

Beyond Hate

White Power and Popular Culture



C. Richard King and David J. Leonard

The Cultural Politics of Media and Popular Culture

BEYOND HATE

The Cultural Politics of Media and Popular Culture

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Washington State University, USA

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ASHGATE

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Chapter 1

Popularizing White Power: A Brief Introduction

In January 1967, George Lincoln Rockwell, founder of the American Nazi Party, spoke at Washington State University. It was one of a series of speeches he delivered in the Pacific Northwest that month, the most recent stop on a seemingly endless tour of college campuses for the demagogue. In his talk and in a conversation with the editorial board of the student newspaper, *The Daily Evergreen*, Rockwell dwelled on three interlaced issues, which he understood to be fundamental problems facing American society: black-white relations, communism, and the Jews. As if updating *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, he linked communism to a broader Jewish conspiracy; while restating the outmoded tenets of the American Colonization Society and Jim Crow, he pledged, if he were President, to repatriate blacks to Africa, and argued that they were inferior in “intelligence and performance” to whites.¹ His preoccupation with these topics would have surprised no one in attendance who was familiar with his worldview or the sociohistorical moment in which he spoke—the height of the Cold War, marked by pronounced anti-communism, especially on the Right, the ongoing struggles over racial equality and inclusion, and the ideological genealogy of the American Nazi Party.

Importantly, Rockwell located many of the dangers posed by each of these questions within popular culture. He was not merely disturbed by the decreasing significance of the color line, particularly as expressed in intimate relations between blacks and whites, but became “enflamed” by a portrait of the then wildly popular Sammy Davis, Jr. and his wife.² Emergent celebrity culture posed the problem: it endorsed interracial sexuality and through the figure of a famous African American performer encouraged the public to approve of it as well. Equally troubling were Jewish artists, intellectuals, and entertainers: Karl Marx and Leo Trotsky, he believed, foisted communism on the world; Gertrude Stein, a “queer Jewish poet,” Allen Ginsburg (who likely fit into the same category for Rockwell), and Pablo Picasso (here marked as a Jew, despite his Catholic baptism) promoted the denigration of Western civilization; and on television, individuals like Ed Sullivan allowed enemies of America like

1 Shreves (1967), Wright (1967).

2 Wright (1967).

Fidel Castro to use the mass media to mislead the public.³ Popular culture was a threat and television in particular endangered white America.

In many respects, his comments that evening in a small southeastern Washington college town echoed the message he rehearsed in his lectures and writings. A few years earlier, at Colorado State University, for example, he told an audience of nine hundred,

You have been brainwashed by the liberals, the peace corps, you must hear both sides of the story. You do not hear both sides, look at the radio and TV—they are completely owned by three companies—ABC, CBS, and NBC. This wouldn't be so bad but these companies are controlled to the man, by Russian Jews.⁴

Repeating these fictions of a Jewish world conspiracy, which he understood to be enabled by their control of popular media, helped Rockwell map the dynamics of power at play in the world, position EuroAmericans as victims, and account for their inaction in response to an urgent existential threat.

In *White Power* (1967: 237), he reiterated this theme:

Our modern generation, soaked in Jewish television, bombarded with Jewish progressive education, lied-to by Jewish newspapers, magazines and movies, poisoned by Jewish “morality”—or rather lack of it—deprived of any real home, family, beliefs and ideals, and finally ruled ruthlessly by Jewish-dominated toady politicians who pass vicious laws enforcing race-mixing with bayonets, has sunk to the point of racial degeneracy which took Rome five centuries to reach. Unless we can find some way to make our White people once more know themselves, realize who they are, what they are, and what the alien races of Jews and Negroes are doing to us, it will be forever too late!

White civilization, according to Rockwell, teetered on the brink: deluded and degraded by popular culture, whites embraced the collapse of racial boundaries and the erasure of their distinctiveness, which threatened to bring about the end of their race and undo its achievements.

Not surprisingly, the racial rhetorics of the “American Hitler” echoed and expanded the entanglements of paranoia, persecution, and power at the heart of his namesake's anti-Semitic account of the world. As Adolf Hitler elaborated in *Mein Kampf*,

By the creation of a press whose content is adapted to the intellectual horizon of the least educated people, the political and trade-union organization finally

3 Shreves (1967).

4 Quoted in Schmaltz (1999: 212).

obtains the agitation institution by which the lowest strata of the nation are made ripe for the most reckless acts. Its function is not to lead people out of the swamp of a base mentality to a higher stage, but to cater to their lowest instincts. Since the masses are as mentally lazy as they are sometimes presumptuous, this is a business as speculative as it is profitable.

It is this press, above all, which wages a positively fanatical and slanderous struggle, tearing down everything which can be regarded as a support of national independence, cultural elevation, and the economic independence of the nation...

Since the Jew is not the attacked but the attacker, not only anyone who attacks passes as his enemy, but also anyone who resists him. But the means with which he seeks to break such reckless but upright souls are not honest warfare, but lies and slander.

Here he stops at nothing, and in his vileness he becomes so gigantic that no one need be surprised if among our people the personification of the devil as the symbol of all evil assumes the living shape of the Jew.⁵

These sentiments, scapegoating Jews and linking evil, power, and popular media, fueled the Nazi political project, laying the foundation for its unrealized Final Solution. Importantly, this racialized vision of the popular imperiling a supreme race (Aryans in Nazi Germany, whites in the contemporary USA) provided the template for subsequent renderings of expressive culture and mass media.

Advocates of white power since Rockwell repeatedly have found popular culture troubling at best, understanding it to be a dangerous front in an ongoing race war. Former Ku Klux Klan (KKK) leaders and now online entrepreneurs of white power Don Black and David Duke both find the media to be biased, dominated by Jews, and ultimately anti-white.⁶ David Lane, a self-described white nationalist and founding member of the Order, has stated in more overt terms that popular culture plays a leading role in an ongoing “white genocide.” Indeed, he identified “Zionist control of the media,” as one of fifteen elements of this active campaign: “multi-racial sports, entertainment, and integration are designed to destroy the senses of uniqueness and value necessary to the survival of our Race.”⁷ The “Jewish-controlled” popular culture industry, among other institutions, has “brainwashed” white women “into believing in the importance

5 Hitler (2001/1925: 323–324).

6 Daniels (1997, 2009), Ferber (1998), Flint (2004), Zeskind (2009).

7 Lane (n.d.: 27).

and dignity of all races of people.”⁸ Worse, in this context, sport coverage poses a dangerous distraction that threatens white men. David Duke, for instance, summarizes the harms of this media complex:

Instead of exercising and becoming strong, engaging in healthy competition, struggle, sacrifice, courage and team spirit, they watch others exercise and become stronger. Ultimately, the choice we have is to actually live our own lives or suffer a twilight existence, living through the victories and defeats of others. The Jew of course is telling us to concentrate on the fiddling while Rome burns ... They are taking advantage of a society they did not build nor fight to defend.⁹

Even though white supremacists, separatists, and nationalists have voiced a common critique of the culture industries, their renderings of popular culture and the media have never been singular or simply dismissive. In fact, the ideological frames of white power have fostered diverse and even competing readings of cultural texts and encouraged increasingly productive uses and understandings of media. For his part, Rockwell, drawing inspiration from the reborn KKK of the early twentieth century and the fascist pageantry of the Nazi, clearly understood the importance of spectacle and media to the promulgation of white power. One might say for a time in the middle 1960s he was iconic because he was an overt racist, arguably the most popular lecturer on college campuses. He wanted more than to establish a cult of personality via mass media. Indeed, he was a transitional figure in appreciating the importance of using the popular to disseminate white power. In addition to more traditional modes, ranging from the standard handbills like the Boat Ticket¹⁰ and periodicals, including the aptly named *White Power*, to countless speeches, interviews with the likes of *Playboy* and Canadian television, and media stunts, such as his Holocaust denial tract *The Diary of Anne Fink*, he tried his hand at transforming his racist ideas into the most popular of popular forms at the time, music, sponsoring a tour of the deep south, dubbed Hatenanny, modeled after the ABC TV show *Hootenanny*, and in response to the Freedom Riders.

Although Rockwell, for all of his infamy and clever orchestration, never established an effective counter-public, he did lay the foundation for later advocates of white power. On this foundation, for instance, David Duke moved the KKK into the television age, skillfully using the media to circulate his racist ideology and advance his personal fortunes. Later, beginning in the 1980s, public access cable channels afforded a new means of communicating with a broader public. White power advocates across the US, most notably in

8 Rogers and Litt (2004: 105).

9 Duke (n.d.).

10 See www.heretical.com/miscella/qlrbtta1.html.

Kansas City, Cincinnati, Austin, and Fullerton, aired Tom Metzger's program "Race and Reason."¹¹ At about the same time, the emergence of punk rock and rising white resentment fostered an entire scene that breathed new life into white supremacist, separatist, and nationalist politics (see Chapter 3). Importantly, the cultural and commercial infrastructure built up around music foreshadowed the electronic networks created on the Internet in the 1990s, when savvy organizers (like Don Black at Stormfront) digitized white power, spawning virtual communities anchored in chat rooms, blogs, podcasts, and social media (see Chapter 9).

We dwell on Rockwell because of his place in the genealogy of white power, his account of popular culture, and his efforts to harness it to convey (however unsuccessfully) his message. In a very real way, he encapsulates and foreshadows the intersections and tensions among popular media/culture and white power. On the one hand, he points to the ways in which white nationalists identified popular culture as a threat to white supremacy, domination, and civilization, imagining popular culture as a Jewish plot against a white future; popular culture has long been seen as an ideological and material enemy to white communities. On the other hand, popular and media culture has been seen as a powerful tool and instrument of recruitment and community building. It was not enough to challenge the teaching of the "Jewish-controlled media", but rather to produce alternative narratives, images, and teachings. Likewise, Rockwell's focus on popular culture highlights the emergence of a new white nationalist movement, one that builds upon their racist forebears in new and profound ways. Contemporary white nationalist organizations, "like such older organizations on the racist right as the Klu Klux Klan and the Nazi Party, seek to foster a sense of white racial pride."¹² Simultaneously, these movements differ from those in the past, in that new white nationalist movements are primarily about "discourse, persuasion and ideas."¹³ In so much as the skinheads of previous generations focused on warfare through murders and vigilante justice, new white nationalism engages in ideological battles through the Internet and talk radio. One needs to look no further than the websites of various organizations to see their near obsession with popular culture, even more so than their interest in policy issues (immigration, affirmative action, multiculturalism).

We begin our discussion of white power and popular culture with Rockwell because our thinking on the subject has taken shape on the campus where he spoke nearly 45 years ago, a campus a short drive from the former Aryan Nation compound in northern Idaho and headquarters in northeastern Washington

11 Harmon (1991), Linder (1999: 11, 24–25).

12 Swain (2002: 3).

13 Ibid.: 4.

where the Order schemed their crime spree to finance an envisioned race war. For us, Rockwell may be dead, killed by a compatriot a little more than six months after speaking at Washington State University (WSU), where we both teach, but his deeper messages of white power, Jewish conspiracies, and black inferiority still reverberate. In 1997, before either of us taught at WSU, a student used the university server to host a website devoted to Holocaust denial.¹⁴ Since the early 2000s, flyers for the National Alliance and others fashioned after Aryan Nation propaganda have been posted on campus, on at least one occasion hung on each of our office doors. Intermittently during this period, students who would demonize white supremacists and disavow the persistence of racism have hosted ghetto-fabulous parties and planned Latino gang theme parties. More recently, students have created groups on Facebook dedicated to white nationalism and established a recognized student group with ties to a white nationalist organization which the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has noted “straddles the line between mainstream and extreme views.”¹⁵ As we drafted the manuscript, our home department received anonymous faxes exemplifying white nationalist readings of history and society. Individually, we also have confronted the entry of white nationalists into our own lives within the mainstream. Leonard’s writing on popular culture and politics has prompted discussions by white nationalists that included references to his Jewishness. Whether in direct emails or online posts, Leonard confronts and is confronted by the white nationalist movement. More recently, Leonard learned that the handyman he had hired to fix the closet in his house had ties to white nationalist organizations, which he learned about only after reading media reports about his contempt for race-mixing. This disturbed Leonard greatly, especially given the interracial nature of his family. It not only elicited anxiety but showed how the extreme (both in the physical body and in ideology) penetrates our collective homes, communities, and lives daily. The media-created bubble resulting from depictions of white nationalists as clowns, reports of far-off compounds, and the otherwise fantasy of being isolated from white nationalists has been challenged by our experiences. There is comfort in the construction of a geographic and ideological binary between the extreme and the mainstream. Yet our experiences and confrontations with white nationalists and white supremacist ideologies within our daily lives undercuts this fantasy; our contact with white nationalist writings on popular culture, even as we sit in the comfort of our own offices or homes, illustrates the ways in which the divide between the extreme and mainstream is tenuous at best. The efforts from white nationalists to produce their own popular culture products in opposition to

14 www.axt.org.uk/antisem/archive/archive2/usa/usa.htm; www.adl.org/sih/sih-print.asp.

15 www.adl.org/main_Extremism/youth_western_civilization.htm.

mainstream films, music, video games, and other cultural productions, some of which we too consume, illustrate the ways in which white nationalists penetrate and engage the mainstream daily.

Beyond Hate: White Power and Popular Culture offers a critical ethnography of the virtual communities established and discursive networks activated through the online engagements of white separatists, white nationalists, and white supremacists with movies, music, television, kitsch, video games, and sport. It takes up two overlapping and understudied problems: on the one hand, it outlines the ways in which advocates of white power interpret popular cultural forms, and on the other hand, it probes the emergent spaces of white power popular culture, particularly music, video games, and the Internet. *Beyond Hate* asserts that white separatists, white nationalists, and white supremacists find popular culture to be repugnant and irresistible, a reflection of social decay rooted in a modern multiculturalism that saturates public airwaves and means of expression and identification possessing the most radical possibilities, a source of distraction and inspiration, and a cause for contempt and hope. Understanding their fear, love, and loathing to be neither marginal nor minor, but part of a broader social field concerned with race and racism in the US, it challenges preconceived notions that rely upon hate to make sense of white power. As a consequence, it simultaneously interprets the ideologies, identities, and institutions animating white power, while connecting their extreme visions of race, society, and popular culture to more mainstream understandings, which despite cosmetic and strategic differences in fact emerge from a common discursive field and share similar visions for the future.

While America is certainly obsessed with popular culture—as evidenced by the billions of dollars spent each year and the millions of people who watch the Super Bowl, play *John Madden Football* or *Grand Theft Auto*, listen to 50 Cent and P-Diddy, or watch Dave Chappelle, Jennifer Lopez, Oprah Winfrey, or Chris Rock—advocates of white power have a special preoccupation with it, given the prominence of celebrities of color, particularly men of color, the celebration of difference, and the popularity of values and practices that challenge their worldviews. Throughout the Internet, on websites dedicated to white nationalism, white power, and white supremacy, conversations on blogs and in chat rooms are dedicated to the nature and effects of American popular culture on white identity formation, race relations, social structures, and the future of the white race. Their online conversations take up an array of issues reflecting their concern with stabilizing racial hierarchy and righting the social order, including the crisis in traditional American values; the degradation of the family; the displacement and pollution of the Western canon by multiculturalism; the perpetuation of liberal, elitist, and feminist ideals; the fetishization of black males; the youth obsession with “acting” black; and the prominence granted to

the grotesque visions of popular cultural industries. Each, in varying degrees, displaces white cultural focus and the efforts to reclaim American spaces as white-centered and dominated. Whether discussing film, music, or sports, white nationalists and supremacists reject mainstream popular culture as a pollutant of white cultural and physical purity, embracing conservative rhetorics of family values and classic white supremacist discourse regarding “negro culture with its emphasis on discrimination procreation and physical violence.”¹⁶ The discourse surrounding popular culture and the constant calls for whites to abandon their financial and cultural support of “nigger culture” sits at the center of the contemporary white nationalist movement; they are obsessed. Of equal importance are patriarchal desires to protect the family (wife and children) from the cultural beast channeled and celebrated in popular culture—from MTV and hip-hop to Hollywood blockbusters and contemporary sports.

The dis-ease voiced in the virtual worlds of white power encourages condemnation and disdain. The following commentary on sports captures the essence of this discourse: “How many of you fat worthless American so call ‘wn’ [white nationalist] men are watching ‘The Game’ right now? I know how the average American male worships big black men. I bet your wife and daughters are watching it with you. And People are surprised when they see a white female with a black man? The problem iz yourself, putz. You are the one supporting the nigger sports. You are the one support the kikevitz.”¹⁷ For this chatter, and countless other participants in the online community of white nationalists and white supremacists, sports, and popular culture more generally, encapsulates the issues and intersections of gender, sexuality, criminality, and the future of white power within America—it is a threat and therefore at the center of this powerful discursive field.

At the same time, the Internet illuminates another relationship between white power and popular culture, namely efforts to capitalize on expressive and technological forms to more effectively disseminate ideological positions and germinate community. In a very real sense, the World Wide Web has nurtured the growth of a white supremacist-nationalist popular (sub)culture. Specifically, online sites have enabled individuals and institutions spaces through which to create and consume white power. Music, memorabilia, and video games have proven especially attractive, fecund, and profitable.

This book thus seeks to uncover the ways in which white nationalists use public forums, list groups, and blogs as not purely spaces of diatribe and propaganda, but as imaginative spaces of debate and productivity that invariably center on hegemonic visions of race and popular culture—one might even call public virtual debates regarding celebrities of color and contemporary popular

16 ZookeeperZ, available online at www.stormfront.org, December 1, 2003.

17 Johnny yuma, VNN Forum, February 1, 2004.

culture amongst white nationalists as an obsession. Within cyberspace, most prominently today, white nationalists fashion powerful spaces for the circulation of racial discourses and narratives whereby essentialized notions of the other become “real.” Specifically, this book interrogates the ways in which websites, discussion forums, and related media enable the policing of the boundaries of whiteness, reiterating through threat and fear of its debasement essentialized understandings of difference and power, illustrating the powerful ways in which white nationalist communities infect and react to the popular culture.

With this in mind, *Beyond Hate* explores the intersections of white power and popular/media culture in the contemporary US, illustrating the ways in which white nationalists use cyberspace discussions of popular culture to define their community in opposition to a world dominated by multiculturalism, hip-hop, and aesthetics associated with communities of color (as a community polluted by the aesthetic and physical presence of minority bodies and cultures). Moreover, it demonstrates the ways in which these conversations and the related white nationalist productions serve as sites of imagined resistance to a mainstream, a resistance that articulates similar ideologies and representations of the racialized other and contemporary racialized politics.

Beyond Hate focuses on what we term white power. Throughout this book, we use this phrase to refer to a range of overlapping racialized social theories and political projects—variously dubbed white supremacy, white nationalism, or white separatism—that share in common a set of ideological features: (a) essentialized notions of racial difference; (b) a conviction that such differences threaten whites and white culture; (c) a sense, often expressed with great urgency, that social reconfigurations resulting from globalization, decolonization, civil rights, the rise of multiculturalism, and post-industrialization have wrought social disintegration and moral decay; (d) a desire to re-establish white-heterosexual-masculine dominance within the home, mainstream culture, and public spheres; and (e) increasingly a tendency to express such positions in coded, sanitized language often appropriated from mainstream, and even progressive, political movements.¹⁸

Despite an expanding literature that speaks of the revival of white power, particularly its utilization of the worldwide web, academic discourse has erased the significant intersections of white nationalist movements and popular culture (outside of music). Our intent here is not to demonize or otherwise stigmatize, for the lines between mainstream and extreme, colorblindness and overt white racism, are fine at best.¹⁹ In fact, we would suggest that the racial theories animating white nationalist and white

18 Daniels (1997), Ferber (1998), Swain (2002).

19 Ansell (1997), Bonilla-Silva (2003), Omi and Winant (1994).

separatist movements push mainstream formulations of race to their extreme and logical ends. Consequently, it is our conviction that critical readings of the ideologies grounding white power movements have much to teach us about the networks of racialized power in the twenty-first century. Of equal importance, examining the often-unnoticed talk about popular culture in white supremacist chat rooms, as well as the understudied uses of expressive forms with white nationalist subculture, grants a fuller understanding of the racial imagination knitting together individuals and organizations that advocate white power. In contrast with previous studies that have emphasized print media,²⁰ in *Beyond Hate*, we concentrate on new media, exploring specifically online popular culture discourses in terms of the criminalization of black male bodies, black female sexuality, the hyper-focus on white females in danger of black sexuality, the place of other intrusive bodies of color (George Lopez, Jackie Chan, ‘Middle Eastern Terrorist’), and the overall connections made between popular culture, multiculturalism, sexual politics, and state functions, all of which they see as working against white men. Most importantly, our discussion leads to a blurring of hegemonic binaries between white nationalist and mainstream advocates, promoters, and voices of white supremacy, moving us beyond rhetorics of hate toward an understanding of instruments of power within white supremacist discourses and practices.

In *Beyond Hate*, we seek to unpack this content and significance of the white power obsession with race, gender, sexuality, whiteness, and popular culture. Specifically within this book, we explore the intersections of white power and popular culture in the contemporary US: we analyze the preoccupation of white nationalists (supremacists) with celebrities and popular culture as evidenced by the ubiquity of Internet conversations and postings on these topics.

We argue that these conversations and the Internet in general have been fundamental to the growth of a white nationalist movement, and that the panics induced by conversations about contemporary popular culture, and the conversations themselves, serve as a foundation for these imagined virtual communities. Moreover, white nationalist fixation on popular culture does not simply reveal grotesque racial visions, but, we argue, it also reiterates fundamental ideological positions of the white power movement: essentialized racial hierarchies, the necessity of racial separation, and the fabrication of whiteness through boundary making.

Finally, we challenge the tendency to disassociate mainstream discourses surrounding race or popular culture from the more extreme versions found among white nationalists to reveal a significant level of continuity. We elaborate this argument through an examination of the central obsessions that anchor this discourse, including criminality, race-mixing, and celebrities

20 Daniels (1997).

of color. Analyzing discussions and discourses concerning sport, cinema, music, video games, and the Internet, this book puts forth an understanding of the nature of these discourses, not so much to give voice to extremist white nationalist ideologies within contemporary popular culture, but to reflect on the intersections of power, culture, race, and whiteness within a contemporary American context. To bring this into the forefront, our concluding discussion links the interpretations of contemporary popular culture offered in the white power movement with more mainstream discussions of popular culture. It builds on the work of Abby Ferber, Jesse Daniels, Carol Swain, and Kathleen Blee, not to look at the online community per se, but to read the preoccupations and presumptions of those who participate within it to outline an account of patterns, forces, and structures.

White nationalists and supremacists do not simply critique mainstream popular culture. In fact, increasingly, they actively produce expressive forms for pleasure and profit, something that has been enabled through the growth of the Internet. The sales of memorabilia, and music, and the availability of cartoons and video games through the Internet not only demonstrate the importance of virtual reality within a white nationalist movement, but also highlight the ways in which they have used popular culture via the Internet (as a place that they own) as a site of resistance. A thriving white power music scene and a pronounced presence on the Internet are perhaps the most well established elements of this popular culture, fostering recruitment, identity, and ideological formation. Similarly, since the late 2000s, video games have emerged as an increasingly important space for the performance of white power. Despite their prominence, these practices remain neglected, pushed to the margins in the hope that they are passing aberrations. In *Beyond Hate*, we suggest that a full understanding of white power is not possible without a comprehensive engagement with its ideas and its objects, its propaganda and its products.

Importantly, *Beyond Hate* brings the discussion of white nationalist movements into a discussion guided by

1. An examination of mainstream popular culture (and its multicultural nature) as the basis of an imagined extreme community (their contempt for popular culture serves as fulcrum of white nationalist ideologies and practices);
2. A concern for the ways in which white nationalists utilize popular culture and new technologies in the advancement of their cause;
3. Attention to the centrality of the internet as a space in which to articulate white identities, secured through formulations of masculinity, heterosexuality, family, and tradition; and

4. Careful readings of intersectionality in an effort to understand both the discourses that condemn mainstream popular culture and projects that produce an alternative popular culture within white nationalist communities.

At its core, the book examines popular and media culture as site of ideology whether reacting to consumptions of mainstream popular culture or producing white supremacist counter-cultural products. In offering the multi-layered focus, *Beyond Hate* engages and challenges hate studies as well as facile notions of popular culture and white power.

We conceive of *Beyond Hate* as a virtual ethnography that adapts the conventions of studying social issues and cultural constructs in action to the interactive and mediated spaces of the Internet.²¹ As such, it assembles a flexible toolkit capable of collecting and interpreting texts, sensitive to conversation and context, and committed to making counter-intuitive connections and disarticulating established expectations. To this end, we draw upon proven techniques from anthropology, sociology, literary criticism, and cultural studies. Following Ignacio (2005), we closely read images, utterances, and exchanges, highlighting and coding the contents, bundling similar expressions and interactions, and then re-analyzing the entire set of texts.²² Theoretically, our readings of white power and/as popular culture weave together constructs from a number of fields of inquiry that illuminate the workings of race, nation, gender, and sexuality in forcefields shaped by neoliberal resentments and post-civil-rights retrenchments. Specifically, we knit together an analytic framework from ongoing conversations in comparative ethnic studies, critical pedagogy, women's studies, and cultural studies.

More specifically, we read online texts, particularly communicative interactions within discussion forums at a leading white nationalist website, www.stormfront.org. We read these exchanges, online commentaries, blog posts, and social media groups, reviewing and coding posted material. Our approach combines systematic searches via Google and specific white-nationalist websites with casual browsing of discussion forums, public groups, and the like to gather interpretations of popular culture. It employs systematic coding of texts, which, in turn, leads to the identification of patterns which are then placed in social context. This method of collection and interpretation forms the foundation for our account of white power and popular culture.

21 Hine (2000).

22 Ignacio (2005).

Before turning to substantive interrogations, we use the next three chapters to clarify more fully the subject and significance of *Beyond Hate*. Specifically, we seek to situate the subsequent case studies, providing a firm foundation for analyses. In Chapter 2, we seek to reframe white power, arguing that prevailing frames in both the media and academia tend to prevent complete understandings of entanglements of race and power. Against this background, in Chapters 3 and 4, looking at music and television, we detail the ways in which advocates of white power create and consume popular culture, highlighting their uses and understandings of it.

Having established a fuller understanding of popular culture as well as white power, its central commitments, and its fundamental tenets, in Chapter 5 we turn our attention to the racialized readings of Hollywood cinema offered within white nationalist websites, blogs, discussion groups, and other virtual writings. We center our attention on white nationalists' understandings of the content of the movies and the control of the movie industry, finding anticipated antagonisms as well as pronounced ambivalence.

Building on the previous discussion of film, in the chapter that follows, we explore the intersections of white power and sports in the contemporary US, endeavoring to clarify the key frames through which advocates of white power read popular culture. Specifically, we analyze their preoccupation with black male athletes and athletics, while challenging the tendency to disassociate mainstream discourses from them. Their fixation on sports does not simply reveal grotesque racial visions, but we argue that it also reiterates fundamental ideological positions of the white power movement: essentialized racial hierarchies, the necessity of racial separation, and the fabrication of whiteness through boundary making.

While sport has been a perennial topic for advocates of white power, the possibilities of virtual worlds have been increasingly powerful for them. In particular, they have seized upon video games and the technologies available through the Internet as fun and profitable means to disseminate their ideas and build imagined communities. Thus, in Chapter 7, as in previous chapters, we link our discussion here to white nationalist discussions of games (such as *Grand Theft Auto*), the function of the Internet as a virtual space of production and consumption, and the larger ideological and discursive connections between both white nationalist conversations and cultural productions with the mainstream. And in Chapter 8, we take up the important influence of social media within white nationalist communities. Focusing on the ways in which Web 2.0 has provided tools to further establish a virtually bound imagined community, we look at the power of YouTube (and similar spaces, some of which have been created by white nationalists) and social networking

sites as not simply instruments of recruitment, but important tools in the production of “spaces of hate.”²³

In the concluding chapter, we endeavor to do more than merely summarize our findings. Instead, we bring the insights gleaned from our analysis of white power and popular culture to unsettle prevailing understandings of race, power, and the popular. Specifically, drawing on the shooting at a Sikh temple outside of Milwaukee, Wisconsin and popular reaction to it, we argue for a fuller understanding of white nationalism, a more complex appreciation of the popular, and the significance of their deep entanglements.

23 Flint (2004).

Chapter 2

Reframing White Power and Popular Culture: Images, Otherness and Interpretive Communities

In 2007, Marvel Comics reintroduced the Hate-Monger, a character little known and largely forgotten by its legion of fans. The masked villain anchored a story arc in *Punisher: War Journal*. Unlike his initial iteration (1963), in which he appears as a clone of Adolf Hitler, the newer version is less iconic, but no less racist and evil. In current reconfiguration, he leads a terrorist syndicate on the US–Mexico border, which is known as the National Force; he espouses neo-Nazi ideologies to his followers, whose uniforms prominently feature swastikas.

The Punisher, an ultra-violent vigilante fighting for justice, infiltrates the National Force, ultimately killing the Hate-Monger and restoring social order. While a simple morality play on one level, in which good triumphs over evil, the storyline communicates other, deeper messages as well. First, overt racism is deviant, criminal even, and undergirds and amplifies other bad acts. Second, the core of racism is hate and what makes it especially dangerous is when a charismatic figure conjures and channels it. Third, where Nazis once embodied the excesses and evils of racism, followed by the Ku Klux Klan, advocates of white power (identifiable through their affinity for and/or symbolic relationship with Nazism) have emerged as reliable villains (see Chapter 4 for more). Fourth, racism can be effectively countered with discrete and direct action aimed at bad apples. Finally, such thinking and the stories it generates lets readers off the hook, undermining their capacity to think about white privilege and the less visible ways in which white racism operates today.¹

In many respects, the Hate-Monger and the comic book narrative that pivots around him reflect dominant understandings of racism in the contemporary United States and importantly the ways in which many scholars have framed white power.

1 [http://marvel.com/universe/Hate-Monger_\(Adolf_Hitler\)](http://marvel.com/universe/Hate-Monger_(Adolf_Hitler)), accessed on December 31, 2013.

Most often, everyday understandings of racism today hold that it is exceptional and outdated, a problem that when discernible demands intervention. Accounts of it frequently employ four interlocking frames: (a) racism is a set of bad ideas, (b) racism is a bad attitude, (c) racism is a bad acts, and (d) racism is associated with or caused by bad actors. It is something that can be isolated and individualized, and thus taken out of context. It is a deviation in thought, feeling, or action. It tends to be associated with a lack of knowledge, incomplete empathy, and heightened antipathy. It is out of synch and irrational. Happily, this folk model asserts, when detected, it can be corrected through education and exposure, or barring that, through punitive measures designed to readjust behavior. This is, as we will argue, an overly simplistic, misguided, and self-serving interpretation of racism. Nevertheless, the worldview has shaped assessments and representations of white power in mass media.

Popular images of white supremacists, white separatists, and white nationalists cluster around extreme individuals (hooded Klansmen, skinheads, and neo-Nazis), unreasonable and antiquated understandings of race (white superiority, the dangers of miscegenation, and Jewish conspiracies) and hate-inspired acts (cross-burnings, swastika graffiti, and gay bashing). They locate white power in far-off or at least socially distant places (the deep South, for instance), historic time periods (Jim Crow, Nazi Germany), and social types (skinheads and rednecks). Such renderings project racism onto ill-intentioned and uneducated actors, and hence let everyone else off the hook. In addition, they prevent an appreciation of the ubiquity of white power, deterring critical interrogations of the connections between mainstream and extreme racial projects. This point of view also erases the interface between the extreme and mainstream; it conceals the connections between communities, presumed to be geographically isolated, in the consumption and production of white supremacist discourse and ideology within popular culture. In point of fact, as our analyses underscore, advocates of white power devote great attention to popular culture and its dangers. As we elaborate in greater detail, popular culture fosters much commentary and concern because it is among the most prominent public spaces centering on racialized bodies. And while a number of websites suggest the emergence of an explicitly racist media culture, here we want to unpack white power interpretations of mainstream popular culture, all the while examining how white nationalists seek to use the same technologies and fandom to cultivate and create a white nationalist movement.

To date, scholars have neglected how advocates of white power produce and consume popular and media cultures. One can find far more studies on the spirituality of white nationalists than on how they create and critique pop culture.²

2 See Barkun (1997), Bushart et al. (1998), Dobratz (2001), Gardell (2003), Michael (2010a, 2010b).

While this derives in part from the rather dim view that many in academia hold of the popular, it also follows from how conventional studies of white power have framed it. Most notably, like popular opinion, they foreground hate, making it arguably the key concept in the literature,³ concerning themselves with hate speech,⁴ cyberhate,⁵ and even hate porn.⁶ Scholars also tend to emphasize deviance, gangs, terrorism, and other dangers,⁷ understanding white power through social psychology and individual identity formation.⁸ And, they often look for white power on the margins, linking it most explicitly with the extreme political right.⁹ Two major exceptions to this pattern themselves constitute threats because they ease access, foster recruitment, and target the vulnerable, namely children. First, scholars of white power have demonstrated a near obsession with the Internet.¹⁰ They have focused much of their critical energies on Stormfront, one of the oldest, most accessible, and most visible white power websites.¹¹ Second, perhaps because of its mix of excess and transgression—which emphasize antipathy, violence, and hypermasculinity—music, often dubbed as hate rock, has attracted much attention (see our discussion in Chapter 3).

Too often, they neglect the deep entanglements of white power today with historic forms of white supremacy, which long structured American society and have left lasting legacies that continue to shape racial identities, ideologies, and hierarchies, even as many Americans embrace multiculturalism and colorblindness. While building on and engaging with scholarly engagements of white power and agreeing that it is repugnant and dangerous, our analysis opts to interpret white supremacy and white nationalism as more than social deviance, psychological pathology, or discrete movement. Instead, advancing the critical constructivist approaches of Les Back, Michael Billig, Jessie Daniels, and Abby Ferber, we understand it to be a sociohistorically grounded set of precepts and practices responsive to political, economic, and cultural shifts. We work to make sense of what advocates of white power say and do (about popular culture), holding that those activating such an ideological framework actively engage the world around them with a disposition that may entail but

3 Barnett (2007b), Brown (2009), Roversi (2008), Schafer (2002), Waltman and Haas (2011).

4 Daniels (2007), Duffy (2003), Meddaugh and Kay (2009).

5 Douglas et al. (2005), Zickmund (1997).

6 Williamson and Pierson (2003).

7 Blazak (2001), Brister (2011), Chroust (2000), Hamm (2009), Lennings et al. (2010), McCurrie (1998), Simi (2010), Simi et al. (2008).

8 Berbrier (1999), Dobratz (2006), Eziel (1995), Simi and Futrell (2009).

9 Berlet and Vysotsky (2006), Blee (2002), Durham (2007), Perry (2000).

10 Daniels (2007), Douglas et al. (2005), Roversi (2008), Zickmund (1997).

11 Bowman-Grieve (2009), Castle and Chevalier (2011), de Koster and Houtman (2008), Meddaugh and Kay (2009), Statzel (2006).

certainly transcends hate to include the creation and interpretation of texts. As such, we argue for studying white power through the claims, bundles of meanings, and discursive patterns that circulate around the popular.

With this in mind, in this chapter, we undertake two tasks, laying a foundation for subsequent discussions. First, we establish a genealogy of white power that situates it within the history of white supremacy. Second, we examine *American History X* to highlight how it represents white power and in turn how white nationalists make sense of the film and its image of them.

White Supremacy and Post-Civil-Rights America

In the early twenty-first century, three overlapping forms of white power manifest themselves in the United States. These might be dubbed (a) persistent, (b) resurgent, and (c) veiled. We understand these formulations to be part of a shared discursive field, in which variations in language and grammar have more to do with contexts and strategies, yet produce shared effects, namely distinction and domination.

Persistent white power is that with which most commentators are most familiar and can most readily identify, if only to demonize and dismiss it. It reveals itself through antiquated ideologies and abolished institutions, such as scientific racism, Jim Crow, and Apartheid. Persistent white power most often has taken the form of white supremacy, which George Fredrickson defines as follows:

[It] refers to the attitudes, ideologies, and policies associated with the rise of blatant forms of white or European dominance over ‘nonwhite’ populations. In other words, it involves making invidious distinctions of a socially crucial kind that are based primarily, if not exclusively, on physical characteristics and ancestry.¹²

Genocide, segregation, Jim Crow, and the policies of “separate but equal,” along with legalized discrimination and the exclusion of Asians, Jews, Irish, and other immigrants, all being institutional, ideological, and centering white actors, privileges, and understandings stand as prime example of white supremacy. Each embodies historic efforts to retain and revivify expressions of persistent white power and violence.

White supremacist structures and stories have laid the foundation for the reformulation of white power. Indeed, since the late 1980s, numerous individuals and organizations have engaged popular culture to reiterate racial differences, boundaries, hierarchies, and identities. Resurgent white power highlights a range

12 Frederickson (1982).

of overlapping racialized social theories and political projects—variously dubbed white supremacy, white nationalism, or white separatism—that, as we noted in the introduction, share in common a set of ideological features: (a) essentialized notions of racial difference; (b) a conviction that such differences threaten whites and white culture; (c) a sense, often expressed with great urgency, that social reconfigurations resulting from globalization, decolonization, civil rights, the rise of multiculturalism, and post-industrialization have wrought social disintegration and moral decay; (d) a desire to re-establish white dominance; and (e) increasingly a tendency to express such positions in coded, sanitized language often appropriated from mainstream, and even progressive, political movements (citations). Despite the increasing amount of literature that speaks of the revival of white nationalism, with its utilization of web culture, the academic discourse erases the significant intersections of white nationalist movements and popular/media culture. Our intent here is not to demonize or otherwise stigmatize, for the lines between mainstream and extreme, colorblindness and overt white racism, are fine at best. In many ways, the racial theories animating white nationalist and white separatist movements push mainstream formulations of race to their extreme and logical ends. Consequently, it is our conviction that critical readings of the ideologies grounding white power’s uses and understandings of popular culture have much to teach us about the networks of racialized power in the twenty-first century. Of equal importance, examining the often-unnoticed talk about in white supremacist chat rooms and white nationalist polemics grants a fuller understanding of the racial imagination knitting together individuals and organizations that advocate white power.

Although persistent and resurgent forms of white power may be most visible, the most common expressions of white power remain hidden, emerging in what we call veiled white power. Others, most notably Amy Ansell, Patricia Hill Collins, and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, describe this reformulation as new racism.¹³ In the emergent global context, sport and other media spectacles, according to Collins, “present hegemonic ideologies that claim that racism is over. They work to obscure the racism that does exist and they undercut antiracist protest.”¹⁴

New racism as a recoding of white power is more than a comfortable or covert expression. Indeed, according to Ansell three features have proven fundamental to the solidification of this conjuncture and its capacity to reproduce white power:

1. A sanitized, coded language about race that adheres to, more than it departs from, generally accepted liberal principles and values, mobilized for illiberal ends;

13 Ansell (1997), Bonilla-Silva (2003), Collins (2005).

14 Collins (2005: 54).

2. Avid disavowals of racist intent and circumvention of classical anti-racist discourse; and
3. A shift from a focus on race and biological relations to a concern for cultural differentiation and national identity.¹⁵

The application of a set of overlapping frames and strategies dematerialize the reigning forms of racial stratification, legitimizing notions of fairness, freedom, opportunity, equality, democracy, and America. The increasing visibility afforded to people of color in media culture—within sports, film, and music—eases efforts to advance new racist formulations of racial progress, while erasing the white power.

Building on the work of Bonilla-Silva, moreover, the worlds of popular and media cultures afford media and fans alike powerful sites within which to account for and make sense of race and racism. Specifically, he suggests that within a the context of new racism whites employ four frames to dematerialize white power, construct a colorblind world, and take pleasure in secure differences: (1) abstract liberalism, an ethos blending individualism, a rhetoric of equality, and choice, (2) naturalization, or the assertion that “racial phenomena ...are natural occurrences,”¹⁶ (3) cultural racism, the appeal to culture to explain difference, and (4) minimization, or efforts to reduce or dismiss the continuing significance of race and racism.

