Cultural Marxism. Breivik continues to attack the loss of adherence to traditional societal values as he writes, "Cultural shifts have enabled people to disregard traditional values and 'prematurely' have kids with whoever and leaving them, making the children fatherless and placing the child under the care of the state" (Breivik, 2011, p. 361). Breivik follows up by arguing the glorification of sexual exploration has contributed heavily to the breakdown of traditional norms, especially those attributed to women. The break-down of sexual ethics and morality within Western society is a point of contention with Breivik, as he disagrees with the acceptance of a woman's ability to engage in one-night stands, pre-marital sex, and a higher average number of partners (Breivik, 2011, p. 1,169). Breivik also attributes the loosening of sexual norms to the corresponding increase of sexually transmitted diseases and infections (Breivik, 2011, p. 1,170).

As Breivik continues his diatribe on the ills of present-day society, he discusses ways in which others can become involved throughout his manifesto. In the early portions, Breivik calls on readers to oppose Sharia law, reject the loosening of sexual norms, and the overall rejection of Cultural Marxism. Over the course of his manifesto, Breivik gradually hardens his rhetoric, citing the need to use terror as a method to "wake up the masses" (Breivik, 2011, p. 836). Breivik continues to spout harsh rhetoric by calling on supporters to overcome their natural chivalrous sentiment towards women, and be prepared to kill them in the name of the cause. Breivik's rationale is, "60-70% of all Cultural Marxists or suicidal humanists are female" (Breivik, 2011, p. 933). Breivik continues by stating, "You will face women in battle and they will not hesitate to kill you... You must therefore embrace and familiarize yourself with the concept of killing women, even very attractive women" (Breivik, 2011, p. 933).

One of the final take-aways from Breivik's prolonged manifesto is the call to action aimed at his supporters, imploring them to utilize the benefits of social media and the internet to consolidate, share ideas, and grow in number over time. Breivik specifically mentions the importance of using Facebook as a means to reach out and connect with like-minded individuals throughout Europe (Breivik, 2011, p. 1,267). Breivik further calls on supporters to sign up for Facebook if they do not already have an account (Breivik, 2011, p. 1,267). Breivik had the foresight to claim, "Online social networking sites will be essential in the decades to come for consolidation and recruitment purposes. Our struggle is not local; it is pan-European and is going on in all countries where Europeans live (Breivik, 2011, p. 1,267).

Case Study 2: Dylann Roof

Dylann Roof was 21 years old when he committed the Charleston church shooting in South Carolina (Shapiro, 2017). The attack at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church resulted in nine deaths, with the victims' ages ranging from 26 to 87 years old (Kim, 2015).

Dylann Roof attended seven schools in nine years, each middle-class and racially integrated (Robles and Stewart, 2015). Roof grew up with Black friends, and came from a well-respected family, as his grandfather was a well-known lawyer in his town (Robles and Stewart, 2015). Roof's parents were divorced; his mother suffered financially as evidenced by a 2009 eviction, and his father was a once well-off home renovator who later fell into severe debt (Robles and Stewart, 2015).

During high school, Roof was a struggling student who had failed ninth grade twice before dropping out (Robles and Stewart, 2015). After dropping out, Roof began bouncing between jobs, taking drugs, becoming an avid drinker, and had frequent run-ins with the police (Robles and Stewart, 2015). After dropping out of high school, Roof began expressing hatred towards Black people. A friend of Roof, Dalton Taylor, is quoted saying Roof, "wanted to start a civil war," and called a Black woman a racist term when passing her by on the street (Robles et al., 2015).

Roof proclaims he began to become radicalized due to the killing of Trayvon Martin (Robles, 2015). Roof would later begin visiting and conversing with others on White supremacist websites, where he would also download a history book pertaining to the Ku Klux Klan in 2014 (Robles and Stewart, 2015; Smith et al., 2016). During his radicalization, Roof created his own website, named "thelastrhodesian," and a Facebook account, where he would post pictures of himself wearing clothes with flags of apartheid-era South Africa and White-ruled Rhodesia, emblems of modern-day White supremacists, while being surrounded by Confederate flags (Robles et al., 2015). Furthermore, Roof wore clothes with the number 88 on them, which is a reference to "Heil Hitler" (Robles and Stewart, 2015). In addition to donning White-supremacist symbols, Roof would post pictures flaunting his guns, which would later be used in his attack, and historical Confederate sites he would frequently visit (Robles, 2015).

Roof's manifesto opens by outlining how he became radicalized, citing the killing of Trayvon Martin, claiming George Zimmerman was within his rights (Roof, 2015, p. 1). Following his "realization," Roof discusses Black on White crime, claiming he found multiple reports made by the Council of Conservative Citizens (Roof, 2015, p. 1). Roof states he became repulsed by the amount of Black on White murders that are being ignored by society (Roof, 2015, p. 1).

