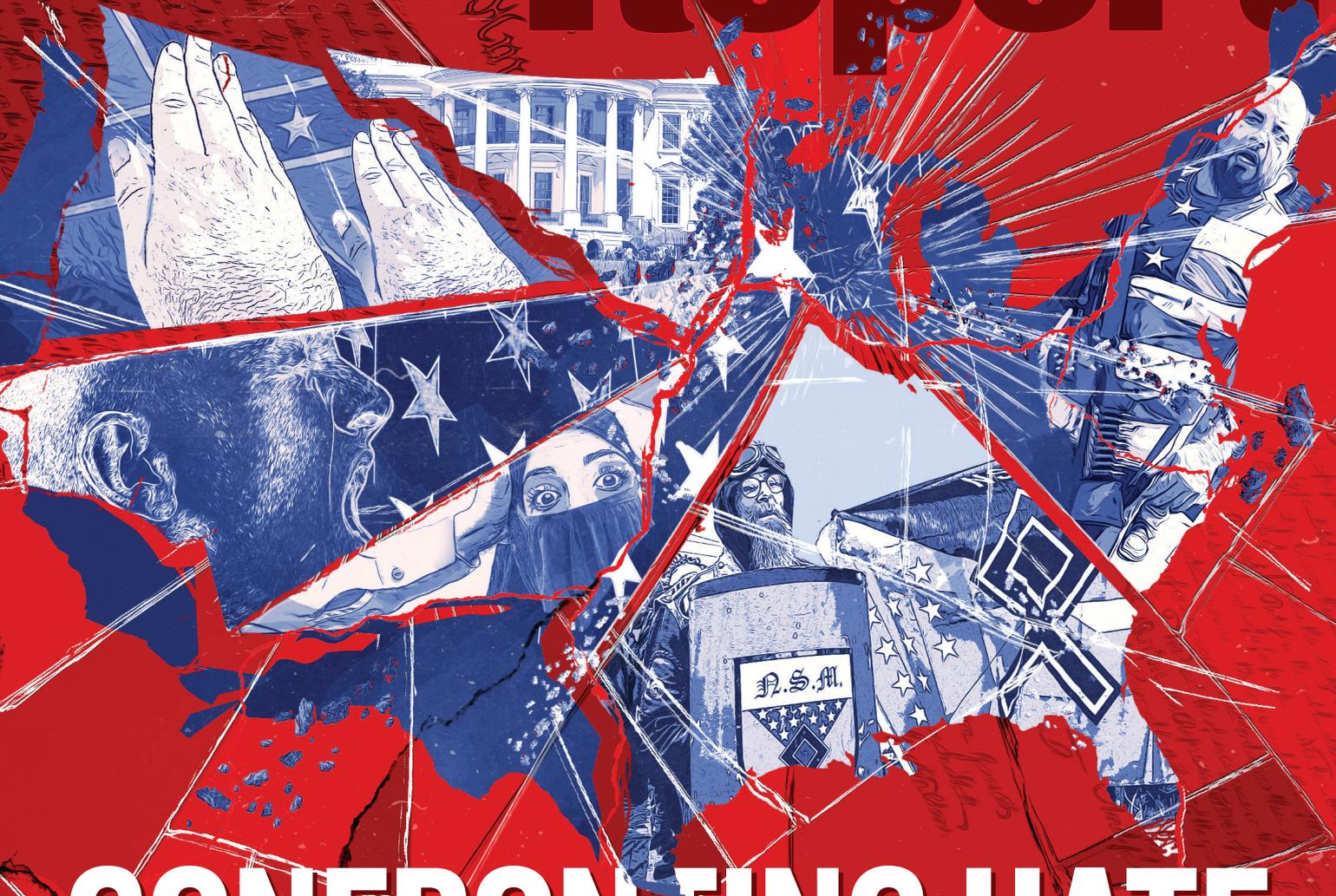


CHARLOTTESVILLE ONE YEAR LATER: IS THE RACIST 'ALT-RIGHT' SHOWING SIGNS OF COLLAPSE?

# Intelligence Report

PUBLISHED BY  
THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

FALL 2018 // ISSUE 165



## CONFRONTING HATE

It's past time to combat all the ways hate morphs into violence and crime in the U.S.

**PLUS**

ADDRESSING DISABILITY HATE CRIMES  
RESPONDING TO 'ALT-RIGHT' SPEAKERS ON CAMPUS



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# Intelligence Report

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PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER'S  
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The *Intelligence Report* is published twice a year by the staff of the Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Project, and provided free of charge to law enforcement officials, journalists, scholars and others. The Southern Poverty Law Center is supported entirely by private donations. No government funds are involved.

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## LAW ENFORCEMENT INQUIRIES WELCOMED

The Intelligence Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) welcomes law enforcement inquiries regarding radical right extremists and hate groups. Please direct questions during normal business hours to Laurie Wood via the SPLC's general number, (334) 956-8200.

## WHAT'S NEXT

# Confronting Hate

## One year after the deadly Charlottesville rally, it's past time to combat all the ways hate morphs into violence and crime in the U.S.

BY HEIDI BEIRICH

**THE RALLY, RIOTS AND DEADLY VIOLENCE** in Charlottesville, Virginia, last summer left the nation in shock and forced us to face a brutal reality — that hate and bigotry long simmering in the shadows had erupted into the mainstream. A year later, the racist “alt-right,” whose hate speech and actions garnered national focus, is struggling, but their violent vision remains a persistent threat.

As the Southern Poverty Law Center documented after President Trump’s election, bias incidents became a daily reality and hate crimes targeting the nation’s most vulnerable communities became a national nightmare.

In this issue of the Intelligence Report, we shine a light on those facing hate who are often overlooked, in our special section Confronting Hate. We also share stories to help our readers understand the scope of the hate problem and provide actionable suggestions for how to address it.

In “The Invisible Hate Crime,” an in-depth report about the savage murder of a young woman with disabilities in Pennsylvania, we call attention to a type of hate crime that is sadly far from rare, but unsurprisingly underreported, under-investigated and under-prosecuted. In the article, we describe specific ways to address disability hate crimes, but we also encourage thinking broadly about how to improve the monitoring and reporting of all forms of bias-fueled crime.

This issue, we also delve into how FBI, state police and local authorities worked together to take down

the white supremacist group Aryan Strikeforce. Its members formed a multi-state conspiracy across the East Coast — buying and selling guns and drugs to fund the activities of their dangerous hate group. After an extensive investigation lasting more than three years, seven of Aryan Strikeforce’s most violent members now sit in jail facing 33 total charges, including conspiracy, racketeering and money laundering — leaving the organization in shambles.

Yet even as specific groups crumble, the threat of violence brought about by hate movements and ideologies continues — often motivating crimes committed by lone wolf actors, as we discuss in “Things Fall Apart.”

Though the racist “alt-right” in particular has struggled to maintain unity and clear leadership in the fallout from Charlottesville, their bigoted ideas, which give birth to real-life violence, are as present as ever. And as the alt-right and its political apologists are spreading hate, successfully grabbing the national spotlight and becoming highly visible, vulnerable groups are struggling against discrimination, fighting for recognition and remaining frustratingly invisible.

As we work to move past Charlottesville, the time has come to take collective action to confront hate in all its forms, against all groups, and in all places. ▲



“A year later, the racist ‘alt-right,’ whose hate speech and actions garnered national focus, is struggling, but their violent vision remains a persistent threat.”

# Intelligence Briefs

WHAT'S INSIDE: Blotter // Extremism in the mainstream // White supremacists in the military // Hate by the numbers



EXTREMISM IN THE U.S.



Pepe the Frog is a meme often used by racists, much to his creator's dismay.

## ALT-RIGHT

### Hell hath no Furie

The artist who created Pepe the Frog has scored a legal win without having to fire a shot at the hard-to-find neo-Nazi who usurped his character.

In July, Matt Furie, a California-based children's book producer, forced the website Daily Stormer to remove Pepe from its pages and logos by threatening to sue over copyright violations.

The move comes more than a year after Furie, who created the anthropomorphic frog, vowed to reclaim the peaceful, "feels good man" character from the alt-right and racists who adopted him as a mascot and central character in multiple memes.

Pepe was featured in more than 40 articles on the site, run by notorious racist Andrew Anglin, who has

made his whereabouts tough to track as others — including the SPLC — have sued him in federal court.

Louis Tompros, one of the intellectual property lawyers working the Pepe case at the law firm WilmerHale, served Digital Millennium Copyright Act notices to the company it said is hosting The Daily Stormer.

"We had seen for a while that they had been using Pepe images in a few places," Tompros told Vice.com. "The problem was that they would be up and then their entire site will be down and move somewhere else and reorganize. The reason it takes us longer on this and some of the others is the day their website moves around a bunch."

GETTY IMAGES/JOSH EDELSON

While Pepe isn't completely gone from the Daily Stormer — some articles are gone entirely while others have had the offending images of Pepe modified, removed or replaced with a graphic explaining that the old image has been censored — the number of articles on the site featuring Pepe is now down to four.

Pepe, originally conceived of in 2005 as a laid back, weed smoking frog, became a sensation among the alt-right in 2015 and 2016. Pepe started showing up in racist and antisemitic memes online, prompting Furie to declare Pepe dead at one point.

Furie began fighting to take back Pepe in 2017 when a former assistant vice principal in Texas published an alt-right children's book called *The Adventures of Pepe and Pede*.

Furie lawyered up and got the text pulled. The law firm of Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP is representing Furie pro bono and has previously pushed white nationalist Richard Spencer to stop using Pepe as the logo for his podcast by sending him a cease and desist letter.

Furie stepped up his legal fight with two lawsuits in 2017. The first, against a Missouri woman, was settled.

The other, against companies owned by Donald Trump supporter and conspiracist Alex Jones and his site, Infowars, is pending in federal court in California.

That lawsuit, which also names Texas-based Free Speech Systems LLC., is against two Texas-based companies managed by Jones, a far-right radio host and promotor of bizarre theories.

At no time, the suit alleges, did Furie give his consent for Pepe to be used by Trump (who was not sued), white nationalists or anyone associated with the alt-right.

But, by 2015, Pepe was the most retweeted meme on Twitter.

In suing Jones, Furie said he became “dismayed by Pepe’s association with white supremacy, anti-Semitism, and the alt-right,” including unauthorized uses of the image by Trump supporters and racist extremists.”

“My client is appalled by the attempts to co-opt Pepe as a symbol of hate,” Tompros told the *Intelligence Report*. “Matt has made clear that no one has permission to use his intellectual property — including the copyrighted image and character of Pepe the Frog — in connection with hateful messages or images.”

Jones, who is not named personally in the lawsuit filed in early March, has been described as “America’s leading conspiracy theorist” and a member of “an anti-government far right that blames the world’s ills on a grand global conspiracy.”



On his website, Jones responded to the lawsuit by saying he “will not tolerate having Infowars’ name dragged through the mud” by trying to equate his operation with “white supremacists and the alt-right, which adopted Pepe as a mascot.”

The post was accompanied by Jones with Pepe.

Along with the website, Jones runs a radio show syndicated to over 100 stations nationally and it is simulcasted on YouTube.

Jones and his companies also sell a poster prominently featuring the cartoon frog. The poster sells for \$29.95, with Jones pitching it as a chance to help “support Infowars in the fight for free speech.”

Furie, in the lawsuit, has a different take. He calls it copyright infringement. Pepe appears alongside Jones, conservative commentator Matt Drudge, political strategist and Trump ally Roger Stone and others.

Also depicted on the poster are infowars.com editor Paul Joseph Watson and Milo Yiannopoulos, the former tech editor for Breitbart News, “both of whom have been associated with alt-right and nativist or white nationalist viewpoints,” according to the lawsuit.

Furie, along with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), launched the #SavePepe campaign in October 2016, a month after ADL added the cartoon to a database of general hate symbols.

Trump and his supporters continued to use Pepe in memes during the presidential campaign, with the GOP candidate posting an Instagram image labeled “The Deplorables,” featuring Pepe standing behind Trump, alongside other supporters of his presidential campaign, according to the lawsuit.

Disappointed with the continued unauthorized use of Pepe in connection with hateful imagery and themes, last May Furie posted an online comic in which Pepe died.

The meme, however, lived on, continually used by hate groups.

A bike helmet bears the image of Pepe the Frog.

## ANTI-IMMIGRANT

## Harim Vargas imagines himself as a 'martyr' for Trump

There are several names he goes by. To his fellow antigovernment “Patriot” friends, he is Harim Uziel, or sometimes Harim Uzziel — spelled with one z or two. On Facebook, he calls himself “The Hardcore American Patriot.” He also maintains an account under the name “Vicente Gonzales.” Government documents reveal his legal name is Harim Vargas.

In an incident that brought him to the attention of police at Austin’s Bergstrom International Airport in March, he said he might soon be described another way — as a martyr.

Vargas is a middle-aged man from Southern California, a Latino who identifies as a Sephardi Jew. He has written openly about losing his job in late 2016 and being unable to find work after that. Since then, he has become a full-time activist, asking donors to fund his efforts through GoFundMe and PayPal. He praises Donald Trump constantly, and has adopted the president’s bigoted rhetoric on immigrants and refugees.

Vargas has been heavily involved in the push against California’s sanctuary policies for undocumented immigrants and has appeared at numerous protests and public meetings throughout the state. Last year, he and fellow SoCal activist Genevieve Peters attempted to trademark the name “Homies for Trump.” Their application showed they planned to use the name on T-shirts, denim jackets, hats for kids and other types of clothing. The application was dismissed after they failed to respond to correspondence from the federal trademark office.

Vargas was in Texas in early March to speak outside the state capitol for an event titled “March 4 Trump.” There, he railed against “globalists” and refugees and warned the crowd about the Illuminati and “One World Order.”

Later that day, he went to the airport to fly back to California, but things went sideways. While waiting to board his flight, and with a large blue Trump flag draped over his shoulders, Vargas overheard a man walking past his gate call him a *vendido* — Spanish slang for “sellout.” Vargas jumped into action and ended up following the man through the terminal and yelling at him, broadcasting video of the pursuit on Facebook Live. It only escalated from there.

“Why you call me a nigga?” Vargas shouted as the man walked away. “Do I look like a nigga? Do I look like a nigga? Fuckin’ talk right! Fuckin’ Latinos for Trump, homie!”

By the time Vargas returned to his gate, police had been called. Austin police records show the pilot refused to let him on the flight because of what had just happened. American Airlines employees attempted to book him on a later flight, but a second pilot also refused to let him board. Police officers eventually escorted Vargas out of the secure area of the airport and waited with him as he got a refund at the ticket counter.

“Fascism at its finest,” Vargas said. “But you know what, I’ll be a martyr, ‘cause I love America and I love Trump.”

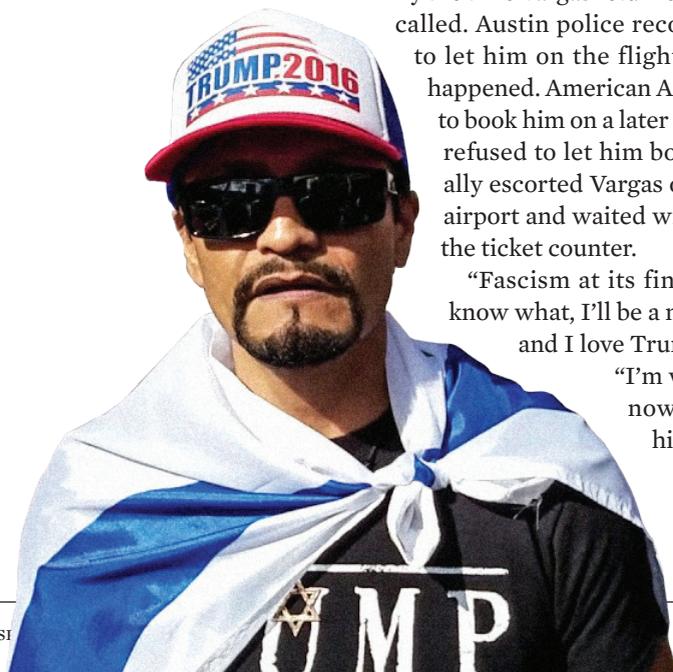
“I’m willing to die, right here and now,” he said as he waited for his refund.

A police officer nearby just shook her head. He soon left the airport without any more trouble.

EXTREMISM  
IN THE  
MAINSTREAM

“I propose a government that makes counter-semitism central to all aims of the state.”

California Republican U.S. Senate candidate **Patrick Little** on his Gab account, referring to a white nationalist euphemism for a hatred of Jews on **May 7, 2018**





## ANTIGOVERNMENT

# Bomb charges for antigovernment extremist

The late Robert “LaVoy” Finicum — regarded as a hero and martyr in many far-right, antigovernment and extremist circles — was an associate of a militia leader who planned to bomb and destroy a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) facility in Arizona, a federal court case revealed.

Finicum was fatally shot on January 26, 2016, during the illegal armed occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon, led by his friends Ammon and Ryan Bundy.

The trio and other Bundy associates were traveling from the refuge when Finicum reached for a firearm, refusing to surrender after exiting his vehicle at a police roadblock. The incident continues to be a rallying cry for antigovernment zealots who claim his death is proof the U.S. government is at war with its citizens.

What wasn’t publicly known at that time is that just three months earlier, in October 2015, Finicum accompanied Utah militia leader William Keebler during a covert militia surveillance trip to the BLM’s Mount Trumbull complex, located in a remote corner of Arizona near the Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument.

Keebler, the self-styled leader of the Patriots Defense Force, wanted to destroy the BLM facility with a bomb to send a message to the U.S. government.

Keebler and Finicum were both participants who provided armed support for Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy during the 2014 standoff with federal agents at Bunkerville. After that landmark event, Keebler was intent at striking back at the federal government over its public land policies, court filings say.

Court documents say Keebler and his militia crew contended the “BLM was overreaching its authority to implement grazing restrictions on ranchers” like Cliven Bundy. Keebler expressed the view that federal public lands “belong to the people,” and to back up that viewpoint, his militia would target BLM facilities “in the middle of nowhere,” the documents say.

The 59-year-old militia leader from Stockton, Utah, wanted his militia cell to be ready to take offensive action, so he began recruiting, organizing and training “for the day when they can take part in an anti-government action with other militia groups similar to the event in Bunkerville,” the public filings say.

What Keebler didn’t immediately know is that one of his new militia recruits was an undercover FBI agent who participated in the group’s field training exercises, codenamed “FTX.” During those militia trainings, members would “practice shooting at targets and receive instruction regarding firearms, military [tactics] and survival tactics,” according to the court documents.

Keebler’s militia group scouted out a mosque and military facilities before deciding on the remote BLM facility in Arizona that Keebler and Finicum had surveilled in 2015, the documents say.

During planning for the intended bombing, Keebler was caught on video saying federal authorities are “going to know we’ve had enough,” promising “some of our strikes are going to be loud and dangerous and damaging.”

The undercover FBI agent in the militia group, responding to Keebler’s request, built an inert explosive device and accompanied Keebler during a June 2016 trip to the remote BLM facility. There, Keebler was handed a detonation device, but left dejectedly when the bomb failed to explode. He returned to Utah where he was arrested the next day by FBI agents.