Significantly, veiled and resurgent forms of white power share the same foundations, namely the crises associated with the demise of systems of white supremacy. Struggles for racial justice made overt racism, segregation, and stratification problematic, if not impossible. In their wake, white power was reworked, fostering visible and virulent forms pushed to the margins as well as nearly invisible and more insidious variants at the center of everyday life.

Disturbing Pleasures: White Supremacists Watch *American History X*

To begin to illustrate the ways in which advocates of white power engage with popular culture and return to our earlier discussion of media imaginings of them, we turn our attention to *American History X* (1998). On the one hand, the film casts itself as an oppositional reading of white nationalism that offers itself as an anti-racist parable. On the other hand, it reinforces dominant understandings of race and racism that work to absolve (white) America of its racial legacies. Together, these themes would appear to repulse white nationalists. Instead,

15 Ansell (1997: 59).

16 Bonilla-Silva (2003: 28).

many of them not only appreciate the movie, they applaud it as well, celebrating it as movie about them that endorses their reading of the world. That said, a number of white nationalists find the film to be objectionable, subjecting it to debate that offers a glimpse of key themes and central tensions of white power.

American History X focuses on a pair of brothers, Derek and Darren Vinyard, in Venice, California, tracing their involvement in the local skinhead scene. Told largely through flashbacks with the voiceover narration from the younger Vinyard brother, Darren recalls several key moments in his life while writing a paper for his high school history class. His memory and the movie itself frames the lives of the young men against a background of loss, growing social problems, and reduced life-chances: Venice is pictured as a town in decline, marked by white flight and increased diversity; the Vinyard family teeters on the edge, having seen their class mobility undermined by the impact of affirmative action and then the death of the patriarch fighting a fire. This frame renders the white protagonists vulnerable, suffering from the shifting social circumstances of post-Fordist, post-civil-rights America. Derek (played by Edward Norton), the elder brother, struggles with the loss of his father and feels compelled to replace him. He turns to neo-Nazism as a teen, emerging as a rising leader within a local skinhead group. His antipathy toward people of color leads him down a path of crime, including robberies and harassment of recent immigrants in the community; he chastises his mother for dating a Jewish teacher, and ultimately goes to jail after killing an African American. While incarcerated, Derek initially gravitates to the Aryan gang, but quickly learns that its leadership is hypocritical (collaborating with people of color and peddling drugs among whites). His disavowal of the group results in his becoming a victim of a prison rape for his lack of allegiance. This, combined with a work detail in the laundry with an African American man, leads to a moral conversion in which he rejects his racism. Following his release, he works to rescue Darren (played by Edward Furlong), who has fallen in with the skinhead scene, and save his family. Before he can realize the promise of his transformation, Derek becomes the victim of a shooting and dies.

American History X conforms to dominant assessments of racism and white nationalism in the early twenty-first century. It communicates clearly that racism is wrong, encouraging deviance and violence. It suggests that white power feeds hate, which if unchecked leads to social and self-destruction. White power, in turn, reveals itself to be marginal, extreme, out of synch, and false. Change, as embodied by Derek's moral conversion, is possible through reflection and exposure to deeper truths.¹⁷ Thus, with great clarity, it demonizes white power and presents itself as anti-racist.

At the same time, *American History X* works to let whites off the hook. It centers on whites, figuring whiteness as imperiled and negatively affected by

17 Grau (2010), Slane (2001).

the changes resulting from pushes for racial equality and inclusion. Moreover, it encourages the audience to identify with white power. Derek emerges throughout as a sympathetic character and he validates core racial ideals (don't be a hater; accept people for the content of their character not the color of their skin; people can change). Nevertheless, the film dwells on the criminal acts, which it presents in an ultraviolent, even seductive, manner, possessing what Christopher Grau describes as a fascist aesthetic.¹⁸ Even as the audience identify with Derek and come to embrace him in the end, his character allows them to distance themselves from racism and call into question policies intent to combat the lingering legacies of white supremacy.¹⁹ Following Paul Smith, *American History X* exemplifies racial thinking in post-civil-rights America, a worldview in which “the epiphenomenal features of racism have evolved in such a way that a central fact of contemporary racism is bound to deny itself.”²⁰ White power, racial redemption, and imperiled whiteness work in concert with one another to advance such deniability.

In either case, one might anticipate that the depiction of white nationalists would lead them to reject *American History X* as media propaganda (or worse). Instead, many of them love it. As a film that gives voice and visibility to both white nationalist ideology and an aggressive and racist white masculinity, respondents focused on themes power and pride. Yet, the narrative and message of the film gives many respondents pause. In fact, *American History X* prompts extensive debates amongst white nationalists, none of which leads to a simple conclusion but rather the clarity of desire to be both heard/seen as a movement (as white men) and a desire to have films advance the political and ideological program associated with white nationalism.

Throughout the conversation on Stormfront, and elsewhere, white nationalists praised *American History X* for its aesthetic representation of the movement. According to mexicanportuguese, the film “promotes the WP in so many ways ... maybe some hate it, but this is one of the best movies that refleject (in a hollywood way) the subculture of the skinhead movement and the problems they fight in u.s.”²¹ References to the tattoos, posters, and the music of the movement were all seen as both evidence of the film's authenticity and its potential as a tool of recruitment. In fact, several respondents noted that they were inspired to join the movement after watching *American History X*.

“It is SUPPOSED to be an anti movie. It is SUPPOSED to make you wanna quit. But watching it, it had the opposite effect on me,” noted Spartan718. “It gave me the urge to fight. To bumrush a store and yell GET THE F*CK OUT

18 Grau (2010).

19 Slane (2001).

20 Smith (2007: 256).

21 Available online at www.stormfront.org, December 4, 2006.

OF MY COUNTRY. To wanna get laid with a chick who wears Doc Martens in bed. And to fight those ape gangbangers.”²² Similarly, White14Pride described *American History X* as “weird because it trys to send a message not be racist but it always ends up making kids want to be a skinhead.”²³ Likewise, several people celebrated the film, citing its efforts to challenge certain stereotypes about the movement in terms of portraying the Vinyard brothers as intelligent and middle-class. “We get to see a smart, strong, charismatic skinhead in a major Hollywood film, we’re not gonna get much better than that (unless you want to go back to *Birth of a Nation*). That’s not to say that it isn’t without its faults.”²⁴ In this regards, white nationalists praised the film for depicting the movement outside the stereotypical representation of the southern and backward racist.

Beyond Visibility: The Importance of Ideology and Mythology

Beyond the inspiration that is found in the visibility of a powerful white nationalist manhood or the presence of movement paraphernalia, a great deal of focus rests with the film’s ability to advance racist ideologies, from its depiction of African Americans as criminal savages or its inclusion of a series of speeches that are never challenged. Just as writings or speeches online can advance the cause through educating whites about race—white supremacy—*American History X* was seen as particularly effective in teaching. For example, in his review on Vanguard News Network, H. Becker praises the film for its white nationalist speeches:

The guts of the movie are the speeches by Derek. Of these speeches, the best is his dinner-table destruction of the Jewish cant put out by the Elliot Gould character courting his mother in which he demolishes the Jew’s inevitable excuse explanations of poverty and racism for Rodney King and the L.A. riots. Edward Norton is a fine actor, and is quite persuasive as a strong and principled skinhead. ... In fact, at no point are the racist beliefs of the main characters Derek and younger brother Daniel challenged. By challenged, I mean shown to be logically or evidentially impaired.²⁵

This discussant, like so many peers, finds value in *American History X* for articulating white nationalist narratives and ideologies, citing several specific scenes. Each captures the ideological and rhetorical appeal of *American History X*:

22 Available online at www.stormfront.org, March 8, 2007.

23 Available online at www.stormfront.org, September 6, 2006.

24 Zitadelle1945, available online at www.stormfront.org, February 12, 2007.

25 www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/v1/movie2.htm.

in the first, Derek reacts to the murder of his father by an African American. In the second scene, Derek prepares other skinheads to enact violence against Latinos and Asians within a community market. Like *francaisetfier*, who celebrates the film showing the superiority of whites with “White team’s victory in the basketball game,”²⁶ WyldeMan45 praises the film for articulating white nationalism and for its use of racist and anti-Semitic epithets. “That was some of the best and funniest dialogue I ever heard ‘Now get your Jewish N***** loving hiping bull**** out of my house before I cut off your Skylock nose and stick it up your Kabala reading ***’ Or his old man telling him at the dinner table how he was so sick of ‘Affirmative Blacktion.’”²⁷

Hollywood Propaganda: Unfulfilled Promise in a Story of Redemption

Others were not so convinced. Irrespective of anti-Semitic speeches, racial epithets, and mere representation of the white nationalists, while good at some levels, the immense failures of the film were not absolved. The film’s focus on redemption and transformation, its inclusion of a homosexual rape scene, its inauthentic representation of movement members, and its overall message undermine any potential, rendering *American History X* as yet another Hollywood attack on whiteness. One of the principal critiques focused on the ways in which the film represents the Vinyard brothers and other skinheads in the film. In the end, they were depicted as unsophisticated trash, who acted like violent thugs rather than principled white nationalists.

A WN Man is a man who is even-tempered and even-keeled and uses violence only as a last resort. But Ed Norton’s character was a bully and a violent cave man. He did not respect his family. Engaging in immoral acts in his mother’s home. Bringing a female (a depraved, lunatic of a female) into his mother’s home and having loud sex with her is hardly the way a White Warrior should act. The stupid Liberal sister was a moron, but he didn’t have to start that terrible scene at the breakfast table. He let her stupid Liberal ways and smarmy attitude get under his skin. I really understand his anger and sadness over seeing a Jew court his mother. Personally, I would have confronted the Jew alone and spared my mother the whole situation. I would have threatened to give him a second circumcision, and this time not spare the razor ... but in private, so my mother wouldn’t see. I would have gotten a few of my crew together and run the bastard Jew out of town.

26 Available online at www.stormfront.org, September 16, 2006.

27 Available online at www.stormfront.org, February 19, 2009.

The Neo-Nazis in jail do not rape men. A real White man does not engage in drug use and even less in homosexual rape, for any reason—period! Those guys were not real WN. They were *****s trapped in White men’s bodies.

I believe White Nationalism can get its point across nonviolently and without using Nazi iconography (though I like it, myself), which quite frankly scares the hell out of most people, especially those wimpy-ass Whites who just want their MTV and Wal-Mart and don’t want to rock the boat. I believe every White person in the world is familiar with what can happen when non-whites directly and forcibly insert themselves into our country and culture... the problem is that even though it bothers ALL Whites, the mainstream Whites simply accept it.²⁸

Similarly, Gondolin argues that Vinyard was “an angry, violent, depressed and lost individual. It essentially made a joke out of WN by making a clear message that ‘only angry, emotionally disturbed people would ever sink so low as to join such a movement.’” He identifies this as a common theme in that all the “pro-white friends in the film were a bunch of violent, fat, Nazi garbage and it seriously makes me sick to think that anyone could find this depiction of WN redeeming or refreshing.”²⁹ Focusing on the anti-white sensationalism or the absurdity of “WP Skinheads play[ing] Blacks for the right to exclusively play basketball on the local court,”³⁰ several discussants chastised those who praised the film, reminding them that underneath the visibility is a film that aids the multiculturalist (Jewish) agenda, a plan that runs against the goals and future of white people. “You have to understand that there is no such thing as a ‘pro-White’ movie. Such a thing doesn’t exist,” writes Crowstorm. “Every movie that appears pro-White actually has a multicultural message in the end and warns that being pro-White will simply bring nothing but trouble and destruction on you and your family... so it’s best to bend over for the Jews and their Black soldiers.”³¹

What we see with *American History X* is the importance of both visibility and ideology, which in many regards are imagined as competing agendas. More importantly, like other forms of popular culture, it functions as a site of racially contested meaning, as places where the white nationalist worldview, the grammar of hate and violence, and the narrative about the United States are debated and discussed. Even with a film like *American History X*, which represents a challenge to the movement’s goals, white nationalists use popular culture to advance the ideology and politics of twenty-first-century white

28 Crowstorm, available online at www.stormfront.org, October 21, 2008.

29 Available online at www.stormfront.org, January 27, 2009.

30 Browning 35, available online at www.stormfront.org, August 19, 2006.

31 Available online at www.stormfront.org, October 21, 2008.

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nationalist movements. We see a similar relationship with music, whereupon sound and music become a vehicle for the production of hate and rhetorics of racist violence. The consumption and production of visual representations, and sounds in the form of music, function together in the advancement of a white nationalist agenda.

Chapter 3

Listening to White Noise: The Sonic Landscapes of White Power

In 1955, Asa Carter lost his job at WILD radio station in Birmingham, Alabama, bringing to an end his regionally syndicated program, which was sponsored by the American States Rights Association. His firing would also mark the end of his radio career. Rather than rethink his racist and anti-Semitic views, Carter redoubled his commitments to segregation and white supremacy. He publicly broke with longtime ally the Alabama Citizens' Council, organizing the North Alabama Citizens' Council as a visible alternative. The leadership role arguably gave Carter an advantaged position to defend Jim Crow and commandeer media attention. Almost immediately, he directed attention at the evils of popular culture. Of particular concern for Carter and his followers was the rising popularity of rock-'n'-roll, which many at the time dubbed "race music." The former radio personality advocated a ban of the musical style, believing its content encouraged moral degradation and race-mixing. The music itself and the behaviors said to be promoted by it were perceived to be a grave threat to white culture.¹ Indeed, Carter saw in rock-'n'-roll a conspiracy by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, "a plot to mongrelize America." As such, "the obscenity and vulgarity," he and others found in the increasing popular genre led them to assert that "rock n roll music is obviously a means by which the white man and his children can be driven to the level of the negro."² To combat the animalism evoked by the banality of rock music, he laid out a plan to work with the owners of juke boxes to remove race-music records.

As outrageous as his reading of pop music seems today, Carter was not an isolated voice. His protest escalated locally and echoed nationally. Perhaps dissatisfied with the theatrics of public relations, Carter formed a second group in 1956, the Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy (KKKC), which turned to direct action and violence. They disrupted a Nat King Cole concert, attacking the singer on stage, and "picketed a concert featuring the Platters, LaVern Baker, Bo Diddley, and Bill Haley, with signs reading, 'NAACP says integration, rock & roll, rock & roll,' 'Jungle Music promotes integration,' and 'Jungle music aids

1 Martin and Segrave (1993).

2 Quoted in Garofalo (1997: 145).

delinquency’.”³ Later, members of the KKKC would abduct, castrate, torture, and leave for dead an African American painter.

Racist opposition to rock music manifested itself throughout the country. City councils in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Louisiana, Texas, and Virginia prohibited interracial dances and concerts.⁴ Meanwhile, radios from Pittsburgh and Cincinnati to Chicago and Denver “refused to play rock and roll.”⁵ And, perhaps mirroring efforts organized by Carter, protestors in Inglewood, California circulated fliers that depicted the perceived evils of rock music. They featured “pictures of young black men and white women dancing, with captions reading, ‘Boy meets girl ...’ be-bop style,’ and ‘Total Mongrelization.’”⁶

Carter eventually turned away from the KKKC, apparently after a falling-out over finances in which he shot two associates. While his crusade against pop music ended, he remained active in (racial) politics. He worked as a speech writer for Governor George Wallace, helping to pen the iconic phrase “Segregation Today, Segregation Tomorrow, Segregation Forever.” Later, he reinvented himself and became wildly popular, authoring the novel that served as the basis for *The Outlaw Josey Wales* and under an assumed name an equally fictional tale that purported to be the autobiography of a Cherokee Indian, *The Education of Little Tree*, which for a time was selected as an official choice of Oprah’s Book Club.

Carter did not stop rock music, any more than local ordinances extending Jim Crow did throughout the body politic. Ironically, much of today’s music that makes up the white power scene derives from early forms of rock-’n’-roll. While this might horrify the former Klansman, demagogue, and crusader, we imagine that he would applaud the creative energies and racist ideologies central to it. Much like his early career in radio, in which he used a popular medium for increasingly unpopular ends, today, musicians, producers, and leaders use popular musical forms to recruit new members, generate revenue, stabilize white nationalist identities and ideologies, and create community. And like Carter, this music scene is vocal and theatrical, wildly unpopular, and primed for volatility and violence.

While in the last chapter, we began to think through the ways popular culture imagines advocates of white power and in turn how they interpret such imagery, with this chapter, we take up equally important aspects of our core project. In particular, we examine white nationalists as creators and producers of expressive culture, which both builds on and arguably distorts popular music. Our effort here is to highlight that white nationalists do not simply consume

3 Delmont (2012: 138).

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

and criticize popular culture, but, where possible, actively work to craft popular works in their own right. While their creations are surely vernacular and vulgar, emerging from “the people” (or at least a select subset), they remain unpopular, at the margins of taste and outside of the marketplace (whether defined commercially or intellectually). Nevertheless, we read these as important dialogues around race, music, and style that highlight the interpenetration of the mainstream (more popular forms) and the more extreme renderings of white nationalists. To this end, we offer more than a summary of the white power music scene: we examine and unpack exchanges and interactions as well bridges and barriers.

Throughout this chapter, our focus remains on white power rock. While there is a diversity of musical styles and aesthetics that encompass white power music, the power of white power rock is evident not just in its resonance with the movement but the ways that its aesthetics and styles mesh with a white supremacist narrative. We build upon the idea that “racist music” becomes a space for community, for disseminating the grammar, tropes, and narratives of white supremacy, and for cultivating a white nationalist worldview. Hate music is not innocuous but part and parcel of the development of the white nationalist movement. The Southern Poverty Law Center highlights its power:

Since the early 1990s, various forms of “white power” music have grown from a cottage industry serving a few racist skinheads to a multimillion-dollar, worldwide industry that is a primary conduit of money and young recruits to the radical right. Although the music originated in Britain in the early 1980s, it is now popular among hard-core racists throughout Europe and the United States.

The music essentially started with the British band Skrewdriver, led by the late Ian Stuart Donaldson, but is now played by hundreds of bands in the United States, Europe (where it is often illegal), and elsewhere. While it was once almost always one or another form of hard-core rock ’n’ roll, it has more recently taken all kinds of musical forms, even ballads.⁷

With this in mind, we begin our discussion with a survey of white power music. Against this background, we endeavor to complicate white power music, contrasting songs from the first decades of the twentieth century with more recent works. This comparative analysis allows a rereading of popular music as “race music” that lays seeds for more radical harvests. Next, we shift our focus to the use of the sounds and stylings of popular music to reach new audiences, first in the recruitment of new members to the movement and second in an unorthodox effort to create a crossover band, a group that would remain faithful

7 www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/ideology/racist-music.

to white power ideals and ideologies and appeal to a wider audience. In closing, we reflect on the scope and significance of unpopular culture.

Recentering White Power

In a recent interview, sociologist Peter Simi, co-author of *American Swastika*, identified music as the cornerstone of contemporary white power:

Music is central to the movement in a lot of ways. It played a vital role in terms of offering opportunities for potential recruitment, offering opportunities for the generation of revenue and then probably most importantly, you know, music pulls people together. It gives them opportunities to get together for music shows, music festivals; small shows, large ones, coming together on the Internet and talking about music shows.

All of these are opportunities for them to share in these kinds of occasions where they're talking, you know, spending time with, communicating with like-minded others who share the same view of the world as they do and talking about, you know, the future and what needs to be done.⁸

As Simi suggests, the white power music scene matters in ways often unrecognized and unexpected by scholars and non-scholars alike. Like all subcultures rooted in expression, style, and performance, it has always been about more than entertainment, parties, fun, and “distractions.” For a movement pushed to the margins, it advances the movement organizationally, facilitates the circulation of ideological positions, anchors interactive spaces (both in person and online), and establishes a forum for the elaboration of meaningful identities.⁹

White power music covers a diverse range of musical styles. In addition to folk and country,¹⁰ it includes musicians producing hard rock, punk, Oi, hardcore, and metal, notably National Socialist black metal. It is a global subculture. Although most visible in North America and Western Europe, it plays an increasingly important role in cultural politics within Eastern Europe,

8 www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=158443990.

9 Burghart (1999), Corte and Edwards (2008), Futrell et al. (2006a), Simi and Futrell (2006a).

10 Although we address folk in our discussion of Prussian Blue, country falls beyond our consideration in this chapter. This reflects its relative size when compared to rock genres, its unique history that would complicate our general discussion, and our familiarity with country music generally and hate country in particular. Good works on these issues include Mann (2008) and Messner et al. (2007).

South America, and Australia. Producers of white power music have adopted emerging media with swiftness and relative ease, first embracing CDs over albums and cassette tapes, and more recently moving onto the Internet both to facilitate distribution and to seize upon the marketing possibilities of new media, tapping the potential of social media to connect with audiences and increase access to music through streaming audio and internet radio. Not infrequently, labels have ties to established or emerging white nationalist organizations.

Resistance Records offers a great illustration of the scene and its organizational structures and ideological elements. Indeed, as an emblematic label, it has proven to be a vital institution not only within white power music but also for the movement as a whole. Established in Windsor, Ontario in 1993, it operated as a “one-man hate-music distribution operation with a handful of album titles,” but rather rapidly expanded to become the leading hate rock distributor in the US. Legal problems crippled the label, leading to its eventual sale to Willis A. Carto, founder of the Liberty Lobby, and Todd Blodgett, who relocated it to the US and worked to resuscitate it. A year later, the pair sold it to William Pierce, author of *The Turner Diaries* and founder of the National Alliance.¹¹ Like Carto and Blodgett, Pierce believed Resistance Records had the potential to recruit young people to the movement and more easily and broadly communicate its message. As such, the new ownership expanded the label beyond its historic distribution hub, adding a monthly magazine, and established a web presence notable for its scope. While the label has suffered as lawsuits, Pierce’s death, and factionalism devastated the National Alliance, it remains a shining example of the nature of and problems posed by white power music.¹² Labels like Resistance Records are not the only space of dissemination for hate-music cultivation. Concerts and music festivals play a pivotal role in the scene, creating what Simi and Futrell dub “free spaces” that allow participants to express themselves without reservation, validating identities and ideologies.¹³ Music matters to white power because of the ways in which it advances the movement, communicates its ideological messages, and opens spaces for the creation of social networks and identities.

Race, Resentment, and Rage

White power music has no singular origin. It has multiple roots and takes seemingly endless routes in and out of popular culture. It appears in blackface

11 www.adl.org/resistance%20records/introduction.asp.

12 Ibid.

13 See, for example, Simi and Futrell (2010).

on the minstrelsy stage, later in the patriotic songs of the Ku Klux Klan,¹⁴ and then in the guise of country and rockabilly.¹⁵ Most famously, it has favored the oppositional worlds of alternative rock—Oi, punk, hardcore, and metal.¹⁶ It exemplifies the transnational dialogues stitching together white power worldwide and the increasingly translocal articulation of whiteness that anchors white nationalism. Perhaps ironically, it takes shape in subcultures marked by resistance and known for anti-establishment, progressive, and even anti-racist sentiments.¹⁷

Contemporary histories of hate rock almost invariably center their accounts around the British band Skrewdriver and its charismatic lead singer Ian Stuart, highlighting the ways in which the band blended class politics, white victimization, British nationalism, and strident racism into a volatile cocktail that drew on the resentment and rage of punk music and the utopian underground of the skinhead subculture. In a very real way, Skrewdriver racialized Oi music and punk more generally, offering a template of how to repurpose pop stylings and the sentiments of youth subculture. It opened a dialogue first within the UK and then across the Atlantic and into Europe around how music as a cultural technology might be deployed to direct political energies,¹⁸ establishing close ties with the National Front and encouraging violence sonically, and secure niche markets through ideology, founding the record label Blood and Honour. These precedents of invention of genre, exploitation of medium, and ideological opportunism reappear in successive subcultures across national borders: hardcore in the United States, black metal in Europe, and folk in the UK.¹⁹

For us, less important than the actual chronology of white power music are the conditions that make it possible for hate rock to take shape and persistently shift in novel contexts. We have in mind what Dunscombe and Tremblay refer to as the “tipping point,” which transforms “inchoate, oppositional rage” into a potent, mobilizable force that targets abject others: where punks had once “allowed their rage against the status quo to slip between those in power and those without it, the White Power punk tips primarily into a hatred of the powerless.”²⁰ White power music becomes a vector for white resentments associated with globalization, decolonization, deindustrialization, and post-Fordism: a small, marginal expression of a larger backlash against immigration, multiculturalism, and civil rights. Importantly, according to Dunscombe and Tremblay,

14 Crew (2003).

15 Messner et al. (2007), Wade (2007).

16 See Duncombe and Tremblay (2011), Hochhauser (2011).

17 Duncombe and Tremblay (2011), Home (1995), Sabin (1999).

18 Brown (2004), Ridgeway (1995).

19 Spracklen (2013).

20 Dunscombe and Tremblay (2011: 114).

White Power punk's sense of victimization, its valorization of oppositional solidarity, its creation and mobilization of DIY cultural networks, its understanding of the desire of the forbidden and the shocking, and the simple raw emotionality and anger of its expression are characteristics that *all* punk shares.²¹

These elements were the building blocks for more expansive and penetrating dialogues, enabling hate rock to crystallize, gain traction, and eventually become the cornerstone of the movement and the key ideological conduit for it.

Listening to Hate Rock

Hate rock addresses the racist preoccupations and expresses the presumptions of advocates of white power. As such, band names and song lyrics clearly illustrate the findings of scholars concerned with the movement more generally. Grounded in concrete notions of naturalized racial and gender differences, they represent a world of constant struggle, especially an ongoing or impending race war; they celebrate pride, honor, and loyalty; they give voice to a hypermasculine and heteronormative worldview; they picture whites (as a people, race, nation, and/or culture) as imperiled; they present dehumanizing portraits of racial others, especially Jews and African Americans; and they offer critiques of the state of society and the relationship to the nation-state. "Some lyrics," according to Peter Simi,

are very, very explicit, you know, advocating, you know, lynchings and beatings and other, you know, violent acts. But then, you know, it is important to point out that that's not all of the lyrics, that there is a pretty wide kind of cross section within this genre of, you know, white power and neo-Nazi music.²²

The most extreme lyrical themes cluster around racism, anti-Semitism, and homophobia. For instance, songs like "Splatterday, Nigger Day" by Grinded Nig, which depicts an attack on an African American, and "Repatriation" by Final War, which launches an invective against immigrants, clearly illustrate the extremes of white power music.²³ And Midtown Bootboys call for anti-gay violence:

Stop the threat of AIDS today

21 Ibid.: 115.

22 Simi and Futrell (2010).

23 ADL (2002).

Cripple, maim or kill a gay
 We've got to take a stand today
 We've got to wage a war on gays.²⁴

Advocacy of violence has led some critics to describe white power music as terrorism,²⁵ a point substantiated by Aaronson, who asserts that between 1987 and 2003, “members of the white power music scene have been linked to 56 murders as well as thousands of acts of vandalism, assault,” and other crimes.²⁶

Less extreme, though not innocuous, tropes include songs that wax nostalgic about Nazi Germany and Viking society, linking past to present, while laying claims to a virile and romantic versions of a supreme white masculinity. An overlapping theme hails specific heroic figures, often celebrating their sacrifices to the movement and/or race. Other songs extol the virtues of contemporary white nationalism, especially embodied by skinheads, as a way of life. In such music, “There is also a clear emphasis on upholding Aryan values through movement participation, fraternity, kinship ties, and racial loyalty. These lyrics speak of fostering ‘global brotherhood,’ ‘volk,’ ‘white pride,’ and ‘Aryan heritage.’”²⁷ In sum, what is important to note here is that white power music creates an abject, even monstrous, other and an empowered and enlightened self, reiterating some of the most vile and violent imagery directed at people of color, Jews, and gays and lesbians and some of the most romanticized assessments of white (supremacist) agents.

Snapshots of the White Power Music Scene

The social structures and cultural meanings associated with white power music make it ideal for the construction of identity. It not only creates an interactive context for the presentation and articulation of self, but it also provides a set of frames and codes through which individuals can fashion themselves. Futrell and colleagues offer a number of good examples of identity formation in the white power music scene.

You'd be amazed at how many young white kids [are] looking for an outlet, a space, to sort of be something different where they don't have to feel guilty

24 Quoted in Burghart (1999: 1).

25 Ibid.

26 Aaronson (2003).

27 Futrell et al. (2006b: 281).

about being white or act like a nigger to be cool ... we [Panzerfaust] give them that opportunity and provide some direction by helping get them educated...²⁸

I listen to white power music and I still have that feeling of being involved with something as a whole. Listening to music like Max Resist, it's something where I can sit at home alone and even though I know the whole world is against me I can pop in a Max Resist CD and listen to it and go not only is this uplifting me but I know the band's behind it and there are people who have the same CD that forms a community and gives us strength ...²⁹

When I hear [white power music] it ignites something in me. Attending the music shows and being there live is even more powerful. The live shows are energizers for racial pride, they just fill you up with love and hope for the future.³⁰

[The festival] was great. We got dressed up [in Aryan regalia] with all these great white families and that's what was really important about this event ... a chance to build unity and remember why we do all of this, it's for racial kinship.³¹

Music matters to white nationalists not simply for its rhythm or sound, not only because it gives voice to visions and values, but importantly because it provides a material expression to white power. It anchors a scene, opens up space, encourages interaction, fosters the articulation of identity, and creates community. While critics have rightly highlighted the lyrics of hate rock and often linked them to violence, such assessments threaten to substitute a caricature of the scene, its attractions, and its significance. For clearly, what white power music means for its producers and audiences is multifaceted: part ideological, part, interactional, part identification. While white supremacist music now might be best described as marginal, if not deviant, manifesting many of the features of other oppositional musical subcultures, often interfacing, if not overlapping with them, its present formation differs markedly from its antecedents in tone, content, and reception.

Songs for Mary Phagan

Music extolling white supremacy, advocating antipathy towards blacks, Jews, and immigrants, and promoting the defense of the white race (often from a

28 Ibid.: 284.

29 Ibid.: 290.

30 Ibid.: 291.

31 Ibid.

palpable existential threat) is nothing new. In fact, this might describe much of American popular music up into the twentieth century. On the one hand, the minstrelsy tradition—in which actors staged performances in blackface, borrowed and denigrated expressive elements of the African diaspora, used caricatured blackness to make commentaries on racial and class politics, and delighted audiences of white men with their song stylings—arguably constitutes a core strand of American popular culture. On the other hand, as urbanization, industrialization, and immigration changed the face of America, scholars set about collecting endangered musical traditions, seeking pure, uncorrupted, and authentic expressions that required disentangling and freeing white from black stylings.³² This racialized and essentialized splitting would have profound implications for the development of popular music as well as understandings of racial difference that echo down through Asa Carter and hate rock.

A measure of the centrality of white supremacy to popular music in the early twentieth century can be found in Ku Klux Klan (KKK) sheet music. While the KKK has the rightful reputation of being a violent vigilante group that used terror to police racial boundaries and put African Americans in their ascribed social place, the group remade itself in 1915 as a fraternal organization committed to 100 percent Americanism. In the following decade, the KKK skyrocketed to prominence across the US, promoting family values, patriotism, and tradition, while campaigning against modernity, immigration, and progressivism. Public pageantry, from parades to socials, and ritualized secrecy were fundamental to the success of the reborn KKK, particularly its political influence in local and regional elections and the passage of immigration reform at the national level. Not surprisingly music played a key role, communicating values and principles, creating community, and crafting identities of white Americans. In the songs collected by Crew one sees a celebration of America, Christianity (Protestantism), whiteness and, to a lesser extent, denigration of Jews, immigrants, Catholics, and African Americans.³³ As the reformed KKK collapsed under the weight of corruption and disillusionment, most Americans forgot its 100 percent Americanism and the music which accompanied it—so much so that a recent episode of *History Detectives* on PBS featured a segment sleuthing the origins of a KKK recording discovered by a surprised and disgusted antique collector at a yard sale.

After the Second World War, two fundamental shifts reinforced one another: first, American society began a slow and incomplete journey toward racial equality and, second, consumerism and media culture began to reshape self and society. Asa Carter's campaign discussed at the outset of this chapter represented a backlash against these twin forces. In keeping with these deeper

32 Taylor and Baker (2007).

33 Crew (2003).

shifts in racial thinking and cultural production, the terrain of the popular shifted as well, destabilizing the acceptability and in many cases the utterability of overtly racist music. In essence, white power music has become unpopular and yet has remained a vital means through which advocates seek to expand the base of the movement and the purchase of their ideological claims.

Two songs clarify these broader shifts in white power and popular culture, offering keen insight into the scene and its strategies. To foster deeper understanding, we select two songs about Mary Phagan, a young factory worker, killed under mysterious circumstances in the Atlanta area in 1913. The subsequent investigation led to Jewish factory manager Leo Frank being charged with the murder. Labeled the American Dreyfus, an obvious reference to the fraudulent, anti-Semitic trial of a French officer at the end of the nineteenth century, Frank was convicted and initially sentenced to death, which was later commuted by Governor John M. Slaton. Outraged, a group of local citizens, including many community leaders, formed the Knights of Mary Phagan (KMP) to avenge the girl and defend the race. As one speaker said to assembled members of the group:

This sainted girl . . . who, true to her inherent high breeding and the teachings of her devoted mother, gave up her own life rather than surrender that Christian attribute—the crown, glory, and honor of true womanhood into the threshold of which she was just entering.³⁴

Shortly thereafter, members of the KMP kidnapped Frank from the prison housing him and lynched him. None of the participants were ever convicted for their roles in the ritual killing. Frank was pardoned in 1986.³⁵

A folk ballad, “Little Mary Phagan,” began circulating after the trial. It was played at rallies calling for the execution of Frank. Largely a narrative of key events, it paints the young woman as an innocent and virtuous victim, while casting the accused killer as cold, calculating, and alien, an individual who defiled both a young woman and the traditions of region, since he took advantage of her vulnerability and did so on Confederate Memorial Day.³⁶

Leo Frank he met her
With a brutish heart, we know;

³⁴ Quoted in Dinnerstein (1968: 136).

³⁵ Importantly, the Knights of Mary Phagan would be central to the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan, constituting its core membership at its public unveiling in 1915 (Dinnerstein 1968).

³⁶ Snyder (1918). The complete text is available at <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/frank/frankballad.html>.

He smiled, and said, "Little Mary,
 You won't go home no more."
 Sneaked along behind her
 Till she reached the metal-room;
 He laughed, and said, "Little Mary,
 You have met your fatal doom."

While the ballad paints a morality tale, pivoting on familiar themes of good and evil amplified by references to the inhumanity and marginality of the perpetrator, it does not invoke overt anti-Semitic slurs or celebrate the impending violence of retribution. It does not have to. The audience knows that the ballad is as much a racial drama as it is a morality play because media coverage and popular sentiment have already framed it as a young, virginal and honorable woman mercilessly murder by a racial other and outsider—a Jew, an industrialist, a transplanted Yankee (though born in San Antonio, Texas). It was one more text in a broader dialogue about racial justice and social order in which the execution of the former would ensure a return to the latter.

Seventy-five years later, the white power band Achtung Juden would release *Reich Songs, Volume Two*, which featured a photo of the lynching as its cover. The CD, featuring 14 tracks, opens with "The Knights of Mary Phagan," and also includes original songs like "Keep on Fighting," "Burn the Books," and "Our Pride is our Loyalty" as well as covers of "classic" songs by Skrewdriver ("Hail the New Dawn") and No Remorse ("Son of Odin").³⁷ The song is a simple, fast-paced, and hard-driving rock anthem marked by forceful guitars and drums, and guttural vocals. Key passages follow.³⁸

Fetch the Rope
 String up the Jew
 Punish the Abraham
 Leo Frank at the End of a Noose
 ...
 We are the Knights of Mary Phagan
 We are the Knights of Mary Phagan
 ...
 Kill the pedophile
 Reclaim our nation
 ...
 Destroy ZOG, before they destroy you

37 www.micetrap.net/shop/catalog/achtung-juden-reich-songs-volume-p-2564.html.

38 www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6xGPJO1Dc0. Lyrics transcribed by King.

...

We are the Knights of Mary Phagan

We are the Knights of Mary Phagan

Where the ballad reported a current event, here, the author and listener become one of the Knights, empathizing with, endorsing, and enacting the lynching. Violent in imagery and sound, the song celebrates the killing, legitimating the deed through anti-Semitic language and assumptions, which were absent from the ballad. This should not be too surprising given that the name of the band itself translates from German as Attention Jews and makes a fairly explicit reference to Nazism, a reference reinforced by the CD title (*Reich Songs, Volume Two*). To make Frank and the impropriety of his actions stark to contemporary listeners, the band foregrounds the killing and the pathological character of the killer. And more, it reminds listeners that this is not an isolated or historical act, but rather an ongoing campaign by the Zionist Occupational Government (ZOG, or more generally, the Jews). Finally, where the KMP and the ballad itself called for defense of the race and the honor of its women, the track calls for the reclamation of the nation, suggesting that necessary action goes beyond defense to recuperation and renewal.

These two songs highlight a number of important shifts in white supremacy and popular culture. First, where racially charged songs were once accepted and applauded (regionally, if not universally by 1915), today, they are unpopular, marginal, and taboo. Indeed, white supremacy, formerly a shared value and natural fact, has become contested, a persistent structure held under erasure by colorblindness, new racism, and multiculturalism. Second, in contrast with the common-sense narrative or recitation of the ballad, “The Knights of Mary Phagan” offers an argument, rather explicitly advancing racialized rhetoric to make claims about the current condition. Third, the language, tone, and style of the songs expose profound changes. Not only does hard rock (somewhere between punk and metal) replace the fiddle and folks stylings of yore, but the imperiled state of whiteness is more urgent, the action depicted more vulgar and violent, and the references to difference more denigrating and starkly anti-Semitic. Fourth, the regional and racial references in “Little Mary Phagan” give way to a new imagining of race and nation, in which whiteness has more global and transhistorical referents, and can be seen as the foundation for a nation distinct from and opposed to the USA, and in an existential struggle with ZOG (Jews). What we see here is the trajectory of white nationalist deployment of music as a site of propaganda and identity, ideological meaning and community, which in spite of changes in technology or the visibility of white nationalist movements, sits at the core of the movement into our present moment. We also see how the changing

place and presence of mainstream popular culture and the dialectics between cultural integration and white nationalist formation compelled a continued emphasis on counter-cultural production from white supremacist spaces.

Isn't It Ironic?

Asa Carter, whose career and critique opened this chapter, seized upon what he understood to be a fundamental contradiction that many think should make hate rock unthinkable. Rock music emerges from a hybrid space, mixing sonic traditions, cultural behaviors, and racialized bodies.³⁹ For Carter and many others in the late 1950s and early 1960s, these polycultural patterns of integration challenged the rule of Jim Crow and threatened their understanding of race relations, the boundaries of whiteness, and the social order. By and large, producers and consumers of popular music do not consider this origin story when writing, recording, performing or listening to a recent release or personally meaningful song. And much the same is true for participants in the white power music scene.

On the one hand, the commercial music industry, beginning at roughly the moment of Carter's campaign, whitened popular music, reworking its polycultural beginnings for increasingly discrete, if not segregated, niche markets defined by race, class, and gender. As a consequence, rock music does not so much conjure a multiracial social scene or sonic style, as it refers to white artists—the Beatles and Rolling Stones, AC/DC and Rush, Led Zeppelin and Aerosmith—while soul, Rhythm and Blues, urban contemporary, Latin and so forth mark music by and for people of color.

On the other hand, the racial politics of popular music shifted after rock-'n'-roll became white. Since the mid-1990s, the normalcy of rock has been contrasted with the deviancy, hypersexuality, and violence of hip-hop and the oppositional waves of (white) alternative music. In common with many pundits and parents, hate rock holds the former in contempt, viewing it as a degenerate genre and social ill. At the same time, it engages with the latter, drawing on punk, metal, hardcore, and even neofolk to communicate its ideology and hail prospective adherents to it.

While we do not wish to set aside the irony of white separatist and white supremacist music policing racial boundaries and reiterating racial hierarchies, we do think it important to stress two other elements crucial to the white power music scene. First, commercial music came to make and market the same racial categories that Carter sought to defend in his campaign. Second, where whiteness came to displace the polycultural foundations of rock

³⁹ See Lipsitz (2001).

music, blackness has, since the 1960s, remained a social problem and source of moral panics.