Following Roof's introduction, Roof begins his first section, titled "Blacks." Roof expresses his distaste for Black people, writing, "I think it is fitting to start off with the group I have the most real life experiences [sic] with, and the group that is the biggest problem for America. N*****s [emphasis in original] are stupid and violent" (Roof, 2015, p. 1). Roof also claims Black people are predisposed to be, "constantly think about race, making them easily offended" (Roof, 2015, p. 1). Furthermore, Roof places blame for this perceived aggressive nature of Black people on "Jewish agitation" (Roof, 2015, p. 1).

Roof proceeds to declare White people as being superior to Black people, even drawing a comparison between Black people and dogs (Roof, 2015, p. 2). Furthermore, Roof writes, "This is why they are able to get away with things like obnoxious behavior in public," further expanding on his racist sentiments (Roof, 2015, p. 2). Roof continues his racist diatribe by claiming he hoped Black people were treated terribly throughout history (Roof, 2015, p. 2). Furthermore, Roof argues segregation was not a bad thing, but rather a defensive measure to, "protect us from them," and, "to protect us from being brought down to their level" (Roof, 2015, p. 2). Roof continues introducing eugenics, "N***oes [emphasis in original] have lower IQs, lower impulse control, and higher testosterone levels... these three things alone are a recipe for violent behavior" (Roof, 2015, p. 3). In the last section of his manifesto, Roof warns about the dangers of interracial children, claiming, "A horse and a donkey can breed and make a mule, but they are still two completely different animals. Just because we

can breed with the other races doesn't make us the same" (Roof, 2015, p.3).

Roof concludes the "Blacks" section of his manifesto, and begins to address his grievances with other people, including the sections of "Jews," "Hispanics," and "East Asians" (Roof, 2015, p. 4). Pertaining to Jewish people, Roof (2015) writes:

In my opinion the issues with jews [sic] is not their blood, but their identity. I think that if we could somehow destroy the jewish [sic] identity, then they wouldn't cause much of a problem... Just like n*****s [emphasis added in original], most jews [sic] are always thinking about the fact that they are jewish [sic]. (p. 4)

Roof continues on to the next section, titled "Hispanics," claiming, "Hispanics appreciate White beauty" and there is, "good White blood worht [sic] saving in Uruguay, Argentina, Chile and even Brasil [sic]" (Roof, 2015, p. 4). Lastly, Roof argues East Asians would be, "great allies of the White race" due to them being "racist by nature," and they could "carry something on" (Roof, 2015, p. 4).

In Roof's final sections, titled "Patriotism" and "An Explanation," Roof states he dislikes seeing the American flag, due to society disregarding the amount of White people being murdered by Black people (Roof, 2015, p. 5). Furthermore, Roof claims he chose Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston because, "...it is most [sic] historic city in my state, and at one time had the highest ratio of blacks to Whites in the country" (Roof, 2015, p. 5). Lastly, Roof is frustrated with the lack of action, as he writes, "We have no skinheads, no real KKK, no one doing anything but talking in the internet. Well someone has to have the bravery to take it to the real world, and I guess that has to be me" (Roof, 2015, p. 5).

Case Study 3: Brenton Harrison Tarrant

Brenton Harrison Tarrant was 28 years old when he committed an attack on the Al Noor mosque and the Linwood Islamic Centre in Christchurch, New Zealand on March 15, 2019 (Kirkpatrick, 2019). The attack on Al Noor mosque and the Linwood Islamic Center left a total of fifty-one people dead, with forty-nine injured (Stoakes,

2019). The age of the victims ranged between 3 to 77 years old, with eight being under the age of 25 ("Christchurch Shootings: The People Killed as They Prayed," 2020).

Tarrant was born in Grafton, New South Wales, Australia, where he would take up the hobbies of body-building and becoming a personal trainer (Kilpatrick, 2019). Tarrant's father was a garbage man who enjoyed competing in Ironman competitions as a hobby, but his mother was not present in his life due to being divorced (Kilpatrick, 2019). People close to Tarrant in his early stages of life describe him as odd, one who prefers solitude, and prone to practical jokes (Williamson, 2020) In 2010, his father passed away, where Tarrant's life took an unexpected turn (Kilpatrick, 2019). Tarrant quit his job as a personal trainer and shifted towards investing in cryptocurrencies as his primary form of income (Kilpatrick, 2019). Tarrant would also travel to North Korea, Pakistan, Poland, Ukraine, Argentina, Spain, Portugal, and France (Kilpatrick, 2019; Tarrant, 2019, p. 10). In Tarrant's manifesto, he claims he did not have an interest in education, and as a result did not attend university (Tarrant, 2019, p. 7). Tarrant was also a member of a rifle club in New Zealand, where he settled down (Williamson, 2020).