In late April, Keebler confessed in U.S. District Court in Salt Lake City that he “attempted to detonate an explosive” device intended to damage the BLM’s facility. A second charge of carrying or possessing a firearm during a crime of violence was dismissed as part of a plea deal he made with prosecutors to avoid a longer sentence if convicted by a jury. Keebler pleaded guilty, was released in July and placed on three years probation

**LaVoy Finicum (left) was fatally shot during the 2016 illegal takeover of a wildlife refuge in Oregon, only months after he and William Keebler scouted a remote Bureau of Land Management facility in Arizona as part of an intended bomb plot.**



## NEO-NAZI

## WORLD OF WOTAN

A couple with past ties to neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups say they are planning a new, tax-exempt, whites-only community named “Wotans Nation” on a 50-acre rural site in southeastern Tennessee.

Eric Meadows and his wife, Angela Johnson, describe their new organization as a community of white separatists.

Both Meadows and Johnson are former members of the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement. Meadows also has past ties with the neo-Confederate League of the South.

The couple’s new venture began in March 2017 when Johnson purchased the rural Tennessee property where site-clearing work was underway, according to a report published in the *Chattanooga Times Free Press*.

Meadows and Johnson have declined to speak with media representatives but appear to be gathering supporters through a private Facebook page and website.

“Wotans Nation is indeed on the rise!” the group’s private Facebook page boasts to a reported 300 followers.

In a recent development, the group’s webpage says Wotans Nation has applied for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status as a “religious organization.”

The site barely attempts to mask the group’s racist, whites-only component, claiming that it’s intended for “indigenous Europeans” who are interested in living in a “folkish-heathen community.” It is very common for racist “volkish” groups to co-opt symbols and language from the broader pagan or heathen community to give their racist organizations a veneer of spiritual legitimacy.

There is a “need for our folk to have a place to practice our religion freely, without fear of social stigma and in a healthy and natural environment among other culturally and spiritually similar people,” the site says. “It is in that spirit that the Wotans Nation project has been formed.”

Initially, the group says it will build a religious center or “hof” and a meeting hall, to be followed by community and training centers and “rental cabins for visitors to the project.”

The group makes mention of “1488,” a reference to the “14 words” spoken by the late David Lane, a Wotanist, a one-time Ku Klux Klan leader and imprisoned former member of the neo-Nazi group, The Order. He had ties to the Aryan Nations and was implicated in a series of racketeering crimes, including the 1984 assassination of radio talk show host Alan Berg, who was Jewish.

Meadows served in both the U.S. Army and Navy and has past affiliations with the League of the South. In 2014, when that group discussed forming a secret paramilitary group called the Indomitables, Meadows, who then lived in Rome, Georgia, was named director of training.

Not everyone in Meigs County is welcoming the white supremacists and their planned community, the *Chattanooga* newspaper reported.

Jason Choate, who owns an auto repair shop near the Wotans Nation property, said he doesn’t think the 12,000 mostly white residents of Meigs County will welcome the Wotans Nation. “Knowing what I do about the people around here, I don’t think they’ll allow it to get up and running,” Choate told the newspaper.

“Wotans Nation”  
founders Eric  
Meadows and  
Angela Johnson

FACEBOOK (L)A3

## ANTIGOVERNMENT

## Sovereign receives 65 years in prison

Saying he wanted to deter sovereign citizens from committing crimes, a New Jersey judge has sentenced a violent criminal to 65 years in prison.

George Gaymon claimed the court had no authority over him because he was a sovereign citizen, but that didn't stop a jury earlier this year of convicting the 30-year-old defendant of 20 crimes, including two carjackings and an armed robbery.

State prosecutors William Neafsey and Joseph Perez said Gaymon and his co-conspirator, Mario McClain, "terrorized" Essex County, New Jersey.

The pair stole two vehicles and robbed a gas station before hijacking a third vehicle at gunpoint on March 24, 2014.

Three days later, the two used one of their hijacked cars to carry out a fourth carjacking, stealing that driver's wallet.

They then used the stolen credit cards to make purchases at multiple locations where video surveillance cameras led to their identification and arrest. The crimes occurred in Orange, Newark and Irvington, New Jersey.

McClain struck a plea deal with prosecutors and is expected to get a lighter sentence in exchange. Gaymon must serve 51 years in prison before he's eligible for parole, authorities say.

Essex County Superior Court Judge Martin G. Cronin said he handed down the consecutive sentences because he "wanted to deter others" from Gaymon's unorthodox sovereign citizen legal tactics.

This incident is part of a string of cases nationwide involving antigovernment sovereign citizens who commit assorted crimes, then clog the criminal justice system with bogus legal moves, pretending their claims to sovereignty immunize them from prosecution under state and federal laws.



## DECEMBER 15

**Brent Ward Luyster**, a neo-Nazi skinhead with a lengthy criminal record, was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole for fatally shooting Zachary David Thompson, Joseph Mark LaMar and Janell Renee Knight, and wounding Breanne Leigh on July 15, 2016 in **Woodland, Washington**. The previous month, Luyster was found guilty on three counts of aggravated first-degree murder, attempted first-degree murder, first-degree unlawful possession of a firearm and second-degree unlawful possession of a firearm.

## JANUARY 9

**Brandon Clint Russell**, a member of the neo-Nazi **Atomwaffen Division**, was sentenced to five years in prison for possession of an unregistered destructive device and improper storage of explosive materials after pleading guilty the previous September. In May 2017, **Tampa** police were called to an apartment where they found two dead men, both Russell's roommates. Russell was outside the apartment building, crying. A fourth roommate, Devon Arthurs, was arrested soon after and charged with shooting and killing Andrew Oneschuk and Jeremy Himmelman. Russell, a member of the Florida National Guard, wasn't charged in the killings, and Arthurs said Russell had nothing to do with the deaths.

But investigators found explosive materials,

neo-Nazi books and related paraphernalia in the apartment, including a framed photo of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh and a copy of *The Turner Diaries*, both items belonging to Russell. They also discovered that Russell and Arthurs were members of Atomwaffen Division ("Atomwaffen" means atomic weapons in German). Arthurs told detectives he killed his roommates for mocking him about his recent conversion to Islam. He also said he killed them to thwart a terrorist attack by Atomwaffen against civilians, power lines, nuclear reactors and synagogues.

## JANUARY 13

**Ronnie Lucas Wilson**, a member of Tennessee's **Aryan Nations** white supremacist prison gang, was captured after a two-day manhunt. The 31-year-old fugitive was arrested while attempting to escape through a window of an abandoned, burning house in **Blount County, Tennessee**. Wilson had been sought by authorities after allegedly shooting a Knoxville police officer several days earlier during a traffic stop, firing at least seven rounds at the officer, who was hit once in the shoulder and treated for non-life-threatening injuries. In May 2018, Wilson was charged with attempted first-degree murder and related charges.

## MAY 21

**Daniel Borden** was convicted of malicious wounding as part of a

group beating of DeAndre Harris inside a **Charlottesville, Virginia**, parking garage. The incident occurred at the August 12, 2017 "Unite the Right" rally, during which Heather Heyer, an anti-racist protester, was struck and killed by a car driven by James Alex Fields, Jr. Harris, a counter-protester attending the rally, was savagely beaten by several white nationalists in a nearby parking lot and suffered a spinal injury, a broken arm and head lacerations. The judge recommended a six-year sentence for Borden, who will be formally sentenced in October.

Earlier that month, two other of Harris' assailants, Alex Michael Ramos and Jacob Scott Goodwin, were also convicted in separate trials of malicious wounding. The jury recommends Ramos be sentenced to six years in prison when he is due to be sentenced this August. The jury in Goodwin's trial recommends he be sentenced to 10 years in prison. Another white supremacist, Tyler Watkins Davis, is still facing charges related to the assault on Harris. Harris had also been charged with misdemeanor assault and battery against one of the white supremacists, but was acquitted last March.

\*\*\*



**VIOLENT RACIST GANG**

## Rise of the Aryan Circle

Murder and racketeering are among the charges seven members of the Aryan Circle face.

A racist gang — the Aryan Circle — appears to be rising in prominence after federal and state authorities brought a series of successful prosecutions against a competing organization, the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas.

Federal authorities describe the Aryan Circle as “a powerful race-based, multi-state organization” operating in and out of state and federal prisons in Texas, Louisiana, Missouri and elsewhere.

In March, seven Aryan Circle members and associates were arrested on federal charges. They were accused of being accessories-after-the-fact in the racketeering-related homicide of a fellow gang member in 2016 in Evangeline Parish, Louisiana.

An eighth gang member, Jeremy Jordan, 38, of Orange, Texas, is accused in a federal grand jury

indictment of carrying out the murder, but authorities have not publicly divulged details or a motive.

Media accounts, however, say gang member Clifton Hallmark was shot in the head at a July 4 house party with fellow gang members, before being transported to a service station where his companions called 911, only to be tripped up by their made-up story that he had been a robbery victim.

The Justice Department issued a statement saying the Aryan Circle has “emerged as an independent organization during a period of turmoil” within the ranks of Aryan Brotherhood of Texas (ABT), considered one of the largest and most violent racist gangs in the country.

“The Aryan Circle is relatively small in comparison to other prison-based gangs but grew in stature and influence within [the Texas prison system] in the 1990s, largely through violent conflict with other gangs, white and non-white alike,” the Justice Department statement said.

The arrests were announced by Acting Assistant Attorney John P. Cronan of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Alexander Van Hook of the Western District of Louisiana. This case was investigated by a multi-agency task force.

The Aryan Circle was formed in the Texas prison system in the mid-1980s and extended its reach into rural and suburban communities in that state, Louisiana and Missouri, with members both in and out of prison.

The indictment alleges the Aryan Circle enforces its rules and promotes discipline among its members, prospects and associates through murder, attempted murder, assault, robbery and threats against those who violate the rules or pose a threat to the organization. Members and associates are required to follow the orders of higher-ranking members without question.



**EXTREMISM IN THE MAINSTREAM**

“If you’re White, and you concern yourself with the well being of your own people, even of your own children, you’re deemed ‘racist.’ The real racism today is not by White people, it’s against White people — directed by well-funded Jewish organizations such as the (ADL-SPLC-HIAS).”

Former Ku Klux Klan grand wizard **David Duke** on Twitter, **May 22, 2018**



CLIVEN, AMMON, AND RYAN BUNDY

**SOVEREIGN CITIZEN**

## Bundy boys at it again

It's turning into a never-ending saga with the Bundy family.

Since last December, when a federal judge in Las Vegas dismissed all charges against Cliven Bundy and his two sons related to a 2014 armed standoff with the Bureau of Land Management in the desert north of Las Vegas, the family has hardly retreated from public view. Instead, members of the family have gone on speaking tours and announced plans to run for state offices in Nevada. The family is also the focus of a seven-part podcast series produced by Longreads and Oregon Public Broadcasting called "Bundyville."

In March, Ryan Bundy, Cliven's oldest son, announced his plans to run for Nevada governor on a states' rights platform. While his political message is somewhat murky, Bundy has already introduced a litany of conspiracy theories into his campaign, not the least of which are antigovernment "sovereign citizen" ideas. But that's just the beginning.

In an interview with BuzzFeed in April, Bundy said "chemtrails" are indication that the federal government is spraying insidious chemicals from aircrafts for nefarious purposes. He has questioned whether former President Obama is an American citizen and said that being gay is "sick and wrong."

"There shouldn't be any homosexuality," Bundy told BuzzFeed. "That is just a disease."

Meanwhile, Ammon Bundy has hit the road on a speaking tour to preach the family's message that the federal government has no authority to control public lands.

During a range rights conference in Modesto, California, last April, Ammon Bundy warned a group of ranchers and farmers that "extreme environmentalism" was on the move and claimed "fanatics" were redefining people "as the enemy of environmental progress."

What's more, Ammon Bundy, who became the face of the occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon, said that the people should stop looking to the courts to ensure their rights.

"We have been duped as an American people to believe that the courts is [sic] where we defend our rights," Bundy said with a voice cracking with emotion. "And I tell you that that is not true, and it never has been. The courts primarily are the takers of rights, and I challenge you to prove that I am wrong."

GETTY IMAGES/GEORGE FRY (CLIVEN); AP IMAGES/RECK BOWMER (AMMON AND RYAN)

## BY THE NUMBERS

The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University in San Bernardino analyzed 2017 hate crime data from 38 police jurisdictions across the U.S., including the country's 10 largest cities. Here's what the researchers found:

**12.5%**

Rise in hate crimes in the 10 largest U.S. cities from 2016.

**12%**

Rise in hate crimes overall for the 38 jurisdictions reviewed.

**4**

This is the fourth year in a row hate crime reports are up in the U.S.

**1,038**

Hate crimes in the 10 biggest cities. 2017 was the first time in more than a decade that number topped 1,000.

**7 OUT OF 10**

Of the largest U.S. cities saw an increase in hate crime reports.

**99%**

Citing FBI data, the researchers found that hate crimes against Muslims are up 99% from 2014-2016.

**23**

Hate crimes targeting transgender people were recorded in Los Angeles alone. Brian Levin, director of the Center, noted that these crimes are on the rise and are often "extraordinarily violent."

*Data courtesy the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, California State University, San Bernardino.*

## ANTI-MUSLIM

## TERRORISTS AROUND EVERY CORNER

When push comes to shove, disgraced FBI agent turned anti-Muslim speaker John Guandolo falls back on what he knows.

Guandolo took to raging on social media the week of April 5 when, after making the first of five scheduled trainings in the Midwest, the last four were called off. The cancellation coincided with his sidekick walking away.

Guandolo and representatives of his group, Understanding the Threat, and the right-wing media group Worldview Weekend (WW) were supposed to make more presentations on the “threat of the Islamic Movement.”

Local activists, though, intervened resulting in the speaking tour ending.

Guandolo reverted to anti-Muslim conspiracy theories to explain his bad luck. Guandolo and Brannon Howse of WW pointed to a “convergence” between antifa, Marxists and Islamists — also known as the “red-green axis,” a favorite far-right conspiracy.

SPLC highlighted the tour in an April report, and concerns about Guandolo training members of the public were echoed by other civil rights organizations like the Western States Center.

Local groups in Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota also took action to oppose the tour.

But for Guandolo, those who challenge his bigotry are either terrorists or aiding and abetting terrorists. In fact, Guandolo sees terrorists around every corner. In March, he posted to Twitter a photo of a bearded Southwest Airlines employee with the caption, “I wish this were shocking ... a sharia adherent muslim (aka jihadi) at my plane,” complete

with the hashtag “#shariakills.” The tweet, which has since been deleted, sparked enough outrage online that Southwest responded on Twitter, calling Guandolo’s post “cruel and inappropriate.”

It appears Guandolo’s tour implosion had larger consequences for UTT. Conspicuously absent from any of Guandolo’s videos about the recent events was his partner Chris Gaubatz. Gaubatz’s bio was removed from the UTT website around the same time as the announcement of the tour cancellation and when he appeared on a WW show on April 8, he didn’t mention his affiliation with UTT. Guandolo confirmed Gaubatz’s exit two days later.

“Chris has resigned from UTT and is moving on, is discerning other decisions in his life, major life decisions about the road he’s going to take, and I just want to say publically that Chris is a great man, he’s been a great asset for this team, a great friend and a great colleague, he will be greatly missed,” Guandolo stated. Gaubatz did not respond to Hatewatch’s request for comment.

The failed tour and resignation of Gaubatz is the latest in a spate of setbacks for the anti-Muslim speaker. Guandolo’s other business — “training” law enforcement to suspect terrorists in every mosque — dried up following revelations that he punched a Minnesota sheriff at a conference in Reno, Nevada, last year.

That development led Guandolo to lean on local anti-Muslim groups to help him organize trainings for members of the public. The locally organized rejection of his Midwest tour strongly suggests he might be running out of audiences for his bigoted act.



## EXTREMISM IN THE MAINSTREAM

“Hey @realDonaldTrump — how about an executive order to take refugees EVERYONE would support? Christian, English-speaking S.A. farmers on the verge of extermination.”

Ann Coulter on Twitter, March 12, 2018



## GENERAL HATE

# White supremacy in the ranks of the U.S. military remains a serious problem

In May 2017, Marines Michael Chesny and Joseph Manning scaled a building at a pro-Confederate rally to hang a banner bearing the letters “YWNRU.” The abbreviation stands for “You Will Not Replace Us,” a phrase now widely known for being chanted in the streets of Charlottesville last year during the torch-lit march on the eve of the deadly Unite the Right rally. It’s also the slogan of white nationalist hate group Identity Evropa, coincidentally founded by another former U.S. Marine, Nathan Damigo.

The following September, after the Marine Corps investigated the incident, Manning, a staff sergeant, was recommended for “administrative separation.” At the time, a spokesperson for the Marines said Chesny had received punishment but was still on active duty in North Carolina, where he served as an explosive ordnance disposal technician. He received a general discharge in April, which the Marines confirmed in a statement resulted from the May 2017 banner incident with Manning. But after Chesny’s discharge, he was outed as the man behind the online alias “Tyrone.” Tyrone was an active participant in discussions on the online chat service Discord planning the Charlottesville rally. After the violent events of the day, including the death of anti-racist protester Heather Heyer, Tyrone’s account received media attention for comments made before Unite the Right celebrating mowing down protesters with cars (or, in one post, a combine harvester).

Last May, an investigation by ProPublica revealed another participant in the deadly Virginia rally was also an active duty Marine. Vasillios Pistolis bragged in online chats before the event that he was willing to kill someone “if shit goes down,” and was encouraged by other commenters to use brutal violence against counterprotesters. After the rally, he reveled in the day’s exploits, posting online, “Today cracked 3 skulls open with virtually no damage to myself.”

ProPublica also uncovered Pistolis’ involvement with Atomwaffen Division, a neo-Nazi hate group whose members have been linked to five murders. After the report, a Marine spokesman confirmed the Naval Criminal Investigative Service has opened an investigation into Pistolis to assess the allegations. Less than a month after their initial report, ProPublica followed up with a troubling story that suggested a Marine had raised the alarm about Pistolis to multiple superiors repeatedly, but he never saw anything done to discipline him.

Yet another U.S. Marine is not only a participant in a neo-Nazi organization, but a leader. Dillon Hopper, who left the Marines in early 2017, is the leader of Vanguard America, a group whose presence was conspicuous at the Charlottesville

## EXTREMISM IN THE MAINSTREAM

“This is how you look when you claim Cuban heritage yet don’t speak Spanish and ignore the fact that your ancestors fled the island when the dictatorship turned Cuba into a prison camp after removing all weapons from its citizens, hence their right to self defense.”

U.S. Rep. **Steve King**, R-Iowa, on his Facebook page posted alongside a picture of 17-year-old Emma Gonzalez, a survivor of the Parkland school shooting, **March 26, 2018**

rally. Hopper claims to have been involved in the creation of Vanguard America in 2015, which means he would have been on active duty while establishing the group.

In 2006, the Southern Poverty Law Center published a report raising the alarm about the prevalence of radical right-wing extremism in the military. Facing pressure to recruit more Americans to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, the investigation showed the military was relaxing its standards on extremist activity. In 2012, journalist Matthew Kennard covered this trend in depth in his book, *Irregular Army: How the US Military Recruited Neo-Nazis, Gang Members, and Criminals to Fight the War on Terror*. In it, he calls the military's approach to white supremacists in its ranks as "the other 'don't ask, don't tell.'"