Remapping the Musical Landscape

One map of the contemporary American musical landscape might suggest a rather deep, if not complete, separation between various popular styles, whether rock, jazz, alternative, roots, or hip-hop, and white power rock. After all, the latter centers on hate, a coming race war, and imperiled whiteness—themes rarely found in the pop charts, not to mention polite conversation. Such a rendering would, however, misconstrue the contours of mainstream music and its entanglements with race and racism. We do not have room for a detailed history, offering in its place three fragments toward an impressionistic portrait.⁴⁰

Writing in the late 1970s, musician and critic Lester Bangs offered a scathing assessment of the place of race in the underground music scene.⁴¹ Lifting the veil off hipster life and its extremities, he probes an emerging contradiction in the wake of the civil rights movement; most hipsters, like most white Americans, “don’t have to try at all to be a racist.” He recounts a series of incidents and observations that should trouble the avant-garde, but do not. For instance, he notes, in the shadow of the Vietnam War, a long-forgotten band Shrapnel regularly played a song “Hey, Little Gook!” and describes Iggy Pop introducing a song, “Our next selection tonight for all you Hebrew ladies in the audience is entitled ‘Rich Bitch!’” His concern goes beyond shock value and pushing limits:

I opened up a copy of a Florida punk fanzine called *New Order* and read an article by Miriam Linna of the Cramps, Nervus Rex, and now Zantees: “I love the Ramones [because] this is the celebration of everything American—everything teenaged and wonderful and white and urban” ... the same issue featured a full-page shot of Miriam and one her little friends posing proudly with their leathers and shades and pistol in front of the headquarters of the United White People’s Party, under a sign bearing three flags “GOD” (cross), “COUNTRY” (stars and stripes), “RACE” (swastika).⁴²

This linkage of America and whiteness slides with disturbing ease into an embrace of white power imagery, which Bangs insists is about more than getting a rise through performance art. Like the use of Nazi imagery in British punk of the same era, these projects do more to show the limitlessness of white privilege

40 See Burghart (1999) for more examples.

41 Bangs (1979), Kennedy (2012).

42 Bangs (1979).

and the limited capacity of hipsters to revalue white racist imagery. But then, as others in the underground scene suggest, perhaps ascribing sincerity to much of their culture work is giving them too much credit. As Bangs observes, Nico, member of the acclaimed Velvet Underground, who performed “Deutschland über Alles” at CBGB, lamented the loss of a record contract in a later interview:

I made a mistake. I said in *Melody Maker* ... that I didn't like negroes. That's all. They took it so *personally* ... although it's a whole different race. I mean, Bob Marley doesn't resemble a *negro*, does he? ... He's an archetype Jamaican ... but with features like white people. I don't like the features. They're so much like animals ... its cannibals, no?⁴³

At the close of the short catalog of opinion, utterances, and encounters, Bangs has resigned himself to a rather troubling conclusion: “When I started writing this, I was worried I might trigger incidents of punk-bashing by black gangs. Now I realize that nobody cares. Most white people think the whole subject of racism is boring.” Of course, for the artists he discusses and many other hipsters at the time racism was fun, racism was powerful (both as it reinforced and held the promise of upsetting the system). This power, of course, is an unrecognized bridge between the hip, fashionable, and proper experiments of the avant garde on one side and the vulgar, uncouth, and unacceptable stylings of white power on the other.

Speaking in 1997—as a punk and metal icon and a founding member of The Misfits and Samhain before embarking on a successful solo career, and as someone who had emerged from the same context Bangs describes—Glenn Danzig (*né* Glenn Allen Anzalone) sat for an interview with Steven Blush of *Seconds* magazine. While much of the discussion centers on his musical endeavors and business ventures, near the end, the conversation swerves to race, after the interviewer asks him about his past statements that he did not think that there was anything “wrong with being proud of being white.”⁴⁴ Danzig replies,

Why would I not be proud of being White? ... I'm a mix of a bunch of different stuff and so is everybody else. There is no “original” race anymore. As far as me being an Aryan or a racist, anyone who knows me knows that's bullshit. But if there's a race war, what I am going to do? Twenty Black guys with guns aren't going to care that I'm not with anybody.

43 Ibid., emphasis in original.

44 www.the7thhouse.com/news/Articles/seconds44.htm.

Here, Danzig makes an interesting move: I am not pure, but I am white, and in the face of difference I will stand against blacks with whom a future conflict is inevitable.

SECONDS: If you stand for anything, you're considered a racist.

DANZIG: They can suck my dick and die. There's so many double standards. If you're proud and White, all of a sudden you're racist. That's not the case and anyone with half a brain knows that. Unfortunately, we live in a world where a lot of people don't have half a brain. People try to acquiesce to certain groups and then that becomes a reverse inequality.

Double standards and reverse racism, classic code words of white resentment encourage Blush to further redefine racism and Danzig to replace white supremacy with black power.

SECONDS: The ultimate racism is a White person saying to a Black person, "Hey man, you've got so much soul," and patting them on the back.

DANZIG: What is Black? To be honest, Black people aren't black. We're all different shades of brown. Calling yourself Black and calling somebody White has already set up a division. So don't moan about the division later, okay?

SECONDS: The racists aren't the problem anymore; it's the virulent anti-racists who cause trouble.

DANZIG: I'm going to say something very controversial: if you are African-American and you don't want to live by White people, that should be your choice ... The flipside of that is why shouldn't there be areas a Black person can't go? If a White person doesn't want to live with Black people, that's their decision. This is America; do what you want to do.

SECONDS: We teach everyone to love each other and maybe we're being disingenuous; maybe it's okay to hate. Why can't you dislike someone ... ?

As Danzig and Blush conclude they have completely reframed racism, advocating racial segregation and separation (Jim Crow style) in the rubric of colorblindness and abstract liberalism (everyone can make an individual choice). This blend is in keeping with much of what neoconservatives say about race and racism amid a neoliberal backlash against the civil rights movement and an endorsement of white nationalists' embrace of heritage, love of one's people,

and defense of one's race. Not surprisingly, discussants on Stormfront love this interview and hold Danzig in high regard.⁴⁵

Although not as effusive, in a 2010 *Playboy* interview, popular singer/songwriter John Mayer also invoked themes more familiar from white nationalist discussion forums.

PLAYBOY: If you didn't know you, would you think you're a douche bag?

MAYER: It depends on what I picked up. My two biggest hits are "Your Body Is a Wonderland" and "Daughters." If you think those songs are pandering, then you'll think I'm a douche bag. It's like I come on very strong. I am a very ... I'm just very. V-E-R-Y. And if you can't handle very, then I'm a douche bag. But I think the world needs a little very. That's why black people love me.

...

PLAYBOY: Do black women throw themselves at you?

MAYER: I don't think I open myself to it. My dick is sort of like a white supremacist. I've got a Benetton heart and a fuckin' David Duke cock. I'm going to start dating separately from my dick.

Following his invocation of Duke, the former Ku Klux Klan leader and longtime white power provocateur, we have our doubts that quite as many black women loved John Mayer after this was published. His hasty apologies suggest he thought the broader public would not like the man behind the media persona, when they read of his multicultural heart and "David Duke cock." It is quite telling that one can have a schizophrenic relationship with race, embracing, but not desiring, diversity, accepting difference as a fashion statement or marketing campaign, but rejecting it as a pathway to intimacy and carnality. What's worse, it is not simply that Mayer so easily compartmentalizes race, desire, and aspects of himself, but that he so comfortably refers to the central marker of his masculinity in this conversation as an infamous white supremacist: what does it mean to internalize such an identification and declare it so openly to the world? What does it mean that the rhetoric, grammar, and tropes of race, sexuality, and otherness within the mainstream and extreme so often mirror one another?

The point of this remapping is not to argue that John Mayer inspires hate rock, or to locate its origins within the hipster scene of the late 1970s. Rather, we see in these passing comments and entrenched sentiments deeper, ongoing discourses about racial difference, dialogues that call into question progressive

45 www.stormfront.org/forum/t131232.

narratives of being beyond race, and comfortable dissociations around taste and style. Indeed, it may be the case that these anecdotes reveal how shifting racial mores have dictated a renegotiation of what Picca and Feagin (2007) describe as frontstage and backstage performances, of public and private codes of conduct, and how these in turn dictate racial etiquette and self-presentation in a society committed to colorblindness. In turn, they likely suggest how and why producers and performers of white power rock continue to find in pop music the promise of conversion of and crossing over to the mainstream.

Recruitment

On a purely instrumental level, music is about getting people into the movement. For white nationalist activists and leaders the chief appeal of hate rock has been its promise of enhanced recruitment. It offers a hook to draw disaffected white youth into the scene, introducing the key ideological positions of white power to them in an attractive, enjoyable, and approachable form.

In 2004, Byron Calvert, co-founder of Panzerfaust Records, offered a fairly rosy picture of the process as he envisioned it.

Eminem and Kid Rock are not the only working class kids who ha— who, whose experience is a story that, that needs to be told, you know, there's a lot of other kids. Our customers here in Minnesota, if you saw 'em, you probably wouldn't know it. I mean it's, it's high school kids. It's girls in the suburb. I probably do over a hundred emails a day and it's just nuts how many emails I get that are your average 14 or 15 year old kid that came across us by doing a internet search or because he saw a sticker or some friends of his told him about the label. And they go, and they actually read the literature, they read the articles, they listen to the MP3s, they watch the videos, they see what it is we're saying. And it's like they soak it up.⁴⁶

Calvert frames those who create and consume white power music after the model of working-class white sensations Eminem and Kid Rock, embodied by myriad normal, average, and otherwise unremarkable and unrecognizable young people. A vision of the media and multiculturalism colluding to keep kids from the truth, to keep minds closed, and expression regulated lurks just behind his assessment. For when chance or curiosity pierce the veil of acceptable mores and established knowledge, they actively embrace the message. The key, the

46 www.onthemediamedia.org/transcripts/transcripts_120304_hate.htm. Accessed June 30, 2005; now defunct.

challenge, for Calvert and other ambitious producers and organizers, is how to get the message to the masses.

In the fall of 2004, building on this understanding of communication, political organizing, and conversion, Calvert and his then partner Anthony Pierpont launched an ambitious venture through their label Panzerfaust Records. Dubbed Project Schoolyard USA, they sought to get a CD featuring white nationalist music into the hands of thousands of young people, convinced this would grow the movement in an unprecedented fashion, while also expanding the audience and market for the bands on their label. Calvert and Pierpont claimed to have been inspired by an earlier undertaking in Germany in which so called “German patriots” sought to circumvent government regulation of hate speech by distributing free copies of CDs compiling “nationalist rock and roll.”⁴⁷ With this inspiration, Panzerfaust outlined the scope and objectives of Project Schoolyard USA:

As an expression of the increasing level of international solidarity and cooperation between White nationalists, Project Schoolyard has crossed the Atlantic and is being continued here in the U.S. *Panzerfaust Records is pressing 100,000 copies of a pro-White sampler CD to be handed out to White youth from coast to coast in every state, including Hawaii.* Volunteers from every pro-White group and organization in the U.S. have signed up to assist us in this project, as well as numerous unaffiliated individuals, consisting mostly of our customers/supporters who are high school students themselves. These CDs will be handed out in middle schools, high schools, university campuses, shopping malls, sporting events, mainstream concerts, parties, etc ...⁴⁸

In this effort to get the message out, Panzerfaust created what it thought to be a pithy tagline, which encapsulates both this venture and the role many accord music in the movement: “We don’t just entertain racist kids: We create them.”

The sampler contained 20 tracks by established hate rock groups. For the most part the CD works to disguise the ideological content. This approach is very much in keeping with the development of cloaked websites that Jessie Daniels describes in *Cyber-Racism*; in both instances creators veil or hide racist messages behind seemingly neutral content, relying on code and subtlety to hail their audience. The featured bands have names like Bound for Glory, Max Resist, Fortress, Rebel Hell, and Final War: perhaps not original, but not too far from the aggressive and oppositional monikers of many rock bands, especially those which play some variation of punk, metal, or hardcore. Only the group H8Machine might send up a red flag for some. And even the inclusion of

47 www.panzerfaust.com/sampler/about.shtml.

48 *Ibid.*, emphasis in original.

a track by Skrewdriver would mean little to most American teens. Only one with knowledge would know these bands are part of the white power music scene. Similarly, the song titles do not reveal much of the content of the CD. Where tracks like “Thirst for Conquest,” “Ghost,” “Waiting for a Ride,” “Might is Right,” and even “Parasite” sounds like fairly typical rock fare, others, such as “Commie Scum,” “Teutonic Uprising,” or “The Nationalist,” might give a thinking fan some clue of the ideological content of the CD. For all that, only one song, “White Supremacy,” explicitly outs the CD. The producers of Project Schoolyard USA clearly sought to use seduction, if not outright deceit, as means to hook young people, drawing them into the music and the movement surreptitiously.

While the goal—unfiltered access to young people to foster interest and involvement—speaks volumes, the organizational thrust deserves special mention here. Panzerfaust would press the CDs and volunteers, ideally affiliated with established white power organizations, would purchase and distribute them. Reading an online forum dedicated to Project Schoolyard USA, one can almost feel the excitement among participants, who eagerly request copies, look to collaborate with others in the area, identify ideal locations (skate parks and malls are deemed more opportune and better than schools), and strategize (use Halloween to give out this treat anonymously and without suspicion to kids).⁴⁹ And groups like the National Socialist Movement (NSM) endorsed the initiative, reiterating its political import in a webposting: “We encourage NSM members and supporters to get behind Project Schoolyard. Music is another tool in our arsenal for reaching out to our Racial Youth [sic], and it is a tool that should be utilized to it’s [sic] fullest extent.”⁵⁰

For a time, Project Schoolyard USA generated much media buzz and active pushback from the Anti-Defamation League and the Southern Poverty Law Center, both of which condemned the message and tactics of Panzerfaust. Perhaps because of the public spectacle and associated attention, as much as the actual number of CDs distributed, Panzerfaust declared Project Schoolyard USA a success: “it reached thousands of White Youths [sic] all across the world with the message of White survival.”⁵¹ Despite its purported achievements, Project Schoolyard USA marked the end of Panzerfaust, as co-founder Pierpont was condemned for not being white (but rather of Mexican heritage) and for taking

49 www.freemindproductions.com/forum/2265. Accessed June 30, 2005; now defunct. See also the enthusiastic endorsements at www.panzerfaust.com/sampler/endorsements.shtml.

50 www.nsm88.org/articles/project%20schoolyard.html. Accessed June 30, 2005; now defunct.

51 www/tightrope.cc/sampler/index.shtml. Accessed May 7, 2007; now defunct.

a sex tour of Thailand.⁵² Factionalism and the politics of racial purity once more splintered the scene and undermined the movement's organizational advances. Notably, Tightrope Records revived Project Schoolyard USA, pressing a second volume, which originally was freely distributed and more recently has been made available for purchase via its website.⁵³ While Project Schoolyard USA reveals much about how white nationalists think about organizing, communication, and outreach, it also underscores the limitations of using music to expand the movement or even attract an audience to the scene: a bridge was built to the mainstream, but little evidence exists that many opted to cross it and become active participants in the scene.

Crossover

On its face, the thought of creating a white nationalist musical group that would have broad appeal seems absurd. This, however, is precisely what April Gaede set out to do, when she formed Prussian Blue, a band comprising her twin daughters, Lamb and Lynx. The twins made their first appearance at EuroFest in 2001. At the event, sponsored by the National Alliance, William Pierce, then leader of the white power group and director of Resistance Records, extended a contract to their mother, who would also manage the band.⁵⁴ Initially, Lamb and Lynx largely performed folk music, cultivating more of a pop sound over time. Prussian Blue put out three albums and one collection of videos, playing major white power music festivals across North America and touring Europe (2007). The juxtaposition of white nationalism, rock music, and childhood innocence garnered the band much media attention, including two BBC documentaries, a spot on *Primetime Live*, and an article in *Gentleman's Quarterly*.

A telling description of the band featured on its official website in 2008, which read in part:

Prussian Blue is the combination of 14-year-old twin sisters named Lynx and Lamb. Prussian Blue is also probably one of the most controversial up and coming bands on the music scene today. In a day and age when most bands are working hard to remain within self-imposed limits of Politically Correct Thought, Prussian Blue pushes the envelope. Within the fold of White Nationalist Rock, one of the only true alternatives to the corporate music and recording business, these two little girls have filled thousands of their fans with love and hope for the future. Also, within the pro White genre, they stretch

52 www.adl.org/extremism/panzerfaust_records.asp.

53 <http://tightrope.cc/catalog/cds-project-schoolyard-volume-ii-p-756.html>.

54 Gell (2006).

the envelope even more to create and sing songs that are of the unexpected. Personal beliefs and experiences [sic] are delicately woven with upbeat rhythms and poignant lyrics to create something that is guaranteed to catch the listener off guard and create a reaction. Open your heart and your mind to a time and place in the future where Pride in who you are and where you came from, Love for your people and Hope for the future are acceptable for EVERYONE. Open your heart and mind to Prussian Blue!

The brief introduction positions the young duo as oppositional figures. As Davis argues:

It suggests that the band is fighting political correctness and the corporate music industry, while articulating a pro-White message predicated upon love or White people (rather than vilifying racial others). It is also important to note here that the notion about pride and hope for everyone only includes White people.⁵⁵

In common with Project Schoolyard USA, coded language and counter-hegemonic posturing conceal the ideological foundations of white nationalism and make it more palatable to a mainstream audience. A similar pattern emerges in interviews about the name of the band (which is not a reference to Zyklon B and the mass killing of Jews, but the girls' ethnic heritage and blue eyes) and to an infamous photo of the girls wearing tee-shirts emblazoned with a smiley face sporting a Hitler mustache (which was just a joke people took the wrong way).

From the start, Gaede sought to use Prussian Blue to communicate a white nationalist message to a broader public. In the documentary *Louis and the Nazis* she remarks,

I think that Lynx and Lamb's music and their appeal, especially as they get a little bit older, they're going to be an example and they're going to show how being proud of your race is something that would be very appealing to young teenage girls. You know, I mean, what young man, red-blooded American boy, isn't going to find two blond twins, 16 years old, singing about White pride, and pride in your race ... Very few are not going to find that very appealing.

Gaede consciously plays up the physical attractiveness and sexuality of her daughters, the very features of the band that most disturbed many members of the public and some in the white nationalist community.

Recoding white power as white nationalism and racism as white pride and wrapping both in a pretty package, Gaede hoped to move hate rock from the margins to the mainstream. As she noted in an online interview,

⁵⁵ Davis (2009: 5–6).

I think that White Nationalist music needs to make some new directions. We need to ... not always be singing about war and Vikings. You know, we need to come up with some different topics to sing about, and we need to sing more about, you know, real life issues that we're dealing with everyday. And I'd love to see some ... good White poetry like this Kipling [sic] poem and turn it into songs because there's a lot of potential there.⁵⁶

She envisioned Prussian Blue as one of these new directions. She actively constructed the band to forge a new model and to reach a new, broader audience.

Importantly, Prussian Blue replaced the hypermasculinity, antipathy, and coarseness long associated with hate rock with more “poppy,” approachable, and feminine elements. Gaede noted in the same interview,

There are a couple of songs on there that sound—I wouldn't be surprised if a similar sounding thing were on Nickelodeon or on a TV commercial, or used for some kind of promotion for a sitcom. Some of the songs are—like Hey Hey and What Do You Think of Me Now—I think that they've got a lot of potential for crossover into the mainstream.⁵⁷

While Prussian Blue achieved a level of notoriety, it never realized the aspirations of its manager. In fact, like Project Schoolyard USA, the group might be described as a failure. It generated media attention and public outrage, but never had more than a small, if devoted, following. Worse, Lynx and Lamb essentially brought an end to the band when they asked to stop touring and more recently renounced the ideology undergirding the band: “I'm not a white nationalist anymore,” Lamb declared in 2011. “My sister and I are pretty liberal now.”⁵⁸ Similarly, Anthony Pierpont, who had founded and later left Panzerfaust Records in disgrace, has left the world of white power behind him, directing his energies more recently to financing ventures in the hospitality industry.⁵⁹

Unpopular Culture

If Asa Carter had had his way, parents and politicians would have prohibited rock music, putting a decisive end to what he saw as a corrupt musical fashion and arguably more importantly saving the white race from certain moral degradation and cultural decline. Despite his best efforts, rock-'n'-roll did not

56 Quoted in *ibid.*: 80–81.

57 *Ibid.*: 77.

58 Gell (2011).

59 www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-files/profiles/anthony-pierpont.

die, a fact many who make white power music today likely greet with great joy, because it constitutes a core of the social scene and political ideology anchoring the movement today. For all of this, while white power engages with and appropriates pop music for its own ends, it remains wildly unpopular, as evidenced by market share, public outrage and condemnation, and the reaction to it within other music subcultures, perhaps notably in punk songs like “Nazi Punks Fuck off” by the Dead Kennedys and “Fuck the K.K.K.” by the Unseen.⁶⁰

This unpopularity has crystallized across the past century. Where white supremacist music (like overt white racism generally) once enjoyed a warm welcome in public life, especially in areas ruled by Jim Crow and that nurtured the reinvention of the Ku Klux Klan as a mainstream fraternal order, it now largely dwells on the margins, emergent in transgressive and oppositional subcultures. Our discussion of songs about Mary Phagan underscores the decline and marginalization of white power, especially in popular culture. Nevertheless, advocates of white power continue to invest in music with great power. On the one hand, it has proven to be especially fecund, enabling adaptation and elaboration of style and sound. On the other hand, it has fostered endeavors, directed at recruiting kids from the mainstream and at itself crossing over to the mainstream, which move across the moral and political boundaries that keep white power on the margins. For all of its engagements with popular music, hate rock remains unpopular. It is perhaps best described as unpopular culture—that is, a set of cultural practices and cultural productions that draw upon and deploy popular stylings but have little claim beyond a bounded social field on audience, desire, or fashion.

60 Spracklen (2013).

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Chapter 4

Watching TV with White Supremacists: Social Life in Black, White, and Jew

Few of us knowingly watch television with individuals who advocate white power. We do, however, have increasing opportunities to view storylines featuring prominent characters who express overtly racist and white supremacist attitudes, including the Aryan Brotherhood prison gang on *OZ*, the Klan on *Boardwalk Empire*, neo-Nazis on *Sons of Anarchy*, and more recently the racist brothers of the *Walking Dead*. They have emerged as something of a meme, or thematic cluster of meaning, if not a preferred trope, for putting drama in motion and establishing a moral arc for televisual narrative. Even in these more complex and celebrated cable shows, which pride themselves on character development and nuance, they emerge as transgressive, perverse, violent, anti-social, and often hypocritical adversaries. Importantly, they always remain at a remove from their target audience, even though many self-described white nationalists and white separatists take pleasure in them. They are outcasts, for instance in prison or outlaw biker gangs; they are set in another time, namely after a future zombie apocalypse or during prohibition; or they are confined to a specific geography, such as the deep South. All of these features surely comfort viewers (not unlike the fantasy world of the wildly popular *Mad Men*): white racism, where it exists, is extreme, excessive, and marginal; white racists dwell elsewhere; white racists, and hence white racism, are bad. In a real sense, in a sociohistorical moment committed to the entangled ideologies of colorblindness and multiculturalism, such messages reassure as they trace the limits of race and power and let white audiences off the hook.

One testament to the power of contemporary framings of racism can be found in a recent interview with Walton Goggins, who plays a white supremacist on *Justified*, convicted of plotting to bomb a black church, later born again in prison, who then denounces his past. Asked by Terry Gross, host of *Fresh Air*, what it was like to play this character, Goggins replied:

I never believed that Boyd Crowder was a white supremacist, to be quite honest with you. ... It was very important for me as an actor not to play this guy as a white supremacist but to play him as a bit of a Svengali: a person who doesn't

necessarily believe all that he espouses. ... [In one episode] Tim [Olyphant, who plays Deputy U.S. Marshal Raylan Givens] says “Boyd, I don’t think you believe everything that you’re saying. I think you just like to blow stuff up.” And that was very important to me.

Nevertheless, as Crowder, Goggins had a swastika emblazoned on his arm and made racist remarks, an experience he described in some detail:

Honestly, it was awful. ... We did a table reading of this script, and ... immediately after, I felt like I had to say “I’m sorry. I don’t believe any of this. A lot of my best friends are Jewish.” It’s difficult, and it’s difficult to have a swastika on your arm. And I actually wore it home. I didn’t let them take it off. I kept it with me during the process of filming the pilot episode. ... You’re certainly affected by ink on your body, and something as powerful as a swastika and the negative connotations that come along with that. I definitely wanted to feel that, and there were times during the day when I wasn’t working and I was out at dinner, that I would roll up my T-shirt and I would leave the swastika there just to see people’s reactions. And there was one time when I was with Tim, when I had rolled my shirt up just to see what would happen, and Tim didn’t notice it for about five minutes until there were tourists walking through the lobby of the hotel who almost gasped—like, you could hear it, you could hear them step back with their Starbucks coffee in their hands. And Tim [Olyphant] said, “Please, please roll down your shirt. Please. Or I’m gonna have to leave you here alone.”

Goggins’ experience is instructive on a number of levels. In this “time after race,” as Herman Grey calls it, overt racism is taboo and even play-acting it is transgressive: no one wants to be a racist. Enlightened whites, who naturally have friends who are Jewish (or Black or Latina/o), cannot reconcile such ideologies with their own identities. They pull back aghast like the tourists when confronted with illicit symbols or, like Goggins, explain away the values and practices of white power when forced to embody them—this cannot be serious; it must a ploy; it cannot be internalized. And yet, it can be fun, a provocation, a means of getting a rise from an audience. Indeed, white supremacists allow for escapes, alterations to self, and fantasies, which remain safe and ultimately reaffirm the settled and silent operations of race and power today—inequalities persist, frequently in more pernicious and problematic forms.¹

In other words, characters emblematic of white power not only allow some audience members to indulge in the pleasures of representations that openly speak the language of white supremacy and overtly tie whiteness to

1 www.npr.org/2012/01/13/145159926/walton-goggins-playing-bad-boy-boyd-on-justified.

(antiquated) vestiges of superiority, but also for many more viewers they render white racism outdated, anti-social, and disturbing, affirming their enlightenment and taste. As both an iteration of retrograde racial discourse and confirmation of acceptable subject positions, then, such characters and stories distance viewers from and allow them to deny prevailing racial conditions, which overt white supremacy effectively effaces. Such disengagements anchor post-racial worldviews, nurturing racial power and its reproduction, precisely because they prompt (predominantly white) audiences not to see race and racism or discern their lasting significance. As comforting as these uses and understandings may be, they allow us to forget that while few of us knowingly watch television with advocates of white power, many of them do watch television. Their interests and interpretations undermine an easy assertion of colorblindness and encourage a more complex rendering of the racial landscape.

Much of the study of colorblindness and racism has untangled the ways in which it fosters more covert reiterations of racial ideologies, thus reinforcing racial hierarchies in softer, less visible terms.² Less discussed are the ways in which colorblindness, as a hegemonic formation, nurtures the articulation of latent and emergent ideologies. The persistence and growing popularity of white power as an interpretive frame offers a unique occasion to explore these understudied elements. This chapter examines online discussions among, and historical documents produced by, advocates of white power with two objectives. First, it seeks to tease out the preoccupations the advocates of white power bring to television and how these shape the dominant themes in their accounts of the medium. Second, it works to make sense of the relationship between the interpretive frame of white power and colorblindness, arguing that the latter dominant form clears a space for emergent and latent ideologies, while offering them a target to spread their messages and broaden their audiences.

In exploring these themes, we advance the following arguments. Many, if not most, white supremacists see television as a powerful threat. From their perspective, both the medium and its messages imperil whiteness, posing an existential threat. Indeed, it endangers whites because of who they believe controls it (Jews), what they assert it communicates (messages that denigrate whites while celebrating blacks), and what they identify as guiding ideologies (multiculturalism and race-mixing). Of particular concern within this racist subculture is the impact of television on children and youth. While speaking from the margins and in terms many would reject as extreme or inappropriate, their concerns with corruption, breakdown, and peril resonate with more normative and accepted interpretations of the ills of television today.

2 Bonilla-Silva (2003).

The Problem with Pop Culture

Popular culture poses fundamental problems for many advocates of white power. And television is no exception. The media, including television, are biased, hinging on what David Duke, former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan and Louisiana State Representative, describes as “a double standard,” rooted in a “very antiwhite racist attitude.”³ Don Black, founder of stormfront.org, underscores and expands this position:

the bias is certainly directed against the white majority in this country and toward white culture throughout the world, where white people are typically characterized as being oppressors and exploiters of other races ... nonwhites are typically portrayed as being intelligent, sensitive, and often the victims ... So there is a liberal bias ... the disproportionate Jewish influence.⁴

Indeed, for many advocates of white power, Jews control television and use it to orchestrate their diabolic plans, communicating anti-white messages, while championing blacks and race mixing. Or as one discussant in thread on the most offensive television programs in history put it, “I have had it with Glee. Gays, Jews, and race-mixing with some teen pregnancy (a Christian White girl, naturally) thrown in for good measure.”⁵

Television troubles, then, because it has visible impacts; far from self-contained stories or flat images, its messages reshape social subjects and structure their worldviews. “Television IS A JEWISH MEDIUM,” exclaims putnamvt, “They have control of it from the start. It ossifies people, passifies [sic] them, hypnotizes them, transforms them from humans into consumers, marching idiot-like to the Jew-advertising drumbeat.”⁶ Alienated, emptied, inhuman, viewers become zombies or puppets. Or as Fritzie Weiss would prefer, “The Jewtube comes up with some of the most despicable propaganda ... I can’t even watch the Jewtube anymore as I get sick ... But sometimes will watch the thing to see the mindset and subliminal messages.”⁷ Such propaganda, often described as the active process of brainwashing, conjures for many white supremacists images from Orwell’s *1984* or Stalin’s Soviet Union. It distorts the world, distracting whites from their interests as a race and from the immanent dangers threatening them. For Holocaust denier and neo-Nazi

3 Swain and Nieli (2003: 172).

4 Ibid.: 155.

5 The Most Offensive Shows in TV History. Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t311123.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

Ernest Zündel, Jewish control of the media “is truth. A lethally dangerous truth.”⁸ Hence, watching television is never mere entertainment; it is always about racial politics in an overdetermined context in which far from privileged whites find themselves besieged and endangered. In large part, this is why watching television with white supremacists matters so much.

Kill Your TV

Not surprisingly, in light of this larger frame, some white supremacists do not watch television, calling for others in the subculture to follow their lead. Discussion threads with titles like “TV kills society so will society kill TV” and “Happiness is Life Free from Television” speak to the virtues of turning off or away from the television.

Kill the TV, throw it out the window ... We need to engage socially, not atomize. We need to action-oriented rather than passive mass media [sic] consumers and sockpuppets [sic]. TV is the Jew-run state social control mechanism par excellance [sic].⁹

Killing one’s TV promises escape and emancipation. Several discussants at stormfront propose a rather simple equation: freedom from television equals freedom. After he stopped watching television, Geborenzuschaukein detailed the life-changing transformation (emphasis in the original):

I have since enriched my life with education and real people. I learn what I want to know, when I want to learn it, not when the media tells me. Free from TV means that *you* choose: you choose whether or not you want to expose yourself to the propaganda, the lies, the filth ... and my critical thinking skills have greatly improved without the MSM [mainstream media] influence.¹⁰

Without television, then, one is a free agent, empowered for self-improvement. To get to this juncture requires an awakening or a breaking of a biochemical addiction that few white supremacists have yet to achieve.¹¹

8 Zündel (1997: 17).

9 The Most Offensive Shows in TV History. Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t311123.

10 Happiness is Life Free From Television. Retrieved October 10, 2010 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t752887.

11 Ibid.; TV kills society so will society kill TV? Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t825568.

What (not) to Watch

Despite these protestations, many advocates of white power watch TV. This raises an important problem: what should a white supremacist watch?

It is perhaps easier to highlight what not to watch on television. In part, this is because, according to Venus-16, “TV is nothing but a bunch of kikes, coons, perverts, and race mixers.” More than the characters, for many white supremacists, the messages put them off. For instance, black comedies are bad, but not simply because blacks have prominent roles. To make this point, one discussant contrasted *The Jeffersons* and *Good Times*:

The Jeffersons, besides being uppity negroes with a particularly obnoxious paternal figure, was chosen mainly for its hard push of race mixing. While *Good Times* was about a struggling black family, the jewish writers just had to push their own agendas such as gun control, “black is good, Whitey is bad”, etc.

Even shows focused almost exclusive on a white family, can prove problematic, as the same commentator continued, “As for *Roseanne*, it might ostensibly be about a White working class family, it openly mocked White people/values by praising homosexuals, jews, ‘affirmative action.’” Similarly, according to Blue Eyes, *L.A. Law* was little more than anti-white propaganda.

It was a real jewfest promoting multi-culturalism and race mixing. The lawyers were a mix of jews, mestizo, negro, and females. One of the few white lawyers in the law firm had a blonde, attractive ex-wife who fell in love with the firm’s negro attorney. This same negro attorney had nailed one of the white female attorneys in an earlier episode. It showed scenes of them in bed together, snuggling, kissing, hugging, etc.

There was also a jew divorce attorney who would end up bedding his female clients. Of course his female clients were all white.

Pretty disgusting.

Not surprisingly, groundbreaking programs like *Roots* and *The Cosby Show* take on a whole new meaning at Stormfront. While the former was intent on rewriting the past and brainwashing Americans and the latter projected upper-class white mannerisms onto blacks, “dress[ing] up chimps as humans,” neither presented the world as it is but offered a fantasy to assuage discontent and push multiculturalism.¹²

12 All quotations in this paragraph from The Most Offensive Shows in TV History. Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.com/forum/t311123.

Anti-white/pro-black messages combined with race-mixing and Jewish control render much of television programming offensive; however, it is not just about race. Sexuality also proves pivotal for many discussants, which should not surprise given that sociologists Abby Ferber and Jessie Daniels have clearly demonstrated the ways in which race, gender, and sexuality anchor and animate white supremacist discourse.¹³ To offer but one list of offensive shows (from whiteworkingclasswoman) as means of quickly showing the centrality of intersectionality:

“Jewy” Springer Show (obvious)
 Flavor of Love Charm School (a group of nigresses fighting all day)
 Deggrasi Jr High (racial mixing and homosexuality about 13 year olds)
 King of the Hill (I take special exception to that one since I am a Texan)
 Chappelle Show (nig filth)
 Queer as Folk and its dyke counterpart the L Word
 The Simpsons
 Rosanne (disgusting jewess)
 MTV (the whole network)
 Nickeloden (whole network)
 Ellen Degenerate
 John Stewart Show and the Colbert Report

Here, the author includes shows celebrating race-mixing and centering on African Americans, networks with multicultural programming, and shows hosted by or about gays and lesbians. Race, gender, and heterosexuality together determine deviance, abjection, and impropriety. To offer two further examples, *Sex and the City* was called out as “Whores and their fag friends. Why else would there be a Jewish actress in it?” and the management and transformation of white masculinity made *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* especially problematic for many discussants. Thus, while race might matter most or most obviously, it takes on greater significance for white supremacist viewers in conjunction with and as set in motion by gender and sexuality.¹⁴

If little contemporary television recommends itself, that does not mean there are no “Good TV Shows for White Folks.” In fact, an entire discussion thread exists at stormfront to list and debate those programs “worth watching for WNAs [white nationalists] and their families.” One thing is immediately clear from this forum: it is like stepping through a time warp or creating a nostalgic playlist of old-time television. That is, earlier shows from a bygone era do have a certain appeal for white supremacists, including comedies, like *Gilligan’s Island*

13 Daniels (1997), Ferber (1998).

14 Ferber (1998).

and *The Honeymooners*, westerns, such as *Gunsmoke* and *Bonanza*, and children's programs, like *The Adventures of Johnny Quest* and *The Wonderful World of Disney*. Not only do these shows center exclusively on whites, they celebrate a vision of the heterosexual nuclear family with marked gender roles and a clear sexual hierarchy, glossed on this forum as white values. Importantly, almost all good or pro-white shows were in production before the reverberations of the freedom struggles had an impact on the culture industries, before the end of the Vietnam War, before feminism and gay rights, before the culture wars and multiculturalism, before globalization. In other words, they come from an era when whiteness, masculinity and femininity, and heterosexuality were largely uncontested, from an era before the fall. Or, as one discussant put it, "When CBS did their 'purge' of 'country' shows in the early '70s that was the point at which TV went anti-White."¹⁵

Not all shows worth watching are now off the air or relegated to TVLand, a cable network in the USA that plays reruns of classic television shows. Reality and "fact-based" programs have clear appeal. Part of the attraction appears to be the sense that such shows lack bias or ideological framing. DanJunior, for instance, likes National Geographic programming, because "They simply show the facts, and are devoid of liberal political agendas." The praise for *Cops* seems to fit with this description as well: an authentic glimpse of the mean streets and the police officers who patrol them. It likely does not hurt that it focuses obsessively on urban dysfunction and transgression, confirming existing stereotypes. Another set of shows in this category deserves mention: work or, better, dangerous work reality shows, like *Ice Road Truckers*, *Deadliest Catch*, and *Ax Men*. Not only real or factual, these shows focus exclusively on white protagonists battling nature, exerting their manhood, and proving themselves through their labor and their bodily exploits. Or, to borrow from one discussant, "It should be noted that both of these professions [timber harvesting and fishing] are among the most dangerous in the world, and that in both shows the work crews ... are noticeably WHITE." Again, gender and race form a potent narrative core that resonates with the discussants.¹⁶

Identification with particular characters sparked a key debate in this thread. Specifically, discussants sparred over how to regard Archie Bunker and *All in the Family*. Some of them championed the character as a working-class hero who speaks truths that are now unspeakable, which could have come from their own mouths, while others chastised their peers for taking text out of context, for *All in the Family* challenged social norms, parodied racially conscious whites, and worse, from their reading, was produced by Jewish communists. Thus, a

15 All quotes in this paragraph from Good TV Shows for White Folks. Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t233328.

16 Ibid.

positive white character with which one can identify is not enough to make a show pro-white or good for whites to watch. A similar debate broke out over *Sons of Anarchy*, in another forum, with a segment of discussants finding the show “bad ass” for its inclusion of white supremacist characters and others dismissing easy identification with caricatures that malign the movement and mock its principles.¹⁷

Open to Interpretation

While white supremacists who watch television find little to praise and much to condemn in contemporary programming, they find deep meaning and satisfying allegories in select shows. *V* is one recent example.¹⁸ Opening a discussion thread on the show, -Chaos- remarks, “I find amusing the parallels between the V’s and Jews, and how things work in the real world,” and then offers a two-page summary of the show. TriRÿche echoed his conclusion, asserting “it IS about (Zionism) the Jews!” Others thought it less about ZOG and more a critical commentary on current politics. whiterider pronounced it decidedly “anti-leftist” and an indication of “growing discontent with the Magic Negro’s [sic] regime,” finding eerie similarities with ongoing events, including the use of health care “to dupe the masses,” manipulation by the media, and “fake Hate Crimes.”

Discussants, of course, picture white supremacists as the freedom fighters, struggling against the oppressive oligarchs and alien invaders. Whether wrapped in a conspiracy theory or not, they draw particular attention to a world turned upside down in the show and every day. Importantly, “political correctness” constrains free thought and public discourse. On the show, Father Jack delivers a sermon that reveals deep truths about the invaders and the world they have wrought and the powers label it hate. “The ones preaching ‘hate’ are actually the good guys.” The analogy is plain: in a colorblind, multicultural society, “we” speak the truth about race and it is labeled hate.

Apparently not everyone at stormfront.org tuned into to *V* for the storyline or the politics. The actresses sparked interest and dialogue as well. At least one poster watched it for “the athletic blonde girl,” while another was originally put off by the “mulatto V leader.” The latter comment caused something of a stir, pushing the conversation in a predictably sideways direction—as is all

17 Discussion of Archie Bunker in the thread Good TV Shows for White Folks. Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t233328; discussion of *Sons of Anarchy* can be found at *Sons of Anarchy*. Retrieved October 12, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t829667.