It was Tarrant's solo travels which began his radicalization, as he indicates in his manifesto. Tarrant would refine his radicalization online through the use of social media and online forums, such as 4chan, and the more extreme 8chan (Williamson, 2020). Prior to the attack, Tarrant posted his 74-page manifesto on his Twitter account three days before the shooting, which had zero followers, as well as 8chan (Stanley-Becker et al., 2019). Furthermore, Tarrant posted links on Facebook to a live video feed from a camera on his helmet (Fisher and Achenbach, 2019). In the video prior to the attack, Tarrant uses pop-culture references, repeating popular internet phrases, such as "subscribe to PewDiePie" (Stanley-Becker et al., 2019).

Tarrant begins his manifesto by discussing the dangers immigrants with high birthrates pose to Western Society. Tarrant (2019) writes:

Mass immigration and higher fertility rates of the immigrants themselves are causing this increase in population. We are experiencing an

invasion on a level never seen before in history. Millions of people pouring across our borders, legally...to replace the White people who have failed to reproduce, failed to create cheap labour, new consumers and tax base that the corporations and states need to survive. (p. 5)

Tarrant continues to echo his claim that immigrants are ethnically, culturally, and racially replacing White people (Tarrant, 2019, p. 5). Tarrant believes this replacement is "white genocide," and writes, "We must crush immigration and deport those invaders already living on our soil. It is not just a matter of our prosperity, but the very survival of our people" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 6).

In the next section of his manifesto, Tarrant engages in a mock question-and-answer section, in which he states the motivation behind the attack was to, "show the invaders that our lands will never be their lands, our homelands are our own and that, as long as a white man still lives, they will NEVER [sic] conquer our lands and they will never replace our people," and to, "take revenge on the invaders for the hundreds of thousands of deaths caused by foreign invaders of European lands throughout history" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 7). Tarrant believes his attack will serve as intimidation for all "invaders," and to, "show the effect of direct action, lighting a path forward for those that wish to follow" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 7, 8).

Tarrant takes a substantial amount of space in his manifesto to describe his radicalization. Tarrant discusses how Ebba Akerlund, a young, partially-deaf, Swedish girl, was killed by an "Islamic attacker" in the 2017 Stockholm attacks. Tarrant claims this was the first event which pushed him towards radicalization (Tarrant, 2019, p. 10). As a result of the killing of Akerlund, Tarrant, "could no longer ignore the attacks" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 10). Tarrant discusses his second event which led him to radicalization, the 2017 French General election. Tarrant discusses how both candidates were unsatisfactory, as he describes them as globalists, capitalists, egalitarians, feckless, and civic nationalists (Tarrant, 2019, p. 10). Tarrant writes the final step towards his radicalization was what he witnessed when he visited France. Tarrant (2019) writes:

In every french [sic] city, in every french [sic] town the invaders were there. No matter where I traveled, no matter how small or rural the community I visited, the invaders were there. The french [sic] people were often in a minority themselves, and the french [sic] that were in the streets were often alone, childless or of advanced age." (p. 11)

Tarrant notes he was filled with rage at the sight of so many "invaders," drove out of town, and refused to return (Tarrant, 2019, p. 11). Writing in another mock question-and-answer section, Tarrant mentions he refined his beliefs via the internet, writing, "The internet of course. You will not find the truth anywhere else" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 23).

In addition to Tarrant discussing his radicalization, he mentions he was not aligned with any group or organization, nor was his attack ordered (Tarrant, 2019, p.13). However, Tarrant did state he contacted the "reborn Knights Templar," the group Anders Breivik initially proposed in his manifesto, for blessings (Tarrant, 2019, p. 13). Furthermore, Tarrant writes, "I have read the writings of Dylann Roof and many others, but only really took true inspiration from Knight Justiciar Breivik" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 24).

Tarrant continues to discuss the degradation of traditional religious values, something he argues is the backbone of Western civilization. Tarrant writes, "Religion? What remains? Empty churches and full shopping centers? Drive through confessionals and no fault divorce? Any religious ideal that stood between the wealthy and wealth generation was downplayed, sidelined and quietly dismantled" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 33). However, Tarrant does not view LGBTQ+ initiatives as problematic, writing, "No, I simply do not care all that much what gay people do. As long as they are loyal to their people and place their peoples well being first, then I have no issues" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 21).

As Tarrant concludes his manifesto, he makes suggestion as to how to grow the movement to "take back" Western civilization from the "invaders." Tarrant implores, "... look for allies anywhere they can find them, in the flesh or online" (Tarrant, 2019, p. 45).