This problem is in no way limited to just the U.S. Marine Corps — white supremacists have long used all branches of the U.S. military as a means of getting tactical training. In some cases, people are radicalized after they enlist. In the piece exposing the extremist behavior of Pistolis, reporters at ProPublica also revealed they had identified six other members of Atomwaffen Division who were either current or former members of other branches of the military.

The U.S. military does have policies in place to outlaw extremist behavior. According to Marine Corps recruitment policy, for example, any tattoos, ornamentation or behavior that indicates membership in a hate group should disqualify an applicant from enlistment. And the decision to "separate" Manning and Chesny shows these rules prohibiting white supremacist activity can be enforced. But what about Hopper, who was never caught, or Pistolis, whose affiliations were exposed by an outside watchdog? These guidelines and policies

still require subjective judgment, and by definition, they relate to beliefs and behaviors that most people choose to keep secret.

Regarding the behavior of each of the Marines mentioned in this article, a series of spokespeople for the Marine Corps shared some variation of this statement:

"Association or participation with hate or extremist groups of any kind is directly contradictory to the core values of honor, courage, and commitment that we stand for as Marines and isn't tolerated by the Marine Corps. We are proud of the fact that Marines come from every race, creed, cultural background and walk of life. As a service whose strength is derived from the individual excellence of every Marine, those who are unable to value the contributions of each Marine, regardless of background, are destructive to the warfighting capability of an organization that depends on individuals at every level."

Making that statement a reality is an immense challenge. But the consequences for falling short — such as training a man with views like Chesny's to use explosives — could be disastrous. Unfortunately, a Marine spokesperson confirmed, the Corps does not collect any data on how many "separations" result from extremist activity, or on how many applicants are dismissed in the recruiting process for white supremacist associations. So, the scope of the problem is, and will remain, unknown. ▲



EXTREMISM IN THE MAINSTREAM

"You wouldn't believe how bad these people are. These aren't people. These are animals. And we're taking them out of the country at a level and at a rate that's never happened before."

Donald Trump, discussing immigration, May 16, 2018

REUTERS/OSHUA ROBERTS



# CONFRONTING HATE

THE STORIES COME EVERY DAY — stories of hate and extremism and bigotry that have come racing into the mainstream of politics and culture at a dizzying rate. These stories — of violence, of discrimination, viral videos of racist antagonism in checkout lines and restaurants — are happening in communities now anxious about the reemergence of hateful ideologies that just years ago remained underground.

As Americans suddenly surprised by the frightening character of the country, we know we must act. In this issue of the *Intelligence Report*, we've dedicated a special section to diving deep into the racist and radical right at a time when confronting white supremacy and bigotry is more important than ever.

Our hope is that you read these stories not only to understand how the politics of intolerance and the ideologies of white nationalism are working to undermine American values, but that by reading this section you see what work lies ahead in pushing those ideologies out of mainstream American life.

We call the section *Confronting Hate*.

# Blood & Dishonour

Greed, guns lead to Aryan Strikeforce's downfall

BY BRETT BARROUQUERE

Justin Daniel Lough slipped into a booth at a Cracker Barrel restaurant in rural Virginia and started talking about making a deal.

Soon, two other members of the white supremacist group Aryan Strikeforce joined Lough, known as “Rocko,” along with another man they had been dealing with at the restaurant just off Interstate 81 near the city of Staunton.

The man pitched Lough, Joshua “Hatchet” Steever and Connor Drew Dykes on serving as “muscle” during a “business opportunity” to move a product from one place to the other.

Lough got nervous and asked for a “piece” — a weapon — something the man making the pitch turned down.

After negotiating a few more points during the November 18, 2016 meeting, the deal was set. Aryan Strikeforce would guard a shipment of methamphetamine from Newburg, New York, west about 100 miles to Scranton, Pennsylvania.

For the members of Aryan Strikeforce, what seemed like a fairly easy money-making deal moving methamphetamine and guns around the East Coast would ultimately be their demise.

The man they met with would prove to be a confidential informant working for the FBI.

The deal, and others like it, became the heart of a case against six members of New Jersey-based Aryan Strikeforce, resulting in three guilty pleas (three others are contesting the charges, calling it a case of entrapment) and law enforcement rolling up the organization.

Aryan Strikeforce and an associated group, Combat 18, a violent neo-Nazi group and offshoot of the British group

Blood and Honour (the latter started in the 1990s and has spread internationally) were constantly on a search for money to pay for their plans. It was a need that hastened their downfall.

Indictments, motions, search warrants, interviews and transcripts of secretly recorded conversations filed in the case provide a look at how law enforcement used the group's need for money and willingness to take on less-than-savory tasks.

## Growing the Organization

Aryan Strikeforce and Combat 18 considered themselves willing to and capable of using violence, as the group's website put it, with the “goal to protect the honour of our women, children and the future of our race and nation.”

Combat 18, which subscribed to the “leaderless resistance” philosophy preferred by militia groups, drew its name from Adolf Hitler. “A” and “H” are the first and eighth letters of the alphabet.

The members of the group were quite vocal about their mission on the group's website, as well as social media sites such as VK, the Russian version of Facebook.

The one-time president of the organization, Ronald “Dozer” Pulcher, posted on VK that recruits for Aryan Strikeforce were required to take a blood oath — a pledge of obedience to the group that could mean shedding blood on its behalf.

“We are the elite ... The first to get the call to shed blood ... when shit goes terribly wrong

we are usually the first to fix it,” Pulcher posted on VK on Aug. 16, 2016.

Pulcher said members viewed the group as an actual “strike force” and a group of soldiers ready to partake in violence to preserve the white race. And they had some reach. Aryan Strikeforce had chapters all around the East Coast, as well as contacts in eastern Europe, South America, South Africa and Canada, said a law enforcement source close to the investigation who asked not to be named.

“This is a web [Steever] was able to create,” the law enforcement source said. “They were always a lot bigger than you realized.”

Each of the six people charged by federal prosecutors were patch-wearing members of Aryan Strikeforce and Combat 18. Lough, a one-time Arizona member of violent skinhead group the Hammerskins, has a tattoo of the Aryan Strikeforce patch on his arm.



Steever, who had been bouncing around fringe right-wing movements for years with mixed results, founded the organization after being involved with Aryan Terror Brigade in New Jersey and failing to join up with Atlantic City Skins. He was briefly married to the niece of actor Patrick Swayze.

Pulcher served as president until his arrest on state drug charges in 2016. Henry Lambert Baird took over the president's position at that point, with Dykes stepping in as sergeant-at-arms and Stephen Daniel "Dan" Davis assuming the vice-presidential spot. Jason "Boots" Robards moved from New Mexico to join.

Along with the group's leadership, which sometimes met at Pulcher's Galeton home in north-central Pennsylvania, Aryan Strikeforce had members scattered up and down the East Coast, including New York, New Jersey and Maryland.

And for all their attempts at secrecy and plotting, Aryan Strikeforce had been on the radar of the Pennsylvania state police, local authorities and the FBI for several years.

### Making a Call to Action

Aryan Strikeforce members gathered in Pennsylvania in the early fall of 2016 to discuss making a bomb out of an oxygen bottle that was later used by a Strikeforce member who was willing to

blow himself up at a white supremacist rally in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on November 7, 2016. Their intended target would be anti-racist demonstrators who were expected to counter-protest.

the month after the meeting about the bomb plot.

So, they turned to more lucrative — and potentially more dangerous — fundraising sources: guns.

## "Fights aside, the Aryan Strikeforce needed a way to pay for the bigger plans they had in mind."

During one of those meetings, held September 3, 2016 in Ulysses, Pennsylvania, Pulcher, Steever, Davis, and a Strikeforce member from Buffalo, New York, met with members of the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement for firearms training. What they didn't know was that law enforcement had placed a confidential human source inside the group who reported back on the details of what they were planning.

The bombing never happened, but Aryan Strikeforce members still found a way to enforce their ideology later in 2016.

Steever and another Strikeforce member were at Spanky's, a bar in Easton, Pennsylvania, on December 4. Steever walked past a group of black men and called them "niggers." A bouncer tried to calm the situation, but Steever kept pushing things until the bouncer removed him from the bar.

Steever returned to the back door of the bar and pulled out a knife while the black men left, precipitating a fight. It wasn't much of a battle, though. Steever, wearing his Aryan Strikeforce jacket, was bludgeoned with a rock.

Fights aside, the Aryan Strikeforce needed a way to pay for the bigger plans they had in mind.

For a short time, Pulcher's marijuana growing operation provided some money, but as Steever noted on VK, that revenue stream ended with Pulcher's arrest by state authorities in October 2016,

Aryan Strikeforce members liked to pose with guns — they posted multiple photos of themselves holding weapons, including a tactical shotgun, a pistol, brass knuckles and an ASP baton and soon were moving unregistered guns and drugs around the East Coast.

In a recorded conversation on March 30, 2017, Lough met an informant near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with Baird, Steever and an undercover agent and said he was ready to start hauling weapons.

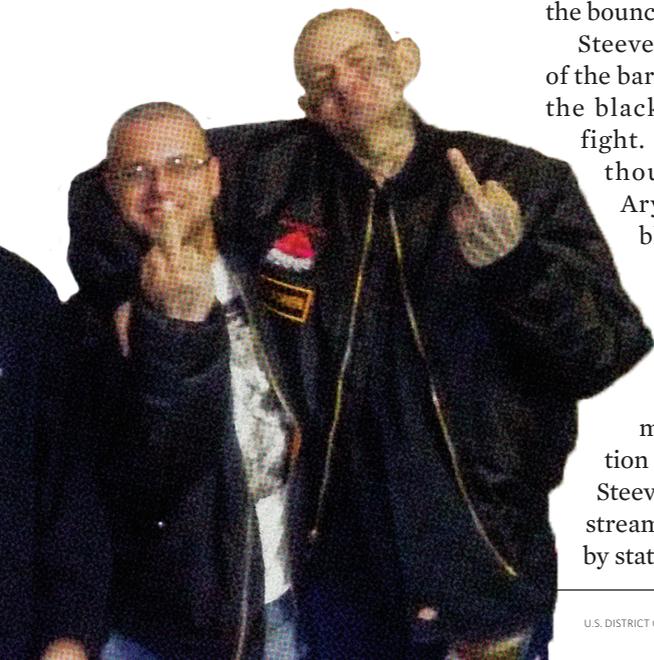
"You call me, I'll be there ... It will be very, very rare if I had to turn something down," Lough said. "That's why I always make sure people know, call me, 'cause I always need the money ... I'm always ready to go."

It was familiar territory for Lough, who bragged several times about his days running methamphetamine and guns and other criminal activity while living in Arizona. Other members of Aryan Strikeforce had criminal records, too, with offenses ranging from illegal possession of brass knuckles to beating a black man with a baseball bat.

"I'm very much accustomed to, you know, making money any way I can," Lough said in a recorded conversation.

"I've probably done far dirtier jobs than you've been on," Baird replied.

A lack of money made Aryan Strikeforce dangerous, and also reckless. While they made big plans, they often couldn't afford to carry them out, the law enforcement source said.



“That was always a thing,” the law enforcement source said. “A lot of the operations and big things would run into a wall. They had no money.”

As planning for the gun and drug running operations amped up — along with talk of a bombing — law enforcement managed to get more confidential informants into the group to identify members of not only Aryan Strikeforce but Combat 18.

### Seeking Weapons

The men of Aryan Strikeforce loved guns, even though most were felons and legally barred from having weapons. But, when it came to doing “jobs” — moving drugs, gun parts or other such activity — they liked to be armed. Lough told the informant that he was looking for guns, plural — “more like quantity” — especially handguns.

“When you say quantity, what do you mean?” the informant asked.

“Just as many as you can get them,” Lough replied.

One of the main concerns with getting a gun was finding one that was “clean” and hadn’t been used in other criminal activity. Lough, especially, seemed concerned with the origin of any weapon he was given. When the informant offered to procure a weapon for him, Lough wanted to make sure it couldn’t be traced.

“What do you mean clean?” Lough asked on March 30, 2017. “They’re not hot?”

“No, they’re not coming back to you, they’re not coming back to anybody,” the informant said.

Also, during the March 30, 2017 meeting, Baird and the informant discussed the need for a weapon.

“I’m looking for a little upgrade, I’m looking for a 21 Glock,” Baird told the informant.

“What do you need?” the informant asked.

“I want a 21 Glock,” Baird said. “It’s my favorite weapon.”

“OK, I’ll see what I can do,” the informant said.

“I just got a Taurus revolver right now, and I need to get that to brother Josh,” Baird said.

### Being Recorded

Aryan Strikeforce liked to use public, often busy places where a group of people wouldn’t be noticed — such as a parking lot for a mall or a Walmart or a Cracker Barrel restaurant off an interstate in a rural area — to arrange the deals.

At a typical meeting on December 4, 2016, two undercover agents and Steever, who by this point had earned a reputation within the white supremacist movement as a potential snitch, met in a shopping mall parking lot near Dickson City, Pennsylvania, to sell methamphetamine.

Steever pocketed \$4,000 for 20 pounds of meth, then left with an undercover agent to meet Lough, Dykes and another Aryan Strikeforce member in a Walmart parking lot. There, Steever doled out \$1,000 payments to Dykes, Lough and the other member.

The undercover informant suggested the four convert the money to Visa prepaid gift cards, but Steever, Lough, Dykes and the unnamed Strikeforce member opted to keep the cash.

Several other sales were made, after which some of the cash was converted to pre-paid gift cards at Target. In one case, Lough, Dykes and Robards bought \$400 cards at Target, then gave those to the undercover informant as a down payment toward future gun purchases.

Steever, who always seems to attract followers, made it clear to the undercover informant that Aryan Strikeforce was up for any work it could get, so long as it paid. When a job came up, Steever usually organized Aryan Strikeforce members, sometimes emphasizing the importance of taking on the assignment. Steever, in a March 24, 2017 text to Lough, made it clear that a job in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, required his presence.

“It’s very important,” Steever wrote. “You definitely need to be here now to do security.”

More meetings took place in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and Hagerstown, Maryland as guns and drugs were bought and sold by the undercover informants and Aryan Strikeforce.

The group’s activities unraveled on April 13, 2017, when the FBI arrested Lough, Steever, Robards and Baird and executed search warrants at their homes.

Court records show guns were seized from the houses of Baird and Steever. Investigators pulled a shotgun with a tactical grip from Steever’s home, but the warrants and other court documents do not specify what other types of weapons were seized. Davis and Dykes were arrested the next day.

The arrest cut off the national and international network Steever had set up for the group. Now, the law enforcement source said, Aryan Strikeforce is something of a non-entity.

“I don’t even hear about these guys anymore,” the source said.

In an interview with the FBI in Waynesboro, Virginia, after being arrested, Lough said he met Steever online and talked about his own drug use. Lough also denied profiting from his association with Aryan Strikeforce, the Hammerskins and the National Socialist Movement and denied dealing methamphetamine.

“No, I’m not a drug dealer,” said Lough, who described himself as a mason who worked on construction sites.

FBI Special Agent Daniel R. Wolf asked Lough if he had ever been paid for his work or time while with the Aryan Strikeforce.

“I don’t know, I can’t answer that,” Lough said. “I cannot honestly answer that.”

When pressed about Aryan Strikeforce membership, Lough opted not to answer questions and said he didn’t know the real names of many of the members. Instead, he referred to “Machete,” “Hatchet” and “Boots,” but otherwise declined to identify anyone.

Lough wanted to know what the quickest way was to be “done and over with and get me back to my life, that I was actually enjoying.”

With the prospect of federal prison time hanging over Lough and his fellow Aryan Strikeforce members, enjoying life may not be in the cards for a while for any of them. ▲



# *Into Darkness*

Inside an American white supremacist cult

BY BRENDAN JOEL KELLEY

From the “God Hates Fags” vitriol of the Westboro Baptist Church to the white supremacist and homophobic totalitarianism of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints to the violent neo-Nazi advocates of “racial holy war” in the Creativity Movement, examples of hate metastasizing via religious dogma abound.

The Twelve Tribes, a Christian fundamentalist cult born in the American South in the 1970s, is little-known to much of the country, and on first impression its communes and hippie-vibed restaurants and cafes can seem quaint and bucolic. But beneath the surface lies a tangle of doctrine that teaches its followers that slavery was “a marvelous opportunity” for black people, who are deemed by the Bible to be servants of whites, and that homosexuals deserve no less than death.

While homosexuals are shunned by the Twelve Tribes (though ex-members say the group brags about unnamed members

who are “formerly” gay), the group actively proselytizes to African Americans, yet one of its black leaders glorifies the early Ku Klux Klan.

The Twelve Tribes tries to keep its extremist teachings on race from novice members and outsiders, but former members and experts on fringe religious movements who’ve helped its followers escape paint a dark picture of life in the group’s monastic communities — especially for black members, who must reconcile the appalling teachings on race with their own heritage and skin color.

## **Discovery**

Sinasta Colucci was born in Detroit in 1984 to a white “free-spirited hippie” woman and a dreadlocked black man of Cherokee ancestry. Colucci’s parents split when he was an infant, and he was raised by his mom, who moved him and his older sister to Northern California when he was three months old.

*“I was listening to the teachings, and part of me really wanted everything else they said to be true.”*

As a mixed-race kid growing up in the conservative town of Redding, California, where barely more than one percent of the population is black, Colucci was both aware of and confused by his skin color. He remembers an incident where he tried scraping his arms with tree bark to make his skin whiter. His mom responded by telling him he should be proud of his Native American heritage.

When Colucci was 10, he was at a park with his friends and witnessed two drunk men fighting, one white and one Native American. When police arrived, he remembers that the Native American man was handcuffed, beaten and pepper sprayed, while the white man walked away. He admits he didn't know the context of what he saw — “I could have gotten the facts wrong,” he says — but the incident made a lasting impact. “From that time on I had been deathly afraid of being beaten or killed because of how I look,” Colucci writes in the memoir he self-published in early 2018.

In Redding, Colucci was called a panoply of racial slurs by people who weren't sure of his ethnicity: sand nigger, wetback and beaner, nigger, dirty half-breed .... But when he moved to Detroit for a brief stint in college after graduating high school in Redding, and was working at a Church's Chicken, he was called “white boy” by some black customers. “I was too white for Detroit and too black for Redding, California,” he says.

A few years later, at age 21, Colucci first encountered the community of the Twelve Tribes at their farm in Weaubleau, Missouri, where he had traveled hoping to find a simpler, idealistic communal lifestyle. He was heartened that the first person he met was an older black man working on the farm who called himself Joshua.

“It was relieving,” Colucci recalls. “They all lived together, they didn't seem separate in [a racial] way.”

Just a couple of years later, at another Twelve Tribes community in North Carolina, Colucci would find himself with a black leader of the fringe religious movement who goes by Yohannan Abraham (real name John Stringer). Abraham extolled the virtues of Nathan Bedford Forrest, an early member of the original post-Civil War Ku Klux Klan, and tried to impress on Colucci the inherent biblical subservience of the black race to white men, slavery being a prime example of that holy dictum.

As he recounts in his memoir of his seven years with the Twelve Tribes, *Better Than a Turkish Prison: What I Learned from Life in a Religious Cult*, the cult's teachings about race are revealed slowly to converts as they're indoctrinated into a lifestyle of microscopic control dictated by its leaders.