18 All quotes in this section refer to the discussion thread, *V* (2009) (TV series). Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t688621.

too common on the site. Where MisanthroPunk disputed the claim, whiterider indicated she was Brazilian actress Morena Baccarin, and PhoenixHawk interjected she was “Probably mostly spashish ... Not a typical mestizo, as ... the short brown trolls with the dull eyes that infest my state.” Even where race seems irrelevant, it becomes a defining feature, key to making sense of the show and establishing correlations with everyday life. Fixing the racial identity of the actress is no small matter because beauty, value, and goodness follow from category and placement. And yet, it does not matter that Brazil was a former Portuguese, not Spanish, colony, but only that the actress can be typed as white, salvaged as distinct from the abject racial other encountered daily. Indeed, exceptions and things out of place pose problems that disrupt narratives and must be explained away for the resolution of apparent contradictions. In much the same way, discussants puzzle over how a show exposing Zionist conspiracies could be written and produced by Jews.

While *V*, and any other of a number of programs, are open to interpretation at stormfront.org, not all participants embrace allegorical readings and conspiratorial thinking. As one commentator said, “I think it’s all reading too much into a sci-fi show about alien invaders.”

Save the Children

Even though white supremacists watching television may find solace in select shows, the medium remains dangerous. Nowhere is the threat more clearly pronounced than in discussions of children and television. While programming generally troubles them, television shows directed at children are found to be especially problematic. Moreover, because of these dangers, they often outline rules or strategies to guard against the ills of television.

Nickelodeon and PBS come under steady assault for their programming, which discussants read as endorsing multiculturalism and corrupting children. *Sesame Street*, for instance, is often singled out for its inclusion of diversity and what is read as an open endorsement of race-mixing. In a discussion of the most offensive shows in the history of television, one discussant opined,

I remember watching that as a small child, and seeing chinese and mexican kids playing with white kids. That was something I never seen in my small north Florida town in 1987. I remember thinking, “did they go to another country to film this?” Looking back, I never seen all white kids or all black kids together, there was all races playing together. Subtle brainwash [sic], but effective.¹⁹

19 The Most Offensive Shows in TV History. Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t311123.

Similarly, according to 88aussie, *Dora* “encourages the one race theory.” That is, its characters, imagery, and narrative have an agenda to convince viewers—here, innocent children—that “the world would be a better place if we morphed into a single race, its a jewish thing [sic].” Other discussants lamented her poor English and wondered if a show title “Jamal” featuring “ebonics” could be far off. Whatever, the precise reason, the discussion of *Dora* suggests a consensus that it is “filth” or “garbage” which few “on this forum would let their child(ren) watch.”²⁰

Responsible parents, committed to what they might term raising racially conscious children, have not only reacted to the content of specific shows, but actively detailed how to protect their children. A 2002 speech by Jan Cartwright broadcast on the Aryan Nations’ American Dissident Voices, lectured listeners on the best practices for “Raising White Children in a Multicultural Society.” She identifies television as one of many dangers, including public education, children’s books, and video games:

My children do not watch television. Upon occasion we do view the news ... We discuss what we’ve seen, and they know to read between the lines. We can’t even trust the educational channels ... Children are too young to split apart the truth from the “glitz and glimmer” that is on television, to read between the lines and look behind everything. If they’re just sat in front of the Almighty Television they’re lost.²¹

While difficult, these measures put children on the right path, “the true path our race must take.”²²

Rachel Pendergraft, in an undated commentary at the self-proclaimed official website of the Knights Party, USA, a recreation of the Ku Klux Klan led by Thomas Robb, who also serves as a pastor at the Christian Revival Center, reiterates and extends the position laid out by Cartwright:

As Christian racialists we must continually stay on guard in our homes—where the enemy most often attacks. They are looking for new recruits into their new multi-racial, bi-sexual, plastic monetary one world system ...

Those in the racist movement should continually strive to monitor their home’s television viewing. America’s future lies in our children and it is our

²⁰ *Dora the Explorer*. Retrieved December 9, 2011 from www.stormfront.org/forum/t826749.

²¹ Cartwright (2002)

²² Cartwright (2002). See also Griffin (2004: 137–143) for a portrait of a family that embodies these principals and is, in his words, “Raising Honorable White Children.”

responsibility as parents or future parents to safeguard our children's mind before ideas of abortion, homosexuality, racemixing, globalism, or euthanasia take root.

She proceeds to enumerate a set of "Guidelines for safe TV watching," including: know what your children watch, watch television with them and discuss its messages, and use offensive shows to highlight the anti-white, anti-Christian agenda.

Pendergraft and Cartwright emphasize responsibility, vigilance, and future focus. They position children as vulnerable and in need of protection. Both endorse cultivating a racially conscious, white supremacist, critical literacy. Where Cartwright discourages television viewing, Pendergraft, perhaps more of a pragmatist, encourages using programming to unmask biases she perceives in the media. Both aim to protect the white race by protecting its future, echoing one of the key refrains of the white power movement today, the 14 words, initially coined by David Lane, a leading figure in the white nationalist movement and founding member of the Aryan-inspired organization the Order: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White Children." The focus on the family and the protection of progeny underscores the entanglements of race, gender, and sexuality in the white power subculture today, an intersection Pendergraft makes much more explicit in her linkage of "abortion, homosexuality, race-mixing, globalizatism [and] euthanasia." Again, television matters because white nationalists understand it to pose an ever present, existential threat, one which parents must actively confront in order to protect their children and the future of their race.

Conclusions

Rarely do many television viewers stop to think about how a white nationalist or white supremacist might interpret the medium and its messages. Listening to the accounts of white supremacists offers a stark counterpoint to the purported colorblindness of the contemporary moment. They remind us of the ways in which racial rhetorics reinvent themselves, taking on novel appearances to communicate seemingly antiquated ideologies. These latent and resurgent forms of white supremacy speak less and less in the language of hate and more and more in terms familiar from multiculturalism (heritage, racial uplift, diversity). Nevertheless, when applied to television, white supremacist frames continue to emphasize theories of Jewish control, the overt anti-white/pro-black biases of the medium, the fundamental dangers of race-mixing, the breakdown of tradition, and the corruption of youth, reading in the medium and its messages an existential threat of grave importance.

It would be comforting if we could separate these views in a discrete domain, set apart from how other critics talk about television and its impacts; however, it is only false comfort. On the one hand, liberal media bias and the elite agenda of Hollywood regularly surface in neoconservative commentaries on the state of American culture, which read popular culture generally and television specifically as denigrating tradition, family, and propriety in favor of transgressive celebrations of hedonism, promiscuity, drug use, and homosexuality. On the other hand, the culture wars, which have raged for the better part of three decades, have routinely targeted diversity and multiculturalism, actively defending white perspectives and privileges in an ongoing, if little recognized, race war. In keeping with the decorum of the day, few of these voices speak of a Jewish conspiracy, but they do fret about corruption, damage to youth, and the future of (white) America. These are homologous projects, marked by distinct rhetorics and styles, which are directed at a common end: maintaining differences that make a difference (race, gender, sexuality) in a context that denies that difference can have any significance because, to turn a phrase, we all are colorblind here now.

Importantly, it is precisely the predominance of post-racial framings, typified by the ideology of colorblindness, that anchors resurgent formulations of white supremacy today, energizing its interpretations of television. On the one hand, the success of the civil-rights movements and derivative projects like multiculturalism, which have brought an end to overt racism, encouraged the celebration of attributes that make ethnic groups unique (culture, heritage, identity, and the like), and established the importance of the recognition and respect of differences, have led many advocates of white power to recast their rhetoric and revisit their strategies. As multiculturalism and colorblindness drain power, violence, and history out of white racism, whites reimagine themselves as one more racial or ethnic group, a unique people. For white supremacists, or, in this softer reworking, for white nationalists, one of the key problems with television, as outlined in this chapter, is that it threatens whites as a distinct people, who possess a unique culture and whose traditions warrant defense. On the other hand, the very dominance of a post-racial worldview opens an oppositional space within which to formulate cultural criticism and present an alternative social vision. The colorblind screen, because of its pervasiveness and popularity, in turn, becomes a primary site to interrogate racial common sense, illustrate what white nationalists understand to be its ill effects, and defend white power.

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Chapter 5

Racing Hollywood: White Power, Audience Response, and Cinematic Spectacle¹

Without a hint of irony, Paul Kersey, best known for the blog he maintains, *Stuff Black People Don't Like*, titles his review of popular film *Hollywood in Blackface*.² Seemingly unaware of the cultural significance of minstrelsy or how blackface reiterated white supremacy, while dehumanizing African Americans, Kersey, like many white nationalists, uses popular culture to invert the reigning racial formation, describing it as Black Run America. For Kersey, Hollywood has played a fundamental role in creating images that distort reality, glorify blacks, and denigrate whites. “Watching movies over the past twenty years,” he reflects, “has convinced me that something strange is occurring Hollywood, where a conscious effort is underway to craft positive examples of Black people in big-budget films.”³ At the same time, he continues, “the agenda” of cinematic tastemakers has actively worked for “the gradual demasculinization of the white male.”⁴ Not surprisingly, Kersey, who believes Hollywood has let loose “a beast of monumental proportions” on the nation,⁵ waxes nostalgic for films like *Point Break*, in which he notes happily “not one Black person has a speaking part,”⁶ and praises Turner Classic Movies for preserving “living memories of Pre-Obama America.”⁷ While it may be tempting to set aside the content and the tone of Kersey’s tome, his perspective resonates well with the interpretations of contemporary cinema voiced by many advocates of white power.

Indeed, white nationalists watch films and offer (often impassioned) readings of them. And like Kersey, they use race to assess the moral, political, and social

1 Sections of this chapter have appeared in print before, in King and Leonard (2006).

2 Kersey (2011).

3 Ibid.: 15.

4 Ibid.: 36.

5 Ibid.: 304.

6 Ibid.: 36.

7 Ibid.: 213.

messages conveyed in Hollywood movies. They understand such films to be (anti-white) propaganda, which distort history and society; misrepresent the true (racial) nature of whites and people of color; degrade, if not demonize, white achievements and actors; encourage whites to embrace blacks as desirable, equal, and, to their minds, even superior; promote race-mixing, particularly interracial sexuality and multiculturalism; and sanctify the fictions of anti-racism, the celebration of civil rights and the commemoration of the Holocaust, which many of them think never happened. This is not to say, of course, that they universally reject Hollywood, for they prize those movies that they read as offering positive images of whiteness and/or endorsing the value of white nationalism.

Given the prominence of film as a nexus for the representation and reception of race, the ways in which advocates of white power interpret it merit special attention. In this chapter, drawing on blogs, discussion groups, and other virtual writings, we examine the central themes of their interpretations of Hollywood cinema. In particular, we explore a key preoccupation of white nationalist readings of film, namely the danger of racial mixing as embodied by interracial intimacy and multiculturalism. To further illustrate the power of cinema as a space for the articulation of white nationalist ideologies, we offer a case study of the *Matrix* trilogy, films that sparked heated discussions among advocates of white power, unpacking their critical readings of whiteness, blackness, Jewishness, and the state of the USA at the start of the twenty-first century. Against this backdrop, we turn our attention to films interpreted as pro-white, probing possibilities of the media for the movement.

The Dangers of Mixing

Within white nationalist discourse, race-mixing—and the associated promulgation of multiculturalism—leads to the corruption of whiteness, moral bankruptcy, and social breakdown. “The standard representation of ‘race-mixing’ is one in which Black men and white women are the principal actors,” notes Jesse Daniels. “Indeed, this is arguably the central metaphor within this discourse. Every publication, and virtually every issue, contains some reference to this particular configuration of ‘race-mixing’.”⁸ In, “A-List Movies: Less Race-Mixing Means More Profit,” blogger Jeff Davis not only identifies race-mixture and interracial sexuality as a central narrative theme within the history, but celebrates the audience resistance against this genocidal propaganda. On the one hand, he uses ungrounded generalizations to assert that “Hollywood and race-mixing go together in the popular mind like Siegfried and Roy, like Milli

8 Daniels (1997: 122).

and Vanilli, like Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin. Every year the film industry spews out degenerate, race-mixing soft-porn flick after degenerate, race-mixing soft-porn flick. Rare indeed is the Hollywood starlet who is not forced, at some stage in the beginning of her career, to bare her bouncing boobies in the name of 'diversity'..." On the other hand, again with little foundation, he asserts, "Comparatively few flicks these days show black males flat out porking white girls. Those that do, don't do very well. But these films have all been box-office as well as artistic flops, and have dropped out of sight to the 99-cent DVD bins at Wal-Mart."⁹

According to Barbara Perry, "the hostility toward interracial relationships is ultimately grounded in the essentialist understanding of racial understanding of racial difference."¹⁰ That is, "boundary crossing is thus not only unnatural but threatening to the rigid hierarchies that have been built around these presumed differences."¹¹ Given the purported stakes concerning white purity and the future of white race, this obsession is not surprising. For example, in "Racial Hygiene: Eugenics vs. Mongrelization," an article that appeared in *Racial Loyalty*, white nationalists articulated the stakes given their worries about the: "Poisoning [of the] White gene pool, pulling down the White Race down slowly but surely under we will be a miserable and shameful mass of idiotic brown zombies, docile, stupid and ready to be willing slaves."¹² An article in *The Thunderbolt* (January 1979) described the threat in the following ways:

Mongrelization of the White race is the single greatest danger facing the world today. It is a far greater threat than an atomic attack from Russia or a depression. We could make a comeback from such temporary disasters, but we could never breed the White Race out of interracial mongrels.¹³

Although seemingly dated, this sentiment remains a cornerstone of white power thought and action.

In *White Man Falling: Race, Gender and White Supremacy*, Abby Ferber identifies interracial sexuality as an "obsession" within white supremacist discourse, which sees it as a "threat to the borders of white identity."¹⁴ She cites a *National*

9 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from <http://downwithjugears.blogspot.com/2007/09/does-race-mixing-really-fly-in.html>; Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.whitecivilrights.com/?p=228.

10 Perry (2004: 88).

11 Ibid.

12 Quoted in Daniels (1997: 123).

13 Quoted in Ferber (1998: 90).

14 Ibid.: 111.

Vanguard article that describes integration as “just a code word for race-mixing. Civil rights for Black men do not mean equal employment opportunities; they mean equal enjoyment of opportunities with White women.”¹⁵ As Feber argues:

Throughout white supremacist discourse, black male sexuality is described as dangerous and animal-like, a threat to the maintenance of the racial boundary. For example, a photograph in *National Vanguard* depicts a black male and a white female nude, embracing. The caption beneath the photograph reads “Race mixing ... Blacks crave it.” The accompanying article asserts, “Lust ... may be too gentle a word for the maelstrom in the black man’s brain!” The black male is portrayed as always ready to attack. White supremacist publications are filled with articles about black crime, especially rapes of white women. Photographs of black men are often published with captions such as “wanted for brutal murder and rape.”¹⁶

This focus, she continues, has long served as a means to “motivate White men to join the movement” and as reflective of ideological notions racial purity,¹⁷ Ferber also connects this obsession to power and control: “Interracial sexuality represents the loss of this control. White men are assumed to have natural rights to White women. ... This discourse suggests that interracial sexuality threatens White masculinity and privilege.”¹⁸ Within white supremacist thought race-mixing is seen as “tainting the white race,” with the introduction of “those reviled deficiencies ... of the ‘mud people.’”¹⁹ As Barbara Perry notes,

Race-mixing is deemed to be yet another symptom of the loss of white power and identity, since it violates the sacred order of the established hierarchy. Moreover, it directly threatens the perpetuation of the white race Consequently, miscegenation elicits calls for enforced racial purity as a means of correcting the emerging imbalance in the relationship between whites and nonwhites. The latter must be put back in “their place”—by force if necessary.²⁰

Discussion of *Save the Last Dance*, a film that explores interracial dating and the conflicts that arise, albeit within the black community, when individuals step across racial lines sexually, offers a good example of the perceived threat of

15 Ibid.: 90.

16 Ibid.: 105.

17 Ferber (2007: 18); see also Ferber (1998), Perry (2004), Swain (2002).

18 Ferber (1998).

19 Perry (2004: 88).

20 Ibid.: 88–89.

interracial intimacy. Several respondents emphasize the damage of these films on the psyches of white girls, encouraging them to become race traitors.

I couldn't sit through that steaming pile of diversity crammed drivel ... because this situation resonates all too well with my own personal experiences. The girl I'm seeing right now has had sexual relations with about 3 blacks in the past, and has even stated before that she prefers black men I can only imagine that it was movies such as *Save the Last Dance* that made her feel this attraction towards negroes because there is no other way around it. If the media told people that dog sh*t tasted like Ice cream, people would be grabbing their pooper scoopers en masse and scooping the sh*t up. There is no way this whole proposterous black male image could have made it on its own merits. Look at what blacks have going for them, bald heads, can't speak English, ugly, big noses, big lips, nappy hair, low IQ's etc ... Now can you imagine if a white guy had those same attributes, do you think anyone would want to go out with him then? Hell no they wouldn't! The whole thing is so retarded, but the only thing about this that gives me solace is the fact that movies like this usually bomb at the box office, proving that America, despite its liberal attitudes still doesn't accept this kind of degeneracy as being normal.²¹

Similarly, in another conversation about this film, several discussants emphasized the destructive message in teaching white girls to be attracted to black savagery.

I see your point ... I haven't seen the last dance, I saw the preview and that was enough for me. I have teens and I sure don't want them to watch another movie that makes it seem alright for a white girl to be ***** lippin' with a (cool) ***** , you know what I mean. I would not even have this movie in my house much less pay money to watch it and show it to my kids. Be cool but, be aware; our time will come again when they will be put back in their places. I live in a town in Kentucky and the ones here know where they stand, (most of them anyway.) Keep the faith guys !!²²

I did see *save the last dance* with some friends a while back. I, unfortunately, did not see the previews or know what the movie was about. I can tell you I cried at one point when I saw the main character hit on that girl. I was so disgusted I left the movie during the scene promoting pre-marital, inter-racial sex. If it weren't for the fact I had a few good friends with me, I would have left if they had not been with me (but the film was educational as far as learning the technique of propaganda).

21 Albanian-American, available online at www.stormfront.org, February 26, 2004.

22 Star, available online at www.stormfront.org, December 21, 2001.

I can tell you any white student who has gone to a REAL ghetto school finds themselves faced with the truth. Not the pretty picture painted in that movie. You wouldn't believe how many of those students know the truth (the smarter ones at least) but are too scared to say anything. Have hope for this generation, as we are not all blind.²³

In short, *Save the Last Dance* epitomizes Hollywood cinema and its capacity to craft false images and in turn brainwash whites. In particular, the film, like pop culture more generally, seizes upon interracial sexuality to market its harmful messages, threatening civilization by making race-mixing cool or appealing to today's youth, especially white women. At least, that is the assessment offered by many white nationalists.

Almost inevitably discussions about Hollywood turn to the origins of these misrepresentations emphasizing the agenda underlying images of interracial intimacy. For advocates of white power, Hollywood films, far from mere entertainment or simple commercial ventures, represent an assault on the white race because of its promotion of race-mixing. They read them as part of a broader race war and larger Jewish conspiracy. A discussion of *Honey*, for instance, links its release and *Save the Last Dance* to a broader Jewish agenda.

Well it looks like the dirty Jews are back at it again, with their newest piece of Black male on White female racemixing piece of crap. The film "Honey" appears to be a "Save the Last Dance" spinoff, the White girl (played by Jessica Alba) was brought up by her parents to do ballet, but instead she wants to be a background dancer in rap and hiphop videos. So a dance choreographer (Mekhi Pfeifer) takes the White girl under his wing and teaches her how to to dance and act Black in order for her to fit in with the Black lifestyle she has chosen for herself. At first she falls for some White music promoter who later ends up hitting and abusing her, so all the negros come to rescue her from this evil White guy. So in the end the White girl and the negro end up falling in love together. In the trailer there seemed to be numerous interracial sex scenes. I saw the trailer for this in the movies the other day and I nearly vomited from disgust.²⁴

Central to this argument is that inherent in white masculinity is the role of protector, which operates from the assumption that white women are incapable of defending themselves from the sexual advances of black men (rapists). "White men are viewed as the rightful defenders of white women, children, and families."²⁵

23 hail1488, available online at www.stormfront.org, December 21, 2001.

24 Available online at www.stormfront.org, September 3, 2003.

25 Daniels (1997: 64).

As such, a white nationalist discourse not only focuses on the race war, and protecting white women and children from black and brown criminals (rapists), but in protecting these same individuals from the cultural corruption that poisons white minds and bodies. Frequently, white nationalists cast the dangers posed by Hollywood cinema in patriarchal terms, regularly referring to the importance of parental intervention, especially by fathers who have a moral, spiritual, and racial obligation to protect innocent children, especially their naïve daughters, from the now popular black male. In keeping with a broader call for family values, this reading of the ills of popular culture and current cultural corruptions also stresses the centrality of racial boundaries, knowing one's place in a racial-gender order, and the need for vigilance. Otherwise, race mixing, interracial intimacy, and sexual violence perpetuated by predatory black males will prevail.

Here lies a central element of the white nationalist chatter surrounding popular culture, evident in the discussions about race-mixing within the Hollywood imagination, all of which centers the white female body as requiring protection from the naturally violent, hypersexual, and criminally minded black male.²⁶ “Nowhere have whites’ fears been more palpable than in whites’ historical relationship with black males. No other group has been so narrowly defined by their sexuality than have black males,” writes Perry, “The presumption of black male as sexual predator continues to underlie racial difference and racial violence in the contemporary era. In fact the myth of lascivious, rapacious, and insatiable black sexuality is perhaps one of the most enduring themes in United States culture.”²⁷ Whether examining mainstream media representations or political discourse or the articulations of white nationalists, “the image of the black sexual predator is the cultural lens through which whites perceive blacks. And this is an image that is apparent throughout white-supremacist discourse.”²⁸ Commenting on *The Princess and the Frog* (2009), Lautoka argues that the film depicted the prince as a “black man with Caucasian features” in an effort to make him “more appealing to little white girls,” which is not only psychological and culturally threatening but in fact puts white women in danger since “some of whom will get raped and killed when they go out looking for a ‘real’ black prince.”²⁹ As Cornel West writes, “white fear of black sexuality is a central ingredient of white racism.”³⁰ And this anxiety anchors white nationalist readings of Hollywood cinema, intensifying their insistence on policing the color line, maintaining racial boundaries, and as we discuss subsequently, pushing back against the cultural crossings associated with multiculturalism.

26 Ferber (2007: 19).

27 Perry (2004: 90).

28 Ibid.

29 Lautoka, available online at www.stormfront.org, November 27, 2009.

30 West (1994: 86).

The Threat of Multiculturalism

Of equal importance, white nationalists hold multiculturalism in contempt and identify Hollywood as key force in its broader popular appeal today. They conceptualize multiculturalism as an effort to promote diversity, acceptance, and equality, and by extension to displace whites and denigrate whiteness. Importantly, from their perspective multiculturalism fosters integration, offering an intellectual foundation for race-mixing that embraces interracial intimacies. In an essay that he posted on Stormfront, eye-for-knowledge described the ways in which multiculturalism operates in contemporary America, particularly within popular culture and Hollywood.

Today in American pop culture multi-culturalism is widely accepted, embraced, and engraved by media into the minds of the unsuspecting American masses. On every media outlet the message of greatness in multi-culturalism is being spoon fed to the people, and nowhere can this be seen greater than in the popular culture of America. What is hardly touched on, or seen in the media is the consequences of living in a multi-cultural society. An under current of crime, disease, ignorance, and tolerance have plagued America since it became integrated on a massive level. All of this leading to the death of western culture.

From music to movies the blending of cultures can be seen in America. In movies like: *Guess Who*, *Beauty Shop*, *Save the Last Dance*, *O, Fools Rush In*, *Coming to America*, a mixture of different cultures is presented in a positive light. ... Revolutionist and writer David Lane paints a bleak picture for the future of white America: Let it be understood that the term "racial integration" is only a euphemism for genocide. The inevitable result of racial integration is a percentage of inter-racial matings each year, leading to extinction, as has happened to the white race in numerous areas in the past. As the white remnant is submerged in a tidal wave of five billion coloreds, they will become an extinct species in a relatively short time (3).

The fact that white Americans are not only losing control of America, but also being wiped out of existence is known and encouraged by American pop culture.³¹

Diversity is a threat. Multiculturalism reflects a deeply anti-white ideology invested in the celebration of difference. And Hollywood places a significant role in the public embrace of diversity and its celebration. Advocates of white

31 eye-for-knowledge, available online at www.stormfront.org, April 14, 2005.

power routinely reject films that they read as promoting cultural respect and interracial understanding as politically correct propaganda.

For example, in a short discussion about *The Blind Side*, a film that chronicles the story of Michael Oher, an African American youth, adopted by a white family, who eventually joins the NFL, MisanthroPunk criticizes the film for its distortions and its manipulation in advancement of a multicultural agenda.

Awww, isn't that sweet? They see a stray negro on the street, and they take him in—just like a little lost puppy! And they help him “fulfill his potential,” because dontchaknow that all young black men have “potential,” it's just those awful, under-funded schools that keep them from realizing it.

And wouldn't ya know it, the White family who took this boy in are led to “some insightful self-discoveries of their own.” Isn't that precious? ... I know Hollywood specializes in P.C., anti-White propaganda, but they've outdone themselves with this s**tstain of a movie.³²

Similarly, Unermüdlich, in a post entitled “Multicult propaganda on steroids,” laments *Remember the Titans* (2000) for representation of black-white relations. A story of the integration of a high school in Virginia, the film focuses on the trials and tribulations facing its football team once black and white players are forced onto a single team. Ultimately, the film portrays the team as coming together in spite of racial difference, succeeding because of its diversity, a fact that elicited the following points: “The entire movie is the most over-the-top, transparent attempt at using film as a propaganda tool to push the notion that ‘diversity is a strength’ that I've ever witnessed. I don't see many movies, and this kind of tripe is typical of why.”³³ Another discussant found the multicultural core of the film equally troublesome because of its attacks on the white majority.

Perhaps more than any other Hollywood movie, *Remember the Titans* (2000) reveals the template for the planned replacement of the American majority. Ostensibly a heart-warming tale about a group of high school football players working to overcome racism in turbulent times, the barely buried subtext is that whites should gladly—altruistically—hand over everything that they value to blacks. ... No opportunity is missed to show that the world is a better place when blacks replace whites. The lesson for American society in general is clear.³⁴

32 MisanthroPunk, available online at www.stormfront.org, November 2, 2009.

33 Unermüdlich, available online at www.stormfront.org, February 9, 2010.

34 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.toqonline.com/2009/11/remember-the-titans.

Multiculturalism, far from a neutral path toward tolerance or a positive policy fostering inclusion, is read here as a reiteration of anti-white ideology that is genocidal at its core. As Ferber, Daniels, and Parry have observed, the dangers of race mixing, as embodied by interracial intimacy and multiculturalism, lie in the threats that white nationalists read into them: they imperil whiteness and white power. Film, as our foregoing discussion has detailed, proves particularly problematic precisely because it complicates perceptions of difference, humanity, and social possibilities and challenges efforts by advocates of white power to naturalize their reading of the social world.

Hope for a White Future? *The Matrix* and Beyond

The *Matrix Trilogy* has fostered extensive commentary among white nationalists. In chat rooms and online film reviews, white nationalists have offered numerous critical assessments of the *Matrix Trilogy*. Dubbing it “the Jewtrix” or “the Zogtrix,” they read it as “an enemy production” or “fag-darkey propoganda,” created by two Jewish Marxists (one of whom several participants described as a transvestite) to brainwash white Americans.³⁵ Significantly, the *Matrix* trilogy confronts and challenges white nationalists, while affording them occasions to reiterate their central ideological preoccupations, including miscegenation, race-mixing, blackness, Jewishness, and the state of America.

Racial mixing, as noted above, troubles white nationalist commentators. On the one hand, white nationalists are obsessed with the ancestry of Keanu Reeves, who portrays Neo in the series. On the other hand, the mixed-race cast and the future they represent disgust them.

Although they cannot agree, white nationalists express deep concern about the racial make-up of Keanu Reeves. Personal experience leads not silent to conclude, “Keanu’s mother is English, and his father was some blend of Hawaiian and Chinese.”³⁶ I’d be inclined to say mostly Hawaiian, because I know a half-Hawaiian girl at school who looks as white as Reeves does.” CyberFacist believes Reeves to be so white in appearance that he can pass with ease: “Yes, I know Keanu is a whole mix of things, but his Mr. Anderson is just average joe sixpack white guy.” Beatrix elaborates on this, noting the telltale signs that reveal his true nature: “If a kid who has never seen him before in Bill and Ted’s Excellent Adventure sees him in this or in Speed, they could assume he’s white. I think he is part Samoan and part white, or something like that. Anyone can tell from his eyes and his slight tan.” While Inhilicon disputes Beatrix’s conclusions, s/he follows her logic: “I

35 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

36 All quotations from the Reloaded Forum thread in this paragraph available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

don't think he has a particularly distinguishing tan, but his eyes are certainly Asian-esque. If his non-white parent was Samoan, he/she was probably already mixed. Reeves appears to have no more than a quarter non-white in him.”

Importantly, the concern over Reeves bleeds into consideration of other actors and characters. “Actually Neo (Keanu Reeves) is half-Asian and Trinity might not be Aryan as well.”³⁷ And others wondered, “is trinity a jew in real life ... with that hideous nose job that I couldnt stop looking at ... Maybe the oracle is half jew/half negro.”³⁸

Arguably more troubling is the racial mixing embodied in both its characters and its vision. Most white nationalists would concur with Der Henker: *Revolutions*, like the trilogy generally, “had far too many mudpeople... .”³⁹ Moreover, *Matrix Reloaded*, according to Kim, is “jam packed with race mixing and ‘tribal’ rhythms”; and, she continues, the rave scene features “white girls and black men, all wet and grinding together to the ‘cultural’ beat.” CanadianSkin agreed: “Matrix 2 made me sick. The amount of mudskins was too much for anyone to ignore. I think that hollywood has shifted their aim. Now they are trying to make white people accept that we will not exist in the future.”⁴⁰

Zion: Or Fear of a Multiracial Future

Whereas the diverse cast and their racial identities elicit speculation and disgust among white nationalists, Zion exemplifies both present ills and an imperiled future. Through discussion of the *Matrix*, white nationalists make it clear that both present problems, and their worsening in the future is intrinsically linked to diversity and people of color. In the estimation of not_silent, “Zion look[ed] fairly muddy to me in the trailers.”⁴¹ For many white nationalist commentators, the physical appearance and racial composition of the underground city correspond to and embody the threat to whiteness posed by racial and sexual difference. Jack Thorn understands Zion not so much as a place as a metaphor: “the underground revolution of tar babies and homos is actually called ‘zion.’” “Zion is near the Earth’s core—where there is more heat. Ah yes, Jewish hell! Makes sense now doesn’t it?” As links between past and present saturate these websites, white nationalist critics offer their racist commentary about contemporary America through their discussion of the trilogy. “Zion was like

37 M731, May 28, 2003, Reloaded Forum, www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

38 RacialAwakening, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

39 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t98144.

40 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

41 All quotations from the Reloaded Forum thread in this paragraph available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

walking into downtown Richmond. Negroes everywhere, only here, they had all the white women. The ‘black power fist’ seems to be the salute in Zion. And of course, this movie leaves you knowing two things. Only minorities of every creed are smart enough to break free from the Matrix, and only they are smart enough to lead. Only white people are evil enough to create the matrix and maintain it.” Not to be outdone, Coldstar further articulated the connection between the present and future. “I hope that they [whites] come to realize that this futuristic ‘Zion’ is growing up around us (above ground) and choking out good whites everywhere.”

Particularly troubling to white nationalist critics is the rave in *Reloaded*. Almost universally, this scene, especially given the predominance of black, Asian, and mixed-race dancers and the rhythmic music, evokes disgust among white nationalists. In the extreme, commentators at stormfront.org described the rave as “people jumping up and down like tribal niggers,” an “interracial enema,” and “the jews ultimate fantasy global racial jungle orgy.” Importantly, commentary on this scene reinforces more general interpretations of Zion and racial mixing:

The Jew World Orders fantasy of the future, a multicultural cesspool jungle sex-dance fest ... In this City of Zion you see a giant slimy cave undergrounded decked out with soulless filthy slimy concrete and steel. The inhabitants are 90% non-white—a total racial genetic dung heap ... You see mulattos of every racial type jumping around in a sweaty greasy orgy of mad gorilla drum beats in filthy bohemian clothing—hippy rags—it looked to me ... I would imagine the underground cave stinks of rotting sewage and multicultural garbage ... Welcome to Zion—Jew York City. They all make black power fists in the air—hello to multiculturalisms victory. Zion is in the center of the earth nearly, a Real multicultural hell.⁴²

Similarly, Kevin Perrell focused on Zion as the basis of his condemnation of its racial politics:

For starters, as in “Reloaded,” “Revolutions” portrays Zion as a mostly negroid, infested dark shithole, with all sorts of the color brown well represented. The movie features three niggers or other nonwhites, usually Asian, for every White. With the exception of Neo, Trinity, a captain, some elders on the Zion council, the Train Master, the Merovingian, a short red-headed woman who gets knifed by Agent Smith, and a couple of other White Zion commoners, there are no other Whites in this movie!

42 RacialAwakening, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

Zion has loads of niggers, both male and female, leaders, grunts, a few Asiatics and that's it. The muds come in a variety of shades, many are leaders in the human crusade and have no problem putting Whitey in his place.⁴³

Focusing not only on the scene's glorification of race-mixing, particularly through sexual contact, the discourse used the scene to highlight fears about an interracial future, one where whites would have no place; civilization, proper values, and morality would also be absent because of the predominance of people of color. In their estimation, Zion embodies a possible future without a white nationalist revolution, albeit a future glorified by Jewish Hollywood. In his review for *Vanguard News Network*, T.C. Lynch emphasizes these points:

About twenty minutes into "The Matrix Reloaded" I was feeling sick to my stomach—literally. The scene was in "Zion," the last bastion of the human [sic] race. Picture the ugliest industrial junkyard on the planet and then drop it down a hole to the ninth circle of hell.

Morpheus, played by the ugly, fat, pock-marked, gap-toothed Negro Laurence Fishburne has just delivered a speech in that deep, resonant, over-modulated, phony-sounding stage voice that Negro actors are wont to use—an affectation that leads me to think that the speaker only half-understands what he is saying.

Then the jungle drums start beating, and we are treated to an excruciatingly long dance/orgy intercut with the lovemaking of Neo (Keanu Reeves) and Trinity (Carrie-Anne Moss, already looking like a crone with a facelift or two). More than 90% of the revelers are non-White: Negroes, Orientals, Mystery Meat. There were even Polynesians with face tattoos. (Or maybe they were just record store clerks from L.A.).

I did not spot any sombreros or bandoliers.

Then, in close succession, I was treated to a spider-strand of spit glistening between the mouths of Trinity and Neo and the slow-motion spectacle of a blue-black, dreadlocked African primitive shaking himself like a wet dog and showering his partners with droplets of sweat. I gagged. My lunch was halfway up my throat before I could control the reflex. ... Then I realized: the human race has ALREADY come to this. The world is already close to 90% non-White, and since there are no real barriers to non-White immigration, the only thing

43 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/lettersOct-Nov03/110703perrellmatrixrevs.htm.

that stands between us and Zion is ... time. Zion is the end of our present road of migration and miscegenation.⁴⁴

In other words, the disgust directed at the *Matrix* trilogy focused on its celebration of miscegenation and multiculturalism in the future as well as the ways in which the values evident in the films and the lived experience of whites in the present moment mirrored the world of Zion. It was not merely a futuristic (and disturbing) racial dystopia or an example of Jewish propaganda, but a glimpse at the hell that defines contemporary society: "I hope that they come to realize that this futuristic 'Zion' is in fact already growing up around us (above ground) and choking out good whites everywhere."⁴⁵

Jews

Many white nationalists seize upon the trilogy, which was written, directed, and produced by Jewish Americans, to discuss what they perceive to be the imaginings and influence of Jews upon contemporary American social structures and cultural industries. Indeed, individual observers see the films as typical of "Jewlywood,"⁴⁶ containing at best "Jewish undertones,"⁴⁷ or constituting at worst "a Judeo-Multicultural sewer."⁴⁸ From the multiracial cast to the vision of the future given material form in Zion, as the comments in the proceeding section suggest, the Jewish media is determined to erase the pure white male through elevating blacks and promoting race-mixing within popular culture. For some, it is not simply that these images are personally problematic or ideologically suspect; rather, they illuminate something deeper about racial power (read Jewish control), directing attention to what the media cannot admit and what the masses cannot see, namely ZOG, the Zionist Occupational Government. Lynch noted how "appropriate that this decadent and debased world is called 'Zion,' because the Jews are primarily responsible for promoting it."⁴⁹ Fsolution offers a similar interpretation:

44 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/lettersOct-Nov03/111103lynchmatrixreloaded.htm.

45 Coldstar, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 17, 2003.

46 Grand_Inquisitor, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t98144.

47 XxXDmanXxX, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

48 Racial Awakening, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

49 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/lettersOct-Nov03/111103lynchmatrixreloaded.htm.

If you havent seen this movie DONT WASTE ONE SINGLE BRAIN CELL WATCHING IT ... it was created by ZOG as propaganda ... the less you see the better! turn off your TV. FREE YOUR MIND FROM ZOG! The TV *IS* the matrix! watching it puts you in a fake world created by ZOG, eventually you live totally in the world and fabricate your own world around it! you begin talking like the ZOG TV tells you to ... you buy the stuff the ZOG TV tells you to ... fight ZOG! save your ZOGBUCKS!⁵⁰

Blacks

If Jews embodied an imagined, generalized threat, controlling the media, while distorting the shape of reality, blacks enter into white nationalist commentaries as sources of contempt and ridicule. Ugly images of African Americans become metaphors for describing the complexities of the film. Kim notes that as (white) audience members tried to follow the Architect monologue in *Reloaded*, “I think we were all sweating like a nigger trying to read.” More frequently, observers turned to the black body to reiterate demeaning stereotypes and reinscribe white power. Individual characters or actors often centered such comments. Lynch thought Niobe to be “a Negress with the world’s biggest lips.” Others not content to simply exaggerate physical features and accepted, naturalized assessments of African Americans went further. The actor playing Link (Harold Perrineau, Jr.), according to *RacialAwakening*, was not only untalented, but physically, he was “goofy ass cromagnon nigger with a Humungous gorilla nose, thin dreadlocks, and black/red lips so big you could build aunt jemimas kitchen on them” as well.⁵¹

Not surprisingly, denigrating commentary about the “other” body easily slides into disparaging, racialized assessments of broader issues:

The whole movie is filled with hideous noses. It distracted me the amount of gorilla noses, or the weird multicultural mixtures all over the movie. The movie was 99% cool nigger, 99% multiculturalism bez dah savior, 97% evil whitey, and 3% good whitey.⁵²

In addition, evaluations of acting ability function largely as racist judgments about intelligence and character. For example, after viewing the final installment of the trilogy, Gnosis noted: “The ‘dialogue’ sucks indescribably. There are all those negroes who talk with a negro accent like uneducated negroes talk in real life ... why do the nigs keep saying philosophical or ‘deep’

50 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t98144.

51 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

52 Ibid.

rhetoric they would obviously never say in real life?”⁵³ And RacialAwakening concurred:

All the nigger characters try to act smart and noble, but they mess it up and it makes them look like cheesy ass actors. God the nigger acting was so bad ... trying to talk all intelligent comes out as gorillas being trained to act like a cross between geeks with attitudes and military robot personnel.⁵⁴

While offering a number of critiques, reflecting a spectrum of racial propaganda, the bulk of rhetoric is linked together by the overarching belief that the *Matrix* trilogy is anti-white, “Jew-inspired”, pro-black, hip-hop propaganda. The links between the films and Jewish control of America, as a means to deprive of the white man his god-given rights, is continually referenced on these websites. Moreover, the fears about race-mixing and hatred of miscegenation facilitates the opposition to *The Matrix*. Along with the general hatred for Jewish Hollywood, these films are blamed for encouraging white girls to sleep with black man, thereby demonstrating that Jews and blacks are working in cahoots to eliminate the white race.