Additionally, Tarrant argues supporters of the movement must focus on appeals to emotion, rather than trying to win people over via facts. Tarrant

(2019) writes:

> Be creative, be expressive, be emotional and above all be passionate. These are the things that speak to people, connect people, drive people. Paint, write, sing, dance recite poetry. Hell, even meme. Create memes, post memes, and spread memes. Memes have done more for the ethno-nationalist movement than any manifesto. (p. 57)

Case Study 4: Patrick Crusius

At 21 years old, Crusius committed the mass shooting at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas on August 3, 2019. The attack ultimately killed twenty-three people and left twenty-three people injured; the age of the victims ranged from 2 to 82 years old (Blankstein and Burke, 2019). Patrick Crusius was born and raised in Allen, Texas, which is a suburb of Dallas, where he later attended Collin College (Eiserer, 2019). During Crusius' time residing in Allen, the number of Hispanic residents sharply increased in the area, while the population of non-Hispanics dove from nearly 80 percent down to less than 50 percent (Chason et al., 2019). Crusius more than likely noticed the demographic shift in his once White-dominated community, sowing the seeds for radicalization.

During Crusius' time in high school, the effects of increased diversity seemed to set in, as students commonly hurled racist insults toward Black students, leading them to create the Black Student Union (Chason et al., 2019). Additionally, following Donald Trump's presidential election victory, students wore "Make America Great Again" apparel, while endorsing Trump's policies of banning Muslims and building a wall at the Mexico-United States border (Chason et al., 2019). Furthermore, fliers in Collin County began circulating, warning members of the Muslim, Indian, Black, and Jewish community to leave Texas and go back to where they came from, as well as warning of the "harms" of interracial dating (Chason et al., 2019). The environment in which Crusius grew up indicates hateful ideologies were common, which allowed him to form racist sentiments. On a personal level, Crusius was frequently bullied and harassed by Hispanic students in the hallways of his high school (Chason et al., 2019). Due to his experiences in high school, and the political views of the community around him, Crusius began to adopt right-wing extremist tendencies. It was his time in college that allowed him to delve into, and expand on, his new-found political beliefs.

Crusius studied at Collin College, where he lived with his grandparents and became radicalized. Crusius silently became indoctrinated by frequently visiting websites, such as 8chan, where patrons frequently promote anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic, and anti-gay sentiments, as well as discussing mass shootings in a positive way (Ailworth et al., 2019). Eventually, Crusius became engulfed with online conspiracies and began participating in discussions online. Authorities claim Crusius would spend up to eight hours a day on racist messaging boards, engaging in discussions with people he did not know (Chason et al., 2019). Furthermore, Crusius became interested in guns, much to his parents' surprise, as there was no indication as to why he suddenly wanted to visit the shooting range on a regular basis (Chason et al., 2019).

Crusius eventually planned his attack, and drove roughly 10 hours to an El Paso Walmart in a crowded shopping center (Arango et al., 2019). Prior to the attack on August 3, 2019, Crusius posted a manifesto, titled The Inconvenient Truth, on an online messaging board, 8chan, which is rife with right-wing extremists and full of hateful rhetoric. In his manifesto, Crusius delves into the various grievances that pushed him to commit the attack, as well as the inspiration for the attack.

Within the first section of Crusius' manifesto, titled "About Me," Crusius explicitly expresses his support for the Christchurch shooter, Anders Breivik, and his 1,518-page manifesto. (Crusius, 2019, p. 1). Following his "About Me" opening, Crusius moves onto the next section of his manifesto entitled "Political Reasons." Here, Crusius voices his grievances with both the Democratic and Republican party, claiming the Democratic party is using, "open borders, free healthcare for illegals, citizenship and more to enact a political coup by importing and then legalizing millions of new voters" (Crusius, 2019, p. 1). Crusius specifically voices concern for Texas, claiming the Democratic Party is relying on the influx of immigrants from South

America to establish Texas as a Democratic stronghold (Crusius, 2019, p.1). Grievances against the Republican party are also voiced within Crusius' manifesto, as he claims factions within the Republican party have become too "pro-corporation" (Crusius, 2019, p. 1).

Crusius continues to discuss the economic difficulties facing the United States, and outlines how corporations and immigration are intertwined. In his next section, "Economic Reasons," Crusius primarily focuses on the economic impacts of immigration. In his manifesto, Crusius (2019) states:

Some sources say that in under two decades, half of American jobs will be lost to it [autonomy]. Of course some people will be retrained, but most will not. So it makes no sense to keep on letting millions of illegal or legal immigrants flood into the United States, and to keep the tens of millions that are already here. Invaders who also have close to the highest birthrate of all ethnicities in America. (p.2)

Crusius believes the introduction of an increasing number of immigrants into American society will further reduce the number of jobs available to non-immigrant Americans.