## The Community

The Twelve Tribes grew out of an early 1970s youth Bible study group led by Elbert Eugene Spriggs and his wife Marsha in Chattanooga, Tennessee. It is now an international network of several dozen religious communes that consider Spriggs, who is known as Yoneq, a modern-day apostle, and follow his teachings explicitly lest they risk being ostracized by the cult and damned to an apocalyptic lake of fire.

Followers who belong to “The Community,” as members refer to the Twelve Tribes, surrender their earthly possessions to the group and live communally, often working at the Tribes' restaurants or tea shops — called The Yellow Deli and Mate Factor, respectively — or simply laboring on the communes or for one of the other cult-owned businesses. The internet is highly restricted, and secular music, books and other “worldly” influences are verboten.

Spriggs and the other leaders of the Twelve Tribes kept the bulk of the cult's “teachings” private, and largely succeeded until Bob and Judy Pardon encountered the group in the mid-1990s.

Bob Pardon holds a Master of Divinity degree and a Master of Theology with a concentration on ethics, and with his wife Judy founded the New England Institute of Religious Research. Together they run MeadowHaven in Lakeville, Massachusetts, which Pardon says is the only long-term transitional facility in the world for former members of destructive cults and fringe religious movements.

The Pardons first came across the Twelve Tribes when a former member contacted them about what she perceived as child abuse — a young child whipped with a long, thin rod like those used to hold balloons, which left ugly marks and bruises. Though she had brought child abuse charges that were eventually dropped for lack of evidence, the Pardons were intrigued by the group, which Bob Pardon says he initially thought was being unfairly maligned. “They had a pretty low profile, and we had never heard of them before,” he says.

Because of their initial skepticism about whether Twelve Tribes was a destructive group, the Pardons were granted access to many of the communities in the Northeast, and conducted extensive research with leaders, members and ex-members. They also studied their printed materials — the “Freepapers” members distribute in order to proselytize — and any teachings they could get their hands on.

But even with access to Spriggs and other leaders, the official teachings weren't shared with the Pardons. “They said that we wouldn't understand,” Pardon says, “that we were not under ‘the anointed,’ which means underneath Spriggs. I have two theological degrees and I have extensive training in

biblical languages and Christian history, so I was always a bit dumbfounded by that.”

Eventually, though, the Pardons met ex-members who had been at the highest levels, right underneath Spriggs, and they took all of the teachings and shared them with the Pardons.

“Once we got those teachings, we knew there was a very seedy underbelly to the group,” Pardon says. “We began to realize that this was a really heavy thought reform environment; there was a lot of behavior control over the members’ lives.”

Indeed, as Colucci recounts in his book, the group exerted control over everything from when single men should masturbate (“usually about every other day or every few days,” Colucci writes, “and you’re supposed to try not to think about anything as you’re doing it. It’s to be a ‘mechanical release.’”) to how to wipe one’s ass (“there really is a teaching about taking three to four squares of toilet paper, folding it to the size of one square, then wipe, fold, wipe, fold, and repeat until you have this tiny, poop-stained square that you flush”).

Among the teachings, the Pardons discovered the rationale behind the extensive accusations of child abuse in the Twelve Tribes. “It’s part and parcel of the theology that the child has to obey authority and if the child doesn’t obey authority, then the child needs to have that [physical discipline],” Pardon says. “It used to be that only parents did that, but early on it began to shift over so that anybody that came into the group who thought your child was disrespectful could discipline them, and that would normally happen.”

Also revealed were Spriggs’ teachings on homosexuality. “They must be put to death,” the teaching reads. “Homosexuality is a capital offense.”

Colucci would encounter these teachings during his seven years as a member of the Twelve Tribes (though he says he personally never witnessed child discipline that he considered abusive). But the teaching that would cause him the most confusion and internal struggle regarded the role of the black race, known as the Cham teaching.

### The “Curse”

The Cham teaching, or the “curse of Ham,” as it’s more commonly known, stems from Genesis 9:20-25. In the story, Noah’s son Ham (or Cham, in the Twelve Tribes’ Hebraic vernacular), sees Noah naked and drunk in his tent and tells his brothers, Shem and Japheth. The brothers respond by walking backward so as not to gaze on Noah’s nudity and covering him with a blanket. When Noah awakens and discovers what happened, he curses Ham’s son Canaan for Ham’s impertinence, damning him to be a “servant of servants” to his brothers.



**Twelve Tribes cult leader “Yaneq,” aka Elbert Eugene Spriggs, and his wife Marsha.**

Though the Bible does not ascribe ethnicity or race to any of the characters in this story, over history Ham/Cham has been portrayed as black by many in the furtherance of white supremacy, hence black servitude to Shem (posited as white by racists) has been biblically justified by prejudiced individuals and religious denominations over the past few centuries.

Hate group ideologies like Christian Identity and those of the Ku Klux Klan have incorporated the “curse of Ham” biblical misinterpretation into their racist theology (Christian Identity sometimes asserting that Jews are actually the descendants of Ham and Canaan). In the 19th century, Southern Christians in America used the belief to justify slavery.

The Twelve Tribes’ teachings regarding Ham/Cham both excuse slavery and perpetuate its bigotry, going so far as to attack Martin Luther King, Jr. “Martin Luther King was filled with every evil spirit there is to say Cham doesn’t have to serve Shem. All manner of evil filled that man,” the teaching reads. “It is horrible that someone would rise up to abolish slavery. What a marvelous opportunity that blacks could be brought over here to be slaves so that they could be found worthy of the nations.”

The Twelve Tribes insist these teachings are not racist. Yohannan Abraham, the black leader who praised the early KKK to Colucci, wrote an article on the group’s website titled “Are the Twelve Tribes Racist?” under his given name, John Stringer. (Multiple requests by the *Intelligence Report* to interview Abraham/Stringer and other Twelve Tribes leaders were denied or ignored.) Addressing a *New York Post* article that quotes from the group’s Cham teaching (“Submission to [white people] is the only provision by which [blacks] will be saved”), Stringer wrote that the quote “is taken totally out of context and has no application within the Twelve Tribes, where blacks are saved like anyone else — by the blood of the Son of God.” He concludes, “The conclusion of the quote and teaching that the *New York Post* took out of context says this: ‘Slavery is over for those who believe and come into Messiah, but it is not over for those outside Messiah.’”

The telling detail Stringer/Abraham dodges is that the Twelve Tribes believe only those baptized into their cult have “come into Messiah,” leaving every other black person “outside Messiah,” where Stringer/Abraham admits he believes slavery “is not over.”

“First of all,” Colucci says of Abraham/Stringer’s article, “any time a group has to have ‘Are We Racist?’ as a frequently asked question, something’s going on there .... They’re saying you have to join

their group to be saved by their messiah, and you have to accept that you have certain iniquities based just on your skin color alone. You only find this out after living there a long time; this is not something they're going to tell outsiders."

### **Brainwashed**

Carolyn Figueroa, who spent a year with the Twelve Tribes and left in 2011, wasn't exposed to the cult's teachings about black people until she left the group. Juan Figueroa, her father, enlisted Bob and Judy Pardon as well as cult expert Steven Hassan, author of *Combating Cult Mind Control*, to help extract Carolyn from the group, at which time former members of the Twelve Tribes explained to her the controversial teachings she had yet to learn.

Colucci was baptized into the Twelve Tribes after a mere three weeks living at the Stepping Stone Farm but didn't encounter the Cham teaching — which dictated that he, as a man with black lineage on his father's side, was cursed to be subservient to whites — for nearly a year with the cult.

It was a younger man, also mixed race, who introduced Colucci to the Cham teaching — "something to the effect that black people are cursed and their only hope of righteousness is to submit to the white man. I was like, 'What? Are you kidding me?'" Colucci approached one of his community's leaders and asked about what he'd heard, and the leader reasserted the teaching "in a more graceful way," Colucci says.

"I was offended at first, and looking back, I'm not sure why I eventually accepted it. I was focused on the positive. I was listening to the teachings, and part of me really wanted everything else they said to be true."

Two years after he'd first heard the teaching, Colucci was sent to the Twelve Tribes community in Hiddenite, North Carolina, where many of the cult's leaders were living, including Yoneq, the founder, and Yohannan Abraham/John Stringer, the African American leader who penned the "Are the Twelve Tribes Racist?" article.

Abraham/Stringer picked Colucci up at the airport in Charlotte when he arrived. "At that time, I was fully inundated, I was brainwashed," Colucci says. "It was like meeting a hero. I kind of idolized him. Here's this strong, powerful black man who's going to bring in more black people, because we need more diversity. That's the way I thought about it."

But as he spoke to Abraham/Stringer, and heard him speak about how Nathan Bedford Forrest and the early KKK were righteous because they'd brought order to the out-of-control Northern blacks raping women in the South after the Civil War, another image from his pre-cult past came to mind. "He was like the black white supremacist from "The David

Chappelle Show," Colucci says. "I was kind of double-minded the whole time I was there, because I really wanted [the Twelve Tribes' theology] to be true."

### **Control**

Colucci left the Twelve Tribes in 2012, getting on a bus with his future wife the day after President Obama's reelection. He didn't leave because of the cult's teachings about black people, but rather had become disillusioned with their theology.

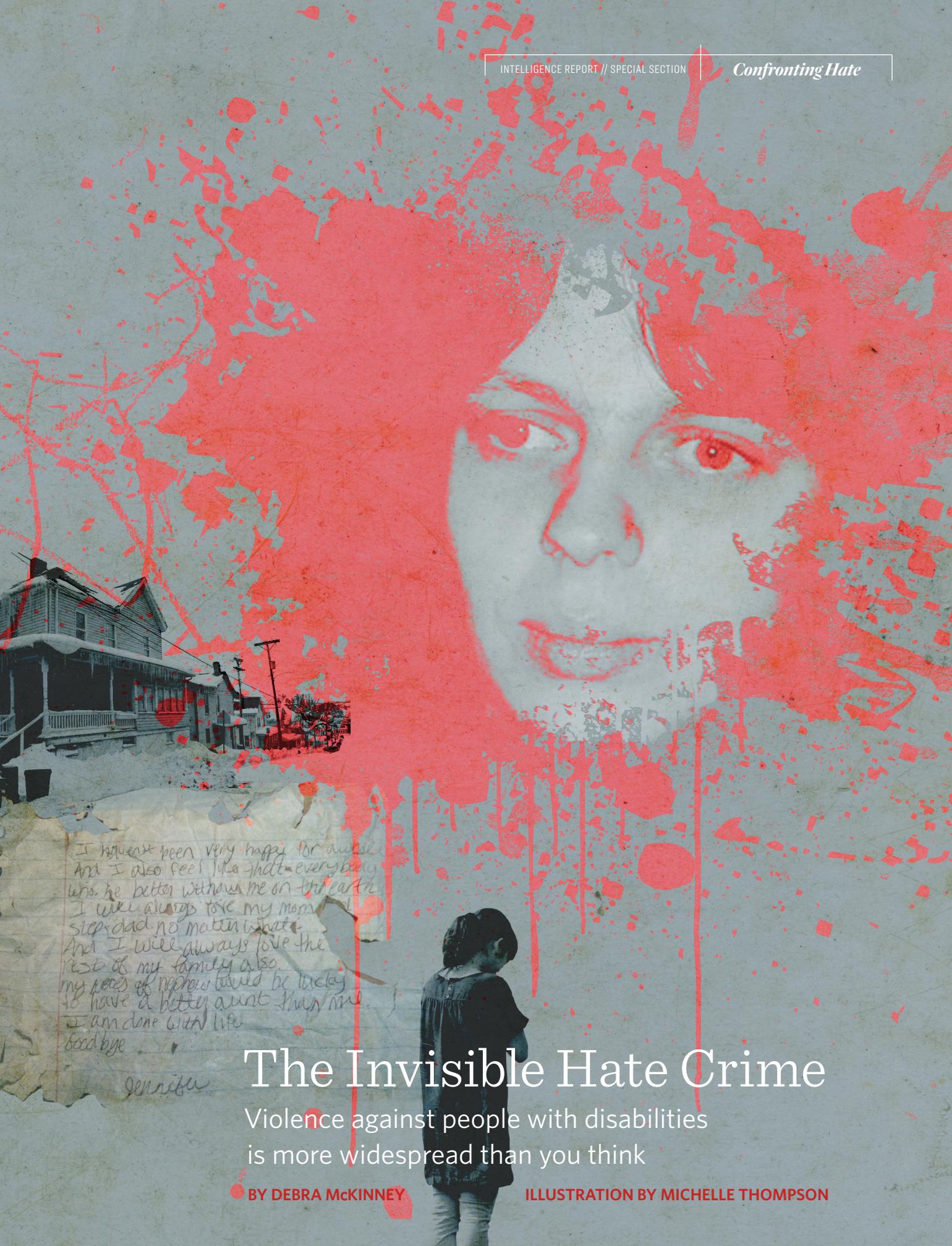
Former Twelve Tribes member David Pike, who was part of the Twelve Tribes from 1997 to 2004, was offended by some of the cult's teachings as well — he says he witnessed young children beaten extensively with thin balloon sticks. "I saw some kids gettin' switched till they bled," he says, but he finally escaped (and spent time at Bob and Judy Pardon's MeadowHaven facility, which helps people recover from abusive cults) when he couldn't reconcile their theology with his own studies any longer.

Jenny Lynn Fiore, a member of the Twelve Tribes in the early 2000s, took issue with the cult's racism and authoritarian discipline of children and its treatment of women. "I saw very controlling, overbearing husbands treating their wives pretty badly, and there was no real recourse... they were basically kitchen slaves," she says, but she spent years in and out of the group before finally cutting ties.

It's remarkable that people of conscience like Colucci, Figueroa, Pike and Fiore become indoctrinated to the Twelve Tribes' abhorrent teachings on homosexuality, black people's subservience to whites and extensive corporal punishment of small children.

"They really begin to control your internal reality, how you process things, how you see reality," says Bob Pardon, who has helped many former members of the Twelve Tribes transition out of the cult over the last twenty-plus years. "There's a lot of emotion control — you feel guilty about things you shouldn't feel guilty about, and not guilty about things you should, and the same with fear, you fear things you shouldn't and you don't fear things that you probably should."

"We were immigrants," Colucci writes in his memoir of his and his future wife's bus ride away from the Twelve Tribes. "We were leaving one nation — the nation of New Israel, the Twelve Tribes Communities, a nation in which women must be submissive to men, blacks and whites are not equal, homosexuality is a sin which gays must repent of if they want to be accepted, where even differing beliefs and opinions are not allowed, where your daily activities are strictly dictated—and we were entering what is arguably the freest nation on the planet." ▲



I haven't been very happy for awhile  
And I also feel like that everybody  
who he better without me on this earth  
I will always love my mom and  
stepdad no matter what  
And I will always love the  
rest of my family also  
my peers of neerw would be lucky  
to have a better aunt than me  
I am done with life  
good bye

Jennifer

# The Invisible Hate Crime

Violence against people with disabilities  
is more widespread than you think

BY DEBRA MCKINNEY

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHELLE THOMPSON



## What happened to Jennifer Daugherty couldn't have been more cold-blooded.

The 30-year-old Pennsylvania woman with intellectual disabilities was smiley and trusting, a Steelers fan who loved dancing, scary movies, auto mechanics and making friends.

"She couldn't sing, but she tried," her stepfather, Bobby Murphy, said from the family home in Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania. "She would play her radio in our backyard, and we had a couple of dogs, and she'd be singing and the dogs would actually howl along with her.

"Every day when I'd come home from work, she'd be standing at the mailbox waiting for me, just to ask how my day went."

Jennifer was about to move out of her parents' house and into her own apartment. She wanted what most anyone wants — independence, meaningful work, love and a family of her own someday.

"This is my time to make a new start for myself, and making some new friends and not being afraid of anything ...," she posted on her MySpace page in February 2010.

Three weeks later, her stepdad took her to catch a bus to Greensburg for a medical appointment and a sleepover at a friend's place. That was the last he saw of her.

"I remember her exact words. She said, 'Pa, I will see you tomorrow afternoon. Tell mom I love her.' And she gave me a kiss on the cheek."

At some point in Greensburg, Jennifer met up with six men and women, ages 17 to 36, who she

thought were her friends. Over the course of two days, they took turns humiliating and torturing her in their crash-pad apartment. As she begged them to let her go, they beat her, stomped on her stomach, cut off her hair, painted her face with nail polish and forced her to swallow vile concoctions of detergent, oil, medications, urine and feces. Held captive in the bathroom, she was forced to write a suicide note before she was stabbed over and over with a steak knife, her wrists slit, her throat slashed. When still she clung to life, two of her killers wrapped a string of Christmas lights around her neck, and with one on each side, pulled. Then they stole a neighbor's garbage can, stuffed her body inside, dragged it through the snow for two blocks and left it in a school parking lot.

It's been eight years, and those who loved her are still reeling.

Murphy recalled how his stunned, overwhelmed family sat in front of a mortician's desk after officials released her body.

"He was making notes," he said, "and he looked at us, and he closed his binder and he said, 'I'm just going to tell ya; they destroyed her body so bad that we can't fix her, so she can't have an open-casket funeral.'"

Although Jennifer's killers were not charged with hate crimes, they were aggressively prosecuted and received sentences varying from decades in prison, to life without parole, to the death penalty.

The savagery Jennifer Daugherty suffered isn't as rare as one would hope. The most recent analysis of a National Crime Victimization Survey by the U.S. Bureau of Justice indicates that people with disabilities are at least 2.5 times more likely to experience violence than those without. And much of that violence is extraordinarily cruel and sadistic.

When a crime is motivated by a person's physical, intellectual or psychiatric disability, it's a hate crime. But disability hate crimes in this country are woefully under-reported, under-investigated and under-prosecuted, said Jack Levin, professor emeritus at Northeastern University and co-director of the Brudnick Center on Violence and Conflict.

"When people think of hate crimes they think of neo-Nazis, they think of racism, they think of homophobia, they just don't seem to think of people with disabilities as being a protected category," he said by phone. "I call it the invisible hate crime."

Levin has been studying hate crimes for more than 30 years. Although he holds himself somewhat responsible for coining the phrase, he doesn't think "hate" is the best term since hate itself is not a crime.

### 2.5X

People with disabilities are at least 2.5 times more likely to experience violence than those without.

### 7X

People with intellectual disabilities are sexually assaulted at a rate seven times higher than those without.

“I plead guilty to having spread this misnomer,” he said. “Because in 1993, I co-authored the first book ever written about hate crimes, and guess what it was titled? *Hate Crimes: The Rising Tide of Bigotry and Bloodshed*. If we had instead entitled the book *Bias Crimes* it might have been more accurate. Everybody uses the term now, so it’s too late to change it. But a hate crime is a crime committed against a victim because the victim is different (with respect to race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or disability status). ‘Bias’ is more general; you victimize members of a group simply because they are different.

“And yet there are people very hostile toward people with disabilities. The sadism indicates some kind of need to feel powerful and special and important by targeting someone seen as inferior.”

In his book *Disability Hate Crimes: Does Anyone Really Hate Disabled People?* Mark Sherry documents case after case in this country and beyond of every type of brutality imaginable. He writes of people being tipped out of their wheelchairs, beaten with their own prosthetics, kicked in the head, slashed in the face, attacked with a tire iron, run over, stripped of their clothing, burned with cigarettes, urinated upon, smeared with feces, poisoned, drowned, stomped on, set on fire, disemboweled. It’s not a pleasant read.