Whites

Arguably more important to white nationalists than both Jewishness and blackness is whiteness. For many who adhere to this racial lens, the trilogy is biased against whites. It casts them as the villains, the “evil white devils” of a nightmarish, multicultural future. Strasser, for instance, observes,

It is rather sad actually. Here’s this film featuring martial arts (fight choreography by Yuen Woo-Ping!), state of the art CGI, an apocalyptic science fiction setting ... and Monica Belluci ... and it’s nearly ruined (for me) by the Wachoski brothers Hip Hop propaganda (read: anti-White racism).⁵⁵

Likewise, KazigluBey understands the basic message of the trilogy to be “anti-white, the future is going to be all mud so deal with it.”⁵⁶ Other commentators reflect not only on the films but also on the more general condition of Euro-America. RacialAwakening laments a recent trip to Wal-Mart prior to viewing the second installment of the trilogy. Wal-Mart was peopled with

53 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t98144.

54 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

white trash ... fat blobs or hobbling on canes. The white race is doomed. If it isn't because we are fat slob, hobbling on canes, it's the best of us mixing with the lowest of humanity: multiculturalism—this sick new disease pushed on us by the most powerful force in the world—the international mass media of music, news, and entertainment. The jew World Order.⁵⁷

This opposition not only focuses on the coloring of Hollywood films, and white celebration of this fact through financial, cultural, and aesthetic investment in Jewish/black cultural productions, but the reversal of power inside America's fictitious and real worlds. "One whole sequence seemed to exist only to show the Negress Captain Niobe humiliating a White male captain by showing her superior piloting skills ... the fact that the average negro has about half billion fewer brain cells than the average White and reacts at a much slower rate to stimuli just go to show that this is science fiction." The power/racial hierarchies are all backward. "When Zionist fight off the sentinels, we see slow-reacting blacks and browns manning the guns, while Whites see to the reloading."⁵⁸ Moreover, Samhain laments the demonization of whites and the film's glorification of blacks: "all bad guys are Whites or machines (controlled by a program played by White person)."⁵⁹ Later, "The idealist White Step-n-Fetchit [the Kid] grovels before and is dressed down by some sort of Mongloid-Australoid hybrid who is his fearless commander." The central message of the trilogy, according to many white nationalists, is the end of white power, the demise of the natural order of things: whites "must get used to taking orders from, fighting for, and dying for racial inferiors."⁶⁰

America

White nationalists read the trilogy not as three interconnected and entertaining movies, but as powerful commentaries on the racial state of the United States of America. Indeed, if Zion is a kind of metaphor for the ill effects of racial mixing, then, for white nationalists, the films together underscore the imperiled present in which they live. As mikhaelis remarks, "I have seen the future of America and it is Zion. And it will end the same way, decimated by foreign hordes."⁶¹ Steel outlines in greater details the analogies between the films and the endangered future of (white) America. *Matrix Reloaded*, he asserts,

57 Ibid.

58 Lynch, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

59 Samhain, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

60 Lynch, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

61 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

is really an allegory for what America has become—“America Reloaded” if you will ... America Reloaded, too, is a pale imitation of the original. America Reloaded glorifies blacks at the expense of whites. America Reloaded is superficial and preoccupied with action. America Reloaded is endless babble with a pretense of sophistication, underlain by a reality of decay and moral depravity ... America has become Zion ... “Matrix Reloaded” and America Reloaded are both racist in the extreme, in that they vainly glorify one race over another, far out of proportion to reality. No amount of propaganda will make blacks the intellectually superior being depicted in either.⁶²

Another commentator also focuses on the dangers of film like these in its glorification of blackness, of a multicultural agenda:

I became aware, during the film that a majority of the major characters were played by African Americans. Neo and Trinity are white, and so is Agent Smith, but consider Morpheus; his superior Commander Lock (Harry Lennix); the beautiful and deadly Niobe (Jada Pinkett Smith), who once loved Morpheus and now is with Lock, although she explains enigmatically that some things never change; the programmer Link (Harold Perrineau); Link’s wife, Zee (Nona Gaye), who has the obligatory scene where she complains he’s away from home too much, and the Oracle (the late Gloria Foster, very portentous). From what we can see of the extras, the population of Zion is largely black.

It has become commonplace for science fiction epics to feature one or two African-American stars, but we’ve come a long way since Billy Dee Williams in “Return of the Jedi.” The Wachowski brothers use so many African Americans, I suspect, not for their box-office appeal, because the Matrix is the star of the movie, and not because they are good actors (which they are), but because to the white teenagers who are the primary audience for this movie, African-Americans embody a cool, a cachet, an authenticity. Morpheus is the power center of the movie, and Neo’s role is essentially to study under him and absorb his mojo.⁶³

Kevin Perrell concurs, although he focuses on how *The Matrix* project is facilitating a multicultural America. “Now, from the all-important racial perspective, this movie really has some metaphors and will only hasten to legitimize multiculturalism for the masses.”⁶⁴

62 Ibid.

63 Steel, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t68827.

64 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/lettersOct-Nov03/110703perrellmatrixrevs.htm.

And here is the ultimate importance of the *Matrix* trilogy for white nationalists and multiculturalists alike. The films are read as an allegory for the present. Importantly, these readings affirm the articulations of whiteness and power through denial and deflection, reiteration and recitation.

The Possibilities of Pro-White Film

Of course, advocates of white power almost universally like some recent films. In particular, they speak in positive terms about Hollywood productions that they find affirm whiteness and ultimately that they read as endorsing their racial ethos. They express special fondness for heroic period pieces, war films, and movies centered around a white protagonist battling the system.

For instance, white nationalists praise *Falling Down*, a film that explores white male anxiety and victimhood, for properly depicting “the reality of living in a multiracial hell hole”⁶⁵ and for offering a pro-white message of fighting back against multiculturalism and the savagery of people of color. Similarly, *Braveheart*, described by one discussant as “the white nationalist masterwork,”⁶⁶ prompted numerous positive assessments for its treatment of whiteness and its vision of white civilization, purportedly uncommon amid the multiculturalism of the contemporary moment.

I think Braveheart was great. The fact than in PC ZOG America the enemy has to be evil Whites – the English, I just take that as an unpleasant fact of life. The movie is great because it is great propaganda, propaganda hits the heart and souls of our White people, don't get all hung up on historical accuracy, we are trying to stir our people to fight, resist, not plod through history as just an honest refutation of facts ... Also, note that the hero connects with the common man against corrupt elites who are concerned with their own money and power, the common people are virtuous, that's the theme.⁶⁷

In common with a spate of historical fictions, from *Troy* to *King Arthur*, pro-white films are those that provided the basis of discussing central tenets of white nationalism and importantly provide a lens for rearticulating notions of white victimhood and the importance of combating the devaluing of whiteness within popular culture.

65 Ted Roach, available online at www.stormfront.org, September 19, 2003.

66 Retrieved 31 December, 2013 from www.whitenationalism.com/cwar/brvhrt.htm.

67 john robinson, available online at www.stormfront.org, January 16, 2006.

Pro-white films also advance images that resonate with the ideological commitments of white nationalism. *Black Hawk Down* (referred to by one reviewer as a “white nationalist treasure”⁶⁸) is arguably the most popular example of such a film, embraced by white nationalists for its “racial realism” (its willingness to portray blacks as both racist and perpetually violent) and its authentic representation of white male heroism. While celebrating the film for what they perceive as its truthful representation of Somalis—whom Rivers refers to as “apes,” “animals,” and “jungle beasts”—as “irredeemable villains,”⁶⁹ the focus of his review, and the praise central to the overall discussion about the film, is its representation of whiteness as physically/intellectually superior, heroic, and ultimately victorious. “I loved the fact that there was a White hero force fighting a black evil force, and they didn’t have to throw in a bunch of minorities with the good guys to ‘even things up.’”⁷⁰ Ulver concurred, noting the larger social-political messages of the film: “There’s very good reason, why it WAS NOT able to be ‘Best Picture.’ So non-PC, I saw blacks leaving after half the movie. It was beautiful. A chilling reminder, of why we should NOT be placing brave, white warriors, in hell-holes, to police social cesspools.”⁷¹ As with much of the discussion on Stormfront, the commentaries about *Blackhawk Down* provided a moment to celebrate white manhood, to justify racial logics, and to offer praise for a movie for its refusal to adhere to political correctness and multicultural acceptance. In this regard, for discussants, it told the truth about the animalistic instincts and savagery of black people and the heroism of white men. Similarly, Mark Rivers, in his review of *Black Hawk Down* for the *Vanguard News Network* describes it as “‘Black Hawk Down’ might just as well be called ‘Brave White Men versus Stupid Niggers.’ It’s just that good.”⁷² He goes on to celebrate the ways in which the film centers and authentically represents white American manhood: “Dozens of clean-cut, all-American White soldiers are shown fighting the black scourge, braving enemy fire and carrying out their mission with expert precision and heroism. For once, they are not misrepresented along racial lines like a WTC tribute statue.”

Finally, pro-white movies celebrate what white nationalists envision as white culture. *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy offers a key example of such a film. One reviewer on VNN typifies such assessments of the film:

68 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.whitenationalism.com/cwar/movlst.htm.

69 Rivers, retrieved 31 December, 2013 from www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/v1/movie82.htm.

70 VNNfan, available online at www.stormfront.org, January 23, 2002.

71 Ulver, available online at www.stormfront.org, January 23, 2002.

72 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/v1/movie82.htm.

I found myself moved to tears in many places. Not just because of sad events in the story, but because this movie is such a magnificent epitome of the greatness of our race and civilization that it underscores all that we have lost. The novels epitomize our Nordic myths. ... See this movie for a glimpse, here and now, of the kind of White culture we are working to create in the future.⁷³

The fantastic fiction underscores that the positivity of popular film derives from both their effective contributions to ideology and propaganda and their affective possibilities for belonging, inspiration, and identity.

In short, pro-white films run counter to the currents of Hollywood: they reject multiculturalism; they value cultural purity and affirm racial boundaries; they properly represent differences; they celebrate white heroes and white culture. They provide a realistic presentation of a world of white dominance, white power, and white manhood; they offer a truthful interpretation of racial hierarchies, something that, according to white nationalists, “Jewish Hollywood” refuses to provide to viewers as part of its plan of “white genocide.” Just as they see Hollywood pushing miscegenation and multiculturalism, they read sporting cultures as fostering a similar worldview, one that outrages and angers white nationalists immensely.

⁷³ Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com/v1/movie75.htm.

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Chapter 6

Hating the Playa: White Nationalism and Sport in the Contemporary USA

At the start of 2010, Tiger Woods fascinated the American public as he never had before. Revelation of a series of extramarital affairs and associated domestic strife had captured the popular imagination. Rumor and innuendo crowded out more pressing social and policy issues, granting many Americans a reprieve from an ongoing recession and an unending war on terror, fueling ribald accounts of forbidden trysts, countless jokes on late night talk shows and around the water cooler, and convulsions of moral outrage. While sex regularly stood in as the subject, invariably interracial intimacy, and more crudely race, often recentered accounts of Woods' infidelities, giving expression to anxieties and fantasies at the core of the American experience, all while policing the color line and putting Woods back in his "proper place."¹ White nationalist forums online resorted neither to the veil of humor nor the over-exposure of pornography. Rather they presented overtly racist critiques of the moral bankruptcy and cultural degeneracy embodied by Woods and too long accepted by society in general, but especially by whites who embraced multiculturalism and fawned over the multiracial golfer.

Even as the Woods scandal continued to dominate popular culture, an entrepreneur in Georgia proposed an alternative to salvage sport and society in the USA. On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Don "Moose" Lewis, without a hint of irony, announced the formation of the All-American Basketball Alliance, a professional league to be composed of a dozen franchises in the southeastern USA. The AABA reworked antiquated visions of segregation and nativism for a post-civil-rights audience: only players and coaches "that are natural-born United State citizens with both parents of Caucasian race are eligible" to participate. Lewis did not frame his white separatists' professional sport league in overtly racist terms. Indeed, the former boxing and wrestling promoter noted: "There's nothing hatred about what we're doing ... I don't hate anyone of color." Rather, Lewis hoped the AABA, as an "alternative brand," would foster appreciation of "fundamental basketball," offering an alternative to "street ball" that had

1 Brown (2010).

come to dominate the sport. In linking the former (with its team-work, training, and control) with whites and the latter (with its lack of discipline, narcissism, and showboating) with urban African Americans made plain in cruder terms a sincere fiction shared by many (white) Americans: whites and blacks are different and those differences find expression in different styles of play. In an interview featured on *The Daily Show*, he also gave voice to common-sense explanation of black domination of sport: they are naturally better athletes than whites. In the same interview, he disputed accusations of racism, suggesting

I am child of integration ... forced integration by the government. And, let me tell you something. You want to deal with racism. Friends of yours that are on the white basketball team are pushed off because now all of a sudden you have very talented black athletes who are going to the same school, and the coach wants to win. You want to talk about racism, I lived racism.

In a near classic reframe, he deflects the accusation by positioning himself and his peers as victims of state-sponsored discrimination. Tellingly, near the close of the interview, during a scrimmage in which a black player questions a called foul, Lewis indicated that such “mouthing off to authority” is what is wrong with sport today; and more, when the black player says he too has a whistle (in the exchange, the symbol of authority), Lewis asks if he stole it from a white man. Not surprisingly, the AABA drew much criticism, but also encouraged the reiteration of common-sense notions of naturalized racial differences and special treatments for people of color (if they can have Black Entertainment Television, why not an all-white basketball team?) that buttress racial hierarchy.²

Although the AABA never came to fruition, it, like the public obsession with Woods’ extramarital affairs, should remind us what many would prefer to forget: sport remains a highly racialized and intensely stratified domain in the USA. In no small part, this derives from the centrality of essentialized, seemingly natural differences to athletics and interpretations of athletic achievement, and how these in turn affirm and trouble racial logics and a social order rooted in them. Although most Americans would surely like to distance themselves from the AABA and the grotesque spectacle that the Woods affair became, we resist this temptation. Opting instead to explore the entanglements of white power and sports in the contemporary USA, we argue that white supremacists’ and white nationalists’ interpretations of sports hinge on the reiteration of racial

² Mike Morris, “‘White Only’ Basketball League Announced,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, January 21, 2010. Retrieved January 22, 2010 from www.ajc.com/news/whites-only-basketball-league-279688.html; Snowball, *The Daily Show*, March 29, 2010. Retrieved June 7, 2011 from www.thedailyshow.com/watch/mon-march-29-2010/snowball.

differences, boundaries, hierarchies, and the relationships, practices, and values which threaten to perforate, unsettle, and dash them, particularly criminality and miscegenation.

While America is certainly obsessed with sports, given the billions of dollars spent each year and the millions of people who watch the Super Bowl, March Madness, the World Series, and a myriad lesser events each year, advocates of white power have a special preoccupation with them, given the dominance of black athletes within the most visible sports. Their discourse encompasses a spectrum of issues of concern among white nationalists, including white female fetish of black males, white male youth obsession with “acting” black, and an overall interest in popular culture. Each, in varying degrees, displaces white cultural focus and the efforts to reclaim American spaces as white-centered and dominated. Whether sports, film, or music, white nationalists (supremacists) reject mainstream popular culture as a pollutant of white cultural and physical purity, embracing conservative rhetoric of family values and classic white supremacist discourse regarding “negro culture with its emphasis on discrimination procreation and physical violence.”³ The discourse surrounding sports, and the constant calls for whites to abandon their financial and cultural support of “nigger sports,” sits at the center of the contemporary white nationalist movement; they are obsessed. “How many of you fat worthless American so call ‘wn’ [white nationalist] men are watching ‘The Game’ right now? I know how the average American male worships big black men. I bet your wife and daughters are watching it with you. And People are surprised when they see a white female with a black man? The problem iz yourself, putz. You are the one supporting the nigger sports. You are the one support the kikevitz.”⁴ Sports encapsulates the issues of sexuality, criminality, and the future of white power within America—it is a threat and therefore at the center of this powerful discursive field.

In what follows, we explore online sports discourses in terms of the criminalization of black male bodies, the hyper-focus on white females in danger of black sexuality, and the overall connections made between popular culture, multiculturalism, and state functions, all of which they see as working against white men. Most importantly, our discussion leads to a blurring of hegemonic binaries between white nationalist and mainstream advocates, promoters, and voices of white supremacy, moving us beyond rhetorics of hate toward an understanding of instruments of power within white supremacist discourses and practices.

3 ZookeeperZ, available online at www.stormfront.org, December 1, 2003.

4 Johnny yuma, available online at <http://vnnforum.com/archive/index.php/t-2108.html>, February 1, 2004.

We unpack this content and significance of the white power obsession with sports. After outlining the underlying ways in which discussions around sport animate white supremacist theories of race, we turn to the articulations of race, crime, and sexuality at the core of white power readings of athletics. In this chapter, we explore the intersections of white power and sports in the contemporary USA. Specifically, we analyze the preoccupation of white nationalists (supremacists) with athletes and athletics, emphasizing how debates and discussions around sport center questions of race-mixing, and black criminality/dysfunction. Their fixation on sports does not simply reveal grotesque racial visions, but, we argue, it also reiterates fundamental ideological positions of the white power movement: essentialized racial hierarchies, the necessity of racial separation, and the fabrication of whiteness through boundary-making. Moreover, we challenge the tendency to disassociate mainstream discourses surrounding race or sports from the more overt and intense formulations found among white nationalists to reveal a significant level of continuity. We elaborate this argument through an examination of the central obsessions that anchor this discourse, including criminality, race-mixing, and sport stars. The concluding discussion links the interpretations of athletes and athletics offered in the white power movement with more mainstream discussions of sport.

It's Genetics, Stupid ... Or Is It?

Do you know how Tiger Wood got his name? His mother is Thai. So you got the Ti. His father is a nigger. So you got the ger. You put them together you got Tiger Woods. Ha Ha Ha.⁵

At the core of virtually every discussion concerning white athletes amongst white nationalists is a debate surrounding the genetic or physiological make-up of white athletes as compared to that of blacks. As with the discourse heard throughout society, white nationalists debate whether or not blacks have a genetic edge that explains their numeric dominance in sports. Within this larger conversation on racial superiority in athletics, there is an extensive number of discussions about the presumption or perception of the superiority of black athletes. Yet, the bulk of chatter shows reluctance to describe blacks as physically superior, but rather, as the products of particular sets of undesirable genes that have proven useful within the world of sports. For example, the following exchange took place concerning the lack of white boxers in the contemporary age: "Lets face it. They had to run from the tigers and the lions.

⁵ Mopar88, available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/thread.php?t+3617&page=4.

You would have to get ‘puuurty quick’ to out run these animals” argues SC Hammer. “They have, naturally, Very hard heads. This is why you have to hit them with a hammer to knock them out.”⁶ Werewolf agreed, citing the “gorilla nature” of black boxers as the basis of their dominance. “This human-gorilla hybrid is not ‘physically superior’ to humans, but they have certain attributes that enable them to be successful in certain sports. In boxing, for instance, they have smaller and less complex brains shielded by thicker skulls and thicker skin, etc, etc. A full-blooded gorilla would likely be even more successful in boxing against humans if given the opportunity (And why aren’t they? Racism, that’s why!) Semi-humans should not be allowed to compete against humans in sports.”⁷ Lastly, in a subsequent debate about black swimmers, Greco summarized the trajectory and nature of this discourse, given both the reliance on genetically based arguments and the efforts to repel these same arguments in the name of white superiority.

Negroes are superior at running, and jumping compared to all other races. This is a result of their evolutionary physiology; be it that they never created technology, they never really made it to the top of the food chain in Africa, henceforth when they were out hunting for grubs, and berries and they saw a tiger in the distance, they had to run, and jump into a tree in order to not get eaten. Same goes with elephants that would crush Negroes, and snakes that would bite them. The Negro evolved as prey to the more predatorial species in Africa, and to this day Negroes are intensely afraid of animals compared to the more evolved races. Their ability to sprint faster than other races is a reflection of this.

As far as sports go, the White Man is superior in almost all winter sports, and sports that don’t involve large amounts of running, and jumping such as collegiate wrestling, and Olympic weightlifting. The White man always dominates the thinking positions in professional sports such as catchers/pitchers in baseball (although Pedro Martinez in one damn good pitcher), and Quarterbacks in football.

All other Negro athletic endeavors can be attributed to White coaches, White nutrition, and White training inventions.⁸

While many rely on genetic or physiological explanations, the centrality of white supremacist discourses contribute to a focus on alternative readings of

6 Available online at www.stormfront.org, June 26, 2004.

7 Available online at www.stormfront.org, July 8, 2004.

8 Available online at www.stormfront.org, November 21, 2003.

the questions surrounding white and black athletes. This re-reading of sport and race often positions the black athlete as an anomaly.

Not Dominant: Black Athletes as Anomaly

There are distinct bounded races that can be ranked, and the culture and character of Euro-Americans place them at the pinnacle of the racial hierarchy. Given this context, Tiger Woods is an anomaly. The incredible success of golfer Tiger Woods, combined with his self-identification as Cablinasian, has fostered intense media attention, popular adulation, and passionate debate about the shifting contours of racial politics in the USA.⁹ As a prominent mixed-race athlete who has excelled in a sport associated with, and dominated by, whites, Woods unsettles the boundaries and hierarchies central to ideologies of white power. In response, many white nationalists forcefully articulate their preoccupations and presuppositions about race and sport. Indeed, online discussions on the Stormfront White Nationalist Community, and the writings of David Duke, one-time Ku Klux Klan leader and Louisiana state representative turned white civil-rights advocate, use the multiracial golfer not simply to account for (or better said, discount) his prowess, but also to reiterate racialized understandings of difference, power, and popular culture. Amid a debate about Tiger Woods, one chatter explicated his theory of racial difference as evidence of how whiteness enhances nations around the globe as well as Tiger Woods' golf game.

Let's look at the larger scale. Iceland is all white. It has VERY low crime, a very HIGH literacy rate and it's an inhospitable place to live (environmentally). Now look at virtually any Caribbean country. They are third world sewage dumps. Those islands are comprised manly [sic] of negroes and mulattos. Even with a year-round warm climate, an awesome tourist industry, and cities that were built by pioneering whites, the muds can't seem to make it on their own.¹⁰

The anomaly of Tiger Woods' domination, and that of other black athletes, reflects their hyper-focus on sports. Given their purported inability to achieve elsewhere, blacks continue to emphasize sports achievement, while whites promote success in other areas, such as school. "Take golf and tiger woods. That nig nog was training when he was 3. Anyone who trains for 21 years would a world contender. Look at Kobe the rapest, same thing form young all he was

9 Cole and Andrews (2001), Yu (2002).

10 Duke (n.d.).

ever doing to do was basketball.”¹¹ In debating the success of contemporary black boxers, several white nationalists offered arguments mirroring that of Harry Edwards, albeit from a totally different political orientation, concerning the singled-minded pursuit of sports. According to Antarctic Champ, “Because boxing is a very demanding and dangerous sport which offers very little financial reward for MOST fighters. It principally attracts competitors from poor backgrounds.”¹² Magog agreed, challenging those who argue the superiority of blacks with an emphasis on geography and choice.

I don't think blacks have any advantage over an Aryan. The fact that most whites don't live in urban areas and dont go to the boxing gym because of this fact is the answer I am sure of it. I also agree when blacks invade a sport whites want to get away from the animals. Not our fault, we have been condition to be nice and friendly to the black via, school, media, churches, government, and blacks have been condition to hate our every fiber. If a white man sticks up for himself he is an evil hateful racist, and if a black sticks up for himself he is brave and noble. We need to end this Psychological attack on us and turn it around on them.

Why do Latinos do so well then? Skill is what you need, and you need to train for it ultimate fighting or boxing.¹³

In short, the argument goes, whites do not seek out sports because of their intelligence, because they have other opportunities and skills.

Boxing usually draws the poor whether it be the original Irish or Italian immigrants or the lowly blacks. Whites as a whole are doing to well financially to want to risk getting injured in a sport. Sports like UFC give advantages to the whites like the ability to wrestle whereas boxing only involves our most vulnerable areas namely our thin skin, nose bone, and temple. As far as those that think boxing is inferior, I would like to match their best against someone like Roy Jones Jr. I could use the laugh as he slips a kick and knocks out your champ.¹⁴

The emphasis on hard work and the connected success, especially among “mixed athletes,” is especially pronounced in discussions of Tiger Woods, the Williams sisters, and in other “white dominated” sports. In other words, hard work accounts for the greatness of America as evidenced by Woods’ success.

11 Magog, available online at www.stormfront.org, October 14, 2003.

12 Available online at www.stormfront.org, September 27, 2003.

13 Available online at www.stormfront.org, October 14, 2003.

14 Securingafuture, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 13, 2004.

The hard work of Euro-Americans transformed America from wilderness to civilization, and lesser, marginal, and treacherous groups seek to live at the expense of righteous whites—Woods is an anomaly. David Duke reminds readers that

Tiger Woods success is a result of hard work and dedication from an early age under the eye of his father. Hard work is the underpinning of white civilization. The only reason he is a success is because he like other mulattos benefit [sic] from the efforts of whites who came before them ... When my people arrived here [USA] from Ireland there was nothing literally just bush. My people built this place and now thanks to the goddamn jews, poofs, wet liberals, and race traitors all that is given away for free to any scumbag looking for a handout.¹⁵

As argued throughout, “I’m not too sure about the whole, entire Negroes are physically superior to Aryans myth going around the movies, but I’d say most Aryans are too busy to construct their whole, entire lives around the hope of becoming a boxer.” On the other hand, “there are 3 available career selections for blacks: rapping, boxing or slavery. Aryan intellectualism obviously offers a far broader range of choices, so the points are allocated a lot wider. Boxing appears to be their zone at the moment. We should conquer everything we participate in, though, so I hope it changes.”¹⁶ Without choice and options, blacks focus attention on sports, giving them an advantage above the more intelligent Aryan.

A Little Whiteness Goes a Long Way

In addition to character and culture, advocates of white power assert, genetics make whites and blacks different, endowing them with unique aptitudes, while making it possible for an individual to excel where the group cannot. Black dominance in sports is both an anomaly and determined by the influence of whiteness. Within numerous discussions, white nationalists mention how both the presence of whites on the field and white blood in the veins of many athletes allow for their success. In the absence of whiteness, black athletes and sports dominated by “pure” blacks would revert to uncontrolled savagery. “In basketball, it’s primarily because they’re able to jump higher and run faster. If you’ve ever followed college basketball for any length of time, you’ll have noticed that the national championships are usually about 40 percent white and 60 percent black, and the black usually have lighter skin than the average black,”

¹⁵ Duke (n.d.).

¹⁶ Shane Altman, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 8, 2004.

notes boomerscout, a member of Stormfront. “Basketball, as a team sport, requires both brains and physical skills, such as jumping and running. The whites on the teams are the one who keep the blacks’ natural savagery in check.”¹⁷ The controlling influence of white coaches and players is longstanding; however, the emphasis on miscegenation as an explanation of black athletic success speaks to the racial contours of this discourse. Debates around the dominance of Tiger Woods invariably come back to Woods’ racial background as both explanation for and evidence of his status as a black aberration.

One could question if Tiger Woods is genetically a genuine Black, as he is at least one half Thai, plus his Father is a mixed-race Black. But, racial pedigree notwithstanding, Tiger had the best of coaching and the highest of discipline since he was a toddler, and by playing so much competitive golf from an early age—he is both used to winning and used to what the sport’s commentators call pressure ... With the avalanche of equality propaganda, millions who admire Woods might pleasantly imagine that an unknown Black young man who wants to move into the apartment next door will be like a Tiger Woods. The truth is that he is exponentially more likely to be like a Willie Horton or a Rodney King. In fact, Tiger Woods in his particular achievement is one out of 30 million. The chance for a young Black man to be a criminal is one out of two. (Fully one-third of young Black men at any given moment are in Jail, on probation, or parole in America—and that does not count the blacks who have been discharged from the criminal justice system or the fact that only a small percentage of crimes are solved leaving criminals not apprehended.)¹⁸

Questions surrounding the racial identity of successful athletes are ubiquitous within white nationalist chat rooms. Those who are successful and desirable are seen as potentially white. Whether discussing Nomar Garciapara or Oscar de la Hoya, white nationalists inscribe whiteness onto successful athletes of color, thereby arguing that whiteness is a prerequisite to athletic success. For example, one chatter asked if “Oscar de la Hoya a Caucasian? He doesn’t have any Indian features ... looks like a typical Italian or Spaniard. He might be a white boxer.”¹⁹ This mere question prompted lengthy conversations about race, especially within Mexico, with an ample number of conclusions being that one-third of Mexicans are Aryan. For white supremacists, Oscar, given his success and character, must be white. Success in sport—especially in those positions, sports, and contexts requiring intelligence, leadership, and discipline—requires whiteness.

17 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 29, 2004.

18 Duke (n.d.).

19 werewolf, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 20, 2004.

Blacks as a Pollutant in Sports

White nationalist and white supremacist envision a social world imperiled by people of color. Not surprisingly, in this context, sports distract whites, even encouraging them to betray the best interests of their race. Black athletes, specifically, pollute the social body. The discourse around sports historically dominated by Euro-Americans clarifies the preoccupations and fears associated with this worldview. White power reads the entrance of blacks into NASCAR as a defilement:

I can imagine how the quality of the event will go downhill if the gangster rap types become interested. The worst crime that ever happened at the Mopar Nats was some of the hot rodders doing burnouts on the public streets in front of the campground. I hear a lot of the NASCAR events are the same way. That it's very family orientated. Now I expect we'll start seeing shootings and other horrible crimes. The cost to get in will increase because the tracks will have to increase security.²⁰

Similarly, many discussants lamented how the integration of unqualified black drivers, who lack the requisite skills ("negroes can't be calm enough during the race ... or are they just too lazy for learning how to drive well?";²¹ "Auto racing requires skill, not brute strength. A good driver also has knowledge of physics and auto mechanics"²² would not only ruin the sport, but put white drivers in physical harm: "having these artificial black drivers in NASCAR is going to dangerous for the experienced drivers and crew out there."²³ Similarly Svyatoslav_Igorevich argued that the (genetic, cultural) incapability of blacks competing in NASCAR threatened the sport and its white drivers:

Blacks don't have the goods to be top-level race drivers. It's that simple. They're going to have to find Harry Belafonte Black if they expect their pet drivers to stay out of last place. And yes, safety is going to suffer if they persist with this nonsense. They won't be able to find Blacks to do that job at that level, any more than the air force can find blacks to fill out Top Guns position.²⁴

Thus are rearticulated commonplace arguments about meritocracy, white superiority, and the threats imposed by affirmative action, multiculturalism, and politically correct initiatives that unnaturally impose diversity.

20 Mom of 2 white boys, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 3, 2004.

21 Kuradikuri, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 2, 2004.

22 Blondebrains, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 30, 2003.

23 MedievalAryanPrincess, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 2, 2004.

24 Available online at www.stormfront.org, July 2, 2004.

Whether black entry into NASCAR meant the intrusion of culturally deficient values or not, the prospects of racial integration challenged white normative values—white power—within this sporting context. According to golfball, commenting on the prospects of hip-hop artist Nelly purchasing a NASCAR truck team, multiculturalism threatened white cultural purity and pride: “This is just another case of rich negro moving into an area dominated by whites so they protest the Confederate flags flying at these events.”²⁵ Calling for action frankD highlighted the stakes in protecting NASCAR from those who seek to unnaturally diversify: “How do they expect Whites to stand by idly and let everything they enjoy get wrecked in the name of diversity?”²⁶

Equally troubling, for white supremacists, is how people of color have begun to contaminate golf. During a discussion about a “heckler,” who happened to be mixed-race, at the World Golf Championships Accenture Match Play Championships that pitted Davis Love III against Tiger Woods, white nationalists lamented the impact of integration on golf. Whitefang noted that incident “showed how some aren’t temperamentally suited for golf;”²⁷ while 10stsoul lamented not only racial integration but the prospect of a transsexual competing at the Australian Women’s Open: “You think the heckler and having the negro Woods in golf is bad? Look at this bull****. Can’t there just be one freakin descent [sic] sport these days that are not infested with minorities, faggots, etc. I am sick of this bull****.”²⁸ Taken together, the history of whites in sports and the values protected by their presence or dominance were threatened by what they perceive as an intrusion of minorities:

As a proud Celt my family has a long history of golfers and I consider it one of our most endearing traditions. David Love is one of the true gentlemen of the PGA and the epitome of a classy White man. Its sad that they let filth like this onto the course except to clean the clubhouse bathrooms. Thankfully golf is still an overwhelmingly White game. I used to play on the Dyker Heights course in Brooklyn alot and almost everyone there was White. Upstate, I have yet to see a minority. I haven’t seen too many golf playing Jews either; most of them don’t have the height and strength to be good golfers. There is clearly an agenda to dilute our most prized traditions from golf, to Nascar, to Country Music—the Jews will stop at nothing until White culture is eradicated. How can we compromise with these people?²⁹

25 Available online at www.stormfront.org, March 9, 2003.

26 Available online at www.stormfront.org, July 2, 2004.

27 Available online at www.stormfront.org, March 1, 2004.

28 Available online at www.stormfront.org, March 3, 2004.

29 Scepio Americanus, available online at www.stormfront.org, March 4, 2004.

Clearly the danger is not simply the presence of blacks, but what that presence means for whites. As in the panics over miscegenation, black athletes threaten to eradicate the white race.

It's Gotta Be the Jews: Containing and Controlling White Men

Much of the white nationalist discourse resonates with prevailing perceptions of the imperiled place of the white athlete and labors to account for the foregone conclusion that blacks are athletically dominant. Connected to claims of affirmative action within sports, as well as the promotion of race-mixing through sports, white nationalists universally excoriate the Jewish influence in sports. At root, advocates of white power understand sport coverage to be the byproduct of the Jewish media (described by some as JewTV) that uses sports as an avenue to promote blackness, race-mixing, and multiculturalism, while denigrating white athletes and actively working to diminish white culture. According to Abby Ferber, a large segment of white nationalists' writings conclude "that Jews are responsible for race mixing and interracial sexuality."³⁰ Whether manifesting through their political efforts to desegregate society or through their celebration of people of color and interracial sexuality, the Jewish mission is to promote miscegenation. "According to this ideology, Jews are trying to race mix Whites out of existence and Black men are the most dangerous tool," notes Ferber. "Because Jews are consistently resented as the driving force behind race mixing, it is assumed that if Jews were out of the picture, White men could tame Black men and ensure the separation of Blacks and Whites."³¹ Describing it as "amazing and profound reversal of historical reality," Jesse Daniels argues that white nationalist discursively link Jews and their purported promotion of race-mixing within the media through their goal of "the genocide of the white race."³² Ferber too identifies fears of race-mixing and white genocide as central to the white nationalist discourse. For example, she quotes a recruitment flyer for the National Socialist White People's Party, which warns that:

the genocide isn't so slow anymore. Now they want to offer up our precious sons and daughters—our FUTURE!—to the slobbering baboons waiting for them in what these rotten federal creeps calls schools nowadays. ... Well, what are you going to do about it, Whitey? Are you going to just sit there and let

30 Ferber (2007: 18).

31 Ibid.: 19.

32 Daniels (1997: 126).

your kids go down the drain ... your girls ... felt up, seduced or even raped by gibbering he-niggers.³³

Similarly, according to the World Church of the Creator: “Jews have aimed the awesome and powerful force of their media weaponry squarely at our women like a loaded gun, playing their emotions like finely tuned instruments so that they are almost complete lost to our Race, committing race-mixing, abortion, and feminist in massive numbers.”³⁴ Given white supremacist views of blacks as intellectually inferior and weak, it is not surprising that Jews become the ultimate threat as “the Jew is using the negro in an effort to destroy the white race that he so passionately hates.”³⁵ “The Jew-controlled entertainment media have taken the lead in persuading a whole generation ... that there is nothing at all wrong with White women dating or marrying Black men or with White men marrying Asiatic women; that all races are inherently equal in ability and character.”³⁶

References to the media as the source of brainwashing reflects the guiding hegemony of anti-Semitism within white power movements and ideologies. “In the U.S. it’s tough though because most of the NBA owners and coaches of Jewish extraction. David Stern being the Jewish commissioner. So they push blacks from the get go. The NFL used to be totally dominated by whites, but now Jewish influenced has entered their as well.”³⁷ The construction of the sports world as a place of black superiority is seen as the result of a Jewish media that uses sports as an avenue to promote race-mixing and multiculturalism. In responding to claims that blacks are superior athletes, Alpha Numericus offered the following theory about sports: “It’s just that the ‘sports’ you see on JewTV tend to be artificial competitions in which the negroes are better. Not swimming, or diving, or fencing, or even gymnastics.”³⁸ The popularity of basketball and football, as well their presence on television, reflects the desires of the Jewish media to both promote blackness and deny the success of Aryan athletes. If blacks dominated swimming or racquetball, these sports would dominate the airwaves. Moreover, white nationalists perceive sports as a natural addiction, amplified by a Jewish-controlled mass media that damages white men.

Giving male Homo Sapiens 24-hour sports is analogous to giving a heroin addict access to all the smack he wants—whenever he wants it. A great portion of European and American males simply cannot resist spectator sports ...

33 Quoted in Ferber (1998: 89).

34 Quoted in Rogers and Litt (2004: 105).

35 J.B. Stoner quoted in Dobratz (2000: 128).

36 National Vanguard Book, quoted in Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (2000: 129).

37 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 7, 2004.

38 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 2, 2004.

Instead of exercising and becoming strong, engaging in healthy competition, struggle, sacrifice, courage and team spirit, they watch others exercise and become stronger. Ultimately, the choice we have is to actually live our own lives or suffer a twilight existence, living through the victories and defeats of others.

The Jew of course is telling us to concentrate on the fiddling while Rome burns. So in the mix of course the Asians “look” like they are achieving. They are taking advantage of a society they did not build nor fight to defend, and in my opinion have no right to, their simple mimicry will be unmasked soon enough.³⁹

As a Jewish-controlled media intent on promoting blacks and denigrating the Aryan, the sports media not only disseminates anti-white messages, but in doing so they misconstrue racial reality. “Sports in this country is about media spin and black promotion. The networks—ESPN, Fox, TNT etc are all very very liberal in their standpoints and ass kissing. They won’t tell it like it is. I’d love to see a network tell it like it is but good luck getting the FCC to okay that non Jewish/non dark sympathetic/non liberal sat. network. Just won’t happen right now.”⁴⁰ According to this worldview, the fact that most whites believe blacks to be superior, and imitate their behaviors, is a testament to both the anti-white orientation of the sports media and a tendency toward myopia and false reality.

Because of their lack of subtlety, it is clear from white nationalist writings and chatter that the condemnation of the media reflects an attack on the Jewish community. References to the media as the source of brainwashing reflects the guiding hegemony of anti-Semitism within the white nationalist movement. In a debate about the Kobe Bryant rape trial concerning responsibility, an online chatter defended the girl through an anti-Jewish frame. “I don’t think the girl should be blamed so much as the Jewish media. Given the constant glorification of black athletes and of interracial sex on TV ... how could the girl be expected to have an aversion to blacks. Moreover, the erasure of the fact that “blacks [are] more likely to be rapists” and that “she’s been deluged with ‘we are equal’ propaganda” explains her behaviour. “We can’t expect her to wary of blacks. The fault lies with the Jewish media who brainwashed the girl, not the girl herself.”⁴¹ Such focus elucidates the hyper-blame placed upon the “Jewish media” amongst white nationalists for white adoration and obsession with black athletes. The wasteful time white men spend cheering for black athletes, and the lustful feelings of many young white women, reflects both a cultural and communal (racial) genocide.

39 Available online at www.stormfront.org.

40 hotashley, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 10, 2004.

41 einzelkampf, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 23, 2003.

Routinely, the “Jewish media” is constructed as a “puppeteer”⁴² and a co-conspirator that elevates black athletes to stardom, whereupon white women fall prey to their uncontrollable sexual savagery. In other words, the “Jewish media” has made interracial sex “fashionable,” while simultaneously affording young black men undeserved power. “I fail to understand the fascination that some white women have for sexual experimentation with Negroes—I think it borders on bestiality ... I suppose it is testimony to the power of the relentless Jewish supremacist media conditioning that any white female would find such a being desirable.”⁴³ Likewise, *The Nationalist Times* blamed the unrelenting support amongst white youth for black athletes on “Semitic hatchet men” who ignore the many criminal transgressions.⁴⁴ “I think with this country, you have a lot of jews running the basketball teams and we know the commissioner is one. We know that ESPN is very liberal and promotes the black person. I.e. Lakers. However, some non-Israeli coaches (Cuban, etc) have challenged David Stern and his Kaballah. With euros coming in you see whining from blacks for their jobs being taken.”⁴⁵ White nationalists, especially males, therefore, have an obligation to protect the ignorant white female mind from Jewish multiculturalism, and the innocent white female body from the ghastly black savage.