The following sections of Crusius' manifesto reveals a ramping up of rhetoric, and it becomes apparent the latter half of his manifesto does not contain the same civilized filter exhibited in the first half. In his "Reaction" section, Crusius (2019) writes:

"This is an encouraging sign that the Hispanic population is willing to return to their home countries if given the right incentive. An incentive that myself and many other patriotic Americans will provide. This will remove the threat of the Hispanic voting bloc which will make up for the loss of millions of baby boomers. (p. 3)

Crusius' use of strong rhetoric continues throughout his manifesto, then he shifts towards making calls to action. Crusius attempts to guide future attackers by providing suggestions as to what targets to pursue in an attempt to guide future perpetrators. Crusius writes, "Attack low security targets.... Do not throw away your life on an unnecessarily dangerous target. If a target seems to be hot, live to fight another day. (Crusius, 2019, p.5)

Case Study 5: Tobias Rathjen

Tobias Rathjen was 43 years old when he shot and killed nine people at a shisha (hookah) bar in Hanau, Hesse, Germany on February 19, 2020 ("Germany Shooting: What We Know About the Hanau Attack," 2020). Furthermore, Rathjen returned home, where he would kill his mother before committing suicide, raising the death count to eleven ("Germany Shooting: Investigation into 'Deeply Racist' Gunman's Links," 2020). The victims' ages ranged between 21 and 44 years old, with victims primarily being of Turkish and Kurdish descent ("Germany Shooting: What We Know About the Hanau Attack," 2020).

Rathjen was born and raised in Hanau, Germany, a town of around 100,000 people, which was east of Frankfurt (Oltermann, 2020). Rathjen received a degree from the University of Bayreuth in 2007, where he studied business management (Oltermann, 2020). Rathjen further trained to become a bank employee, however, opted to work at numerous consumer financial firms throughout his life ("The Bizarre Views of Germany Shooter Tobias Rathjen," 2020). Never finding someone to marry, Rathjen lived with his parents, both 72 years old, in an apartment in Hanau ("The Bizarre Views of Germany Shooter Tobias Rathjen," 2020). Colleagues of Rathjen described him as a loner with poor social skills, but one who was very ambitious and dedicated to his work, often putting in twelve-hour work days ("The Bizarre Views of Germany Shooter Tobias Rathjen," 2020). It is unclear as to the hobbies Rathjen took a liking to, however, he held a license to own weapons as a gun hobbyist, and was a member of multiple shooting clubs in Munich and Frankfurt ("The Bizarre Views of Germany Shooter Tobias Rathjen," 2020). German investigators indicate Rathjen was not a known member of any right-wing extremist groups, and acted as a lone perpetrator (Oltermann, 2020). Furthermore, German authorities have noted Rathjen was not radicalized in isolation, rather, he may have been radicalized due to being a victim of his surrounding community (Crawford and Keen, 2020, p. 3). Furthermore, German authorities indicated that even though Rathjen was not radical-

ized online, the intention was to provide influence to prospective perpetrators in online communities (Crawford and Keen, 2020, p. 6). Prior to the attack, Rathjen uploaded a video to his personal YouTube channel, as well as a 24-page manifesto on his personal website. Rathjen's original, full, and uncut YouTube video has since been removed, hence a proper analysis cannot be conducted; however, a copy of Rathjen's manifesto has been acquired in German and translated to English, allowing for analysis.

Rathjen makes clear that his intended audience is the German people in his opening remarks. Rathjen continues by defining what he means by "secret service," a term used throughout his manifesto. Essentially, Rathjen's "secret service" is a group of people who have been monitoring him since birth (Rathjen, 2020, p. 2). Rathjen (2020) writes:

The impression of my awakening was based on the voice that I heard in the bathroom and that had left a lasting impression on me. In addition, I grasped being human, the world around me and it quickly became clear to me that people, to put it simply at this point, are not always nice to each other or that people are themselves the enemy. (p.3)

Moreover, Rathjen claims he became more aware of the secret service's presence in the years leading up to his "awakening" on September 11, 2001, which is the day al-Qaeda hijackers committed the September 11th attacks in the United States. As Rathjen recalls a conversation with a colleague at a bank he was apprenticing at in 1999, Rathjen indicates the secret service were present during this conversation, and he could feel them "latching on" (Rathjen, 2020, p. 5).

Further in his manifesto, Rathjen claims the monitoring conducted by this secret service hindered his ability to find love, writing, "First of all, I shouldn't be disappointed, as a young student met my expectations from the outside. However, this meeting, like the non-meeting, was controlled by this 'secret organization', which I was not aware of at the time" (Rathjen, 2020, p. 13). Rathjen states that as time went on, he began to deal with the "secret service" personally. Rathjen writes, "I started dealing with this situation and after a few weeks I started talking to the invisible people right

in my student apartment" (Rathjen, 2020, p. 14). As Rathjen continues in his manifesto, he increasingly attempts to "connect-the-dots," and begins to veer away from reality. Rathjen argues the "secret service" influences the production of Hollywood films, as evidenced by recently released films being based on his ideas (Rathjen, 2020, pp. 17-19).