“Writing this book has, in many ways, burned my soul with pain,” are his first words in the book.

“There’s never a time when I give a talk on this topic to the disability community when somebody doesn’t come up to me at the end to tell me their story of victimization,” said Sherry, associate professor of sociology at the University of Toledo. “I think disabled people have been segregated so much both formally and informally that they’re not placed in positions of power where people listen to their testimonies.”

Anyone who still needs convincing that there are people who hate people with disabilities can find proof with an online search and a few vile words:

“These people are barely people! They are wads of meat in the vague shape of people. Incapable of living any life whatsoever ... if their parents knew they’d be downies, they’d have been coat hanger aborted into the toilet.”

“It’s gotten to the point where I will not even breathe in their disgusting direction. ... They make me physically nauseous with their appearance, their behavior and their fucking stench. It’s ironic because I’m the most tolerant person I know but when it comes to these filthy pieces of shit I do a complete 180.”



Hundreds of Jennifer Daugherty’s friends and family held a candlelight vigil after she was tortured and murdered by six people in this Greensburg, Pennsylvania house in 2010.

While researching his 2010 book, Sherry found anti-disability hate sites and rants as bad as this, and worse.

“There’s been a campaign by disabled people to take these sites down,” he said. “Very successful, in general.”

And yet, there they still are.

### Long, Hard Battle

Curt Decker, executive director of the National Disability Rights Network, was part of a coalition formed during the Clinton Administration that pushed for inclusion of people with disabilities in federal hate-crime legislation. It took a lot of convincing, he said from his office in Washington, D.C.

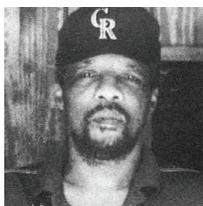
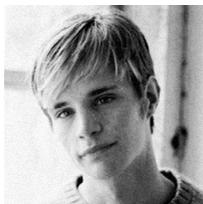
“In the political arena, there was a fair amount of conversation around, ‘People don’t hate people with disabilities, they’re very sympathetic.’ And it was like, ‘No, actually that’s not necessarily true.’ And then we went through a series of discussions like, ‘Well, isn’t it more a crime of opportunity? You rob a blind person or attack someone because they

can't run away? That's not really hate, that's just convenience.' It was a constant struggle throughout the whole process.

"I was also very interested in trying to stretch it a bit because of who we are and what we do, which is a ton of investigations of abuse and neglect in a range of facilities where people with disabilities reside. 'Wouldn't that rise to the level of hate crimes?' And a lot of people, again said, 'No, no, no, that's not a hate crime, that's just neglect or bad staffing.'

"So, it was quite a slog. It took almost 12 years."

The fight paid off in 2009 with passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which expanded Civil Rights-era hate crime protections. Federal law now covers crimes motivated by a victim's actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability, and makes it easier for federal investigators to step in when local jurisdictions drop the ball.



After Congress passed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, President Barack Obama signed it into law as the murdered men's mothers looked on.

Three New Mexico men were the first to be charged with hate crimes under the Shepard-Byrd Act. In 2010, after luring a 22-year-old Navajo man with mental disabilities to an apartment, they gagged him with a towel and used a hot coat hanger to brand a swastika into his arm. They also shaved a swastika into the back of his head and defaced his body with markers, writing "KKK" and "White Power," and drawing horns on his forehead and an ejaculating penis on his back, calling it his "Native pride feathers."

Although the defense characterized the crimes as pranks gone awry, all three attackers went to prison.

Harm doesn't have to fit a legal definition to assault the soul.

Dominick Evans, a filmmaker and activist in Dayton, Ohio, is "multiply marginalized" as a transgender man who is also disabled. One of the worst days of his life came at 16, after returning to school following a back surgery he barely survived.

With progressive spinal muscular atrophy, he used a wheelchair and relied on an elevator to access his school. Well aware he was the only student allowed to use it on a daily basis, a group of football players littered the elevator floor with dead mice.

"They thought it would be funny to take the one disabled kid in their school and make them the senior prank," Evans recalled.

"I spent sixth and seventh period hiding out in the disabled (restroom) stall because I couldn't stand to go to class and they wouldn't let me go home. I just cried. I felt like there was no place for me, that my life had no value."

Nobody came forward to say who did it. Nobody was held accountable.

"Nobody cared about what happened to me; that's how I felt, that nobody cared."

The humiliation of this so-called prank contributed to a suicide attempt a few years later.

In 2015, in a school locker room in Dietrich, Idaho, a white high school football player kicked a coat hanger into the rectum of a black, mentally disabled teammate. The assailant, John R.K. Howard, had also repeatedly called his victim the n-word and taunted him with a song about lynching. The judge refused to see the case as a sexual assault or a crime motivated by race or disability. Howard, who got a plea deal, walked away with probation and community service. According to court records, the victim later ended up in an assisted living facility after multiple suicide attempts.

"They can't see how our lives can be taken seriously," said Vilissa Thompson, a Columbia, South Carolina social worker, a black woman with brittle bone disease and founder of RampYourVoice.com, a site promoting self-advocacy. "If somebody takes you as 'less than' or 'subhuman,' they are not going to take your quality of life and what happened to you as seriously as somebody they deem 'worthy.'"

### Dark Corners of History

People with disabilities are a vastly varied, rich and diverse community. And they have been isolated, marginalized and dehumanized throughout history.

“When people think of hate crimes they think of neo-Nazis, they think of racism, they think of homophobia, they just don’t seem to think of people with disabilities as being a protected category. I call it the invisible hate crime.”

In this country, discrimination against people with disabilities, known as ableism, includes passage of “unsightly beggar” ordinances, later known colloquially as the “ugly laws.” Susan M. Schweik, author of *The Ugly Laws: Disability in Public*, traced the first arrest under these primarily anti-begging ordinances to 1867, two years after the end of the Civil War, when a “perfect wreck” of a disabled Union soldier wandering the streets of San Francisco offended certain people’s sensibilities.

Various cities across the country followed suit, including Chicago when an alderman became annoyed by what he characterized as a “street obstruction,” a woman who’d lost her job in a woolen mill after being run through a carding machine. With two children to support, she cranked “Molly Darling” on a hand organ day after day hoping for compassion. Instead, in 1881, Chicago passed an ordinance against people like her: “Any person, who is diseased, maimed, mutilated, or in any way deformed, so as to be an unsightly or disgusting object ... shall not therein or thereon expose himself to public view ...” Although rarely enforced, the last of these laws wasn’t repealed until 1974.

During the American eugenics movement, estimates indicate as many as 70,000 Americans deemed defective in one aspect or another were forcibly sterilized between 1907 and 1963. One mental institution in Illinois gave patients tuberculosis-tainted milk to weed out those genetically unfit to survive.

The home of Satoshi Uematsu, 26, who was on a mission to “obliterate” disabled people, and a makeshift altar where mourners left flowers for the 19 people he killed.



Adolf Hitler was a big fan of the U.S. eugenics movement. When forced sterilization spread to Nazi Germany, it became the precursor to mass slaughter. As the first victims of the Holocaust, an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 people with disabilities were among the millions killed in gas chambers and by injection, starvation, experimentation and exposure to deadly diseases between 1939 and 1945.

A mission “to rid the world of disabled people” was behind the biggest mass murder in Japan since World War II. In 2016, Satoshi Uematsu, a 26-year-old former employee of a residential institution in Sagami-hara, Kanagawa Prefecture, broke into the facility in the middle of the night and started stabbing and slitting throats. Nine men and 10 women, from teenagers to senior citizens, were killed and 26 were wounded, most of them seriously.

Such atrocities are among the reasons activists on the frontlines of the disability movement sometimes bristle when non-disabled people question whether disability hatred really exists.



# The fight against disability hate crimes is ongoing

*Nicole Jorwic is director of rights policy at The Arc, the largest organization in the country advocating for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and their families. The Arc also runs the National Center on Criminal Justice & Disability. Jorwic spoke in May at a public briefing on hate crimes and bias-related incidents sponsored by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Jorwic spoke with the Southern Poverty Law Center about her testimony at the event and what she hopes will happen next.*

## **Crime against people with disabilities has been called “the invisible hate crime.” Why do people not realize it exists?**

Because for decades people with disabilities were often locked away in institutions or kept out of mainstream society, it created an idea that people with disabilities were “less than.” Which is why hate crimes against people with disabilities are often minimized and called pranks or bullying instead of referring to them as what they are, hate crimes.

## **Is there any new legislation in the works?**

We are always working on legislation to ensure that the civil rights of individuals with disabilities are protected. Specifically, we are working on a bill to create a national criminal background check system for direct care professionals who work with people with disabilities. Right now these are state systems, so a bad actor would just have to cross state lines to commit another

crime. There are also continued legislative efforts, led by The Arc and the National Disability Rights Network, to fund additional training for law enforcement on how to interact with people with disabilities.

## **In certain situations, people with disabilities have been taught to be compliant with caregivers, teachers and others. How can that backfire?**

Very often people with disabilities are taught to “be good” and not cause a problem. The unfortunate reality we know from data is that in a lot of crimes against people with disabilities, the offenders are people the individual knows. It can be difficult for the person to report in the first place. But for the person to be supported through the system, it requires them to step outside of that tradition of “being good” or doing what they are told.

## **Can you talk about assertiveness training and self-defense programs designed for people with disabilities?**

There are several programs on self-defense, and sexual assault support groups and other support groups that are specifically geared toward people with disabilities. Some chapters of The Arc offer those support groups. Also, [these programs] can give individuals with disabilities a safe space to work through their issues.

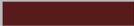
## **What advice can you offer regarding reporting crime involving a person with a disability?**

It’s very important that if there is any suspicion of any sort of abuse or crime against a person with a disability, that it’s reported quickly. But the reality is that the criminal justice system so often isn’t equipped to properly prosecute the crime. So if a local law enforcement agency were facing a situation like

that, I would encourage them to interact with either their local Arc chapter or their state’s protection and advocacy organization that has expertise on how to work with people with disabilities. Because so often we see a lot of misunderstanding and misassumptions about an individual with disabilities being a competent witness — whether as a victim or as a witness to a crime. Arc or other protection advocacy organizations can support an individual to communicate what the person can’t. Not all people with disabilities can communicate everything they want. But they will communicate what they can in a way they know how, and often times that’s going to require a little bit of translation.

## **How can people get involved?**

I would recommend anyone who’s horrified hearing these stories to get involved with their local chapter of The Arc or local chapter of another disability organization of their choosing, and to find a way to support the services needed for individuals to live in the community. Because the more people with disabilities are part of the fabric of society, the less we are going to have to worry about these issues because they will be out of the shadows.



**Predators target people with intellectual disabilities because they know they are easily manipulated and will have difficulty testifying later. These crimes go mostly unrecognized, unprosecuted and unpunished. And the abuser is free to abuse again.**

— “The Sexual Assault Epidemic No One Talks About,” January, 2018, Joseph Shapiro NPR.org



Lydia X.Z. Brown, an Asian-American activist with autism, has put it this way:

“We know hate and we know violence, because it is written on our bodies and our souls.”

### Invisible Victims

Numbers gathered through the Bureau of Justice victim survey, which are reported anonymously, and those gathered by the FBI, which are not, are wildly out of sync. The most current FBI statistics claim only one percent of hate crimes indicate a disability bias, the majority against people with intellectual disabilities. Among reasons for the discrepancy is that state and local law enforcement agencies aren’t required to report them to the Uniform Crime Reporting program, which the FBI relies on for its data.

“We still get statistics from the FBI where all these major jurisdictions don’t report any hate crimes,” Curt Decker said. “I mean, Jacksonville, Florida? Miami? Zero hate crimes? We are constantly going back to these jurisdictions and saying, ‘Really? A major city didn’t have hate crimes against anybody?’ That’s pretty hard to believe.”

“For a long time, people with disabilities have been invisible when it comes to reporting about crime,” said Kim Brittenham, co-chair of the Violence & Abuse Subcommittee of the National Council on Independent Living. “The national crime victim surveys include people with disabilities but doesn’t include people with disabilities

who are in group homes or living in institutions or hospitals. So, while the number of victims of violent crimes is much greater for people with disabilities, still, a lot of people with disabilities are largely invisible in the statistics.”

In January, after a year-long investigation, National Public Radio revealed in a seven-part series that women and men with intellectual disabilities are seven times more likely to be sexually assaulted than non-disabled people.

Dar Dobroslavic’s son was one of them, and she refuses to be silent about it.

Behavioral issues had always been part of his disability, but at 19, they went through the roof. After outings, he’d sometimes become violent when it was time to go home. At home, he’d come out of the bathroom swinging. And it kept getting worse.

“It was a runaway train at that point,” said Dobroslavic of Tucson, Arizona. “We couldn’t read the signs.”

Then one night in 2002, her son pulled a knife on one of his caregivers and chased him out of the house. Four years later, he finally revealed that this caregiver had molested and raped him. By then the perpetrator was long gone.

Devastated, Dobroslavic reported the crimes, but too much time had passed, the detective told her. There was no proof, and her son had trouble talking about details.

Crimes against disabled people go unreported for many reasons. Some may not understand or have words for what’s happened to them. Or they’ve been threatened. Or they’ve had negative interactions with law enforcement or the justice system, and have no faith in the process. That can be especially true for people of color. Victims may fear retaliation, particularly if their perpetrators are caregivers or family members they rely upon for assistance. Or, reporting is impossible because they’re chained to a boiler in a dark, dank Philadelphia basement.

This was among atrocities discovered in the “Tacony Dungeon Case,” a crime ring uncovered in 2011 that kidnapped mentally disabled people and held them captive to steal their Social Security checks. For 10 years, the perpetrators isolated, confined, tortured, starved, drugged, stabbed, burned and beat their victims with everything from fists to hammers. Some were forced into prostitution. Some died. According to news reports, victims were so terrified they begged not to be set free for fear of being punished. The ringleader pled guilty to 196 federal counts, including hate crimes, and was sentenced to life in prison plus 80 years.

The “Tacony Dungeon Case” was a crime ring that preyed upon mentally disabled people.

Here are some sites for learning more about disability issues and politics from writers, activists, bloggers and podcasters at the forefront of the disability movement:

David M. Perry is a columnist for the *Pacific Standard* and a freelance journalist focused on disability, parenting, history and education.

[thismess.net](http://thismess.net)

Vilissa Thompson's Ramp Your Voice! is a self-advocacy and empowerment site for people with disabilities.

[rampyourvoice.com](http://rampyourvoice.com)

Lydia X.Z. Brown, an autistic disability rights activist, runs the site Autistic Hoya.

[autistichoya.com](http://autistichoya.com)

Alice Wong's Disability Visibility Project is dedicated to recording, amplifying and sharing disability media and culture.

[disabilityvisibility-project.com](http://disabilityvisibility-project.com)

Disabled Writers is a database of writers, public speakers, advocates and experts on a wide range of disability issues.

[disabledwriters.com](http://disabledwriters.com)

“If somebody takes you as ‘less than’ or ‘subhuman,’ they are not going to take your quality of life and what happened to you as seriously as somebody they deem ‘worthy.’”

Victims also stay silent for fear no one will believe them. No one believed Nancy Jensen when she sounded the alarm about the Kaufman House, a group home for people with mental illnesses in Newton, Kansas, where she spent a year in the late 1980s.

When she moved in, a resident warned her about Arlan Kaufman. “Don’t make him mad, he’ll make you naked,” Jensen recalled from her home in Wichita, Kansas. It didn’t take long to find out what that resident meant. Due to some infraction, Kaufman took away Jensen’s clothes and locked her in a room with boarded up windows, with limited access to a bathroom and nothing to sleep on but a filthy, orange shag carpet.

“I got put in seclusion three or four times,” she said, “one time for three weeks.”

Jensen tried several times to report what was happening in that house. No one took her seriously.

After she left, the abuse continued for another 18 years. Arlan and Linda Kaufman were indicted in 2004. Residents told of being forced to perform labor in the nude, of how Arlan had used a stun gun on one resident’s testicles and had urged them to masturbate and urinate in front of each other, as well as perform sex acts, some of which were videotaped. The Kaufmans were convicted in 2005 of 30 federal charges. Jensen was among those testifying, and later co-authored the book, *The Girl Who Cried Wolf*.

Eight years after Jennifer Daugherty never came home from her trip to Greensburg, it’s still not over for her family. Although all six

killers were convicted, her family has had to sit through appeal after appeal after appeal. One of the death penalty cases was overturned, so they’ll be back in court in July. They dread it; they’re exhausted. It’s like having a lifetime admission to their own horror show.

“You never get a time to heal because there’s always something coming up,” her stepdad said.

Jennifer is home now, her ashes at rest in an urn on a living room shelf. Every morning when he walks by, he tells her good morning. Every night before bed, he tells her goodnight. Not a day goes by she isn’t loved and missed. ▲



IN MEMORY  
*Jennifer Daugherty*  
1980 — 2010



**THINGS FALL APART**

# Amid dissension and discord, arrests and lawsuits, the ascendant racist ‘alt-right’ shows signs of collapse

BY RYAN LENZ

ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX WILLIAMSON

Matthew Heimbach was the youthful face of white nationalism — a character just as comfortable kissing the rings of racist right luminaries as he was touting the glories of a white homeland to violent Golden State Skins, or his ideological brethren abroad.

For many, he was indispensable as the racist “alt-right” sought mainstream prominence in the era of President Trump — an era that has seen the ideologies of hate and extremism move swiftly from the margins to the mainstream. But all that changed in March when, confronted with allegations he was having an affair with his mother-in-law, Heimbach attacked his wife and long-time associate Matthew Parrott, with whom he founded the Traditionalist Worker Party (TWP).

The whole thing was a tawdry affair, even for a movement that has been no stranger to scandal. But in the weeks and months that followed, the racist boy wonder who was dubbed “The Little Führer” quickly lost allies and friends. TWP disbanded and Heimbach, once an ever-present fixture at public alt-right events, went into hiding.

Earlier that month Richard Spencer, head of the white nationalist National Policy Institute, visited the Michigan State University campus to deliver a speech — another provocative testament to white nationalism designed to “rustle the jimmies” of liberal students. While attendance was sparse, the scene outside the venue erupted into violent skirmishes.

The violence wasn’t new, and the interest in what Spencer had to say on March 5 was lackluster at best. A week later, Spencer announced he would stop giving speeches altogether.

“They aren’t fun,” Spencer said in a video announcing the cancellations. “Until the situation changes, we are up a creek without a paddle.”

While Spencer was characterizing the state of the racist “alt-right” following dozens of appearances marked by violence that rocked college campuses nationwide — a dynamic that had been developing for more than a year as anti-fascist protesters and alt-right extremists engaged in violent skirmishes — Spencer’s assessment had far-reaching implications.

In fact, since the fatal “Unite the Right” rally last August — an event organized by white nationalist Jason Kessler — the alt-right has been afflicted with widespread problems. There were financial difficulties as big tech began cracking down on the alt-right’s use of online platforms. Numerous influential figures have abandoned the movement, sometimes after their identities have been revealed through dozens of high-profile doxxings. There have been several arrests stemming from Unite the Right, including those who participated in a brutal attack on DeAndre Harris in a parking garage during the rally. Perhaps most damaging, a lawsuit filed against Spencer, Kessler and many others for their roles organizing the rally.