Hating Whitey

Not only is the spectator sport addiction damaging to the lives of millions of young and old White men who waste excessive time and adopt unhealthy lifestyles, it wrecks psychological damage of the worst sort. When the young Black man sees Black heavyweight boxers routinely defeat Whites, or sees Black star running backs such as O.J. Simpson be made into idols desired by the most beautiful of White women, it affirms Black racial pride and a sense of supremacy and solidarity. When young White men see such Black athletic supremacy, it has the opposite effect on their spirit. Their sense of racial pride and solidarity is weakened. Young Whites tend to emulate and identify with athletic stars, and many of them are Blacks such as O.J. (before his fall) Michael Jordan, and countless others. The anti-White press makes the sports champions appear not only as great athletes, but also as great men, which is usually far from the truth. Once more, the racial realities are obscured by the media.⁴⁶

42 Ferber (2007: 19).

43 Skyfirezz, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 22, 2003.

44 Retrieved August 4, 2012 from www.anu.org/thenationalisttimes_august2000.html; now defunct.

45 Tony Simos, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 10, 2004.

46 Duke (n.d.).

Along similar lines, white nationalists paint the world of sports as irrelevant popular culture that is beneath them. It not only represents food for the masses, but also exists for the purpose of distracting whites from their racial reality. “I don’t care who is better than who in sports, it means nothing in reality.”⁴⁷ Instead of engaging in either a mental or physical revolution, whites sit glued to the television, cheering for black men.

During my race for the Governorship of Louisiana, our sports crazy fans were told that our universities’ sports programs would have trouble recruiting if I were elected. It pains me to acknowledge that I probably lost some votes because some members of our race were more worried about their school’s football team than the safety of our own kind from Black crime or the racial discrimination practiced against thousands of Whites with affirmative action.⁴⁸

In essence, sport encourages whites to be race traitors who undermine their best interests as whites when they consume contemporary sport spectacles.

As already mentioned, white nationalist condemnation of sports focuses on how sport misrepresents reality. It teaches them that blacks are superior; it teaches them to want to be like or with black men; it teaches them that bouncing a ball is more important than education.

He played a great four rounds at the Masters. He may yet turn out to be the best golfer of all time up to now. But let’s put it in perspective. It’s only a game, a pastime of no real significance in comparison to freedom, or invention, or medicine, or philosophy, or prosperity, or crime, or poverty, or degeneration, or of evolution. Golf can be fun, but it is truly trivial compared to the splitting of the atom or the invention of the transistor or the computer, or the Genome project. It is insignificant compared to even whether one young man dies in war or from cancer or alcoholism, or whether he accomplishes feats of genius and vision and daring that will someday take us to the stars. Compared to the fate of our race, who wins some golf tournament is about as important as single grain of sand at the bottom of the Atlantic.⁴⁹

In this context, advocates of white power celebrate the success of white athletes. From their perspective, given the desire of the media to promote black success—to misrepresent reality—a celebration of white athletes is equally important, in that their visibility thwarts whites seeking blacks as role models and demonstrates white athletic prowess.

47 IrishJay, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 9, 2004.

48 Duke (n.d.).

49 Ibid.

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I have never believed that Blacks have any superior physical abilities when it comes to boxing than any other race. There seems to be a popular sentiment among White America currently (could I call it brainwashing?) that the African American is the worlds greatest athlete. Even Larry Bird said as much. I feel that this myth has largely contributed to the dominance of boxing that Black athletes have enjoyed for the last several decades.

Fortunately, there are some extremely talented White boxers in the heavyweight ranks these days such as the Klitschko brothers, Andrew Golota, and Corrie Sanders. I am very interested in seeing how Joe Mesi's career will develop. Currently he is 29-0 and seems to have a knack for winning close fights.

Personally, I hope more and more White fighters will continue to rise onto the boxing scene. There are very few single sports events in the world that can so thoroughly attract the publics attention as a high level heavyweight fight.⁵⁰

From Maria Sharapova and the Klitschko brothers, to the increasing number of Europeans in sports and white Olympians, white nationalists have something to celebrate. In virtually every discussion, chatterers insert names (historical and contemporary) of white athletes not just as a point of celebration, but also as evidence to a true sports (racial) reality. In the estimation of white power advocates, sports, like affirmative action, multiculturalism, the media, and even the criminal justice system, represents not only evidence for the backlash against white men, but a site of cultural contestation where the meaning and the future of whiteness is the most important battle, one that pits the Jewish media and their black athletic allies on one team, and white men and their children on another.

Affirmative Action

Given the purported genetic, cultural, and intellectual superiority of the Aryan race, white nationalists seek to give explanation as to why the stars of golf, tennis, basketball, football, and baseball are black. In other words, they seek to answer *Sport Illustrated's* question "What Happened to the White Athlete?"⁵¹ According to white nationalists, he was destroyed through affirmative action advantages, and by a Jewish media. In a debate concerning boxing, Doug offered the following bit of insight: "Another reason is that the rules are geared

50 Aetius, available online at www.stormfront.org, July 12, 2004.

51 Available online at <http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1011593/1/index.htm>, December 8, 1997.

toward Black advantages. The White man's weaker point is face and chin, yet headshots are legal. Blacks' weak point is the neck; neck shots are not legal. Why go into a sport that is stacked against you in the first place?"⁵² In the natural order of things—that is, when minorities do not receive unfair advantages like affirmative action—whites triumph. Tiger Woods, Venus Williams, Mike Tyson, and Kobe Bryant are all anomalies fostered by double standards and social engineering. "Blacks aren't superior physically. Why would any white nationalist think that? It's called Affirmative Action, only letting nigs dominate the mainstream sports that your average Joe Sixpack supports."⁵³ This line of reasoning is quite popular within white nationalist discourses, as members see sports as yet another space in which whites are punished for being white. "So you see the promotion of black apes as being the 'new deal.' This again is false and incorrect as whites are typically built stronger and bigger, especially in their frames."⁵⁴ In the natural order of things, whites are superior athletes (as the superior race), yet social engineering, politics, and a Jewish-controlled media all lead to a false reality where, apparently, blacks dominate sports because they are superior athletes. David Duke crystallizes this argument through his explanation of the success of Tiger Woods: "Everything is in their [people of color] favour and everything is stacked against the white working class. On an even field, this would not be so. Its not brains that are helping them but an unjust system."⁵⁵ The desire to reclaim sports as a white space reflects a hope to conquer black bodies on the athletic field. The power of this goal lies not just in the desire to reinsert whiteness into an increasingly black world, but a belief that a limited white presence within sports reflects discrimination against whites. White nationalists thus attribute their absence in the sports world not as a sign of inferiority, but as a result of athletic affirmative action. "The truth is that white football players, no matter how talented are directed into a racial caste system that limits" their positional opportunities. Many white nationalists, then, believe sport to be a hostile domain, reflecting their deeper sense of white men as victims of multiculturalism and tolerance.

In a connected way, white nationalists continuously raise the issue of the race card, concluding that black dominance of those visible sports, and their popularity, reflects a fear of whites to stand up or compete with blacks. The construction of the race card paradigm represents a powerful frame used to explain away the presumptive superiority of black athletes. During a heated debate on a proposal to increase diversity in NASCAR, several chatters focused on how accusations of racism—the purported race card—and political

52 theBlondbeast23, available online at www.stormfront.org, September 9, 2003.

53 Shane Altman, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 2, 2004.

54 hotashley, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 7, 2004.

55 Duke (n.d.).

correctness would result in integration and the eventual dominance of blacks. “Golf was called racist before the Tiger Woods day. Anything that blacks aren’t good in is called racist. Black really should be good car drivers, look at all the times they run from the cops.”⁵⁶ White Owl agreed, offering a similar argument: “I wonder what’s going to happen when the blacks start running Nascar full time and he gets disqualified or something. They’ll cry and hollar ‘racism, racism.’ Hell, I bet Nascar gives them money to build and run a car so they won’t be running dead nigger last. That’s the only way they are going to be successful.”⁵⁷ Interestingly, these discussions permeate those colorblind discourses of mainstream America.⁵⁸ In responding to an article Leonard wrote about Kobe Bryant and the race card, a reader sent the following comments: “The race card says that all blacks are victims of an inherently racist white government. Instead of cards depicting characterizations of black men and crimes they have allegedly perpetrated, the race card is what minority groups play when the only alternative is to take responsibility for their own actions.”⁵⁹ Even in this more sanitized language, the notion of “the race card” encodes a deep antipathy to blackness, a certainty of racial hierarchy undermined unfairly, and a conviction that the powers that be, particularly the state and society, erroneously reward people of color at the expense of whites. Importantly, advocates of white power find the media especially culpable for these injustices. The promotion of multiculturalism and race-mixing, the glorification of blackness and the devaluing of whiteness, and the role of the “Jewish-controlled” media are not limited to sports or even Hollywood, but can be found across the entire spectrum of media and popular culture; in fact, according to white nationalists, these ideologies, these assaults on a white future are prominent in both the real and virtual worlds.

Conclusions

To many spectators and participants, particularly in the USA, sports are entertaining competitions that have little to do with race or power. In fact, guided by the ideology of colorblindness, most fans and commentators would likely assert that athletics embody the promise of racial integration and social equity. The discourses of white power expose the fallacy of such assessments. Advocates of white separatism and white nationalism remind us of the centrality of white supremacy to interpretations of sports.

56 Michael S. Burks, available online at www.stormfront.org, June 26, 2003.

57 Available online at www.stormfront.org, August 3, 2003.

58 Williams (2001).

59 Leonard (2003).

Sports, we have argued, unfold as a fundamental, and often unrecognized, domain for the forceful reiteration of white power ideologies. White separatists and white nationalists use sports to restate stereotypical, distorted, and false understandings of people of color. Discussions of criminality and projections of sexual transgression, key tropes of white power discourse, afford powerful occasions to malign blacks, while theories of conspiracy and control demonize Jews. And while the Other preoccupies white separatists and white nationalists, the ultimate concern of their discussion of sport is whiteness. White power readings of sports patrol the boundaries of white identity, defending it from the threats of difference and hybridity. For white separatists and white nationalists, integrated sporting worlds imperil whites where race, gender, and sexuality intersect, precisely because media adulation distorts the natural order of things and endorses miscegenation. Consequently, sports endanger white women especially, opening the troubling possibility of the elimination of the white race.

In the end, confronting white power and sports reminds us of the necessity to reflexively and responsibly engage race, power, and history in the sporting world. In both crude and refined forms, white supremacy is sports and sports are white supremacy. To celebrate Jackie Robinson is to remember the daily letters of hate received in place of fan mail. To yell “you da man” to Tiger Woods is to memorialize Charlie Sifford, who felt razor blades inside many cups. To love the game is to realize that race infects its daily working, as much as any other institution. To celebrate sports is to acknowledge racism in all its visual forms, whether in white supremacist chat rooms, through the work of journalists that demonize black athletes, or in the comments of media commentators.⁶⁰ To dismiss racism in sport as if it was particular to white nationalists misses the point in that as they celebrate the success of Maria Sharapova as a blow to the “ape” Williams sisters, Howard Stern, among others, announces that the Williams sisters should not be in *Playboy*, but *National Geographic*.⁶¹ To fully understand race and sports demands the setting-aside of simplistic models that reduce racism to hate mongering, ignore it, or characterize it as a disease, often confined to the US South. It demands that we make connections between colorblind, populist, and extreme formulations of racial difference and social power. To be sure, many white nationalists speak in ways that many others find reprehensible and offensive, but their ideas and values often overlap with more mainstream conservative initiatives and ideologies. Extreme and mainstream converge around a concern over the declining moral standing of the United States, thereby linking worsening conditions to the overemphasis on, and hyper-visibility of, black entertainers. Whether because of ESPN or MTV, the message is clear: white parents are losing their white children to multicultural

60 See Benedict (2004), Benedict and Yaeger (1999).

61 Available online at www.stormfront.org, July 3, 2004.

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America. Too many children want to be a P.I.M.P like 50 Cent, or worse, have sex with Kobe Bryant. Popular culture, according to this logic, imperils the white future. Moreover, according to this logic, it is the Jews that are pulling the strings, manipulating sport and other forms of popular culture, leading the nation toward destruction.

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Chapter 7

Gaming the Racial Order: White Power Identities and Ideologies in Video Games

At first blush, discussions of Super Mario within the Stormfront community do little to betray the ideological commitments of participants. In fact, if one stumbled into the handful of posts dedicated to the video game franchise, little would distinguish them from similar threads in a range of gaming networks. They speak of the pleasures of playing various incarnations of the game, often with marked nostalgia.¹ Given the immense popularity of video gaming generally, and the success of Super Mario specifically, this does not really surprise us. After all, just as they watch television, go to movies, and listen to music, white nationalists play video games too. And given the fantastic elements of Super Mario, it arguably lacks references to contemporary society (beyond the obvious heterosexist enactments of gender scripts and the caricature of white working-class ethnics—Mario and Luigi are rendered as Italian American plumbers), so white nationalists, like so many other gamers in the USA, read and remember it as “just fun.”

The ubiquity of Super Mario (featured in one or more games on every Nintendo platform since the mid-1980s) and the simplicity of the programming, however, have made it a rich resource for cultural poaching—that is, for fans to take and remake it. One can find thousands of riffs on the gaming franchise on Youtube, ranging from replaying song elements and reworking characters (for instance introducing Hitler in Wii Sports or the Ku Klux Klan within *NES KKK*) to screen animation from games fans created by hacking the original software. White nationalists have reframed Super Mario and his quests, transforming the animated icons into white power heroes, namely skinheads and Nazis, and incorporating explicit references to organized racism through key symbols, such as the swastika and KKK regalia. In fact, one can find hacks for both a Super KKK Brothers and Super Nazi Brothers online. Not surprisingly, discussants at Stormfront find

1 See www.stormfront.org/forum/t530521. Retrieved June 8, 2011. Also www.stormfront.org/forum/t712287 (now defunct).

these repurposed games to be fun, funny, and desirable.² At its core, the play with Mario Brothers reflects the essential relationship between white nationalist and mainstream popular culture: one of ambivalence defined by interaction and a reimagination of the offerings all in the name of white supremacy.

As with other forms of popular culture, white nationalist consumption is rife with ambivalence and even disdain for what are seen as harmful influences. That is, mainstream games, those that reflect the values of a multicultural and morally corrupt America, have turned whites into zombies. Echoing the Fox News and GOP talking points, and those who nostalgically recall a time of wholesome values, white nationalists lament the influence of video games on today's youth. According to Jim Ring, a commentator on National Alliance News, video games are a threat to a white future:

Have you ever noticed that our young girls seem to be far ahead of our young boys and that our young women seem to be much more “together” than our young men are? Have you ever noticed how many young American men almost seem like zombies and find even the most basic human interactions extremely awkward? Well, this didn't happen by accident. Researchers are finding that there are two traps in particular that are absolutely destroying the next generation of young men in America. One is video game addiction and the other is pornography. In the old days, the parks and ball fields of America would be flooded with young boys after school was done for the day, but now our parks and our ball fields are very quiet. So where did all the boys go? Well, they are all sitting at home staring into computer screens.³

In order to awaken whites to their own demise, it is therefore crucial for white nationalists to critically take down the popular games all while creating alternative and pro-white games in the name of white power. Super Mario is distracting and part of ZOG efforts to mute and silence the white revolution; yet, a refashioned gaming experience has the potential to educate, inspire, and create a new white future. The message is clear: popular culture is a threat to the white existence unless whites push back and ultimately create their own games.

As with comic books and music, advocates of white nationalism produce and consume video games. They often enjoy playing popular titles, even as they display pronounced ambivalence as a community over the messages that they believe them to convey, and since the mid-1990s, they have developed an array of games expressing core elements of their ideologies. While some have opted

² www.stormfront.org/forum/t376055 and www.stormfront.org/forum/t61172. Retrieved June 8, 2011.

³ “Porn And Video Games Having Profound Effect On Young Men,” June 3, 2012. Retrieved August 8, 2013 from www.natallnews.com/story.php?id=10263.

to read video games and white nationalism primarily as a productive pathway toward recruitment,⁴ we seek to offer a more complex rendering here. In unpacking the ways in which white nationalists use and understand video games, we seek to further our analysis of the rhetoric of white power and reflect on the nature of popular culture forms at their most repugnant. Gaming affords white nationalists a powerful space to elaborate their core belief that social forces and cultural values imperil whites and whiteness today. In particular, they find expressions of chaos and degeneracy in mainstream video games, while creating games that propose simple, violent, and dehumanizing solutions to these perceived problems. We begin with a consideration of the immensely popular *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, noting competing interpretations among white nationalists and probing the centrality of savagery and criminality to their understandings of the title and society more generally. Against this background, we examine a series of games produced by white supremacists, arguing they offer players a means to engage in the ongoing race war that preoccupies many advocates of white power. We argue that games are not simply about recruiting but about using dominant stereotypes of black criminality in the creation of virtual spaces of violence. We close with a disquieting reminder: video games in white nationalist (no less than mainstream) contexts offer occasions for pedagogy and pleasure.

Mainstream Video Games: Or an Extremist Playground

Our observations of marketing materials and online discussions suggest video games are popular with white nationalists, who, like their more mainstream peers, find them to be a pleasurable and powerful medium. In other words, notwithstanding the opposition and contempt for mainstream popular culture, as well as their purported identity being outside or in opposition to mainstream/middle America, white nationalists share a similar fascination with and enjoyment of video games. Whereas mainstream sport, music, and film are eschewed by white nationalists because of the visibility and purported power of people of color and Jews—and because of the supposed promotion of multiculturalism, racial equality, and race-mixing—the allure and popularity (and the resulting debates that emerge because of this popularity) of video games result in a more complex and contradictory relationship. Games such as *World of Warcraft*, *Resident Evil*, *Kill Zone*, *Grand Theft Auto III*, *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, and various World War II games are ubiquitously cited as both sources of fun and games that allow for the celebration or promotion of white nationalism. Yet, even a game like *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, a game that

4 Selepak (2010).

“recreates” South Central Los Angeles in the 1980s and therefore centers on blacks and Latino characters, prompts divergent analysis.

Many discussants “celebrate” *GTA: San Andreas* for its seemingly realistic representation of the black community. According to BlueIce *GTA: San Andreas* “didn’t promote black culture, whatever that is. Just showed the worst. Which is effectively all black characters were low life scum with no prospects. Maybe that’s black culture.”⁵ Martin agrees, noting that the inclusion of a black male character within a game depicting criminal behavior and violence in Los Angeles was necessary: “Using a black character for the GTA series is making the game more realistic.”⁶ He later celebrated the narrative and representations available in the game, arguing “Atleast that game is portraying the negro realistic as criminal.”⁷ While Sabbath also described *GTA: San Andreas* as “realistic about black culture,”⁸ Third EYE found nothing wrong with playing *San Andreas* because the “entire game basically stereotypes and takes a dump all over black people in general. It makes them look bad. How could they make a car theft game without including the Negroes.”⁹ Applauding the game for what they see as its real feel, particularly in its depiction of African Americans as dangerous gangsters, as thugs, as violent criminals, several chatters identified *GTA: San Andreas* as a refreshing counter to what they perceive as the political correct (that is, positive) representations so common place within contemporary popular culture. According to backlash 567, “It’s ok to play GTA: SA in my opinion”: not only because it shows African Americans in a realistic fashion, but because it ostensibly doesn’t disparage authentic whites:

If you know me, you’ll propely [sic] know I’m a big fan of Grand Theft Auto. I have a high-powered PC which allows me to PLAY GTA 1,2, London, 3, Vice City at maximum settings with mods. But when I heard that Rockstar was going to make a “gangsta” sequel [sic] for the trilogy, I was dissapionted [sic] that ANOTHER game company was heading down the same path like E.A.. But after finding the game really cheap, I decided to play it, and to my atonishment [sic] it was a negro simulator : D. You see in the game you play as C.J. (Carl Johnson) was just came back to his “hood” to “chil’ with hiz hoimez” Sweet, Big Smole and Rider. :p In the game you can go “ghettofy” yourself with Crip, Blood, and other gangbangers clothes like a “weed” necklace or an Africa tattoo. In the game you steal, rob, murder, and “drive-by” enemy Blacks and Mexicans. You must keep yourself “fit and healthy” buy [sic] eating friend chickin [sic]

5 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 11, 2007.

6 Available online at www.stormfront.org, December 10, 2005.

7 Available online at www.stormfront.org, January 4, 2006.

8 Available online at www.stormfront.org, October 6, 2006.

9 Available online at www.stormfront.org, October 9, 2006.

and cheese burgers. Only two refences [sic] are held against prop-white people one you must help a white hippie get a combine to help him grow his weed by stealing from some white survivalists and two your homie says “Your brother is being imprisoned [sic] next to a child molester and white natinalist [sic] who wants to eat his heart out.” Other then that you guys should check out this video game.¹⁰

While assenting to the depictions of African Americas as savage-criminals, much of the debate about *GTA: San Andreas* and similar “ghettocentric” games found little to celebrate because of the purported glorification of gangsta/black/criminal culture. That is, while realistic at some level, the game’s focus glorified and celebrated black culture at the expense of whiteness. “I cannot STAND San Adreas [sic]. It is full of black ‘male’ worshipping crap and garbage/ghetto black ‘culture’ that it makes me want to PUKE,” wrote francaisetfier.¹¹ He later expanded on his “analysis” with the following explanation:

When I say U.S./Western entertainment is full of black “male” worship some people think I am exaggerating. Are they KIDDING me? Then I want them to tell me WHY San Andreas had no skin color change feature for the main character when that is an ESTABLISHED GTA TRADITION. WHY was their no skin change feature for SAN Adreas. Tell me!!!¹²

These same themes guided white nationalists as they spoke about the transformative potential of *Grand Theft Auto IV*. We are Many made this clear:

Ideally, GTA IV should feature a white nationalist underground group who works to restore order in NYC. Hopeless? Yes, but it’s a video game! This is a great idea for a mod. Someone should make a mod of any game, where you play as WN’s. I remember making a huge skinhead character in *Saints Row* and getting rid of the people who didn’t belong ... with screwdriver as background music. **That** was fun!¹³

The references from We are Many to a Skinhead character in *Saints Row* prompted a series of comments as to how they transform video games from multicultural threats into empowering white nationalist games. From inserting skinhead music, to creating characters that resemble white nationalists, they use virtual reality to affirm white nationalist ideology and identities.

10 Available online at www.stormfront.org, October 5, 2006.

11 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 11, 2007.

12 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 13, 2007.

13 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t383133-9, May 7, 2007.

Not only outraged by the celebration of black criminals, by those individuals who purportedly threaten white children and women daily through their criminal behavior, several white nationalist discussants expressed fear about the game's impact on white youth in the form of their accepting people of color, race-mixing, and cultural assimilation. They consistently denounced these games for teaching and glorifying black cultural values, which they understand to be pathological, and otherwise making them cool. Gnosis lamented the "little world of video games" because it "is filled to the core with political correctness and love and admiration for 'black culture.'"¹⁴ Just as GermanIrish Aryan Brother denounced *GTA: San Andreas* for promoting wigger culture and through its labeling of black culture as the "inn thing,"¹⁵ Baron Von Hund questioned what message these games were sending to white youth:

I love my violent video games, but this trend with Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas and The Warriors promoting ethnic gang violence and corrupt lifestyles involving pointless swearing, womanizing [sic] (and defaming), theft for points (armed robbery included), mass killing of police and the innocent public for money and drug dealing and usage for gain is getting even obscene [sic] for me.¹⁶

Responding to a post that described these games as harmless fun, Baron Von Hund reiterated his concerns about the glorification of black/ghetto culture: "but games like *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* and *The Warriors* promote non-European gang life and criminal behavior were you are heavily rewarded for doing such actions."¹⁷ Wiseguy too questioned the values being taught through these games, arguing that the problem with *GTA: San Andreas* and its competitors was not its depiction of black criminality but how the games view and deal with this problem: "The problem with many of these games is you are indeed rewarded for violence against innocents or police. A game could feature the same content but punish you for the action and escape scrutiny. This trend of gangsta games clearly makes you 'the bad guy' and your victims 'the good guys.'"¹⁸ In other words, these games encourage and glorify black violence and criminal behavior directed at whites—"innocents" and the "police"—when in reality whites are the good guys who are under siege and constantly being victimized by blacks/bad guys. Commenting on *The Warriors* Lilith echoed the sentiments of Baron Von Hund, noting that it was "not a cool game" because you are an "American Negro" who "joins a gang, breaks into cars for stereos, mugg [sic] people for

14 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 12, 2007.

15 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 11, 2007.

16 Available online at www.stormfront.org, January 5, 2006.

17 Available online at www.stormfront.org, January 6, 2006.

18 Available online at www.stormfront.org, January 7, 2006.

money, do smash and grabs.”¹⁹ Throughout various discussions over several years, respondents denounced these games for promoting and glorifying the criminal behavior of black savages.

Worse than the glorification of black savagery, *GTA: San Andreas* and the other copycat games erase the threat facing white America. That is, not only do these games glorify black crime and violence but also, in presenting blacks as the victims of racism, discrimination, poverty, history, and the government, they erase white victimhood. “Anytime they have a Negro character, the storyline completely sucks. They try to make them into victims rather than criminals.”²⁰ Likewise, Brookkklyn Skinhead denounced *GTA: San Andreas* and other games for misrepresenting reality: “[C] was shown as a victim of circumstances because in ... [the] screwed up PC world all murdering, rapist, crack dealing cooks are ‘good guys.’”²¹ As such, video game culture poses a threat because at one level it facilitates and trains future black criminals who ultimately will prey on whites, particularly white children and women, but worse it erases the targeting of whites by black criminals all while depicting blacks of as victims of white racism, police aggression, and poverty. The discursive link here is crucial as a central element of contemporary white national discourse: not only that blacks and Latinos are dangerous criminals, but also that the threat they pose to a white future is ignored, erased, and concealed by both the media and popular culture as a whole. Indeed, for white nationalists, black criminality, as effectively rendered in *GTA: San Andreas*, exemplifies the degeneracy of contemporary culture and poses an existential threat to white civilization.

The Color of Crime

In 2005, The New Century Foundation, a think tank associated with American Renaissance, which was founded by white nationalist hero Jared Taylor, released the second edition²² of *The Color of Crime: Race, Crime and Justice in America*, in its effort to “correct” the misinformation and erasure of interracial crime not only argues that blacks and Latinos are more likely to commit crimes than whites, but also dismisses any claims about racism within the criminal justice system, describing such accusations as unfounded. Citing statistics from the US Department of Health and Human Services, the report argues that blacks are admitted to the hospital for drug-related emergencies with much greater frequency, demonstrating that “there is only plausible explanation for these

19 Available online at www.stormfront.org, January 4, 2006.

20 Everlasting Reign, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 27, 2007.

21 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 29, 2007.

22 The initial report was released in 1999.

rates. Blacks are much more likely to be using drugs in the first place.”²³ Denying claims of racism within America’s police department or within the criminal justice system writ large in noting low arrest rates of Asian people, the report ultimately concludes that victim reports, arrest rates, and the number of blacks and Latinos incarcerated all point to two clear realities: (1) blacks and Latinos are violent and more prone (genetically/racially; culturally) to criminal behavior; and (2) these criminals are a daily threat to law-abiding whites throughout the nation. Professor J. Philippe Rushton, from the University of Western Ontario, argues in “*The American Dilemma in World Perspective* (pp. 11–30) that there is a strong correlation between a state’s homicide rate and the percentage of blacks living there, a fact he links to higher levels of testosterone within black males.”²⁴

The emphasis within *The Color of Crime* is not simply that blacks and Latinos are the source of America’s crime problem, but rather that the majority of crime is interracial. More importantly, the report concludes that blacks, motivated by racial animosity and prejudice, are guilty of the majority of interracial crimes, with whites being the chief target and victim. This is made clear in the report’s first listed finding, which states, “There is more black-on-white than black-on black-violence.”²⁵ Citing the National Crime Victimization Survey, a Department of Justice Study intended to gather information about reported and unreported crimes through victim accounts, the report concludes the following: “Of the approximately 1,700,000 interracial violent crimes involving blacks and whites reported each year, blacks commit 90% and whites only ten percent. Blacks are therefore more likely than whites to commit crimes of violence. The differences are even greater for multiple-offender interracial crimes with blacks 100 to 250 times more likely to be involved in gang attacks.”²⁶ Similarly, the 2005 edition also emphasized the prevalence of interracial crimes involving blacks targeting whites. Arguing that “of the nearly 770,000 violent interracial crimes committed every year involving blacks and whites, blacks commit 85 percent and whites commit 15 percent.”²⁷ More specifically, it notes that the majority of victims of crimes committed by blacks are white (45 percent compared to only 43 percent who are black and 10 percent Latino; accordingly, they argue that in instances of whites committing violent crimes their victims are black only 3 percent of the time). As to further emphasize the level of targeting violence against whites, they conclude that “Blacks are an estimated 39 times more likely to commit a violent crime against a white than vice versa, and 136 times more

23 New Century Foundation (1999: 7).

24 Cited in Swain (2002: 112); also noted in Taylor (1998).

25 New Century Foundation (1999).

26 Ibid.: 1.

27 New Century Foundation (2005: ii).

likely to commit robbery.”²⁸ In other words, despite media and popular culture representations, white people are under attack from blacks and Latinos, at least partially, as the report goes on to argue, as a result of anti-white racism as well as the inherent criminality of blacks and Latinos. “A motley collection of white supremacist and rightist extremist groups has eagerly made black-on-white violence a wedge issue,” writes Earl Ofari Hutchinson. It is part of “their crusade to paint blacks as the prime hatemongers in America.”²⁹

The 1999 edition of *The Color of Crime* emphasizes the significance of its findings in its effort to correct the erroneous record portrayed by the mainstream media and popular culture that paints blacks as victims and ignores the violence perpetuated against whites, and thus educate whites and the public at large at the dangers facing whites in contemporary America:

Americans are extremely hesitant to “perpetuate stereotypes,” and generally take care not to draw or publicize conclusions that may reflect badly on racial minorities. This is understandable, but has reached the point that certain subjects can no longer be investigated without bringing down charges of “racism.” Needless to say, research that reflects badly on the majority population is not constrained by the same fears. However, our willingness to ignore sensibilities should not be selective. Violent crime and interracial violence are important, agonizing concerns in this country, and we cannot begin to formulate solutions unless we understand the problems.³⁰

Moreover, the report seems to focus its attention on the everyday threat faced by whites in terms of assaults, muggings, and rapes. Yet, in an effort to argue that the purported epidemic of black-on-white crime/violence was not purely about economics (i.e., poor blacks mugging richer whites) the report highlights rapes and other “hate crimes.” It notes that whereas 30,000 white women were raped by black men, only 5,400 black women were raped by white men in 1994, arguing that black men were 38 times more likely to rape a white woman than white men attacking black women. Playing on longstanding fears of the black male’s sexuality and his supposed insatiable desire for white women, which we discussed in previous chapters, *The Color of Crime* brings together prominent themes within white supremacist discourse: black savagery, black criminality, and black sexuality, all as threats to white civilization and therefore elements of an ongoing race war. As noted by Jessie Daniels in *White Lies*,

28 Ibid.

29 Earl Ofari Hutchinson, “Why Are Black Leaders Silent on Black Hate Crimes?” salon.com, March 6, 2006.

30 *The Color of Crime*, 1999: 11.

This reinterpretation of crime, an issue which affects all of us, as a racial issue, that is, one of Black perpetrators and white victims, is the essence of rearticulating whiteness; this whiteness is simultaneously reinterpreted along lines of gender and sexuality.

Whether in mainstream news reports or in white supremacist publications, Black men are represented as criminals. This construction rests fundamentally on a biological notion of Black masculinity as inherently volatile, explosive, and dangerous. In white supremacist literature, Black men are represented as a particular type of criminal: especially violent thugs inclined toward rapacious, murder attacks against whites.³¹

Barbara Perry too argues further that the efforts to link blackness to an innate criminality result in a narrative that imagines whiteness (particularly womanhood) and the nation being under threat from black men. Black criminality is thus constructed as a tool of white genocide. “Another common theme among hate groups is the inherent criminality of minorities,” writes Barbara Perry. “Nonwhites are portrayed as ‘egregiously anti-social elements, riot-prone minorities, dastardly criminals, homosexuals, drug dealers, perverts’ who pose a constant threat to the moral, peaceful, law-abiding white race.”³²

The Color of Crime simply attempts to put a more “genteel” face on their racist ideology through presentation of “‘facts,’ scientific, sociological and philosophical arguments” and the appearance of academic legitimacy.³³ In many regards, *The Color of Crime* provides legitimacy to white supremacist arguments about crime, becoming “a kind of Bible that shows them they were right all along”³⁴ (Southern Poverty Law Center). As noted by Ferber, Perry, and others, the focus on black crime as a threat to white safety and a white future, especially white women, is central to white supremacist discourse. For example, Dobratz found that within movement publications white nationalists emphasized the links between population increases amongst minority communities and increased crime.³⁵ Headlines within *The Truth at Last* read “Negro Crime Wave Sweeps America,” and “Negro Crime Out of Control.” The later publication described the epidemic of crime in the following ways: “Black crime is clearly out of control in America. This 12% of the population is committing 64% of all the violent crime nation-wide. This figure reaches 90% or more in many

31 Daniels (1997: 82).

32 Perry (2004: 89).

33 For a thorough refutation and rebuttal to this report, see Anti-Defamation League (n.d.); Southern Poverty Law Center (2000a); Wise (1998, 2004).

34 Southern Poverty Law Center (2000a).

35 Dobratz (2000).

cities. Liberals understand this grave threat, but refuse to admit to the fact that it is a racial problem.”³⁶ Jessie Daniels also found that the criminality of Black men is a constant theme in the publications, noting that each included at least one page featuring “crime news,” often reprinting mainstream articles without citation or permission. Importantly, her analysis emphasizes the ways in which crime is positioned a threat to white women, children, and families. Within a story appearing in *The Thunderbolt*, entitled “Nation-Wide Black Crime Wave,” black men are painted as vicious criminals:

Violent murders have reached an all time high in many American cities with negroes being the killers in over 85% of the cases The press and TV are covering up the kings of Whites by blacks in order to make the crime wave look like a onesided affair in which only blacks are suffering.³⁷

Similarly, while not questioning the veracity of their arguments in terms of the manner in which white nationalists misuse crime statistics, Carol Swain argues that white nationalists “have also utilized crime statistics to buttress their appeal to white Americans who may feel increasingly insecure because of recent demographic changes.” She argues further:

Claiming that a white person may be in danger not only of losing his privileged, majority status but also of losing his life as well, white nationalists prey upon instinctive fears for personal safety and security in their calls to raise white consciousness about the impending “minority menace” to American society.³⁸

Whereas affirmative action, open-door immigration policies, mainstream popular culture, and multiculturalism threaten the power and overall dominance of whites, these shifts (including integration) put the safety and future for whites in America in peril “unless white people ‘wake up.’”³⁹ Accordingly, white nationalists see video games as an educational tool—one that shows the criminal nature of African Americans and Latinos; yet, in glorifying hip-hop, in promoting integration, these games also put whites in danger. Challenging the games is thus key, but using games to prepare for real-life race war is essential.

In other words, the “facts” regarding black-on-white crime, regarding the daily assaults faced by white women, children, and men, mandate a violent, albeit justifiable response. “If someone believe that his life or property is genuinely threatened, then he or she will seek to eliminate that threat as expeditiously as

36 Quoted in *ibid.*: 115.

37 Quoted in Daniels (1997: 84).

38 Swain (2002: 109).

39 Quoted in Daniels (1997: 85).

possible. White nationalists prey upon this fear in whites by focusing on crime statistics that paint African Americans as criminals,” writes Carol Swain. “It is their sincere hope that these statistics—combined with rhetoric and hyperbole designed to exacerbate white insecurities—will raise white racial consciousness to the point where whites will seek to eliminate the perceived source of their problem: minorities,”⁴⁰ resulting in a race war.

Race War

One of the recurring themes of both the online conversations about video games and the actual production of games is that of race war. At one level, the race war is about whites violently defending their rights and future. It is about protection and defending white women, children, families, property, culture, and future from the violence, savagery, and genocidal plans of minorities. At a rally of the Silent Brotherhood, members are instructed to repeat a oath of loyalty: “We are in a full state of war and will not lay down our weapons until we have driven the enemy into the sea and reclaimed the land which was promised to our fathers of old.”⁴¹ A celebration of violence as the only viable solution to preserve a white future guides white nationalist ideology. Richard Scutari argues, “Rifles and bayonets turn the real pages of history and rifles and bayonets are the only thing that will save our race.”⁴² Similarly Joseph Janette, a member of the Aryan Nations, calls for the establishment of a separate white nation, which will only be attainable through violence:

When it comes down to the second American Revolution—most people call it a race war ... we just learned today some other people call it Armageddon—it’s going to have to come down to violence. They’re not going to give us our national state no matter how many people we get.⁴³

At another level, these references reflect “the belief that Jews are orchestrating a ‘race war,’ which is often linked to the imposition of the ‘one-world order.’”⁴⁴ According to Blee, who studied women within the white nationalist movement, many within the movement see a race war as inevitable. Those who see games as training modules call for white youth to use games to prepare, whether through games produced by white nationalists or those that simply allow player-

40 Swain (2002: 129).

41 Quoted in Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1998: 192).

42 Quoted in *ibid.*: 184.

43 Quoted in *ibid.*: 184.

44 Blee (2002: 97).

controlled characters to go around beating and killing characters of color. Carol Swain likewise sees “fear” or even the desire for a racial war as a central element of white nationalist movements. “This fear of a future race war is what drives them toward nationalism, which is seen as their protection.”⁴⁵

Specifically, white nationalists preach that Jews are using African Americans, fostering tensions between blacks and whites. In their estimation, such manipulation is part of a Jewish war against whites. “I feel that the new world order will trigger the race war and I think the new world order will be enforced by 1998 to 2000 and the race war will follow soon after that,” argued Klanswoman.⁴⁶ The race war will not simply manifest through Jewish manipulation of African Americans, whether in the promotion of race-mixing or integration, but because of the violence that defines American cities. “The cities, they imagine, will be under the control of armed bands of African Americans, Hispanics, and other people of color, all operating under the careful watch of their Jewish overlords.”⁴⁷

Evident in the celebration of various mainstream games that allow for the enactment of race war fantasies, whether as Germans fighting the United States or as Aryans at war with the Vietnamese, the theme of race war is also evident in discussions about the types of games needed to be developed by white nationalists. The significance of games and other forms of media culture stems from white nationalist plans for a race war. In this sense, white-nationalist-produced games function as a recruitment tool, as a method of educating and organizing the necessary “foot soldiers” for a future race war. The National Socialist Movement (NSM), which offers free downloads of several games, makes the recruiting agenda clear:

- Yes, these free computer games will drive teachers and parents crazy, because they are politically incorrect, and even downright NS [neo-Nazi]. So much the better! Some people just don't know how to have a good time. But YOU do! So do your friends.
- These free computer games are real collector [sic] items. Lets face it, the retail stores do not carry these computer games. And you won't see them advertised on TV or in your local papers.
- The NSM in joint cooperation with the NSDAP/AO [Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei/Auslands-Organisation, the National Socialist

45 Swain (2002: 127).

46 Quoted in Blee (2002: 98).

47 Blee (2002: 98).

German Workers Party/Foreign Organization] are launching a mass literature distribution of flyers announcing these video games.