As Rathjen continues in his manifesto, he includes harsh xenophobic rhetoric. Aimed predominantly at Muslims, Rathjen (2020) outlines the necessary steps to be taken to ensure a utopian society in Germany:

Therefore, I said that the following peoples must be completely destroyed: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Israel, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, the entire Saudi peninsula, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, to the Philippines. (p. 6)

Rathjen further expands on the genocide of people by claiming a "cleansing" will follow in the remaining African states, South and Central America, the Caribbean, and all Western states (Rathjen, 2020, p. 6). Rathjen cites the high crime rate of immigrants as justification for such "cleansing," and calls upon a time where he reviewed witness cards of suspects for a bank robbery in which more than 90% were non-German (Rathjen, 2020, p. 5). Rathjen further argues, "these people have not proven themselves to be productive in their history," and, "they are destructive in every way" (Rathjen, 2020, pp. 5-6). Additionally, Rathjen argues Afghanistan and Iraq are, "geographically and politically viewed as the center of evil or backwardness and must be developed by the West," further displaying Islamophobia (Rathjen, 2020, p. 8).

Rathjen continues by imploring the United States to incorporate some of his suggestions into its foreign policy, citing his fears of the rise of China. Rathjen cites China's growing population alone as enough to propel it into becoming a competitor for the title of the lone superpower (Rathjen, 2020, p. 8). Rathjen further contends the importance the West has placed on building up China technologically, with the intent on taking advantage of China's low-wage workforce and low costs of production, will only benefit the West in the short-term. Rathjen claims these policies will be a problem in

the future, due to the loss of jobs in their respective states (Rathjen, 2020, p. 10). Furthermore, Rathjen argues that a potential economic boom in China, as result of the failure of the West's economic strategy, will provide China with the necessary resources to build up its military power (Rathjen, 2020, p. 11). Rathjen also advocates for the United States, and more specifically the West, to preemptively hinder China's ability to rise to the top of the international hierarchy by implementing policies which counter the interests of the Chinese.

As Rathjen concludes his manifesto, he argues his future attack is the only choice, as he did not get the necessary attention to bring the actions of the "secret service" to light. Rathjen (2020) writes:

> This war is to be understood as a double blow, against the secret organization and against the degeneration of our people! People come and go. What remains is the people! Look carefully at who the people are in the future. (p. 24)

Rathjen hopes his attack will wake others up to the actions of the "secret service," as well as beginning the ethnic cleansing he proposes within his manifesto.

Findings

As it pertains to the entirety of the cases studied throughout this thesis, there are factors contributing to the observed rise in right-wing extremism throughout the West in the last decade. After reviewing all of the cases, there are core characteristics of right-wing extremism that are consistent, regardless of time period. Throughout history, right-wing extremism has primarily centered around anti-immigration, religious intolerance, a racial social hierarchy, White replacement, and anti-government tenets. The only exception is the shift towards lone-wolf (single perpetrator) and small group (2-4 perpetrators) attacks since the late 1990s. Given these consistent variables, why are we seeing a recent increase in right-wing extremist activities in the last ten years?

Following the analysis of the cases in their entirety, the evidence allows for the confident conclusion that "the internet and social media" is the most impactful factor as to why we are seeing a rise in extreme right-wing activity in the last ten years. The

internet and the emergence of social media in the last decade is a new variable in which scholars and members of the intelligence community have not yet been able to comprehensively assess. The internet and social media is the most influential factor as to why we are seeing a recent uptick in extreme right-wing presence and activities. This is due in large part to right-wing extremists' sentiments becoming more mainstream and available to a wider audience. In general, the widespread use and access to the internet and social media sites have made it easier than ever for anyone to find like-minded people to converse and share ideas. This same principle unfortunately applies to those with extremist tendencies as well.

Those whose political views, which would otherwise be considered "fringe" within their respective communities, can now congregate and create groups of like-minded individuals on the internet and social media. The ease of access to online platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, Parler, 4chan, 8chan, and more, have considerably aided in the creation of a new dimension to right-wing extremism. Breivik, Tarrant, Crusius, Roof, and many others have found like-minded individuals online, further reinforcing any extreme right-wing sentiments one has fostered throughout their life. Furthermore, Breivik's insistence of supporters joining social media is evidence of the perceived value the internet and social media hold to right-wing extremists (Breivik, 2011, p. 1,267). Additionally, Tarrant mentions the need to expand the reach of extreme right-wing activists through the use of pop-culture references within his manifesto (p. 57).