For any observer, the irony is apparent: A rally intended to show the world that white nationalists could unite in the public square now stands as a testament to the violent nature of the alt-right — a movement built on contrarianism and conflict. What’s more, the rally seems to represent a zenith in the rise of the alt-right, and the beginning of a shift.

Not quite two years after declaring victory with the election of President Trump, racist extremists determined to capitalize on the Trump era seem hobbled.

In short, situations are strained as the movement divides between those dedicated to street action and others who worry that high-profile confrontations will damage the movement’s image, not to mention put extremist activists in legal and financial peril.

But determining what that means for the coming months and years, especially as the country prepares for mid-term elections, is a difficult task. Will the movement again find common cause in the face of adversity? Can it overcome the legal obstacles it faces after Charlottesville? Will new leaders stand up to guide the movement as old ones disappear and defect? Will the danger posed by the alt-right diminish as leaders fall? And finally, is this a beginning of something new, or simply the end?

A rally intended to show the world

that white nationalists could unite  
in the public square

### The Racists Have No Clothes

While Heimbach's difficulties are among the most visible in the expansive ecosystem of alt-right characters who have risen to prominence alongside a global surge of populist nationalism, his problems are but a drop in a sea of turmoil. There are many more organizations and individuals who, after Charlottesville, have struggled to stay active in the alt-right.

Nathan Damigo, who founded the white nationalist Identity Evropa, handed over the reins of the group, which has stayed afloat under the leadership of Patrick Casey. Citing personal problems, Damigo announced a complete departure from politics. The group since has been embroiled in continuous debate over a way forward.

Others have departed the movement for different reasons, perhaps none so prominently as Kyle Bristow, an attorney who ran the Foundation for the Marketplace of Ideas (FMI), a collective of lawyers working to defend the constitutionality of white nationalism.

statements I mostly made over a decade ago while I was in college and a prominent and staunchly conservative activist," Bristow wrote in a letter to the *Detroit Free Press*. "In light of the recent relentless and unjustifiable vilification of me, as well as the mischaracterizations of who I am as a person, I have unilaterally made the decision to provide the clarification and to withdraw from politics."

Shortly afterward, FMI's website went dormant, though Bristow has continued to represent white nationalists in legal proceedings.

But not all of the departures from the alt-right have been as graceful, or as voluntary.

Eli Mosley, whose real name is Elliott Kline, rose quickly to become a leading figure on the racist alt-



The racist right has struggled to find its way after the violent and deadly rally in Charlottesville. Pictured, from left: Patrick Casey, Jared Taylor, Richard Spencer and Brad Griffin.

Bristow is more than a lawyer, though. As a student in the early 2000s, he burst into public view at Michigan State University where his racist activism drew national headlines. He frequently attacked immigrants and the LGBT community as an undergraduate. He planned a "Catch an Illegal Immigrant Day," which was later canceled. He led a "straight power" rally in front of the Lansing City Hall to protest a proposed 2006 law to protect gay men, lesbians and bisexual people against bias based on sexual orientation. And later, while in law school, Bristow dabbled in violent hate fiction, including the novel *White Apocalypse* which depicted a race war.

What prompted Bristow's departure from the alt-right remains unclear, especially given his full-throated assessment of President Trump's election as a turning point in the mainstreaming of white nationalism. But it was unmistakable.

"In recent weeks, journalists have published horrifically disparaging articles about me which contain acerbic, offensive, juvenile and regrettable

right last year when he helped Kessler organize the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville. By August, he had taken over leadership of Identity Evropa, the white nationalist group known for papering college campuses across the nation with racist fliers.

Yet contrary to his passion for the cause, truth is stranger than fiction.

In February *The New York Times* revealed Kline's claims that many like him in the alt-right were veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were revealed to be lies. While Kline had served for six years in the Pennsylvania National Guard, he had

now stands as a testament  
to the violent nature of the alt-right.

The tragic fact remains that,  
even if the alt-right falls apart completely,  
violence associated with the radical right ideas  
will likely continue.

never deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, the *Times* reported. His service was a lie. His valor, stolen.

And how could Christopher Cantwell's Waterloo be forgotten? The creator of the viciously antisemitic podcast "Radical Agenda" known mockingly online as "The Crying Nazi," and the protagonist of *Vice's* documentary on the Charlottesville protest, made the shocking claim in March that he was a federal informant. Cantwell made the announcement in a conversation with Andrew Auernheimer, a notorious neo-Nazi hacker who uses the alias "weev," and in a subsequent blog post on his personal website.

"The feds are our only hope for a lawful remedy," Cantwell wrote. "And I intend to cooperate fully with any effort to bring these criminals to justice."

### Online Struggles

The division, defection and infighting playing out in the real world of the alt-right reflects a larger existential struggle the movement faces online, where it began.

After Charlottesville, Silicon Valley responded, pushing extremist sites off the web and deleting PayPal accounts in what the movement quickly identified as its greatest threat: denial of access to the internet's expansive social media platforms, also known as "deplatforming." That response continued in the opening months of 2018, most surprisingly with the slow demise of the internet's oldest and most notorious forum for hate, Stormfront.

The first signs came on April 6, when Stormfront founder and former Klansman Don Black announced the forum would temporarily restrict access to "sustaining members," users who donate at least \$5 a month — and would be archiving and shuttering its main server on April 6 due to a "financial crisis."

The notice wasn't a surprise. Three days earlier, on an episode of Stormfront Radio, Black told his cohost Patrick Slattery, "The [radio] show will continue, but Stormfront the website suffers from a financial shortfall." He continued, "Contrary to rumors that circulate around that say, 'Oh, Don Black could run that website for fifteen dollars a month.' Well, I would welcome anybody to try that. ... We'll be back, I just, I need to reduce expenses, considerably."

A month later, Black's troubles compounded when his Stormfront Radio co-host Freeland "Truck Roy" Dunscombe, and longtime chief of staff James "Jack Boot" Baker abandoned Black to struggle alone with his increasingly Sisyphean endeavor.

Stormfront's troubles remaining online are shared by other sites, too. Daily Stormer, the once-powerful successor to Stormfront, has bounced across domains as web hosts after Charlottesville have grown increasingly unwilling to host racist content.

Domain registrar GoDaddy in May, for example, pulled the plug on AltRight.com, giving Spencer 48 hours to find a new home. While often citing freedom of expression in allowing sites like Spencer's to use their services, GoDaddy said the site had crossed a line.

"In instances where a site goes beyond the mere exercise of these freedoms, however, and crosses over to promoting, encouraging, or otherwise engaging in specific acts of violence against any person, we will take action," the company said in a statement to *The Daily Beast*. "It is our determination that alright.com crossed the line and encouraged and promoted violence in a direct and threatening manner."

What's more, websites that helped the alt-right fundraise have dissolved. GoyFundMe.com and WeSearchr are down, and Hateon has not accepted pledges since February. WeSearchr, the crowd-sourcing platform founded by far-right trolls Chuck Johnson and Pax Dixon, went dark after Johnson failed to pay hosting fees. Johnson and Dixon have since parted ways, but not before helping the movement considerably. Andrew Anglin, who runs Daily Stormer, raised more than \$150,000 on the site to fund his defense against a Southern Poverty Law Center lawsuit.

And just as surely as alt-right sites continue to pop up, they go down in a 21st century game of cyber whack-a-mole. But some have refused to go away quietly.

In February, Jared Taylor, the founder of the infamous white nationalist website American Renaissance, filed a lawsuit in superior court in San Francisco. Conspiracy theorist and male

supremacist Mike Cernovich, who was banned from the publishing platform Medium in February along with Jack Posobiec and others, has said he plans to file a lawsuit to protest his ban.

### Obstacles to the Vision

The division plaguing the movement has been coming for some time.

Matthew Parrott, who co-founded TWP with Heimbach, noted that problems may have begun when Anglin, who he cited as the “movement’s foremost polemicist,” turned on other alt-right organizations he deemed “obstacles to his vision,” especially those tarnished for their involvement in Charlottesville, where one woman was killed by a Vanguard America sympathizer.

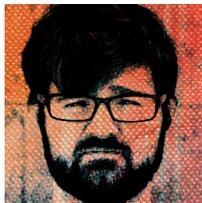
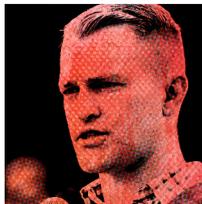
While evidence shows clear lines of division and signs of collapse across the alt-right, the forces that have always driven the radical right in America — immigration, predictions that whites will be a minority in the coming decades and now, the stamp of presidential approval for fringe ideas coming from the White House — are not falling away with the movement’s troubles.

The fact remains that the alt-right — even before it adopted the moniker — was always violent. Throughout Obama’s presidency, extremists motivated by far-right ideologies either plotted or carried out acts of domestic terrorism every 34 days, the *Intelligence Report* documented. The majority of those attacks were associated with lone wolf extremists — what FBI director Christopher Wray told Congress in May was the bureau’s “highest counterterrorism priority at the moment.” Wray said the agency has more than 1,000 investigations into suspected lone wolf actors in all 50 states.

Extremists who now call themselves members of the alt-right are killing people, too. Earlier this year, the *Report* found the alt-right had influenced alleged perpetrators responsible for killing or injuring more than 100 people since 2014.

The tragic fact remains that, even if the alt-right falls apart completely, violence associated with the radical right ideas will likely continue. That is especially true given the arrival of groups such as Atomwaffen — an underground domestic terrorism organization expressly dedicated to waging a bloody race war.

Against this backdrop, the organizers of last year’s deadly rally in Charlottesville plan to hold a second rally this August, with plans to hold



Defection and infighting have plagued the movement over the last year, both online and in the real world. Pictured, from top: Nathan Damigo, Jason Kessler, Don Black, Chuck Johnson and Andrew “weev” Aurenheimer.

events in Charlottesville and in Washington, D.C. In June, the National Park Service gave Kessler initial approval to hold a rally just steps from the White House, but he had yet to receive a permit as of publication.

Still, it is unknown how many participants from last year’s rally will attend, if any.

Spencer and Brad Griffin, who runs the white nationalist website Occidental Dissent, told *Newsweek* earlier this year that neither would attend. Michael Hill, president of the neo-Confederate League of the South, told Raw Story that the League didn’t have anything to gain by going back.

Their decision echoes concerns voiced by Peinovich, who has expressed extreme reluctance to revisit another Unite the Right rally. He blamed the fatal outcome of last year’s rally on “Antifa thugs,” with no mention of James Fields, who faces charges of second-degree murder in the death of Heather Heyer, a 32-year-old paralegal from Charlottesville.

“I have no plans to attend this rally, nor am I involved in any of the planning. I was not involved in the planning of the last event, either, just an invited speaker. After the unfortunate events and the violent attacks we suffered, I am reluctant to return to Charlottesville,” he told *Newsweek*. “I hope the event, if it happens, is peaceful and that Antifa thugs do not disrupt it with violence as they did the last one.”

In March, the host of the radio show the “Daily Shoah” aired his frustrations with the hard-right vanguard and offered a dire read of the situation — and maybe some tough love for himself and others on the alt-right.

“We definitely put ourselves off in this ghetto where we are now this thing [sic], and we burned any bridges that we had to the wider right,” Peinovich said. “And we’re going to have to spend some time rebuilding that.” ▲

The City of Charlottesville has a special section on its website with strategies for personal and community resilience when coping with events such as Unite the Right. For more information, please visit [www.charlottesville.org](http://www.charlottesville.org) and look for #ResilientCville.

# Schools Out



Richard Spencer took universities, protesters by storm; they adjusted and brought his speaking tour to an end

BY BRETT BARROQUERE

The white nationalists marched across the campus in crisp, white dress shirts and khakis or decked out in all black Dickies and boots, headed under an overcast sky toward protesters clad in a variety of outfits and masks, carrying signs.

Nearby, police in riot gear watched warily and waited for the conflict to start.

The scene, as it played out March 5 at Michigan State University in East Lansing, looked a lot like what happened publicly at other colleges when racist “alt-right” front man Richard Spencer chose to speak on their campus.

It was another chapter in the alt-right campus playbook, which brought

the potential for violence, protests and an internal scramble by university officials to create other events or minimize student exposure to Spencer and his followers when they descend upon a school.

But universities are making adjustments in how they respond to the requests, much to the chagrin of Spencer and other alt-right figures, who have started to scale back school talks.

#### Long-time target

College campuses have been a target for decades among white nationalists, racists and white supremacists, because the schools are seen as liberal bastions

that either need to be exposed to right-wing ideologies or called out for their political leanings.

Former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke got his start at Free Speech Alley at Louisiana State University in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which he used as a platform to try and start a political career.

It’s also where Duke first came out as a Nazi.

During a Free Speech Alley session in 1969, his sophomore year at the Baton Rouge school, Duke spoke about a “Jewish Communist conspiracy” to control the news. He also said he would bar Jews from appointed

**White nationalist Richard Spencer's speech at the University of Florida, his first in public since the deadly "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, two months earlier, turned violent, with two of his followers facing trial for attempted murder. Since the Florida speech, universities have adjusted to dealing with Spencer and the alt-right. Spencer quietly shut down his college speaking tour on March 12, 2018.**

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Rather than rant and rave, Duke would appear well-dressed and well-spoken in presenting his ideas, however ugly, and always have something factual-sounding to rebut any argument or answer any question from the audience or hecklers.

Duke has since become something of a grandfather or godfather figure to the alt-right, passing along his wisdom and methods to a new generation to tweak and use to some success.

#### **Provocative Strategy**

Duke's political aspirations took more than two decades to take off before flaming out quickly, but now others are employing parts of his strategy while steering clear of the ballot box.

Matthew Heimbach, formerly the head of the Traditionalist Worker Party, made his way around academic settings, speaking in February 2018 at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

Heimbach used public forums to preach about National Socialism, but to little effect. His attempts to glom on to an anti-abortion protest there in February resulted in mockery and the anti-abortion group publicly distancing itself from Heimbach and his cohorts.

Heimbach was arrested in March and charged with battery after a confrontation following an affair worthy of a spot on the Jerry Springer Show. He was involved with the wife of his chief spokesman, who is also the stepfather of Heimbach's wife. TWP has since effectively dissolved and Heimbach has faded from the public eye.

But Spencer and his legion, usually clean-cut and well-dressed, chose to follow a simple strategy for getting onto campuses and getting attention: Request a speaking engagement at a university, then threaten to sue on

First Amendment grounds if the school doesn't meet the demand.

For good measure, Spencer and his booking agent, Cameron Padgett, often choose venues or dates for which an appearance by a white nationalist would be highly controversial. At Texas A&M, the pair sought to use a hall named to honor World War I and World War II veterans. At Kent State University in Ohio, they requested to speak on May 4 — on what would have been the 48th anniversary of the shooting deaths of four students perpetrated by the Ohio National Guard.

Universities have generally agreed to settlements with Spencer, which involve paying some legal fees — \$27,000 at Michigan State — and providing security for the event.

Settling the lawsuits and scheduling Spencer to speak on campus, however, tends to be the beginning of problems for the targeted universities, not the end.

A review of documents from two universities where Spencer has spoken — Texas A&M and the University of Florida — show that once the appearance is announced, the real work for the schools begins.

Interoffice memos, along with phone calls and emails from concerned students and alumni create a landslide of chaos for universities trying to deal with suddenly being in the spotlight because a racist has picked their campus.

At other schools where Spencer either spoke or sought to hold an event, schools went into overdrive to deal with security and the response from students, alumni, and the community to the idea of a white nationalist taking the stage on campus.

At both Florida and Texas A&M, the school administrations dealt with a plethora of emails from angry, upset and outraged alumni and students.

positions in the government and hoped to eliminate the "negative" influence of Jewish culture.

"I am a National Socialist," Duke told the crowd of students. "You can call me a Nazi if you want to."

Duke would continue to use the campus as a recruiting ground for his white supremacist activities for years to come, including several appearances during his political ascension in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

It is also where Duke learned a valuable lesson: Ku Klux Klan sheets and Nazi uniforms may be provocative, but the best way to get an audience's attention is to confound them.

**Richard Spencer (top) and his supporters clashed with Virginia State Police in Emancipation Park after the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, on Aug. 12, 2017. Georgia State University student Cameron Padgett (below) served as the college tour organizer for Spencer.**



“I am sure my Dad class of 44 who fought during WWII for all our freedoms would agree that this person does have freedom of speech but not in a building dedicated to the alumni who died in World War I and World War II,” wrote Bill H. Bailey of Reading, Pennsylvania, a member of the Texas A&M class of 1975.

Others were more direct.

“Cancel the contract, let Richard Spencer sue,” wrote 1995 Texas A&M graduate Brian Smits. “Every dollar spent fighting him in court is a far better outcome than allowing his speech on campus. Any sane judge would award \$1 in damages.”

At Florida and Texas A&M, university administrators set out to organize counter-rallies, large gatherings of students with messages of inclusion. The University of Florida even invited one-time Gator quarterback and Heisman Trophy winner Tim Tebow, but couldn’t get him due to his television commitments. Texas A&M spent about \$299,000 — or nearly \$100,000 an hour — for a three-hour long “Aggies United” rally featuring musical acts and feel-good speakers at Kyle Field, the university’s football stadium.

### Counter-strategies

The initial campus speeches in 2016 drew decent-sized crowds, along with huge protests, as the curiosity about Spencer and what he had to say remained high. Spencer, in a March Twitter video, acknowledged as much.

“The idea of a college tour is going into the belly of the beast. It’s going into totally academic Marxist controlled territory and giving a speech that introduces the basic ideas of identitarianism and the alt-right, to interface with students, and to present ourselves, to a degree, as a kind of curiosity,” Spencer said.

But universities started to deal with

Spencer by trying to deprive him of a student audience. No audience on campus, no curiosity factor drawing students to him.

After Spencer’s speech in College Station, Texas A&M rewrote the rules to now bar speakers not sponsored by a university group from using school facilities. Any speaker can still use the open areas of campus.

Michigan State and the University of Cincinnati took a different approach.

Both scheduled Spencer to speak during spring break for students, minimizing the exposure and risk to much of the student body.

The idea appeared to be an attempt to deprive Spencer of a ready-made audience on campus.

The tickets weren’t just a hard sell. It was more like impossible.

Spencer supporters were reduced to trying to give tickets away at a mall near the university. Few students (outside those protesting) were on campus on March 5, leaving Spencer primarily with an audience of people who made the choice to travel to the university to see him and were willing to wade through a police escort and protesters to get in.

Ultimately, only about a dozen people showed up to go inside the pavilion, which had recently hosted a water conference and a rabbit show, to hear Spencer give a slightly more militant version of his usual stump speech.

### Despite Precautions, Violence Erupts

Universities have spent — and spent big — on security when Spencer makes an appearance on campus.



Texas A&M dropped \$20,000 on law enforcement — from four different police and sheriff’s departments — to handle the Spencer event, the Aggies United rally, protests and traffic control.

That speech went off fairly clean, with mostly noisy protests and only a couple of arrests.

Not everything proved easy at other universities, however, where violence and arrests erupted.

The infamous “Unite The Right” rally in August 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia — home to the University of Virginia — wasn’t a Richard Spencer speech on campus per se, but he did attend. The rally devolved into a series of fights, riots, and, before the weekend was over, the death of 32-year-old Heather Heyer, a counter-protester who was struck and killed by a car driven into the crowd.