- All Pro-White groups and activists are urged to assist in this project and get the word out to the Public. Any NSM or NSDAP/AO activists willing to pass out these leaflets in large amounts are urged to contact us asap. Hail Victory!⁴⁸

In many ways, video games are imagined as a threat to white manhood, as undermining a pro-white ethos, and as part of white genocide. Yet, they are also imagined as tools to counteract and change this reality. White nationalists, in this regard, have to engage the *Zombie* white youth where they are at ideologically and geographically. According to Yevgeny Morozov,

The majority of Whites nowadays largely habituate in their safe, racially homogeneous, comfort zones, in whatever they call home. Whites are extremely individualized and they spend a lot of time on computers, on the internet and with video games. I don't think anything we can do, at the moment, is going to make them spend any less time in their comfort zones. So, in my approach, changing what they're increasingly spending their time with (or on) would be worthwhile in my opinion.

Then there's also this aspect: Have you ever noticed how many World War II and Iraq/Afghanistan War and related games there are? Not to mention the extremely apparent changing of the ethno-racial demographic of video game characters? Just to name a few things. These are things that most people may not even "care" for about normally, but because they're seeing it over and over, in both subliminal and *agitprop* manners, they may slowly start to grow "used" to it or not notice it anymore. This is dangerous and this is what we need to reverse, or at least try to put to our hand, in my opinion.

It's not *the* solution for all our problems, or anything like that, but I think—or, at least, I was hoping—that you knew that.⁴⁹

Games are threats but also tools of recruitment, a means to educate and create a community, all in getting ready for the inevitable race war. Responding to a post that criticized a white nationalist who played video games for partaking in mindless distractions, Atlantean emphasized the importance of producing games in an effort to safely prepare for a race war: "We have to build our

48 Kutner and Olson (n.d.).

49 Available online at <http://vnnforum.com/showthread.php?p=1465258>, June 2, 2012.

army under the radar.”⁵⁰ Similarly Misanthropunk, questioning those who see video games as “a waste of time,” offered the following assessment of white-nationalist-produced video games.

Videogames are one of the biggest forms of entertainment these days especially for the young. A videogame with a pro-white message would [be] a tremendous propaganda opportunity, opening up [a] whole new potential for recruitment, much like the white power music scene. I’m sure when Screwdriver started out some pessimist said, “rock music? Waste of time!” It’s a good thing such advice was ignored then, as yours should be now.

Millions upon millions of young people could be reached by a WN videogame. But you’re right, it’s a waste of time. Let’s Xerox up some flyers ... that will reach the next generation of youth.: rolleyes.⁵¹

To this white nationalist and others, a successful movement that generates a victorious race war would only be possible by updating recruitment methods and tactics of education. Video games, because of the availability of technology that allowed for easy production and distribution, and because of the available types of narratives and representations, held immense possibilities.

Beyond the recruitment prospects for a future race war, video games also offer the possibility of simulating and imagining a race war. During a conversation on the need for white nationalist games, Atlanleon called for the production of “a game whose sole purpose is to shoot illegal immigrants coming over the border.”⁵² He also suggested a game “based on a war between whites and Zionists with other races serving as double agents or armies of dubious royalty.”⁵³ Alyssa wrote fondly of a game called “‘Romper Stomper.’ You were a cherry red Doc, and went around squashing ... well ... you can guess ... hehehe.”⁵⁴ Mr. Freeman likewise provided a rather in-depth description of a game depicting a race war of sorts:

I think a game where the character keeps finding situations where whites and him/her (or both as you can have more than one character to play) are persecuted and slowly becomes a WN and finds how they want to whip out the white race. It could include puzzles like getting through innercity [sic] slums

50 Available online at www.stormfront.org, April 5, 2006.

51 Available online at www.stormfront.org, April 6, 2006.

52 Available online at www.stormfront.org, March 22, 2006.

53 Available online at www.stormfront.org, March 22, 2006.

54 Available online at www.stormfront.org, March 19, 2006.

which are a white no go and escaping from being persecuted by the police for racism because you defended yourself from non wight [sic].⁵⁵

While the issue or theme of race war is evident within white nationalist chatrooms, more importantly it has been central to the production of games by white nationalist communities. Even highlighting the dangers and the anti-white dimensions of games is part of this community-building. From noting what games are pro-white to lamenting those genocidal games, from strategizing how to create white nationalist games to spotlighting ways to change existing games to be more “white friendly,” white nationalist engagement with games is about community formation, based on violence and white supremacist ideologies. Eschewing those who see video games as a distraction, a number of white nationalist groups have produced racist games in an attempt to both recruit members and to work toward the imagination of a white nationalist community.

White Nationalist Games: Waging the Race War Virtually

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2002, Resistance Records, a white supremacist multimedia company, unveiled its newest enterprise: *Ethnic Cleansing*. Part of a wave of white supremacist video games, *Ethnic Cleansing* claims to be the “most politically incorrect video game ever made.” Offering players the option to virtually embody a Klansman or a skinhead, *Ethnic Cleansing* provides game enthusiasts (and racists) the opportunity to become a white supremacist from the privacy of one’s home, all the way promoting a separatist agenda and spreading the goals of the white nationalist movement. “The whole intent of making this video game was to make a racially provocative game and if it does help promote the separation of the race, then it’s positive and that’s what we want,” noted Shawn Walker, chairman of the National Alliance.⁵⁶ In other words, the intent of a game like *Ethnic Cleansing* was to stir controversy because controversy breeds visibility and exposure; yet, at the same, its production also sought to spread the message of separation all while playing to the prominent fantasy of race war within the white nationalist movement. The initial moment of the game makes its agenda clear: “The Race War has begun. Your skin is your uniform in this battle for the survival of your kind. The White Race depends on you to secure its existence. Your peoples [sic] enemies surround you in a sea of decay and filth that they have brought to your once clean and White nation. Not one of their numbers shall be spared”

55 Available online at www.stormfront.org, May 2, 2007.

56 Quoted in Futrell et al. (2006b).

Specifically, players are able, according to the game's own description, "to run through the ghetto blasting away various blacks and spics in an attempt to gain entrance to the subway system ... where the Jews have hidden to avoid the carnage. Then if your [sic] lucky you can blow away the Jews as the scream 'oy vey'." The premise of the game is, thus, that an average American city—which resembles New York—is under the control of "subhuman gangs" and their Jewish masters. Together they are working towards world domination and the annihilation of the white race. The Jewish plans for world domination can be seen in the subway along with a sign reading "Diversity: It's good for the Jews." Your task is, thus, to battle those gangs in order to seek and destroy the Jewish mastermind. Clearly, the game reflects dominant white supremacist ideas of violent hordes of people of color—you, the sole protector of the white race, must battle the endless number of black and Latino savages and the manipulating Jews. After successfully killing as many blacks and Latinos as possible, the white nationalist protagonist enters the subway to kill several Jews before ultimately trying to kill former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

The stereotypes within *Ethnic Cleansing* are not surprisingly extreme and ubiquitous. The black gangsters, wearing red shirts emblazoned with the words Nigzs, make monkey and ape noises each time you shoot them; the game advertises real "negro voices," on its front cover. The Latino characters wear ponchos and sombreros, uttering, "I'll take a siesta now" or "Ay Carumba" as you approach them in preparation for murder. While there no close-ups of the faces of the black or Latino characters (dare we say they all look alike), the game provides visual detail of the Jews, as they relate to the white supremacist imagination. Throughout the game, posters of the "stereotypical Jew," hooked nose and all, appear on screen. The evil Jew, who of course utters "oy vey" within the game, is in control of this imaginary world, using his scheming mind and ability to manipulate the violent masses to control and destroy the white race. Beyond the racist caricatures afforded to characters of color and Jews, the game producers use *Ethnic Cleansing* to "educate" players about the white nationalist movement, including National Alliance Posters, including one picturing a young blonde white girl emblazoned with the words, "Missing: A Future for White Children," music from various white nationalist rock bands, the URL for the organization, and even a video clip featuring William Pierce, the national chairman of the National Alliance, promoting the "upcoming white revolution." "From the very beginning we have been a multimedia organization, interested in using communication, using every medium that we can to reach the public effectively," noted Pierce.⁵⁷

Resistance Records and the National Alliance followed up this effort with the release of *White Lam*. The premise of *White Lam*, like so many games, is

57 Quoted in Berkowitz 2002.

that of a lone wolf battling the evil dregs of society. The game takes place in 2021, following a terrorist attack that leaves Washington, DC in shambles. America's capital is relocated in New York State, in Kapitol City, which "was to be a beacon of light for other cities to follow and the most 'diverse' city in the nation." According to the game, under the rule of Police Chief O'Mally, Kapitol City experienced the highest minority arrest rate in the nation, resulting in his firing and the creation of an all-minority "Equality Police." Unfortunately, the "Equality Police" left the city under the control of people of color, resulting in mass levels of violence and chaos, not to mention almost \$4 dollars per gallon for gas. You have the opportunity to become Michael Riley, formerly of the KPD SWAT team, to reclaim Kapitol City as a place for white Americans. Traveling around the city on foot, your task is thus to kill until the city is back under control of the white race.

If the premise alone does not elucidate the white supremacist message of *White Law*, its opening sequence makes clear connections between the state of America, race and anti-Semitism. The game begins with its title circling around a Star of David, only to stop with this symbol of Jewishness exploding into many pieces. Notwithstanding, this game is far less racialized than *Ethnic Cleansing*. Taking cues from mainstream video games, *White Law* embraces racist messages and ideologies without the blatantly racist images and music of its baby brother. That being said, it should be clear that the game successfully integrates racist images, with the black characters wearing red sweat suits emblazoned with symbols that make references to marijuana, donning dreads, and always dancing and rapping. The game is disturbing, and reflects the burgeoning of the white nationalist movement.

As noted before, *Ethnic Cleansing* and *White Law* are part of a litany of white nationalist games available. Games like *DriveBy2*, *African Detroit Cop*, *Shoot the Blacks*, *Aryan3*, or *Concentration Camp Rat Hunt* are emblematic of white nationalist use of the technology of video games in that a number of these games are simply modifications of existing games. *Shoot the Blacks* challenges the player to shoot as many African American babies and young black males as possible, while the goal of *Concentration Camp Rat Hunt* is to shoot "Jewish" rats running between canisters of Zyklon-B and a Star of David located in Auschwitz. In *Virtual Drive By 2*, players are given an "authentic" ghetto experience, which of course reinforces the vision of *The Color of Crime* ("Feel what it's like in the ghetto"). With *Watch Out Behind You, Hunter*, players are instructed to "Shoot the fags before they rape you."

Mate Hale's World Church of Creator has offered several games on its website, including a modified version of *Escape from Castle Wolfenstein*, another game where the purpose is little more than to simulate a race war through the killing of black characters; a successful killing results in "Dead Nigger" appearing over the corpses. The game, as with many white nationalist games,

uses virtual space to spread its propaganda, including white power symbols, anti-Semitic graffiti, and pictures of Anne Frank and Adolf Hitler on the rooms and hallways. According to Mate Hale, video games are a valuable tool in recruiting younger members, while demystifying the white nationalist movement. “The younger the better. We mean to utilize whatever means we can to achieve our goals and bring faces to our church,” argued Hale in 2002. “We want people to recognize we’re average people. If we can influence video games and entertainment, it will make people understand we are their friends and neighbors As long as it doesn’t denigrate white people or have pornography in it, it’s OK with us.”⁵⁸ On this website, players can also download patches of SS uniforms, black characters donning gang attire, and exploding watermelons to be used.

A white power version of *Doom*, titled *White Power Doom*, is also available to download on the web. In this game, player-controlled characters such as a Nazi, a “hooded klansman carrying a noose and machine-gun toting skinhead”⁵⁹ roam the streets to shoot at basketball-dribbling African Americans and Latinos while dodging watermelons that shoot from flaming barrels. Throughout the game, players are exposed to white power music and slogans in the background.

Neo-Nazi Gerhard Lauck, who described video games as “free advertising,” offers SA Mann, a modified version of Pac-Man that has replaced the famed sounds of the original version with “Seig Heil” sound effects and Nazi marching music. Likewise, in this version, a Nazi trooper, who refuels by consuming swastikas, navigates a three-dimensional maze that resembles a building while being chased by Jewish “monsters.” *KZ Manager*, one of the first white supremacist video games, was created in 1989 in Austria and Germany. It allows players the chance to manage a Nazi concentration camp and gas Turks. *Hate War* brings the focus back to the contemporary United States, challenging players to oppress and persecute a racial, ethnic, or religious group of the player’s choosing. What is evident from these games is not the sophistication of aesthetics or gaming but rather how, in recent years, white nationalists, benefiting from technological advances and the arrival of Web 2.0, have moved away from games that are accessible via download or by purchasing a CD to making games available on websites themselves. Mark Pitcavage, of the Anti-Defamation League, sees these games as having a broader reach given that players don’t have to either download or purchase them. “It appears on a Web Site and it runs and once you finish playing, it goes away until the next time you visit that Web Site.”⁶⁰ According to Jason Ocamp, an editor at Gamespot.com, “Flash games are very simple to make.” Other games “require multimillion-

58 Quoted in *ibid.*

59 Martinez (2002).

60 Quoted in Futrell et al. (2006b).

dollar budgets that only big corporations can afford, but with Flash a talented artist can create a game or animation with one or two people. All they need is the right software.”⁶¹

An example of this type of game is *Kaboom*,⁶² a game that has players become suicide bombers with the goal of blowing up as many Jews as possible. Yet another example of this new use of technology can be found with the very popular *Border Patrol*, a game that saturated the Web amid the 2006 immigration debate that among other things resulted in a significant increase in violence directed at Latinos. *Border Patrol*, which was originally created in 2002 by Zine14, is a first-person shooter where players patrol the border by merely controlling the scope of a gun. The game’s instructions make this clear: “There is one simple objective to this game, keep them out ... at any cost.” Specifically, “them” refers to three particular targets, all of which play upon widespread myths about immigration: a drug smuggler, who dons a sombrero and carries a sack of marijuana on his back, the breeder, a pregnant Latina who enters the United States with two kids alongside her, and the Mexican Nationalist, who crosses the border carrying his Mexican flag, a pistol, and plans to take over the United States. All of the characters visually embody the hegemonic stereotypes of Latinos, displaying exaggerated smiles as if they are both sadistic/pathological and overjoyed at the prospect of pillaging the United States. While they offer a virtual space for the execution of the white nationalist race war, providing a grotesque spot to fulfill the insatiable desire to kill, it also provides a moment to bring to life the narratives and representational field of mainstream discourses. While this extreme game is easy to dismiss, the construction of the border as porous, as an entrance for welfare cheats, anchor babies, and drug smugglers, mirrors the opinion of many within the mainstream. These games, thus, articulate the ideologies otherwise circulated through alternative vehicles.

As these characters enter into the United States, they are met not only by gunfire, but by a welcome sign, which has been littered with bullet holes. It reads, “Welcome to the United States,” the sign strategically placed above an American flag where the stars have been replaced by a Star of David, spotlights white nationalist arguments about Jewish control and their use of Latinos as part of their effort to further gain control of the United States. The sign also contains an arrow and the words “Welfare office,” reinscribing the widely held idea that Latinos are entering into the United illegally with the plans to use and abuse America’s social welfare system. The game keeps score of both the number of people you let into the United States (as a negative number) and the

61 Quoted in Silverstein (2006).

62 Generating controversy, the Anti-Defamation League investigated the origins of this game, discovering that it was produced by “a college student who did in a few hours as a joke” (Brian Marcus quoted in Silverstein, 2006).

number of Mexicans you successfully kill (in positive numbers). A player wins the game after successfully killing 88 Mexicans, symbolically significant as 88 is shorthand for “Heil Hitler” (“H” being the eighth letter of the alphabet) within the Neo-Nazi movement. A poor showing in the game—i.e., killing too few Mexicans—leads to an equally clear message: “Do you have a greencard, paco?” Violence and white supremacist ideologies are at the core of this game, allowing for both pleasure and power in murder and terror.

Extreme and Mainstream

The reaction to these games, while relatively silent within mainstream media, was more pronounced from liberal organizations and advocacy groups. Shocked by the message and content, games like *Border Patrol* and *Ethnic Cleansing* have been too easily dismissed as extremist venom that only reflects a small segment of the American population. While it is necessary to excoriate racialized projects of hate and white supremacy, the condemnation of *Border Patrol*, *Ethnic Cleansing*, and *White Law* locates racism as an isolated phenomenon particular to these games. Similar to the Jerry Springerization of racism within talk shows, which leads to popular ideas that racism only manifests itself in extreme forms, the response to the release of *Ethnic Cleansing* denied the more subtle forms of racism within a majority of video games, identifying this game and similar others as isolated from the mainstream. Abraham Foxman, the national Director of the Anti-Defamation League, initially led the protest against this wave of white supremacist games, making clear that these new incarnations have little in common with their more popular brethren. “Once again, racists are finding new ways to exploit technology to spread their message of white supremacy, anti-Semitism, and hate to a mass audience The difference is these games are loaded with blatantly racist messages and themes.”⁶³

Similarly, Rachel Aviv, in an article in the *Village Voice*, described *Ethnic Cleansing* as “a video game for neo-Nazis and similarly deranged Americans.”⁶⁴ Likewise, Rick Tosches, in his aptly titled piece “Cleansing can Start with Racists’ Small Minds,” expressed almost shock that games like *Ethnic Cleansing* had been produced in 2003. “Distressingly, a small but horribly aggravating sector of our nation’s population have been left behind, bogged down in centuries-old thought, a picket of human being lost in time and unable to rid itself of angry and twisted ideas.” As to make clear his argument about the peripheral and dated nature of these games, he notes that the people producing and playing

63 www.cavers.com.pipermail/tfr-1/2002-March/000093.html; now defunct.

64 Aviv (2005: 48).

these games are “still fighting their great-grandpappy’s sad fight.”⁶⁵ Bobby Rush, congressman from Illinois, while calling upon the Justice Department to investigate the proliferation of hate-based video games, described them as a “deviant, perversion of mainstream games by hate groups.” He argued that white nationalist groups had “turn[ed]” video games “into racist tools to encourage the proliferation of racist ideology and ultimately, the recruitment of the game player.”⁶⁶

Foxman, Aviv, Tosches, and Rush surely have not analyzed the racial contents of mainstream games that contain blatantly racist messages and themes, albeit with more sophistication, panache, and depth.⁶⁷ In fact, the virtual body of black men within some sports games and those based in virtual ghettos like that seen *Ethnic Cleansing* are almost identical, with an emphasis on savagery, violence, and animalistic features.⁶⁸ *White Law* and many mainstream war games have the identical premise, with America’s capital falling under control of an evil enemy (minorities and communists), only to find its savior in an average white Irish American. With each game, players attempt to save the nation from evil through hard work and intelligence. While the aesthetics are different, with mainstream games embracing a colorblind tone, these games are more similar than they are different. Likewise, the common depiction of America’s cities as jungles, overrun by the “savage Other”, in need of domestication links these extremist games with their mainstream brethren. The visual appeal of urban spaces as dark and dangerous plays on America’s racialized fear and our obsession with the always-growing criminal justice system. While it is easy to dismiss *Ethnic Cleansing* and *White Law* as extremist garbage not to be feared, they reflect notions of white supremacy that are found in all segments of society.

The video game industry went to great lengths to disassociate itself from these more racist games, using *Ethnic Cleansing* and *White Law* as evidence for the righteousness and usefulness of popular games. “The Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA) finds these games abhorrent and condemns these kinds of sick efforts to abuse the wonderful technology of video games to peddle racist and anti-Semitic garbage,” writes Doug Lowenstein, President of IDSA.⁶⁹ Despite the efforts of Foxman and Lowenstein to legitimize popular video games for not only their quality, but because of their progressive political (racial) message, a sophisticated analysis of games reveals that *Ethnic Cleansing* and *White Law* are not unlike its popular counterparts. The similarity of games

65 Toschies (2002: 1).

66 Quoted in Strausberg (2002: 5).

67 Brock (2011), Daniels and Lalone (2012), Kafai et al. (2010), Leonard (2006, 2007, 2009).

68 See Hester (2012) for discussion.

69 www.cavers.com.pipemail/tfr-1/2002-March/000093.html.

reveals the powerful connections between colorblind and white nationalist racism.

Disturbing Pleasures

Although white nationalists ubiquitously depict video games as a vital tool of recruitment and education, especially given the power and popularity of video games amongst white youth, they also emphasize the pleasure derived from video games irrespective of the specifics of the game. In fact, many respondents criticized games like *Ethnic Cleansing* and *White by Law* not only for contributing to the stereotypes about white nationalists, but because those games simply are not fun. In other words, while offering a good message, the poor game play and limited technology rendered these games, despite the excitement in killing people of color, as unpleasurable and therefore undesirable. Unrealistic violence lost its source of pleasure. “A good game needs to have depth and create emotional ties to the character and plot. It has to be more than a mindless shooter to interest and educate people.”⁷⁰ Similarly, Coronach stated that white-nationalist-produced games needed to be fun.⁷¹ While many respondents made clear that their fun and pleasure emanated from the ability to shoot and kill, whether “crips,”⁷² “other races”⁷³ in a game like *GTA: San Andreas*, or “silly Mexicans”⁷⁴ who are nothing but “little beggars,”⁷⁵ Gott Entthronte demonstrated the possibility for finding pleasure in a different content. With *GTA: San Andreas*, “It was fun recruiting black gang members and flying them into buildings.”⁷⁶ From games like *Border Patrol* to even *GTA: San Andreas* or *The Warriors* the pleasure of playing games stems from the ability to enact racial violence. White nationalist transform (or embody) these games to fulfill the desire for violence.

While virtual racial violence is central to the conception of pleasure, games that provide an avenue for developing and playing through white heroes are also seen as fun. For example, Mithrandr23 expressed pleasure even in playing *NBA Live*, “where my all-white team led by the sweet shooting Dirk Nowitzki are crushing the Negro Basketball Association.”⁷⁷ Given the racial script and subtext

70 Mr. Freeman, available online at www.stormfront.org, March 22, 2006.

71 Available online at www.stormfront.org, April 18, 2007.

72 Britain Quinn, available online at www.stormfront.org, April 4, 2006.

73 Quejumpingafghan, available online at www.stormfront.org, January 15, 2006.

74 Whitepride722, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 6, 2006.

75 Scottish_blood52, available online at www.stormfront.org, May 6, 2006.

76 Available online at www.stormfront.org, October 6, 2006.

77 Available online at www.stormfront.org, March 3, 2006.

of the 2011 finals, which pitted Dwyane Wade and LeBron James' Miami Heat against Dirk's Dallas Mavericks, it is rather instructive to see the ways in which virtual reality functions as a playground, where ideologies and narratives develop as white nationalists create spaces of warfare and domination. In other words, irrespective of the aesthetics, narrative, or representations afforded within these virtual spaces, white nationalists deploy a racist gaze to find pleasure: to find joy in white supremacy, violence, and the affirmation of their racial ethos.

More than the games themselves, both mainstream and white nationalist games provide spaces to highlight and articulate ideologies of community. White nationalist gamers lament the content of mainstream games, calling for the creation of pro-white games. Games, in this sense, function as a metaphor for the broader reality. According to white nationalists, mainstream-produced virtual reality does not mirror the truth regarding the white race and racial others, instead propagating lies and misinformation. The pleasure comes not just from the games, but also in determining the meaning of the games, in collectively searching for war games that allow players to control the Nazis or urban games that allow the player to be a police officer. More importantly yet, the pleasure of games also emanates from the sense of community that develops through playing, conversing, and dreaming of more racist games. What is therefore at the core is the pleasure in supplanting the perceived Jewish power structure and carrying out a race war within and through virtual reality.

Chapter 8

What's not to "Like": White Power and Social Media

On July 22, 2011, Anders Behring Breivik detonated a bomb in Oslo, Norway and subsequently went on a killing spree at a youth camp organized by the Norwegian Labor Party, killing a total of 76 people. That morning, he emailed copies of a 1,518-page manifesto, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, to several thousand associates.¹ The text is an ideological diatribe against the evils of multiculturalism and cultural Marxism, a call for action against what Breivik understands to be an Islamic invasion certain to end in racial genocide if left unchecked, and a primer reviewing tactics, organization, and weapons for other would-be terrorists. While Breivik does not consider himself a white nationalist, rejecting such as peculiar to the racial struggles of the United States, and cautions readers against borrowing their rhetoric in a European context because it “instantly [places one] in the same category as Hitler,” he engages popular culture in a manner that mirrors the writings of white separatists.² For instance, he identifies hip-hop as a leading example of “the destructive forces of the diversity/ethnic industries,” asserting that it fosters “anti-social and anti-authority views ... [and] ‘thug’ mentality,” glorifies drug use, violence, gangs, and “primitive pride and destructive norms,” and leads to the breakdown of gender roles and family structures, imperiling European nations.³

To combat the ills of popular culture and advance his vision of European/Christian nationalism, Breivik highlights the value and utility of (among other things) social media. In fact, he devotes a whole section of his manifesto to Facebook and social networking. In the age of the Internet, he notes:

You have to be a lot more thorough than that which will involve hundreds perhaps thousands of hours invested, inviting each and every member of the group to acquire the individuals email address. I spent thousands of hours doing this over a duration of more than 6 months (from 2 Facebook accounts) and I, alone, managed to send the compendium to more than 8000 dedicated

1 Retrieved on January 6, 2013 from <http://publicintelligence.net/anders-behring-breiviks-complete-manifesto-2083-a-european-declaration-of-independence>.

2 Ibid.: 667.

3 Ibid: 1208.

nationalists this way. If only 100 of these 8000 heed the call we will be able to send the compendium to 800 000 nationalists! Please, DO NOT think that others will do this work for you. No one else will. If you are unwilling to do this, we have lost. Please, for the love of anything worth saving, DO NOT assume that others will do this, because they will not! The fate of Europe lies on your shoulders. This is the only correct and productive attitude.

For Breivik, social media enables networking and eases community building: urgency paired with utility render the message and medium perfectly suited for one another. The English Defence League (EDL), a far-right political group in Great Britain with which Breivik claimed to have interacted with, similarly recognized the emergent force of social media. As one of its leaders, Stephen Lennon, reflected, “I knew that social networking sites were the way to go.” And, in fact, it was, as the EDL witnessed rapid growth from a handful of members to more than 10,000 in the summer of 2011.⁴

Like Breivik and the EDL, white nationalists in the United States have seized upon the power of social media. In this chapter, we explore the uses and understandings of new media by advocates of white power. While new media can refer to everything from the Internet and online forums to the blogosphere and video games, which we have explored in previous chapters, here, we concern ourselves with other emergent virtual technologies that foster increased accessibility, fluidity, and interactivity.⁵ New media does not merely represent a constellation of new technologies but rather the ways in which the technologies themselves and their lived application have and continue to change the landscape. Referring to virtual reality as an “ecosystem of subcultures” Howard Rheingold described this world as extremely connected to the “real” or lived communities:

People in virtual communities use words on screens to exchange pleasantries and argue, to engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, exchange knowledge, share emotional support, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, find friends and lose them, play games, flirt, create a little high art, and a lot if [sic] idle talk. People in virtual communities do just about everything people do just about everything people do in real life, but we leave our bodies behind.⁶

The new media landscape is a “terrain created by the television, the telephone, the telecommunications networks crisscrossing the globe.”⁷ More importantly,

4 Suebsaeng (2002).

5 Jenkins (2006), Silver and Massanari (2006).

6 Rheingold (1993: 3)

7 Ibid.

as written by McKenzie Wark, in *Virtual Geography: Living with Global Media Events*:

These “vectors” produce in us a new kind of experience, the experience of telesthesia—perception at a distance. This is our “virtual geography,” the experience of which doubles, troubles, and generally permeates our experience of the space we experience firsthand.

This virtual geography is no more or less “real.” It is a different kind of perception, of things not bounded by rules of proximity, of “being there.” If virtual reality is about technologies which increase the “bandwidth” of our sensory experience of mediated and constructed images, then virtual geography is the dialectically opposite pole and process. It is the expanded terrain from which experience may be instantly drawn.⁸

While this is true, Wark erases part of this transformation in that new media technology has not simply changed the virtual geography of culture, politics, and life, but has changed the process of producing this terrain. We explore what these transformative and productive technologies have meant to the evolution of white power. In particular, we unpack how white nationalists use and interpret social media, detailing their engagements with Facebook, their efforts to expand networking beyond mainstream spaces, and their endeavors to foster community online. We look at the ways in which white nationalists use and incorporate new media technologies not only as a tool of recruitment but toward the establishment of a community without borders. Simultaneously, we reflect on how the Web 2.0 not only facilitates an imagined community among white nationalists but also serves as a virtual bridge between the mainstream and the extreme, literally providing mechanism for shared information and identity formation.

New Media and White Nationalism

According to the Simon Wiesenthal Center’s 2008 Report “Online Terror + Hate: The First Decade,” extremists are leveraging 2.0 technologies to dynamically target young people through digital games, Second Life scenarios, blogs, and even YouTube- and Facebook-style videos depicting racist violence terrorism. It found “more than 11,500 social networks, websites, forums and blogs promoting violence, anti-Semitism, homophobia, hate music and ‘terrorism,’ an increase from 10,000 last year.” Whereas past expansion was seen in the development of websites, the growth of white nationalist presence

⁸ Wark (1994: vii).

on the web has been almost entirely within the realm of social networking. “The spike is not in traditional Web sites in the United States,” noted the Rabbi Abraham Cooper, who is the associate dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. “It’s more global and almost all in the social-networking area.”⁹ According to Christopher Wolf, the chair of the International Network against CyberHate (INACH), “the Internet toolbox that is available to hatemongers has a number of new items.”¹⁰ Specifically, the Simon Wiesenthal Center concluded that 30 percent of all the hate-based websites that it examined were on Facebook, with a significant increase from Europe and the Middle East.¹¹

The importance of the integration of Web 2.0 technologies transcends the reach and size of the white nationalist movement globally, but demonstrates the ways in which white nationalists are using the Internet and its entrenched technologies in “creating their virtual neighborhood of hate.”¹² The technological shifts ushered in by Web 2.0 and the ways in which white nationalists have “adapt[ed] to the news and the new technologies with incredible speed” have aided in recruitment efforts.¹³ “Neo-Nazis are very well aware of social network platforms for recruiting the next generation, for infiltrating youth groups,” argues Stefan Glaser, one of the co-founders of INACH.¹⁴ This especially true given how these networks allows for the dissemination of videos, writings, and other connective structures with great ease.

While an issue of recruitment and the ease of disseminating ideologies in absence of any sort of filter, Web 2.0 has furthered the efforts of white nationalists to establish a sense of community and bounded identity. White nationalist groups have used and developed social networking websites “to create a community, a community of hate and it has very real consequences.”¹⁵ Social networking websites specifically (along with the Internet in general) work “to eliminate borders and local laws and traditions.”¹⁶ Or as argued by Ian Buruma, “Geographical borders no longer count.”¹⁷ While partially accurate in that these websites and their content allow for white nationalists to transcend national boundaries, isolation, and other divisions, they do allow for the construction of new borders, laws, mores, and boundaries, all of which are held together by a white nationalist ethos and ideology. While acknowledging the power of virtual

9 Quoted in Solomon (2010).

10 Quoted in Simon Wiesenthal Center (2008).

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

reality in the establishment of imagined communities throughout society, Val Burris concludes that the Internet, especially Web 2.0, "holds a special attraction for those [white nationalists] in search of 'virtual' community to compensate for the lack of critical mass in their own locale."¹⁸ Simi and Futrell highlight the importance of the current offerings available to white nationalists within virtual reality:

Jay, an Aryan Front Skinhead, uses the Internet to allay his feeling of isolation from the movement. As he points out, "I don't have much free time anymore to attend festivals, but e-mailing and the chat rooms make me feel a lot less alone. The Internet just makes it easier to be a racist when you know people all over the world are fighting for pretty much the same you are."¹⁹

Scotty, also an Aryan Front skinhead, explained, "[The Internet] keeps me feeling connected to the movement and that gets pretty hard sometimes because I work two jobs and having a family."²⁰

Social networking websites thus, enable "Aryans [to] access a global online community," and successfully imagine themselves in explicitly nationalist terms.²¹ It provides them with the materials to carve out spaces of hate, community of power, and virtual neighborhoods that are explicitly oriented to white supremacy. This especially important given how "maintaining spaces that contain and protected established desired social relations is a common theme" for white nationalists, given the ways in which they "adopt cognitive maps as to what should belong and what needs to be expelled."²² The creation of blogs, the posting of videos, the establishment of online discussions, and even the efforts to limit white supremacist presence online all contribute to the existence of a white nationalist virtual community, which Daniels describes as "the complex set of relationships between people who hang out online and sometimes meet face-to-face."²³

As a result of the increasing visibility of white nationalism afforded by Web 2.0 and the ways in which various groups and individuals have used new technologies to advance a white supremacist agenda, debates about regulation of their activities have become front and center since the late 2000s. With concerns about free speech and hate speech guiding the conversation, both

18 Simi and Futrell (2010: 97).

19 Ibid.: 88.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Flint (2004: 20).

23 Daniels (2009: 105).

Facebook and YouTube have responded to the debate and the demands for content removal from activists with explicit policies.

Within its Terms of Service, Facebook does not make explicit references to hate speech (racism; anti-Semitism; homophobia) but instead offers general terms that would cover these practices:

6. You will not bully, intimidate, or harass any user;
7. You will not post content that: is hateful, threatening, or pornographic; incites violence; or contains nudity or graphic or gratuitous violence;
10. You will not use Facebook to do anything unlawful, misleading, malicious, or discriminatory.²⁴

As part of YouTube's statement on "Respecting the YouTube Community,"²⁵ it offers an explicit policy regarding hate speech: "We encourage free speech and defend everyone's right to express unpopular points of view. But we don't permit hate speech (speech which attacks or demeans a group based on race or ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender, age, veteran status, and sexual orientation/gender identity)."²⁶

Additionally, after the Simon Wiesenthal demanded certain pages removed, Facebook complied, issuing the following statement: "Where hateful content is uploaded and reported, Facebook removes it and disables the responsible account. Many of the groups or pages that were shown to us by the Simon Wiesenthal Center earlier this year as part of their study had already been removed under Facebook's rules."²⁷ Similarly after concerns were expressed about racism on Facebook from Australian activists, representatives of Facebook once again articulated its attempt to "'strike a very delicate balance' between giving Facebook users the freedom to express their opinions and ensuring people do not feel threatened when using the site."²⁸

Existing research, as well as our own examination of white nationalist usage of social networking websites and the Internet in general, raises questions about

24 Retrieved on January 6, 2013 from www.facebook.com/home.php#!/terms.php?ref=pf.

25 It introduces this statement with the following: "We're not asking for the kind of respect reserved for nuns, the elderly, and brain surgeons. We mean don't abuse the site. Every cool new community feature on YouTube involves a certain level of trust. We trust you to be responsible, and millions of users respect that trust. Please be one of them."

26 Retrieved on January 6, 2013 from www.youtube.com/t/community_guidelines.

27 Quoted in Balkin (2009).

28 Quoted in Simon Wiesenthal Center (2008).

the usefulness and utilization of these rules: there continue to be a number of pages on Facebook and videos on YouTube that run counter to the spirit and explicit requirements of the above rule; it is equally clear that Facebook and YouTube have taken down, and continue to take down, numerous white supremacist pages. It is important to think about this debate and these rules as we look at white nationalists and social networking. Importantly, efforts to rid virtual reality of explicit enunciations of white supremacist ideology has in fact cleared a space for reiterations of many of its foundational preoccupations and fueled the circulation of its key narratives. In particular, advocates of white power read in these rules an affirmation of anti-white double standards that solidify notions of white victimization and encourage retelling of conspiracy theories to account for this position.

White Victimhood

It is tempting to think of Facebook as an unparalleled means of creating community, and in turn, right to worry about how it facilitates the formation of virtual communities dedicated to white power. Significantly, white nationalists lament the ways in which they, as whites, as white nationalists, and as people challenging multiculturalism, suffer in the popular medium. The assumed power of Facebook to bring together white nationalists to allow for the creation of virtual communities is disputed by white nationalists themselves, who bemoan the ways in which what they describe as political correctness and frame as Jewish power undermines their ability to create public communities. In this vein, it represents the most recent and highly visible domain marked by systematic efforts to exclude, control, and otherwise discriminate against whites. Ironically, the purported discrimination by social networking websites, and their alienation from mainstream public culture, provides the basis for community formation. Here are a few examples of this side of the discourse:

They disabled my pro-white account, but of course, anyone who posts "black powa" or "viva la revelation" gets a pat on the back and a government check! This goes to show you how racist facebook really is, they favor non-whites, and keep us aryan in the dark! If we were friends on facebook and it says were not friends anymore, blame the jews that probably run facebook out of the basement of a bank. They probably saw my propaganda album and thought, "Oh, another strong-willed white man is uniting white people amongst facebook, let's keep this aryan down, before he rises!"²⁹

29 The Lone Skin, available online at www.stormfront.org, April 22, 2010.

Billy Roper just had his American Nationalist Party group deleted yesterday for no reason and no explanation. FB is a jew operation, but we have lots of WN there having good discussions. On individuals they seem a bit more relaxed than they are on white pride groups.³⁰

Any pro-White group that gets popular is disabled.³¹

I don't even bother joining those type of groups on facebook anymore, they always get closed. Keep your profile tamed down, or you'll get kicked off aswell. Just stick to stormfront.³²

You shouldn't be wasting your time on that damn liberal jew run site anyhow. I wont let my kids get an account on Facebook or Myspace. Both sites are worthless and they corrupt the minds of white kids and teenagers!!!³³

As the white nationalists imagine themselves, and whites in general, as under attack, another theme develops surrounding Facebook and other social networking websites: the existence of double standards. Citing Facebook groups advancing notions of pride and supremacy—"Asian Pride," "Jewish Pride," "Black Pride," "Black Power"—and those opposing notions of white pride—"***k White Pride," "Good Night White Pride"—numerous discussions on places like Stormfront focus on the ways in which whites are not welcome in mainstream society. For example, Skinedge, after listing the above Facebook groups, announced how his group had been removed from Facebook:

My non racist white pride group was deleted after only 3 days and only 30 members joining—while dozens of other racial pride groups persist with thousands of members (and no desperate disclaimers of non-racism in their group descriptions). WHAT ABOUT FREEDOM OF SPEECH? WHAT ABOUT EQUAL RIGHTS? It's OK to be proud of your heritage ... unless you're white—if you're proud to be white that makes you Nazi trash.³⁴

Leonidas of Sparta also focused on the racial double standards, a trope that brought this community together just as it serves as a fulcrum throughout the white nationalist community: "I've NEVER seen such obvious double standards as facebook. The first post in this thread says it all. I've saved that post as an

30 FTTEE, available online at www.stormfront.org, April 22, 2010.

31 Knight of the Occident, available online at www.stormfront.org, April 23, 2010.

32 WP_Quebec, available online at www.stormfront.org, April 22, 2010.

33 white_is_nice, available online at www.stormfront.org, April 22, 2010.

34 Available online at www.stormfront.org, September 4, 2009.

image, and emailing to everyone I know on there. I just closed my account, and can't thank you all enough."³⁵

In response, many white nationalists offered support and strategies to combat this discrimination, all while using the moment to advance the formation of a community based on an identity of persecuted whiteness and racial double standards. "That's EXACTLY what I'm talking about. I'm sorry to say, but this is where the negro has it over us. The negro complains and complains and complains and complains, and never gives up. It's why we used to have to use the whip, to get through to it's thick skin," writes Arc Xtrike. "The very least we can do once in a while is get PI\$\$ED OFF, very PI\$\$ED OFF, and treat it the way it should be treated, like a WAR, and don't give up until we win the battle. I for one volunteer to help here, in any way I can."³⁶ Likewise, FTEE lamented the difficulties of organizing and educating given their lack of power: "That is true, but we're also up against a power structure that doesn't want to let us thrive. The sooner we understand that it is us against the world, the sooner we will start to build our own power structure. It's 2009 people, we need to get it through our heads that the powers that be, for the time being, are biased against us. Let's quit whining and do something about it!"³⁷

As is evident here, a white nationalist community emerges as a space to advance not only a white supremacist agenda, but one based on an identity of victimhood and second-class citizenship.³⁸ Just as those advancing white pride and a white nationalist agenda are censored and persecuted, the backlash directed at those trying to use Facebook is indicated of the precarious future for whites. Questions about white existence and a white future emanate from debates about the alienation and removal of white nationalists from the Facebook community.