An additional reason as to why the internet and social media has contributed greatly to the recent rise of extreme right-wing activity is the circulation of manifestos and online posts. The circulation of manifestos and posts provides people with inspiration and knowledge on how to carry out attacks. As previously discussed within this thesis, the online proliferation of Breivik's manifesto has served as a blueprint to carry out attacks, and has inspired many soon-to-be perpetrators, including Tarrant and Crusius. Furthermore, Tarrant explicitly mentions he read the writings of Breivik and Roof online, in which he gained invaluable knowledge and

inspiration (Tarrant, 2019, p. 23, 24). Additionally, Crusius opens by stating the value Breivik's writings hold, and the inspiration and knowledge he obtained (Crusius, 2019, p. 1).

The Breivik-Tarrant-Crusius relationship is just one instance of the demonstration effect in the realm of right-wing violence. The demonstration effect can be defined as the effect a successful action has on the behaviors of individuals who observe and wish to replicate the action. In this instance, the writings of Breivik, and his attack that followed, demonstrated how one could successfully carry out an attack, with Crusius and Tarrant observing and successfully copying it. Granted, Rathjen did not become radicalized via the internet, however, the release of his manifesto on Twitter and 8chan, uploading his video onto YouTube, and the claim that he hopes his attack will essentially "wake" people up to reality, indicates his intention to serve as an influential figure to extremists that come after him. The example of Breivik serving as a model to Tarrant and Crusius, and the intentions of Rathjen, reveal the stark reality of the impact the internet and social media has on the activities of right-wing extremists.

Some may argue my findings are flawed due to the internet beginning to boom in the 1990s. Such an argument begs the question: "Why did we not see the internet and social media as a major issue back in the 1990s?" There are three explanations as to why the internet is a major contributor to the rise in extreme right-wing activities today, and not so much in the 1990s. First, we have seen a shift in the last two decades towards lone-wolf (single perpetrator) and small group (two to four perpetrator) attacks (Jones, 2018, p. 6). In response to the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing carried out by Timothy McVeigh, law enforcement increased their monitoring of large-scale right-wing extremist groups. By nature, small groups and lone individuals are better able to slip under the radar of law enforcement, giving them increased freedom to plan and successfully carry out their attacks. Furthermore, Louis Beam's essay titled Leaderless Resistance was released in 1992, which advocated for a shift away from large-scale organizations and groups toward small cells or lone perpetrators (Berger, 2019). Beam's essay became increasingly

popular in right-wing extremist circles, especially following law enforcement's monitoring of large organizations (Berger, 2019). Over time, we have seen the extreme right-wing community gradually shift towards attacks with less than 4 perpetrators who have no ties to any extreme right-wing organization, allowing them to elude law enforcement.

The second explanation is the internet is more accessible today than ever before, hence being used more than it was 20 years ago. In December 1995, roughly 16 million people had access to the internet ("Internet Growth Statistics"). 25 years later, the number of people with access to the internet has ballooned to 5.053 billion people in December 2020 ("Internet Growth Statistics"). To put those numbers in perspective, about half a percent of the people in the world had access to the internet in 1995, compared to roughly 64% today (Roser, 2018). Furthermore, internet access has grown exponentially in the last 25 years as well, especially in areas where right-wing extremists reside. Generally, right-wing extremists tend to live in rural areas, who have historically been left behind regarding access to the internet (Lee, 2014; Maxwell, 2019). Looking specifically at the United States, the internet was typically relegated to major cities, with extremely limited access in rural areas in the early 1990s (Lee, 2014). As a result, right-wing extremists were unable to utilize the internet to its fullest potential to recruit until the late 1990s and early 2000s (Lee, 2014). Slowly, right-wing extremists have been able to reap the benefits a reliable connection to the internet entails, thus being able to reach out to people across the world and share ideas on a more consistent basis.

The third explanation as to why the internet is a more prominent variable today than it was 25 years ago, is because of a cumulative effect in two very distinct ways. First, as discussed previously, the internet provides for "copycat" attacks, also known as the demonstration effect. Essentially, extremists have been able to gradually observe successful attacks carried out by others throughout the world, and have gained inspiration and knowledge on how to carry out their own. Second, extremists have learned how to effectively use the internet as time went on. Rather than relegating themselves to lesser-known messaging boards, right-wing ex-

tremists now understand the benefits of moving to mainstream platforms, like Facebook and Twitter, to share their ideas. Furthermore, right-wing extremists have learned how to advertise their ideas to the youth, as edgy memes with an underlying racist message have become a primary mode of attracting the attention of young people (Greene, 2019).