After Spencer spoke at the University of Florida in Gainesville, three people were arrested and charged with attempted murder. The trio, brothers William and Colton Fears, and a friend, Tyler Tenbrink, pleaded not

**Matthew Heimbach (top), then the leader of the neo-Nazi Traditionalist Worker Party, takes part in a brawl outside of Richard Spencer's speech at Michigan State University. The speech turned out to be Spencer's final one on his ill-received college tour. Spencer and attorney Kyle Bristow (below) were once thick as thieves.**



guilty. Charges were dropped against William Fear, but Colton and Tenbrink are awaiting trial.

At Michigan State, campus police were joined by officers from the Ingham County Sheriff's Office, Michigan State Police, East Lansing and Lansing police departments. Despite that police presence, a rowdy group of protesters awaited outside the Michigan State agricultural pavilion as a group, including Heimbach and members of the Traditionalist Worker Party, and Gregory Conte, a Spencer ally and operations director for Spencer's National Policy Institute.

Heimbach later reposted a TWP comment on the alt-right social media sight Gab:

"Our speaker spoke at 'your' campus. We picked your best fighters up and threw them around like rag dolls until the police stepped in to protect y'all, and we even captured your flag, faggots," TWP wrote.

More than two dozen people — primarily protesters and about a half-dozen Spencer backers — were arrested on a variety of charges that day.

### Spencer Out

Kyle Bristow, of Clinton Township, Michigan, had served as the attorney

and legal muscle behind the challenges to the universities

where Spencer sought to speak. But on the eve of the Michigan State speech, Bristow publicly walked away from Spencer, the alt-right, politics and the white rights law firm Foundation for the Marketplace of Ideas — which he once called the "sword and the shield" of the alt-right. Bristow deleted his Twitter account and skipped Spencer's speech.

Spencer, who can be a somewhat divisive figure on the alt-right, posted a video on Twitter in March, laying the blame for the end of the college tour on antifa activists as well as the political

*College campuses are clearly on the front-line of the battle against multiculturalism. They are targeted by the racist "alt-right" for a simple reason: They embrace diversity, tolerance and social justice. They strive for equality and have created safe spaces for students of every gender and identity. College campuses are home to the highest ideals of human rights.*

*These values are soft targets for the alt-right. College students are curious and receptive to new, even radical, ideas. And universities, by definition, welcome free speech and philosophies of every stripe. Publicly funded schools, in fact, may not prohibit free speech.*

*It's an opportunity the alt-right and other extremists are enthusiastically exploiting to attack egalitarian values and recruit students to their cause.*

*For more information on what you can do if the alt-right comes to a campus near you, visit [www.splcenter.org/alt-right-on-campus](http://www.splcenter.org/alt-right-on-campus).*

climate following the "Unite The Right" rally in Charlottesville.

"There were many things about Charlottesville that were very trying. There were some things that were just simply terrible," Spencer said. "And even those trying things can be good: standing in the face of oppression, police oppression, the oppression of free speech and free assembly."

News of the end of the college tour brought celebrations from groups like "Stop Spencer at Michigan State."

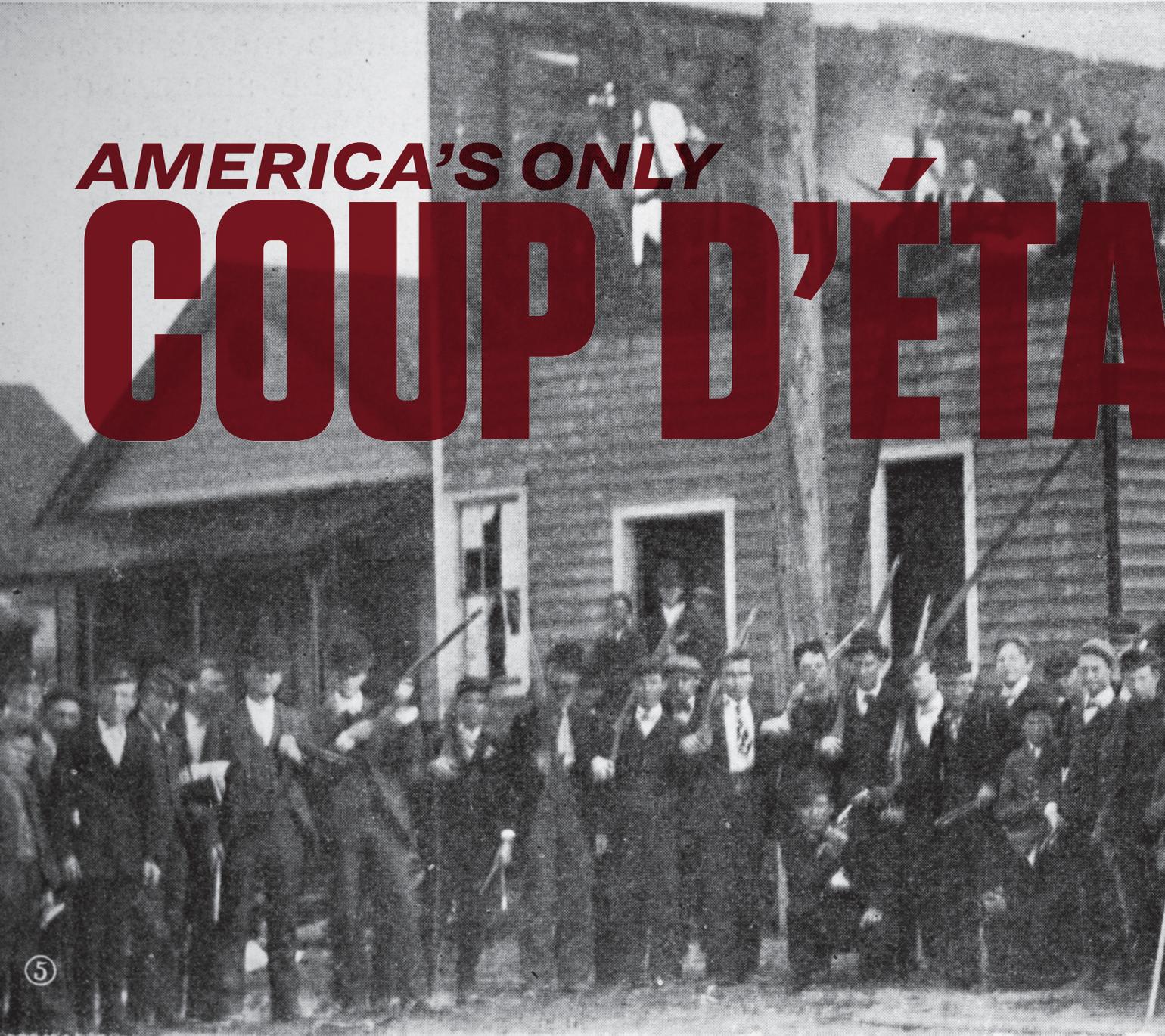
"This is a huge win!!!! We are powerful and can out-organize the fascists!!!! We showed what our community stands for," the group posted on Facebook. "Let's keep building for the world we want, against white supremacy and all forms of domination."

It also brought out the knives on the alt-right. Spencer became a conversation point on the alt-right social media platform Gab in the days after his announcement. While a few applauded his plan to rethink the tour, some, such as writer and Gab user Matt Forney, expressed harsh feelings.

"Richard Spencer admits that his college tour has been a massive, costly failure and that he's calling off any future engagements. Heckuva job, Dickie," Forney wrote.

For his part, Spencer doesn't seem to be going anywhere anytime soon. In his Twitter video, Spencer referred to a "course correction" with regard to any future public appearances. But, he pointedly did not rule out future college speaking engagements.

"We always need to take a step back and think, and ask ourselves honestly, is this the right direction?" Spencer said. Until that new direction is determined, universities and other public forums can't rest easy. ▲



**AMERICA'S ONLY**  
**COUP D'ÉTAT**

*North Carolina honors an elected black government that was violently overthrown by racist whites 120 years ago*

**BY MOLLY McCLUSKEY**



**T** WILMINGTON, N.C. — When the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Advisory Committee voted to approve a new highway marker, they were faced with a herculean task: how to summarize one of the most catastrophic events in American history in a few lines of text. The necessary brevity of the statement, 12 lines comprised of 34 spaces each, seems hardly adequate to summarize a massacre led by white supremacists against the African American residents of Wilmington, North Carolina, in 1898 — the only time a successful coup has taken place on American soil.

As is often the case when trying to encapsulate history, interpretations of the armed assault led by Confederate soldier and former U.S. congressman Colonel Alfred Moore Waddell against prominent African American businesses in Wilmington vary depending on the telling. Therein lies the challenge in memorializing it on a highway marker.

“Armed white mob met, Nov. 10, 1898, at armory here, marched blocks and burned office of *Daily Record*, black-owned newspaper,” reads the latest draft of the text. “Violence left untold numbers of African Americans dead. Led to overthrow of city government & installation of coup leader as mayor. Was part of a statewide political campaign based on calls for white supremacy and the exploitation of racial tensions.”

It tells a story, but not the entire story. The events of November 10, 1898 involved hundreds of white men taking to the streets to reclaim the city from the “clutches of Negro domination.” In an armed mob, they marched to the office of the African American newspaper, *The Daily Record*, and burned it to the ground. They then stormed Wilmington’s predominantly black neighborhood, and opened fire.

By the end of the day, many were dead, many had fled, and the culprits were left to tell the tale.

(Previous page) Men gather outside the charred remains of *The Daily Record* after the 1898 massacre.



## The White Man's Ticket

In 1896, 87 percent of eligible male black voters participated in the local election, which directly led to a number of African Americans being elected to office, and one of the first mixed-race municipal governments in the United States. Ahead of the November 8, 1898 elections, however, white supremacists openly encouraged people to “vote race, not politics” and ran campaign ads on the “White Man’s Ticket” with supported candidates in each district.

In the months leading up to the elections, one of the local papers, *The Wilmington Messenger*, repeatedly ran articles about real and imagined conflicts between the black and white residents. These articles followed a familiar narrative; that the quality of life of whites in Wilmington was being threatened by African American citizens, and/or that whites could retaliate with impunity.

“Negro Killed at Hamlet,” one headline screamed. “He insulted and assaulted a well-known white man who wore a red shirt,” was the subhead.

“News was received here yesterday of an incident which occurred in Hamlet Wednesday evening, which is but another illustration of the insolence engendered among negroes by the present Republican-negro regime ...”

Central to this theme was the idea that the black men in town posed a sexual risk to white women, and it was the responsibility of white men to protect them. On August 18, 1898, Alex Manly, the editor-in-chief of *The Daily Record*, published an editorial that railed against that hyperbole. “If the papers and speakers of the other race would condemn the commission of crime because it is crime and not try to make it appear that the Negroes were the only criminals,” Manly wrote, “they would find their strongest allies in the intelligent Negroes themselves; and together the whites and blacks would root the evil out of both races.”

Manly went on to say that white women fall for black men just as white men fall for black women, and that’s simply how it goes. However rational his argument, it was, at the time, sufficiently incendiary for the white supremacists.

But it was this line that truly set them ablaze: “We suggest that the whites guard their women more closely,” Manly wrote, “... thus giving no opportunity for the human fiend be he white or black. You leave your goods out of doors and then complain because they are taken away.”

In the ensuing months, it would be this editorial to which Waddell and his ilk would return, time and time again. They would use the myth of needing to protect the purity of white womanhood, and their outrage that Manly would dare use *The Daily Record* to challenge them in such a way, to rouse the rabble.

On October 24, Waddell made a vigorous speech at the town’s Thalian Hall, in which he declared that he and his brothers “... wrote with their swords from Bethel to Bentonville the most heroic chapter in American annals and ourselves are men who, inspired by these memories intend to preserve at the cost of our lives if necessary the heritage that is ours.

“Let them understand once and for all that we will have no more of the intolerable conditions under which we live. We are resolved to change them, if we have to choke the current of the Cape Fear with carcasses,” he proclaimed. “Negro domination shall henceforth be only a shameful memory to us and an everlasting warning to those who shall ever again seek to revive it.” The speech was run the following day in the local newspaper, *The Wilmington Messenger*.

White supremacist Democrats continued to stoke tension in the days leading up to the election, urging their compatriots to end the control of the Populist-Republican coalition, also known as Fusion. Two days after the election, Waddell and his gang stormed the town.

The day after the massacre, the local newspaper *The Morning Star* proclaimed on its front page, “Bloody Conflict with Negroes. White Men Forced to Take Up Arms For the Preservation of Law and Order. Blacks Provoke Trouble.”

When it was all done, Waddell declared himself mayor and replaced with white supremacists the rightfully elected Board of Aldermen, as well as more than 100 police officers, market clerks, health officers, janitors of public buildings, the city clerk, the treasurer, the city attorney and anyone “whose affiliation with the Fusion-negro regime made them obnoxious to the people and the present administration.”

There is no official tally of the number of African Americans killed during the massacre. The North Carolina Office of Archives and History released *The 1898 Wilmington Race Riot Report* in 2006, which asserted, “No official count of dead can be ascertained due to a paucity of records from the coroner’s office, hospital, and churches.” Estimates range from 11 to 250. Hundreds more hid in the woods. The title of the report was problematic: “race riot” is the term Waddell himself used when describing the massacre, although it lacks veracity.

## A Clash of Past and Present

Highway markers are a regular sight in North Carolina, and in Wilmington, they seem to appear every few feet down the city’s main thoroughfares, many of which are also adorned with memorial Confederate statues. Amid the controversy over Confederate monuments, highway markers have

remained largely unscathed, protected by omission from a state law, requiring the approval of the North Carolina Historical Commission before any monument, memorial, plaque or other marker on public property can be removed, relocated or altered. The law was signed in July 2015, just shy of a month after Dylann Roof killed nine African Americans at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

“The markers were successfully separated out, because they’re not monuments. But people think of them that way, unfortunately,” said Ansley Herring Wegner, the administrator of the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker program at the North Carolina Office of Archives and History at the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

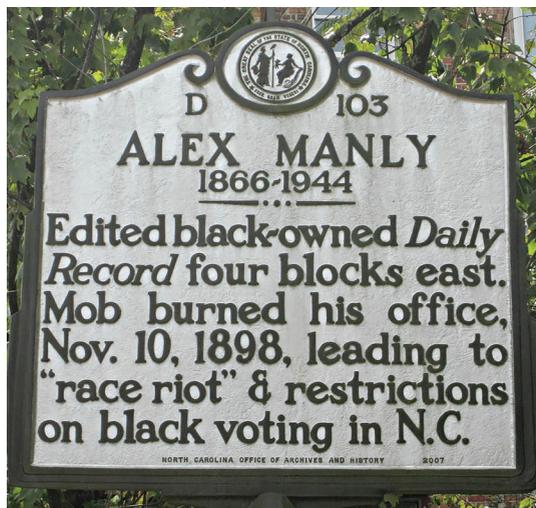
“I try to encourage people not to think about historical markers as monuments. They’re more like labels on the landscape, like a history museum has a label text to point to something and say that’s what this is,” Wegner said. “I don’t want people to think about the markers as monuments, because we’re not making judgment calls on them.”

Unlike in other states, the highway markers program in North Carolina is state-funded; the \$1,700 or so each marker costs to create and install comes from the Department of Transportation budget. Any resident can nominate a topic for a marker; a committee of history professors from around the state meets twice a year to vote on whether the proposed topic rises to the level of statewide importance. When he learned there wasn’t one commemorating 1898, Wilmington resident Rend Smith, a member of Working Narratives, a group that combines social justice and art, drafted a proposal.

The process is coordinated through Wegner’s office in Raleigh, and is typically fairly straightforward. The 1898 marker was expected to be, as well. As part of a standard procedure, Wegner emailed the elected representatives in Wilmington to notify them of a proposal in their district. Representative Deb Butler tweeted out the notice, and Wegner began receiving calls with feedback about the text.

“People didn’t like that we gave an entire line to Waddell. Some other people didn’t like that we said blacks instead of African Americans,” Wegner said. “That was just a space issue. We also originally had Alex Manly in there again, but since he already had a marker, we took his name out, and that gave us room to change the text again.”

One of the largest points of contention in the language was the line, “Violence left up to sixty blacks dead.” Some believe the number is much too high. Others, much too low. The latest draft reads “untold numbers,” which Wegner feels is more appropriate.



A memorial and marker currently in Wilmington.

“Essentially what we’ve been hearing, and it’s absolutely legitimate and I’m glad it came around, is that this has been a long time coming and we want it to be right and respectful,” Wegner said.

Deborah Dicks Maxwell is the branch president of the New Hanover County Chapter of the NAACP, which includes Wilmington. She’s one of the people who objected to the original language of the marker, and felt that 60 was entirely too low.

“We know there was more than 14 because we know no one kept accurate records of black folks back then because no one cared about black folks back then,” she told the *Intelligence Report* in March, sitting in a sunny park outside the main branch of the Wilmington public library where a room devoted to North Carolina history contains archives of the original newspapers from 1898. “There were hundreds of people killed, hundreds more forced to flee Wilmington. Their land was stolen. You go downtown now and you see all these developments, and that’s all land that belonged to the black community.”



Confederate soldier and former U.S. congressman Colonel Alfred Moore Waddell led an armed assault against prominent African American businesses in Wilmington.

Dr. Melton McLaurin is a professor emeritus in the University of North Carolina at Wilmington's history department. He has taught and written about the South and race relations for more than 50 years and thinks the number of dead has been "willfully exaggerated" over the years, and there were generally fewer than the 60 originally proposed for the marker. But, he says the number of actual dead

is not as important as what he sees are the two defining factors of the coup.

"1898 is so terribly important because it clearly said the federal government is not going to protect the rights of African Americans, even if whites use violence against them," McLaurin said. "It was part of an ongoing drive toward disenfranchisement of African Americans in the pre-Jim Crow era. Fear and violence were used to achieve this. And Wilmington signaled that the federal government isn't going help."

As for the size and scope of the massacre, that might never be completely knowable, or agreed upon. "At this point, it's become a legend, powerful and emotionally true," McLaurin said. "But as a historian I can't teach in the classroom what I heard as a legend."

McLaurin was part of the commission that established the 1898 Monument and Memorial Park in downtown Wilmington. Designed by Ayokunle Odeleye, it features six elongated, 16-foot-tall freestanding bronze paddles, and a curved bronze wall in a small park immediately off the highway. It was dedicated on November 8, 2008.

Maxwell thinks the park, like the marker, was a nice start, but there is a long way to go before the events of 1898 are properly addressed. "It's not enough. As far as they're concerned, they built that park and it's a done deal," Maxwell said. "We dropped the ball in Wilmington. We still have a long way to go."

Both McLaurin and Maxwell want to see more education on the events of 1898, and how they helped set in motion a chain of events that still shapes race relations today. And there's clearly a need. When asked, several local high-school and college-aged students said they had never learned of it. One librarian said she had only learned

Wilmington's history when she, a native North Carolinian, moved to Wilmington to study history at the university. She was amazed it wasn't something she had learned in grade school, or in any of the years following.

"This city is beautiful but it has a lot of problems. The past impacts the future. You've got to acknowledge your past," Maxwell said about the lack of education about 1898. "This city had a vibrant African American community, artisans, craftsman, fishermen, shop owners. We're still vibrant but not as much."