Moving to the other factors outlined in the literature review, in accordance with the evidence in the cases, it can be concluded "anti-immigrant sentiment" is another factor which has contributed to the rise of right-wing extremism in the last decade. In observing the cases' personal lives, Tarrant, Crusius, and Rathjen clearly became radicalized as a result of the changing demographics in communities they reside in and the states they visited. Furthermore, in the cases studied throughout this thesis, it is observed that Breivik, Tarrant, Crusius, and Rathjen all include grievances pertaining to the threats the recent influx of immigrants poses to contemporary life, claiming immigrants will eventually "replace" White people and their culture. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to draw attention to the lack of a consistent group of people which is targeted by said sentiment. Crusius places blame on Hispanic immigrants, whereas Breivik, Tarrant, and Rathjen each place blame on Muslim immigrants. Seemingly, the group deemed as an "invader" is subjected to one's geographical location. Nevertheless, anti-immigrant sentiment is a reason as to why we are seeing a recent rise in right-wing activity.

Next, the evidence provided within the five cases allows for the confident conclusion that "the economy and anti-immigrant sentiment" is another contributing factor. It is observed within the writings of Breivik, Tarrant, Crusius, and Rathjen that the perceived state of the economy serves as a causal effect on the levels of anti-immigration sentiment exhibited by right-wing extremists. Furthermore, the evidence points towards this rationalization: if the economy is perceived as weak, then anti-immigrant sentiment rises due to the belief immigrants are taking away the jobs of the natives, and vice versa.

"Social hierarchy and The Great Replacement theory" is perhaps one of the more complex factors

to categorize due to its long-standing history with right-wing extremism, and how intertwined it is with other factors, specifically anti-immigration. The evidence within the five cases points toward "social hierarchy and The Great Replacement theory" as being another relevant factor. Social hierarchy and The Great Replacement theory both exhibit inherent racist and xenophobic sentiments, which creates a causal relationship with other factors. All cases analyzed exhibit a belief in a racial social hierarchy, as shown in the perceived imminent threat "out" groups pose to Western culture and the desire for the cases to combat the perceived change to the racial social hierarchy.

Additionally, the evidence provided within the cases do not allow for a confident conclusion that "religion and anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment" has contributed to the general rise of right-wing extremism in the last decade. Although Breivik and Tarrant allude to the loss of traditional values as detrimental to Western society, the values discussed are more aligned with traditional conservative values, not religious ones. Granted, Breivik and Tarrant mention the loss of religious values, however, values such as drug use, sexual partners, and gender roles are more aligned with traditional conservative values. Additionally, Roof writes within his manifesto that the targeting of Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston was not a result of frustrations with their religious teachings, but rather the historical importance of Charleston and the ease of attacking Black people (Roof, 2015, p. 5). Furthermore, there was no mention of anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment within the five cases. Moreover, Tarrant specifically mentioned he did not care about the activities of the LGBTQ+ community (Tarrant, 2019, p. 21).

Lastly, there are some factors in which there is not enough data to make a confident projection as to their contribution to the rise of right-wing activities in the last ten years. Hence, the remaining factors of "foreign influence" and "mental health" are both uncategorizable. Beginning with "foreign influence," it is difficult to determine the level of influence a foreign state had on an individual when they became radicalized. Furthermore, there was no explicit mention or allusion to foreign influence within any of the cases analyzed within this

thesis, leading to the determination that this factor is uncategorizable. As for "mental health," it is difficult to ascertain the cognitive health of an individual without proper medical training or records. Granted, Rathjen's manifesto provided subject matter which could be interpreted as him suffering from some form of mental health issue, however, I am unable to confidently determine his mental state without a professional medical diagnosis. It is noteworthy that Breivik, Roof, Tarrant, and Crusius each claimed they suffered from mental issues within court documents during their respective trials, however, those claims have not been verified by medical professionals, thus making "mental health" an inconclusive factor. Furthermore, all cases incorporate some aspect of being socially awkward and a loner throughout life, however, being awkward and a loner is not a reasonable ground on which to base one's mental health.

Conclusion

In closing, this thesis reviewed the manifestos of Anders Behring Breivik, Dylann Roof, Brenton Harrison Tarrant, Patrick Crusius, and Tobias Rathjen, each of whom carried out vicious attacks against innocent people. The research into the personal lives and manifestos of each of the aforementioned perpetrators finds the grievances associated with anti-immigrant sentiments, the state of the economy, and racial social hierarchy are lesser-impactful factors which have contributed to the rise of right-wing extremism in the last decade.

Moreover, the grievances pertaining to the abovementioned factors are frequently amplified via the internet and social media, heightening their ability to resonate with right-wing extremists. Furthermore, the internet and social media have the ability to connect extremists across the world. With the aid of the internet and social media, the grievances of the lesser-impactful factors are able to transcend the individual and domestic levels of analysis. As a result, these grievances become relevant at the international level, thus being endemic at all levels of analysis. The internet and social media have allowed for inspiration to be drawn, and grievances to be echoed worldwide, making it a variable law enforcement and policy makers must account for when attempting to combat the global threat of right-wing extremism.

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