A highway marker isn't likely to change that gap in knowledge anytime soon. Nor will all of the highway markers in North Carolina, lined from end to end. Some are far shorter than the long-form one for 1898. The marker for Thalian Hall, for instance, doesn't mention that it was the site of the uprising, or any of the other historical events that occurred there. Nor does the marker for Alex Manly, which was recently knocked down in a traffic accident and is scheduled to be replaced this year. Wegner worries a similar fate will befall the 1898 marker.

"I'm having more and more [markers] vandalized. They're vandalized, or they're stolen for fun, because people want to have them in their home or over a bar," Wegner said. "Or they're stolen or vandalized because people don't like the topics. They're knocked over, they're broken, they're painted on."

Wegner said the DOT has to occasionally break out the sandblaster, like when somebody painted KKK on the Thomas marker in December 2015. Wilmington's Confederate statues, including those in the vicinity of the uprising, have also been vandalized.

On May 22, the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker committee held their bi-annual meeting in Raleigh. Maxwell and Smith attended via conference line from Wilmington to discuss the proposed language, as did Bertha Todd, a member of the 1898 Commission that oversaw the creation of the existing memorial.

Rend said he believed that the phrase "racial tensions" did not adequately reflect the role of the coup as a precursor to the Jim Crow era, and suggested "racial violence" or "racial hatred." The committee settled on "racial prejudice." Maxwell suggested the word "crowd" be changed to "mob" and reminded the committee of the importance of accurate language to Wilmington residents, who will pass the marker daily.

The marker was approved with the amended language. ▲



Charlottesville, the strategy he once personified is the subject of a pained introspection and debate within the alt-right, if not the source of a widening cleave. The optics of an aggressive ground game built around high-profile conflicts with anti-racists and other counter-protesters — once thought the key to recruitment and growth — has not turned out to be the winning strategy Azzmador and others in the movement had promised.

“There’s been a lot of really weird stuff going on in the movement,” Azzmador lamented on a post-Charlottesville episode of his podcast, “The Krypto Report.” “The alt-right got huge during the Trump campaign. Then we had 2017 and things kind of went off the rails.”

It must have been a difficult admission to make. If anyone stood at the center of the year everything “went off the rails,” it was the man known to his legions of fans as “Azz.”

To see what Azzmador’s street strategy looked like a year ago, roll the voluminous tape recorded at Charlottesville. Living up to his reputation, Azzmador led shield-walls into clashes with counter-protesters and initiated loud chants of “The Jews Will Not Replace Us!” He bragged on camera about pepper-spraying “kikes,” and about telling the academic Cornel West to his face that he was a “foul ape for the rope.”

For his alleged role in organizing the rally, at which 30 people were injured and one killed, Azzmador is named among the co-defendants in a civil suit brought last October by several residents of Charlottesville in a Virginia federal court. The suit accuses Azzmador and his fellow organizers, led by Jason Kessler, of conspiracy “to terrorize [the city’s] residents, commit acts of violence, and use the town as a backdrop to showcase for the media and the nation a neo-nationalist agenda.”

The defendants have submitted a motion to dismiss that argues their internet memes and rhetoric about gassing Jews and lynching black people should not, and were never meant to be,

taken seriously. But in a series of leaked chat room logs from Discord, an online messaging service for gamers, Azzmador and other rally organizers write of their readiness to “crack skulls” and “shank ... niggers.” The suit includes sections of the Discord logs in which Azzmador (“defendant Ray”) writes, “I come bare-fisted ... But my guys will be ready with lots of nifty equipment.”

The suit’s allegations against Azzmador find further support in the celebratory letter he read at an afterparty that weekend on behalf of The Daily Stormer’s editor-in-hiding, Andrew Anglin.

“A day is quickly coming when it is we who will be digging graves,” Azzmador says in a leaked recording of the event, a day after a counter-protester was killed. “This is our war! Death to traitors! Death to the enemies of the white race! Hail victory!”

Exhortations to violence with echoes of Nazi ideology are consistent with Azzmador’s self-styled role as The Daily Stormer’s fearless face in physical space. The “Texas Barbaryan” (Azz’s Skype handle) is the coordinator for a national “offline” network of Stormer-affiliated “Book Clubs” and has led his own East Texas affiliate into numer-



ous skirmishes with anti-racists and the media. In a March 2018 Stormer post, he described the Book Clubs as being about “comradeship ... men helping each other, and always having a bully squad to show up when a bully squad is needed.” The Book Clubs’ symbol features flanked maces, studded clubs used in early medieval warfare.

These “bully squads” were originally conceived to be more than just situational

“muscle.” They were launched with the hope that they’d develop into the sharp 50-state edge of a nationwide project to get far-right activists into the streets and making noise. They would show would-be sympathizers that the movement is real, organized and unafraid.

As Azzmador explained on his podcast, “The street battles are symbolic. The important thing is to show that people aren’t afraid to leave their house. We’re coming out. We outnumber the anti-white filth. IRL meet-ups grow our movement by showing we’re here.”

Compared to the two Andrews associated with The Daily Stormer — Andrew Anglin, who founded the website in 2013, and his chief technologist, the former hacker Andrew “weev” Auernheimer — Azzmador is the unknown member of the troika. But while he enjoys the lowest mainstream profile, he has arguably the most energetic cult following. This was visible in the flow of admirers in grey Confederate caps and red MAGA hats that interrupted his livestream in Charlottesville to snap pictures and shake his hand. Others called out, “God bless you, Azzmador! Hail Victory!”

Of those Azzmador interviewed for his livestream that weekend, only David Duke failed to recognize him, betraying the former Klan Grand Wizard’s generational disconnect from the younger cohort that has gathered around The Daily Stormer.

But far from being insulted by Duke’s slight, Azzmador was left gushing — feeling “like a giddy schoolgirl,” in his own words. After their brief encounter,

he turned to the camera and said, “There would be no Azzmador if it wasn’t for that man.”

He explained that his political path to far-right stardom began in 1976 after seeing Duke interviewed on a talk show while watching television with his father. When he heard his father praise Duke, a white nationalist was born. Ray was 10 years old.

In the years before the internet, the young Ray struggled to find outlets for his hate. In an interview with the “Southern AF” podcast, he described how he used to call late-night talk shows on KZEY, a black-owned AM radio station in Tyler, Texas, to pass the night shift while working as a security guard during the 1990s. “I’d call in and think up excuses to say ‘nigger,’ or I’d have a cassette player and play chimp noises at them,” he recalled.

Azzmador still retains his faith in analogue trolling and frequently advocates for its revival. Since local talk radio is mostly dead, he recommends that people participate in online flea markets and swap shops. “Call those and start talking about the blacks or whatever,” he once said. “There are all kinds of ways to troll outside of the internet. One of the oldest forms of anonymous trolling is bathroom graffiti. Go into a gas station with a giant Sharpie and write ‘FUCK NIGGERS’ on the back of a door. It’s probably more effective than people think.”

While engaging in bathroom graffiti, Ray became a familiar face at the Smith County Jail in his hometown of Tyler, Texas. A series of mug shots taken over the last 20 years captures the evolution of his journey from clean-cut to his recent shaggy-biker persona. The litany of charges offers a window into Ray’s pre-internet life: Disorderly conduct, assault, public intoxication, drunk driving (multiple), theft, avoiding arrest and possession of unlicensed and prohibited weapons (likely a switchblade or brass knuckles).

The rise of social media allowed Azzmador to scrawl on thousands of virtual bathroom doors. He set up his first Twitter account in September 2014 and built an online following by aggressively and crudely trolling blacks, Jews

and leftists. When Twitter suspended one account, he started another. When moderators shut that down, he started another. By his count, he’s had 25 Twitter accounts. These days, he’s just as busy on Gab, the alt-right’s alternative social media forum.

As he developed his online trolling strategies, Azzmador began to realize he could be more than just another small-town neo-Nazi scribbling obscenities in Smith County truck stops. He focused on baiting people, then opening up vicious, sustained attacks. Soon he had a reputation as a kind of racist prank caller of the internet age. He reveled in acquiring enemies and taking them on in groups. “I’m really famous for the way I handle leftists and Jews on Twitter,” he bragged on an episode of Sven Longshank’s “Radio Aryan” podcast. “You get up to around 3,000 followers, and the leftists swarm.”

Less than a year after joining Twitter, in summer of 2015, Azzmador started a podcast, “Hidden Mysteries Radio.” The twice-weekly show launched as a promotional vehicle for an online Tyler, Texas-based bookstore owned by his co-host, an older man called “Ghost,” whom Azzmador described as an old friend.

The show veered into far-right politics after Azzmador dedicated an episode to the subject of “The International Jew.” After a positive listener response, he recalibrated “Hidden Mysteries” as a discussion of current events seen through the prism of a coming race war. In a segment from the 2016 New Year’s episode, Azzmador tells of a “patriotic German” who’d recently stabbed a left-wing German politician in the neck. When Ghost inquires hopefully whether he’d also raped the female politician, Azzmador replies, “No. Patriotic Germans are not rape apes. I just wish she’d died.”

As the audience for the show grew alongside his Twitter notoriety, so did the donations. Azzmador bought secondhand studio equipment and began picking the brains of other podcast hosts to learn the arts of sound engineering. Before long, the audio quality of “Hidden Mysteries Radio” was drawing plaudits and favorable comparisons to Red Ice Radio, the new hate-radio standard.

Then everything went to hell.

Ghost, Azzmador’s straight man and co-host, fell into a coma. Azzmador later claimed the sudden absence left him vulnerable to the schemes of Sven Longshanks, operator of Radio Aryan, a competing website that hosted the podcasts of rising alt-right stars Dennis Wise, Matt Heimbach and Grandpa Lampshade.

“My plans to build a world-class studio on the cheap is shattered now,” Azzmador wrote in July 2016. “Radio Aryan killed *Hidden Mysteries Radio*. Thanks Sven, thank you very fucking much.”

His partnership with Sven Longshanks may have sent “Hidden Mysteries” to an early grave, but it also planted the seeds of Azzmador’s second act. His many appearances as a substitute guest host brought him into contact with many of the alt-right figures that would soon coalesce around a young but growing website called The Daily Stormer.

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In 2015, The Daily Stormer’s traffic surpassed Don Black’s Stormfront, making it the country’s leading racist website. Traffic continued to surge throughout 2016, fueled by the candidacy of Donald Trump. In January 2017, Azzmador launched a new podcast, “The Krypto Report,” with co-hosts Big Snout and Caerulus Rex. It was an odd choice for a title, as there was never anything crypto about the politics of Azzmador or The Daily Stormer; both have been openly neo-Nazi from the start.

Azzmador used his new perch at the Stormer to promote several events that served as precursors to Charlottesville.

On June 10, he led a protest at the Sam Houston statue in downtown Houston. Recordings of the event show Azzmador screaming “Cucks!” at passersby and baiting the press. The following week, Azzmador teamed with Vanguard America to lead a gathering outside the State Capitol in Austin. Their “Texas is Ours” event drew activists dressed in matching white for speeches by influential alt-right voices Mike Peinovich, Sacco Vandal, Wooderson and Johnny Monoxide. The group marched in military formation around the capital grounds before heading

to a German restaurant for dinner and a live taping of Peinovich's podcast, "The Daily Shoah." When a young Jewish patron confronted them, Azzmador told him, "We'll be throwing you in an oven." (Activists used social media to identify two members of Azzmador's Book Club as William Williams and Wil Zachary Smith, aka "Dragonarm.")

In his report for The Daily Stormer, Azzmador said the sunny June Saturday in Austin "will go down in history [as] a watershed moment when the real alt-right stepped off the internet and into the real world. No one tried to water down the message or make it more media friendly, which is exactly what the people are starving for."

He concluded, "Expect a hot summer, and I'm not talking about the thermometer!"

Two months later, Azzmador and his crew from East Texas would make the journey to Charlottesville.

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In the immediate aftermath of Charlottesville, Azzmador reflected a movement-wide belief that the rally succeeded. An episode of "Krypto Report" shortly after the event featured Azzmador and Anglin sounding triumphant, optimistic and unified. Following an intro song — "I'm so sick of kikes/I hate them/Let's start the ovens this time, for real" — the panel listed the ways Charlottesville had been a smashing double feat of masterful optics and organizing strategy.

Azzmador then continued to press his strategy by example. On September 11, he and his Book Club showed up at Texas A&M, where Richard Spencer was giving a talk. Police kept Azzmador's bully squad away from counter-protesters, though he would later boast, "We faced down 500 antifa and BLM scum and prevailed."

A few weeks later, Azzmador's crew crashed an Anarchist Bookfair in Houston. It was a short display that Azzmador would later describe as a flash mob. Together with the Houston Goylers and Thomas Rousseau's Patriot Front, the Stormer Book Club was blocked

from entering the building, where they instead lit smoke bombs as Azzmador addressed those inside through a megaphone. Azzmador would later crow, "They were afraid to come out. It was great propaganda."

**"This is our war!  
Death to traitors!  
Death to the enemies  
of the white race!  
Hail victory!"**



Was it? Within the alt-right ranks, including Andrew Anglin, many began doubting the value of street battles, uniformed displays, and other forms of political theater. Discussions grew around the need to "pivot" toward a more recognizably "patriotic" nationalism. Symbolic of this shift, Anglin added an image of George Washington to The Daily Stormer banner. This opened him, as he knew it would, to charges of "civic nationalism," a racially blind American creed in which fealty to race is second to fealty to country. Anglin heatedly denied the charge, on a March episode of the "Krypto Report," telling Azzmador, "We haven't compromised our ideology. The messaging on the site has not changed. This idea that we're promoting civic nationalism, that's nonsense."

On The Stormer, Ben Garland defended the shift in focus — away from uniformed street battles and back toward red-white-and-blue, Middle America-friendly "race realism" — with a series of articles, including a two-part history of "White Racism and American Nationalism." In it, he quotes National Alliance founder William Pierce's 1970 essay, "Prospects for a National Front," in which Pierce warns against "isolating ourselves from the public with programs and images so radical that only a small fraction of one percent will respond."

The alt-right debate over whether

it should retreat back into a world of internet memes and chat rooms is a business decision as much as a political one. Azzmador is among those who now make a living off donations that wax or wane along with the size and momentum of the movement. Though rarely discussed in financial terms, the debate over optics and recruitment is a matter of bread and butter, dollars and sense.

Azzmador is among those undergoing a change of heart. He confessed as much on the March 26 "Krypto Report," which found him sheepishly discussing the future with Daily Stormer colleague Lee Rogers.

"There's been a lot of really weird stuff going on in the movement," said Azzmador. "The past couple of weeks, there has been a schism. It's been a long time coming. The alt-right got huge during the Trump campaign. Then we had 2017 and things kind of went off the rails."

Translation: traffic and donations have slowed way down, and we've been hit with two potentially crippling lawsuits.

His embarrassed tone on the show was a far cry from his bombast and that of others after Charlottesville. Nearly a year later, he is the unlikely voice of moderating reason.

"I'm not against IRL action," said Azzmador. "But I'm against the way it's being done. We show up in weird uniforms and Third Reich imagery. [Anti-fascist] groups go into gear to outnumber you 10 to 1. I'm not an optics cuck, but the thing that had [us] going so well is that it [was] a movement of middle-class whites waking up to the [Jewish Question], sharing memes and backing Trump. Then Charlottesville happened, and [some want to take] a movement on the rise and turn it into this thing that has never worked."

Azzmador, who still promotes the benefits of racist bathroom graffiti, is not disheartened by this retreat from the streets to the shadows and anonymity of the internet. For him, the line between the two has conveniently blurred, if not collapsed altogether.

"For better or worse," he recently told "Krypto Report" listeners, "the internet is the real world." ▲

# THE WRATH OF DON

Nazis show up in the strangest places, and now not even anime conventions are safe.

BY RACHEL JANIK

Once upon a time, there was a hero. This man, this myth, this legend, was brave but eccentric. Sometimes people thought he was crazy or stupid, but he didn't care. He was going to lay it all on the line for the fate of the planet — he was going to save the Earth, and he was going to do it in his own way, no matter how silly he looked. I'm not talking about the Nazi cosplayer pictured — that guy is a jerk.

No, I'm talking about Son Goku, the alien martial artist and protagonist of Japanese animator Akira Toriyama's long-running and highly influential manga and anime franchise *Dragon Ball*. If you're familiar with it, you probably know the anime TV series *Dragon Ball Z*. You or your children might have watched it on Cartoon Network back in the '90s. But regardless of whether or not you have any idea what I'm talking about, you're probably pretty bewildered as to why it's coming up in the *Intelligence Report*. Trust me, I'm as surprised as you are.

According to reports on social media, the man in the Ralph Fiennes-in-Schindler's List cosplay trolled an anime convention in Houston called Anime Matsuri. The convention allegedly failed to intervene promptly as this man harassed con-goers with Nazi salutes. He trolled a Cosplay Dating Game panel, calling himself Otto Skorzeny (an SS lieutenant colonel you've probably never heard of unless you're a history buff or a Nazi fanboy) and participating as one of the contestants. The audience laughed indulgently as they strained to understand the strange, garbled muttering he may have thought was a convincing German accent.

After those warm-up hijinks, little Skorzeny was ready for the main event, his big showcase to establish once and for all the superior creative writing power of the master race. He took over a panel on fanfiction reading that the panelists had backed out of, but that Anime Matsuri staff had failed to remove from the schedule. While the specifics of the story he read may never be fully known, varying reports suggested the Nazi cosplayer wove a tale involving Anne Frank, Hitler, "Holocaust jokes" and *Dragon Ball Z*.

If you've never seen *Dragon Ball Z*, you might assume it somehow relates to World War II or German-occupied Holland, even tangentially, like

that one episode with the Nazi planet in *Star Trek*. You'd be wrong. *Dragon Ball Z*, a popular anime television series in Toriyama's wider *Dragon Ball* franchise, follows Goku as he and his allies have drawn-out martial arts fights against a series of silly, but often genocidal villains who threaten the existence of Earth. As a member of a race of alien warriors called Saiyans, Goku has the ability to transform into a "Super Saiyan" when he is angry enough in battle. Why am I telling you this? Because according to a con attendee who claims to have heard the story our Nazi spun, Goku fought Adolf Hitler, and Hitler went Super Saiyan. (A side-note: the normally black-haired Saiyans turn blonde-haired and blue-eyed when they transform into Super Saiyans, so in this unwanted contribution to the growing body of misguided American fanfiction, Hitler finally embodies the Aryan physical features he so famously prized.)

From the beginning, references to anime and geek culture have been part of the racist "alt-right" lexicon. The Nazi/*DBZ* enthusiast who embarrassed himself in Houston may be a wrongheaded but ultimately harmless troll, or he could be a malignant racist who has been convinced by many hours spent on 4chan that elaborate and meaningless pranks like this are worth his time. If he was a true believer out to champion the white race, he chose a strange audience when he brought his antics to a convention full of people dedicated to celebrating Japanese pop culture.

Who was it who said, "If you want to win a race war, make a mockery of yourself in front of a small, unrelated subculture, and be sure the pics live on the internet forever"? Sun Tzu, probably.

In Toriyama's story, the heroes can use the seven "Dragon Balls," to summon a dragon called Shenron, who grants them a wish. If I were the Anime Matsuri Nazi, and I could make a wish, I'd wish to get back all the time I wasted on an idiotic stunt. Just saiyan. ▲

**Goku fought Adolf Hitler, and Hitler went Super Saiyan.**