Another aspect common thread that links together discussions about social networking websites and the ways in which their existence (and white nationalists' relationship with them) contributes to a sense of community is the idea that espousing white supremacist ideologies puts white nationalists in danger. Therefore, Facebook, and the Internet as a whole, exposes white nationalists to potential harm in terms of punishment from school, from the criminal justice system, and in the workplace. During a discussion about Facebook, smashleigh offered the following assessment of the dangers of online discussions:

35 Available online at www.stormfront.org, September 5, 2009.

36 Available online at www.stormfront.org, September 4, 2009.

37 Available online at www.stormfront.org, September 4, 2009.

38 Daniels (1997, 2009), Ferber (1998, 2004).

I'm glad you use a really generic name for your facebook profile and that your profile isn't overly WN in the search view to avoid negative feedback from outsiders but please be careful! What you put on SF, Facebook and elsewhere online you may be able to erase but you can't ever be sure it is gone for good.

Also be aware who you befriend on social networking sites, pictures you post and the groups you subscribe too.

I don't want to sound overly negative or be a worry-wart, but some people will use whatever information they can get on you to negatively affect you.

Whether it's work, family or friends—not everyone is as enlightened about the importance of WN fight as members of SF.

I know of one SF member being “outed” in the Australian media as a WN and being placed on leave at work while an internal investigation was undertaken—granted, she did work for the government so was under more pressure.

We need people to fight for the WN cause in their everyday lives, and people can't do that if they are under constant pressure or opening themselves for attack on social networking sites.

Saying that, I'm glad you are passionate and proud of your race and willing to show that to the people around you, both through your actions online and through the life you lead.³⁹

Fellow Englishman Billy agreed, wondering about how the enemies of white nationalist/white people would use Facebook and other social engineering websites in terms of surveillance and control:

Yeah. To my mind, these social networking sites have probably been purposefully engineered as another Big Brother measure, designed to record as many of people's details as possible. Think of all the different forms of data people post about themselves; names, addresses, photos, occupation, age, e-mail address etc... the list goes on. Anyone can access this information at any time on these things.⁴⁰

Yet others questioned this approach in that being secretive didn't allow for recruitment of new members, nor did it facilitate honesty about the truth:

39 Available online at www.stormfront.org, April 7, 2010.

40 Available online at www.stormfront.org, April 8, 2010.

"That's pretty lame, I appreciate people trying to be on the down low about things, but having a 'secret' life and set of feelings is NOT a good thing. By doing this we are like 90% of everyone else who just bitches about things but doesn't do a damn thing to try and help out the situation."⁴¹

Useful Things for Community Building

Although many conversations among white power advocates highlight exclusion and persecution, many white nationalists also have found ways to use this tool as a method of organizing, and for education. Given a focus on reaching youth, particularly, and countering the multiculturalism message prevalent within popular culture, many emphasized the importance of not abandoning this technology. "The internet is the future, and one of the easiest ways to get in touch with white youth and people who may support the WN cause; facebook," writes *The Lone Skin*. "I've already found 9 people, and they're all WN. Hopefully soon I can start finding people from my county or even my town."⁴² He went on to emphasize the importance of Facebook, and presumably other social networking sites, in that unlike Stormfront or others spaces, it provided an opportunity to expand beyond the already converted white nationalist:

You are correct that I'm preaching to the choir, but some of the "choir" that are adding me have only recently been awakened and need information as to what books to read, where to go for information, etc. I also look for white youth and people who* are aren't WN, I join "highschool groups" of highschools around my area and post things on their pages, hoping that white kids that look at the highschool pages see it and add me. Curiosity is my ally! Which, in turn, the kid looks at my post and adds me, I wake him up, in turn he wakes his friends up or* refers them to me, chain reaction.⁴³

Similarly, Knight of the Occident argued against those who dismissed Facebook as mindless or Jewish-inspired propaganda to challenge other white nationalists to think about the ways it can be used to educate, inspire, and cultivate a community of white nationalists within the United States and elsewhere.

I deleted my Facebook account but reactivated it, I have commitment problems with social networking sites, it seems. It's a good tool for connecting with like-minded individuals, of course there's some anti's who are there to cause trouble

41 358Mustang available online at www.stormfront.org, April 8, 2010.

42 Available online at www.stormfront.org, April 7, 2010.

43 *The Lone Skin*, available online at www.stormfront.org, April 8, 2010.

but just be sensible about what you post and what personal information you give out. There's no way I'd put my address or home phone number on the internet, even if it was just "Friends only" who could see it, just in case.⁴⁴

Within the parameters of Facebook, then, white nationalists have creatively utilized the technology to foster virtual communities.

Using the Southern Poverty Law Center's list of hate groups, we searched Facebook to see which had a presence there. We discovered that many groups were not readily present and that in instances where white nationalist organizations existed on Facebook as a group to join (or as an organization or idea to "like"), there were often few members. While present, the Aryan Nation (5 people); European Americans United (257); League of South (5); American Front (45 people); American Renaissance (504); New Century Foundation (59); Save Our State (142); Prussian Blue (15 in a couple of groups); Paleoconservative Alliance (629); The Charles Martel Society (81); The Occidental Quarterly Online (772); Americana Pictures (833); A Conversation About Race: a film by Craig Bodeker (665) (about is a film from New Century Productions) were not terribly popular at time of writing. Moreover, the level of activity among these pages appeared to be minimal. They appear to function as markers of identity in that they allow members to assert their views (on their pages it would state that they were a member of or simply liked that particular organization). Moreover, the white nationalist presence on Facebook exists as a passageway or a thoroughfare to websites throughout the Internet. The National Association for the Advancement of White People (NAAWP) has a presence on Facebook, with 331 members in one of its group pages. Unlike other pages, it does not provide a link to the NAAWP website, but instead provides a description of the group: "For all the whites out there who have been persecuted because of their race. NOT being racist and not at all against any race, just tired of every other race blaming every little thing on the white man."

On its wall, there is limited discourse, but rather mostly mundane juvenile chatter that could reflect a particular ideology but could also represent challenging sarcasm ("I love being white"), although some more revealing comments reflect the basic tenets of white nationalism. Leading up to and immediately after the 2008 US presidential election, the following comments were posted:

And suddenly after today you were a racist if you did not vote for obama. race has nothing to do with this vote, obama just seemed to many white americans to be the inferior candidate.

44 Available online at www.stormfront.org, April 15, 2010.

WHAT'S NOT TO "LIKE"

Haha i love how someone hung Palin for Halloween and everyone thought it was a hilarious joke; but when someone did it to Obama, it was racist

I mean I understand the history of lynching and all, but a black man is our president-elect, isnt that kind of irrelevant

Other comments also captured core ideological components of white victimhood, whites as minorities, and whiteness under attack.

It would have been nice if the united negro college fund could put me through college ... but alas i was denied

Its not racist to say the jena 6 should be in jail. i'm not condoning what the guys who hung the nooses did, but no one was hurt from that action. sure it offended people and is not right, but no one was physically hurt. in response a kid who was completely unrelated to the event was nearly beaten to death. i don't ... care what color those kids who beat up the other kid are, they should be in jail!

It's about time someone started a group like this. i'm tired of saying that white people are subjected to racism and being called a racist in response.

Will man I agree. When you really think about it, whites are the easiest target for racism because if we even tried to complain about it we are being racist to some other group. And how is it racist to say things like the jena 6 should all be in jail? It makes me mad

Has anyone else seen that shit about the halloween decorations (the nooses) that the NAACP didn't like so they made a big deal about it? i bet if a black person had put up the nooses noone would have said anything about it but no, a white guy put it up so it's racist.

Their page additionally offers a few links to articles and videos that further emphasize whiteness under attack, whether physically ("Aryan Women Under Attack") or from racism ("Racism Against Whites), in the United States and elsewhere (South Africa).

In many ways, those pages that are connected to more "acceptable" organizations also articulate white nationalist values and ideologies yet their names are not explicitly connected to white supremacy. For example, the National Policy Institute, which despite its claims to be a Think Tank is listed as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, has close to 5,000 members on Facebook. It describes itself as:

An Augusta, Georgia-based research foundation that educates the public on trends and policies that affect the interests of the United States' founding people and historic majority population. NPI is guided in its work by the wisdom and vision of the Founders, whose purpose was to establish "a more perfect Union" for "Ourselves and our Posterity."

Additionally on its Facebook page is a description of their "company overview":

White Americans have been led to believe that "diversity" and "multiculturalism" are sacred. We're conditioned to be shy when it comes to standing up for our own beliefs. But doesn't every race, ethnic subculture, and special interest—from left-handers to lesbians—have all sorts of organizations working for them? Isn't it about time someone spoke for us? It's not just the minority lobby who opposes our interests while advancing their own: even America's white leaders—conservatives and liberals, Republicans and Democrats—routinely push for policies that disadvantage their own people. Well, it is about time we had a voice in public policy—that's why THE NATIONAL POLICY INSTITUTE (NPI) was formed. NPI promotes the American majority's unique historical, cultural, and biological inheritance—and advances policies that, without prejudicing the legitimate rights of others, fearlessly defends our rights... our heritage

Reflecting this ideology, its Facebook page is filled with links (1,500) to various articles of white nationalist orientation. For example, in April 2010, after the passage of SB1070, Arizona's immigration legislation, NPI posted several links to its own articles all of which justified the actions in Arizona. In "Arizona: Illegal alien crime wave continues," its authors argue, "While politicians such as President Barack Obama denigrate the government of Arizona and 'activists' attempt to punish that state's citizens, these so-called social justice paragons ignore the fact that the U.S. is Mexico's de facto penal colony." With links to an article by Pat Buchanan about immigration, numerous referencing crime committed by "illegal aliens," and others focusing on the cultural, physical, and geographic attacks being waged against whites in the United States, South Africa, and Australia, the NPI Facebook page is meeting place for white nationalist ideas. It provides a gathering place for the dissemination of NPI articles (white nationalist ideologies) and a community whereupon white nationalists are able to dialogue and find legitimacy in their worldview. In addition to links to various articles, the NPI also appears to have developed several "historic" fans pages, which are linked as its favorites. On its "Davy Crockett" page there is very little historic information about Crockett. Instead it offers links to Lew Rockwell's "Davy Crockett vs. welfare," references to Tea Party Patriots, which on its page listed "Remember 9/11? Heck I ain't

forgot the Alamo yet!" as a favorite sign from the "Tax Day Tea Party," and a link to a video of Ted Nugent speaking on Fox's *Neil Cavuto Show*, where he said "Everyone knows Davy Crockett was right... ." On several pages, it merely lists quotes from various historic figures, which deal with issues of race, "liberty," or notions of freedom

Thomas Jefferson fan page: "Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government. Nature, habit, opinion have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them"

William Walker fan page: "Any social organization, no matter how secured, is preferable to that in which individuals and families are altogether at the mercy of savages."

Jack London fan page: "Our soul stuff is not a coin to be pocketed by the first chance comer. The Japanese cannot pocket it any more than he can thrill to short Saxon words or we can thrill to Chinese hieroglyphics. The leopard cannot change its spots, nor can the Japanese, nor can we. We are thumbed by the ages into what we are, and by no conscious inward effort can we in a day rethumb ourselves. Nor can the Japanese in a day, or a generation, rethumb himself in our image."

Jack London fan page: "A man should, whatever happens, keep to his own caste, race and breed. Let the White go to the White and Black to the Black. Then whatever trouble falls in the ordinary course of things—is neither sudden, alien nor unexpected."

John Jay fan page: "Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers."

The NPI Facebook page is about recruitment, about spreading a white nationalist ideology as part of an effort to cultivate a community within Facebook and elsewhere. Presenting its white nationalist ideology through purported academic and historic offerings, the NPI tries to redefine and repackage white nationalism all while reimagining what a white nationalist community might look like. Other Facebook pages, like those associated with the Lew Rockwell (close to 10,000 people in two groups) or the Ludwig von Mises Institute (over 23,000 people "like this organization"), equally promote white nationalist ideologies, using the pretense of academic and scholarly inquiry as the platform. The Southern Poverty Law Center refers to this practice as "academic racism": developing places where the ideology and strategic arguments of the movement

are developed as part of a larger effort to develop, sustain, and grow a white nationalist community.⁴⁵

The SPLC identifies the Ludwig von Mises Institute as neo-Confederates and describes this group, based in Auburn, AL, in the following way:

Headed up by Llewelyn Rockwell Jr., the Ludwig von Mises Institute is devoted to a radical libertarian view of government and economics inspired by the Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises, whom the institute says “showed that government intervention is always destructive.”

Indeed, the institute aims to “undermine statism in all its forms,” and its recent interest in neo-Confederate themes reflects that.

Rockwell recently argued that the Civil War “transformed the American regime from a federalist system based on freedom to a centralized state that circumscribed liberty in the name of public order.”

Desegregation in the civil rights era, he says, resulted in the “involuntary servitude” of (presumably white) business owners. In the past, Rockwell has praised the electoral success of European neofascists like Joerg Haider in Austria and Christoph Blocher in Switzerland.

Both Rockwell and institute research director Jeffrey Tucker are listed on the racist League of the South’s Web page as founding members—and both men deny their membership. Tucker has written for League publications, and many League members have taught at the institute’s seminars and given presentations at its conferences.

At the recent Austrian Scholars Conference, the F.A. Hayek Memorial Lecture was delivered by Donald Livingston, director of the League’s Summer Institute. In 1994, Thomas Fleming, a founding League member and the editor of *Chronicles* magazine, spoke on neo-Confederate ideas to an institute conference.

Rockwell, who is also vice president of the Center for Libertarian Studies, runs his own daily news Web site that often features articles by League members.⁴⁶

Similarly, the Libertarian-Nationalist Forum, which is presumably a reincarnation of the Libertarian National Social Movement, which was noted

45 Retrieved on January 6, 2013 from www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-report/browse-all-issues/2006/summer/irreconcilable-differences/the-groups.

46 Southern Poverty Law Center (2000b).

by the Simon Wiesenthal Center's report about Hate on the Internet, presents itself as a mainstream organization. It describes itself on its Facebook page in the following way:

Libertarian-Nationalism may be described as a philosophy that advocates "A nation for a every people," and "All people for their nation."

The impetus for this movement is to encourage the political development of a party, or coalition within the two major parties (the preferable solution) in the U.S. that strictly adheres to a program to attend to the National Interest, with respect to the libertarian origins of the basis for this National Interest to be expressed.

Clarity comes in understanding that the Libertarian-Nationalist is both libertarian and nationalist; we believe in the sovereignty of individuals from which the sovereignty of nations stems, and by which the individual character of nations is formed.

A proper celebration of Individualism according to the libertarian ideal recognizes of persons only; a Libertarian-Nationalist recognizes it according to persons, and their respective states, in that order, with preference to dealing with the state as a body coherently expressing the will of the people.

"Nations are Individuals"

We look to the state to coherently organize the will of the people, and believe distinct peoples ought to be represented by distinct states.

"Equality in hierarchy"

Libertarian-Nationalists are opposed to the chaotic, interference-principle oriented philosophies of Multiculturalism and Internationalism. These may be described variously as national suicide or Balkanization, and these are undesirable as they oppress the will of all but a few who would pretend to manage a disaster too ill-understood to be an intentional scheme. Balkanization is a policy failure from which the World must be rescued, and our nations secured from the ambiguities, lack of representation and waste attendant to World-government schemes in all their incarnations.

"For a society that is orderly for all, and ordered"⁴⁷

47 Simon Wiesenthal Center (2008).

Equally revealing are the groups/organization it gives “shout outs” to—The John Birch Society; The Council of Conservative Citizens; American Renaissance (publication); The Nationalist Times (newspaper); The Public Advocate; The National Policy Institute; The Foreign Policy Research Institute; CATO Institute; Mises Institute—many of which are at the forefront of the white nationalist movement. While small (it had only 133 members on January 8, 2014), it demonstrates the ways in which white nationalists continue to use Facebook and continue to package its ideology in accepting and appealing ways.

White nationalist presence on Facebook is also evident within “issues”-based groups, which allow for the articulation of ideologies and white supremacist framing. Despite efforts to rid Facebook of anti-Semitic and white-nationalist organizing, it continues to provide a space where white nationalists form a community inside a larger community held together by mutual support for particular issues. For example, Facebook offers groups like the “Boycott the Glenn Beck Boycott” (a National Policy Institute Page, with close to 5,000 members) and the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals (referenced on Free Republic and Stormfront, and liked by the Facebook page of the National Policy Institute, and which has over 2,300 members), both which recycle commonplace ideologies and narrative tropes in absence of an explicitly white nationalist context. The communities that form around issues are particularly important in providing mainstream legitimacy and acceptance for white nationalist ideologies in the absence of the integration of white nationalist groups into mainstream discourse.

All of this demonstrates the shared ideologies and shared white racial framing between white nationalists and the mainstream even as certain groups are represented as extreme. For example, there are numerous groups and pages on Facebook dedicated to the confederate flag and confederate states of America (over 6,500), which illustrates the ways in which neo-Confederate ideologies are disseminated through and present on social networking sites. Likewise, pages focused on the evils or racism of affirmative action (“Affirmative Action: Brilliantly Fighting Discrimination with Discrimination”—almost 6,000 members—and “Affirmative Action is Racism”—over 4,000 members), political correctness (“Fuck Political Correctness”—close to 4,000 members) and multiculturalism (“Against Multiculturalism”—741 members) illustrate the ways in which Facebook is and has the potential to be a breeding and recruitment ground for white nationalists. We can see other examples in the ways in which President Obama has become a rallying point for white nationalists. The “NoBama” page and one dedicated to wishing for the death of President Obama provide such a forum. There, individuals posted not only their contempt (if not hatred) for President Obama but recirculated commonplace tropes among white

nationalist communities. In response to accusations of racism, the following defenses were offered:

Come on!!! we are not racist just b/c we dnt like him!! he is only in office b/c blacks just wants blacks president!! and i'm not racist because my babby sister is half black

Many blacks call WHITE ppl racist which i dont get.b/c their is ALL BLACK SCHOOLS,BLACK HISTORY MONTH,BLACK THIS BLACK THAT. WHERE IS ALL WHITE,SCHOOLS,WHITE HISTORY MONTH WHITE THIS WHITE THAT!!!

More than any other issue, that of immigration allows for the circulation of white supremacist arguments, links to shared articles, recruitment, and the formation of a community of sorts. Offering similar statistics and narratives about immigration, from those about jobs, crime and welfare to denials of racism except in the case of discrimination against whites and the mutual focus on values, the immigration pages on Facebook allow for the creation of a community based on ideology and mythologies rather than shared identity. Following the passage of SB1070, several groups were either created or most certainly enhanced their visibility: 1,000,000 Strong SUPPORTING Arizona Immigration Law; Not Giving Welfare to Illegal Immigrants; SORRY ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, BUT THE COUNTRY'S FULL and countless others. In one the smaller groups, the following exchange took place regarding "Illegal immigrants":

We should have a whole genocide of them in our country lol

I am sick and tired of these sorry azz fuckers coming over here and fucking up OUR country so it looks like theirs. I wil say this. I welcome with open arms, ANYBODY that wants to come to America to have a better life. PAY TAXS, LEARN THE DAMN LANGUAGE, and be a useful part of society. Dont come over here, ... See Morecrap out a kid, reap all the free benifits of MY HARD WORK and not pay for it. I think the first time an illgal is caught in the country, put a chip in them and ship them out. IF they come back, shot them dead on site. Simple put, their breaking laws and their not paying for the crime, so thats my cost for breaking the law.

The existence of issue-based communities that circulate particular ideologies and framing, that bring together the mainstream and extreme, is important in the development of the white nationalist movement. They highlight the importance of these spaces for recruitment in that they allow white nationalists to target those who demonstrate an interest and a shared racial ethos.

New Saxon: New Media, New Community

Not surprisingly, given claims of censorship, and given desires to create white nationalist communities, there has been increased effort to produce social networking websites through existing white supremacist organization structures. Describing the growth of social networking websites amongst white nationalists, Mark Potok identified their broader context and appeal:

Well, it is in some ways making them more transparent. I mean it's remarkable—you know, one thing that is not as important as was once thought are hate Web sites on the Internet. It turns out hate sites really work like all other sites. If the content doesn't change, you know, people go visit them a few times. Essentially they act as a brochure for your group. But when you look at the social networking site, some of the neo-Nazi forums like Stormfront.org, it is really a remarkable thing to see.

First of all, some of them are very large. Stormfront has over 140,000 registered users. You know, this is a site run by a former Klan leader from Alabama. But what is sort of fascinating is you will see discussions of ideology, of organizing in the movement, of questions like is the primary enemy black people or gay people or the Jews or whatever it may be, discussions of should we go—you know, let's go join the Tea Parties. They may not be exactly like us, but we have a lot in common.

So yes, these kinds of sites have made their world much more transparent. In addition, we see sites like New Saxon, which is really, its Facebook for Nazis. And you go up there and you will see these men and women, you know, often looking for love and looking for friends and so on. At the same time, they're posting pictures of themselves standing with AK-47s in front of swastika flags and so on, and in some cases you get remarkable insights. New Saxon has carried quite a number of profiles of American neo-Nazis and other kinds of extremists in the U.S. military, which is quite a frightening thing.⁴⁸

New Saxon is not the first attempt to recreate the concept of social networking within an explicitly white nationalist context. In 2005, Dylan Wheeler, then webmaster of Volksfront, a skinhead group from Portland, Oregon, created Folkscom.com. Attracting over 2,000 members, it was a short-lived project that was shut down later in 2005, leaving a void that several different websites would attempt to fill.

48 Gross (2010).

However, NewSaxon.org—which was created in May 2006 by Todd Findley, a white nationalist from Florida, and which, as of 2009, had 7,906—is the most prominent of these social networking websites dedicated to and emanating from a white nationalist perspective. The impetus for New Saxon was spelled out to potential members: “NewSaxon.com realizes the need of white folk to have a place on the net to call our own so we set up an online community.” It thus provided white nationalists with “the ability to stay connected with family, old friends and meet new people through our online discussion forums, real-time chat rooms, groups, and classifieds section.”⁴⁹ As of May 2010, it describes itself in the following way:

New Saxon is a Social Networking site for people of European descent where users may enjoy many great features which will enable fun interaction among members. Hot topics of interest include defending the rights of white people, preservation of European culture and heritage, reform of illegal immigration policies, workers rights, withdrawal of our military from an illegal Middle Eastern occupation and promotion of white separation.

New Saxon is also an excellent place to meet like minded people with high moral character, a love for their heritage and culture, have strong family values and are politically active in various grassroots projects.

For a pure National Socialist experience NewSaxon.Org members are also invited to join the NSM Official Party Forum where you may indulge yourself in National Socialist doctrine and excellent debate among fellow members of the forum.⁵⁰

Kevin Baron, in an article for Stars and Stripes about military personnel utilizing NewSaxon.org, “a racist version of Facebook run by the National Socialist Movement,” described the site in the following way:

It is Facebook for the fascist set, and the typical online profiles of its members reveal expected tastes.

Favorite book: “Mein Kampf.”

Favorite movie: the Nazi propaganda film “Triumph of the Will.”

Interests: “white women.”

49 Buchanan (2007).

50 <http://newsaxon.org>.

Dislikes: “anyone who opposes the master race.”⁵¹

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, NewSaxon.org not only provides a means for white nationalists to form a community through conversations and connections, but also creates a space defined by shared practices. It offers members random polls—“Which of these late heroes was the greatest leader in US White nationalism?”⁵²; “If you could press a button and by doing so rid the planet of niggers or Jews, which would you choose?”; “Someone says ‘Adolf Hiter was a jew.’ You do what?”⁵³—as well as quizzes on key white nationalist information.⁵⁴ It also provides members with access to white nationalist music and “an extensive photo gallery of white supremacist tattoos, Sieg-heiling children and skinheads posing in front of swastika flags.”⁵⁵ To further illustrate the ways in which it operates as a community, as a self-contained extended family, NewSaxon.org also contains social groups dedicated to various topics, including one entitled “Noble Maidens and Mummy,” which focuses on parenting advice and appropriate arts and crafts projects that will teach future generations “a moral code that will bring forth the new dawn for white pride.”⁵⁶

These features and Baron’s description of NewSaxon.org are just as appropriate for several other websites, albeit ones that appear less popular, in their efforts to recreate Facebook and MySpace within an explicitly white nationalist context. For example, Aryan Space (with 315 members in March 2011) focused on social networking as well as blogs, video games, and music, and offered an imagined community:

Welcome on AryanSpace—a Social Network for all white people who are proud of their ancestors and of achievements that members of great Aryan Race attained during 6000 years of recorded human history. The reason why we established AryanSpace is very simple, there is many social networks for Moslems, Blacks, Asians etc, but I was unable to find any for Aryans. Please let know your friends about our network so an online White Aryan community will grow faster.⁵⁷

51 Ibid.

52 Choices were Dr. William L. Piec, Ben Klassen, Rev. Richard Butler, or George L. Rockwell.

53 Options include “Say Fuck off,” “Flip the finger” and “Show them a Doc Marten dental plan” (a clear reference to violence in terms of stomping on someone with Doc Marten shoes).

54 One question asks “Hitler’s Famous Book was?” with the multiple choice answers being: *Of Mice and Men*, *Mein Kampf*, *Grapes of Wrath*, *Die Jew Die*.

55 Buchanan (2007).

56 Ibid.

57 www.aryanspace.net/home.php; accessed in March 2011 (now defunct).

Nazi space (White Powered)⁵⁸ was another social networking website that brought together likeminded white nationalists from all parts of the world. In each instance, identity and community were central in that these websites emerged from the ideological claims that whites and particularly white nationalists are excluded from mainstream communities. In many ways, these social networking sites outline an important new means of articulating specific, bounded, and antiquated versions of whiteness and of clearing a space to imagine a community free from the troubles posed by difference, opposition, and critique.

Conclusions

In his classic study of nationalism, Benedict Anderson underscores the importance of print capitalism—the printing press, the rising middle class, and the spread of literacy—to the articulation of nationalism across Europe and the Americas. A new media and the sociopolitical technologies associated with it anchored the creation of new identities and new ideologies. These new forms, nations, importantly, were fixed and bounded, grounded in territory, linked to race and state, and tangible in embodied sociality. In this chapter, we have traced how the emergence of social media has shifted the terms and terrain of imagined communities. New media as discussed here reinforces the bond between race and nation, but deterritorializes in response to heightened flexibility, liquidity, and virtuality. In many respects, white nationalism is unimaginable without new media. Specifically, the technologies have encouraged a translation and transformation that at once reiterate established white power themes and afford the creation of new social spaces.

Thus, while it may be tempting to regard the use of new media by advocates of white power as opportunistic efforts to increase recruitment and promote propaganda, as can be witnessed in videos on YouTube that reproduce commercials from established groups, in this chapter we have argued that social networking and other new media sites reveal something deeper about how white nationalists employ them. To be sure, fostering an essentialized identity and sense of pride in the face of persecution, often through the rhetorics and frames of other freedom struggles, has played a leading role in the formation of identity and community via new media. Moreover, as mentioned within our discussion of Facebook, a central element in the formation of white-nationalist communities within their imagined virtual communities comes from their sense of victimhood. In other words, white nationalism exists as a community because, whether under attack from black criminals or the Jewish media, a

58 www.nazispaces.net; accessed in March 2011 (now defunct).

bonded community that exists for all—irrespective of age, class, or gender, or geographic, linguistic, national, and ethnic differences; for white men, women, and children, as well as white culture/civilization and a white future—was being attacked. According to Simi and Futrell, “White power members build and sustain their connections online largely by sharing accounts of their struggles. Their online chats, videos, and writings detail injustices that they perceive and define the social, physical, and moral boundaries that separate them from racial enemies and non-Aryans.”⁵⁹ For example, “Save your race Join Then National Alliance” offers a bleak picture for white people who are under threat from black criminals.⁶⁰ With a series of mug shots of mostly black men coupled with images of poverty and despair, the National Alliance argues that unless the tide of integration is stopped—by people joining the National Alliance, joining their white nationalist community—the communities where white people currently live will be systematically destroyed through the intrusion of inferior cultures and criminals. Likewise, in “14 Words Europe,” which was uploaded by AmericanGI88, the constant danger confronting white men and women is a point of emphasis. The video, which begins with an image of a white man, beer in hand asleep on the couch with the words “Waiting for 18” and “white Pride World Wide,” represents this key feature to white-nationalist community formation. It then proceeds to reference demographic shifts, instances of “black on white violence,” and the cultural disrespect shown to whites.⁶¹ The videos “NPI: Global White Population to Plummet to a Single Digit,”⁶² “The Genocide Of The White People”⁶³ and “Europe’s Fallen tribute to white victims of multiculturalism”⁶⁴ emphasize that in spite of dominant cultures’ attempts to deny the connections between whites, white Aryans are bonded together because of their precarious future.

59 Simi and Futrell (2010: 89).

60 Retrieved from www.youtube.com/watch?v=wulVm1H1AMY&bpc tr=1389466612 (now defunct).

61 Retrieved from www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjzGz0hedFI (now defunct).

62 Retrieved on January 6, 2013 from www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6pzPp1Q2ew&feature=related.

63 Retrieved on January 6, 2013 from www.youtube.com/watch?v=aAnRWW8lJX0&feature=related.

64 Retrieved on January 6, 2013 from www.youtube.com/watch?v=2lwfERAYFLc.

Chapter 9

Beyond Hate: Wade Michael Page, White Power, and Popular Culture

It happened again. This time leaving six innocent people and the shooter dead. On August 4, 2012, Wade Michael Page went on a rampage at a Sikh temple outside of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Although his “precise motivation” remains unclear, his racist beliefs clearly played a leading role. For more than a decade, Page had embraced core elements of white supremacy. He was also an active, even visible, member of the white power music scene, forming the group End Apathy in 2005. In this closing chapter, through a discussion of the life and death of Wade Michael Page, we hope to underscore the key themes of *Beyond Hate* as well as the fundamental relationships between white power and popular culture.

End Apathy

Page founded End Apathy to change the world. Fed up with what he saw as social pathologies, he hoped the band would encourage whites to better see the world around them and act to make it a better place. Importantly, Page put race at the center of his vision, using the divisive discourse of white power to identify both problems and solutions. As his description of the band highlights:

End Apathy began in 2005 ... to figure out what it would take to actually accomplish positive results in society and what is holding us back. A lot of what I realized at the time was that if we could figure out how to end peoples apathetic ways it would be the start towards moving forward ... But I didn't want to just point the finger at what other people should do, but also I was willing to point out some of my faults on how I was holding myself back. And that is how I wrote the song “Self Destruct.”¹

1 Retrieved on January 7, 2014 from <http://deadlinelive.info/2012/08/06/band-end-apathy-interview-with-alleged-wisc-shooter-wade-page-not-yet-scrubbed>.

On the group's MySpace page, moreover, Page contrasted it with pop music: "The music is a sad commentary on our sick society and the problems that prevent true progress." Concluding that whites are blind and asleep, an assessment that reflects a deeper white nationalist belief that whites are "zombies" who need to wake up to their perilous situation. Clearly, Page hoped his music would be a catalyst for this racist revolution.

To this end, End Apathy used music as a tool, perhaps even a weapon. Like the guns he used to murder, he saw music as a tool in his quest to save the white race, to awaken his people, and to otherwise spark a change, one that celebrated whites and whiteness as it demonized others. Not surprisingly, the band, like the subculture, linked violent imagery and hypermasculine rhetoric, casting them in overtly racist terms, while accentuating their symbols with special meaning for those conversant in and committed to white supremacy. For instance, its album *Violent Victory* contains a picture of a white hand, tattooed with the letters "HFFH" ("Hammerskins Forever, Forever Hammerskins") punching a black male in the face. According to its website, the Hammerskins is "a leaderless group of men and women who have adopted the White Power Skinhead lifestyle ... the Hammerskin brotherhood is way of achieving goals which we have all set for ourselves ... summed up with one phrase consisting of 14 words."² That is, Hammerskin Nation, like most white nationalists, build their identities and ideologies on a common proposition, first coined by David Lane: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White Children."

Far from isolated, End Apathy had a presence in a larger subculture. They were on a major label, Label 56. And, they made appearances at prime events like a racist music festival called Independent Artist Uprise in Baltimore, which featured well-known acts like Blue Eyed Devils and Max Resist. That said, Page was never going to get rich touring the white power circuit and likely was never going to be a popular act. We imagine that he knew and accepted both of these elements of his life in the scene.

For reasons not fully clear at the time, Page found music to be lacking as a weapon and opted to take up a gun to express his rage and hate. And unlike many other musicians and fans, he translated his rhetoric into deadly action, leaving six Sikhs and himself dead.

Aftermath

Despite an increasing familiarity with similar incidents, shock may be the best word to describe public reaction to the shooting outside of Milwaukee. If Americans had been paying attention, perhaps a different sentiment would

2 Retrieved on January 14, 2014, from www.hammerskins.net.

have emerged. Despite the increased visibility of white nationalists, particularly online with YouTube videos, a presence on social media, video games, and countless other cultural productions, the size and scope of white nationalists remain elusive within the mainstream. While many took comfort in the election of Barack Obama, it, along with the intensification of globalization and worsening economics, has sparked a rise in skinhead, neo-Nazi, and other white supremacists groups in the United States and around the world. According to a report from the SPLC, which has tracked such groups since the mid-1980s, while more than 1,000 hate groups were identified in 2011, up from roughly 600 in 2000, militia and patriot groups numbered 1,274, up more than 450 from the year before.³

Similarly, perhaps if this trend was common knowledge, we would have a different account of the event and its causes. The media used words like “deranged” to describe Page, while using words like “senseless” to describe the killing spree, all of which diverted attention away from how much he embodies white power today—its racism, its anger, its subculture, its networks. During the initial days, the coverage we saw missed that he exemplifies an operational strategy. Like Tim McVeigh, Page was a lone wolf. He blended into society around him and then activated to commit an act of extreme hate and violence.

Indeed, one colleague asked King in the week following the event in which white power and individual psychology was the focus, “Why is the media not talking about this?” In part, the silence and erasure is part of dominant model of racism in the USA that stresses bad apples with bad ideas and/or bad intentions. In part, it’s because most Americans do not understand the history of racism and white supremacy in the United States. This focus on Page, his mental state, his difference from “us,” and the overall tone that has sought to imagine the terror inflicted by Page through an individualized lens has erased the larger context. It has also meant that a disturbing discourse among white nationalists received less attention than it deserved. To offer one example, Alex Linder, who manages Vanguard News Network, had the following reaction to the shooting:

Take your dead and go back to India and dump their ashes in the Ganges, Sikhs ... You don’t belong here in the country my ancestors fought to found, and dedded to me and mine, their posterity. Even if you came here legally, and even if you haven’t done anything wrong personally. Go home, Sikhs. Go home to India where you belong. This is not your country, it belongs to white men.⁴

3 Severson (2012).

4 Retrieved on January 7, 2014 from www.splcenter.org/get-informed/news/white-supremacists-react-to-sikh-massacre.

Saturated with antipathy and driven by a disgust with difference, Linder repeats a familiar nativist refrain that defines the United States as a white nation, hurt by others, who should remove themselves, or one imagines, be taken out by force as Page did. He was not alone, as one commenter wrote: “[T]here are thousands of other angry White men like Page out there, the vast majority of them unknown. When will they, like Page, reach their breaking point, where they give up all hope for peaceful activism, and reach for their guns and start shooting at the first non-Whites they see?” On his Facebook page, which mirrors other social media spaces for white nationalists—a space of community, outreach, and identity formation—Larry Loper, head of the Pennsylvania chapter of the Hammerskins, expressed their sorrow for Wade: “I really don’t feel to disagree or agree what Wade did. All I feel is loss and sympathy for a brother that was overwhelmed by pain and frustration. I could care less though for those injured and wounded other than Wade.”⁵

Still, not all white nationalists stated their racial worldviews so plainly. Indeed, many were troubled by Page and his action, particularly because of what it meant for the movement.⁶ Others used the moment to reiterate the core themes and ideologies of the contemporary white nationalist movement: the Jewish media, the threat of black and Latino criminality, white victimhood and countless other issues.

For example, WhiteRights noted:

The Sikhs are the least of our problems. Do they kill White people with the frequency that the Blacks and Latinos do?

If we seriously want to stop gun violence in America, the one most effective thing would be to expel Mexicans and Blacks.

Notice that Obama is already trying to stir the gun control pot. Five or six more of these “lone nut” shootings and he’ll probably introduce some gun control.

Amazing how these shootings so often pop up at times when liberals want to push some new gun control legislation.⁷

Likewise, MattwhiteAmerica used the moment to reiterate the goal of white separation, which in his estimation was not advanced by the shooting:

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Available online at www.stormfront.org/forum/t905255-2, August 6, 2012.

BEYOND HATE

I want separation from both the anti's (whites, idiots and jews) and non-whites. I hope it is a peaceful separation...

I think the best way to do this is to form PLE's in states like Montana, WY, WV and work to secede them. Once that is done we can write a constitution banning non-whites from living there.

We have to separate from the kooks too. Just as important as separation from the non-whites. I want separation as I don't want to be treated violently by non-whites. I don't want to cause it.⁸

Irishsllovak made clear the true enemies of white nationalists:

As soon as I heard the discription of the guy I was worried about the headlines. The jewish media couldn't pass up the opportunity for race-baiting. This guy who did this is an idiot. I don't believe high gas prices at 7-11 warrant this kind of behavior.

It's a pity we don't hear about the negroes who shoot asian or white clerks during robberies because of their race.⁹

As evident here, concern or criticism does not reflect sympathy or some anti-racist trajectory but rather questions whether Wade used the best tool in their arsenal under the right conditions. Just as white nationalists debate the usefulness of music, media culture, video games, or social networking sites, they have seized Wade's murders to debate tactics rather than ideology. And while others have positioned themselves beyond hate, working to extract themselves from ideas and values central to their identities and organizations, no amount of protest should lead us to disentangle Wade from the movement and its culture of hate, white supremacy, and violence. Label 56, for instance, who long distributed and profited from End Apathy, released the following statement in the days after the shooting:

Label 56 is very sorry to hear about the tragedy in Wisconsin and our thoughts are with the families and friends of those who are affected. We have worked hard over the years to promote a positive image and have posted many articles encouraging people to take a positive path in life, to abstain from drugs, alcohol, and just general behavior that can affect ones life negatively. Likewise we have never sought attention by using "shock value" symbols and ideology that are

8 Available online at www.stormfront.org, August 6, 2012.

9 Available online at www.stormfront.org, August 7, 2012.

generally labeled as such. With that being said, all images and products related to End Apathy have been removed from our site. We do not wish to profit from this tragedy financially or with publicity.

In closing please do not take what Wade did as honorable or respectable and please do not think we are all like that.

Thank you, Label 56¹⁰

Clearly, they do not want to be on the hook—either legally culpable for or existentially entangled with Page. They have always tried to be “positive”: they are about love not hate (although the lyrics of their bands might lead one to a different conclusion).

Painful Reminders

The life and death of Wade Michael Page offers many lessons. For our purposes, he highlights a series of painful reminders about white power and popular culture.

Popular culture is not frivolous. It encourages ideologies to circulate, fosters the construction of identities and imagined communities, secures social networks, and entertains. It moves people to action, a vital source for pleasure and a forceful incitement to cause pain.

Even once the details of Wade’s life emerged, some took the opportunity to reiterate the often-stated frame of popular culture as art, as expression, as free speech, and as little more than entertainment. Responding to the work of Futrell and Simi, whose analysis of “spaces of hate” offers an important context for understanding Page and hate rock more generally, Cord Jefferson penned an intentionally provocative reframe, “In Defense of Neo-Nazi Music” (a sensational title that skews the debate and offers too much comfort and sympathy for white nationalists). Importantly, Jefferson dismisses any focus on his relationship to music as akin to those who blame video games or rock music for violence.¹¹

People like Futrell and Simi try to avoid sounding like the neo-Tipper Gores that they are by not condemning the neo-Nazi music itself and instead saying that it’s the culture around the music that’s dangerous. It’s the “spaces of hate” they’re

10 Retrieved on January 7, 2014 from www.label56.com/2012/08/press-statement.

11 Retrieved on January 7, 2014 from <http://gawker.com/5932965/in-defense-of-neo+nazi-music>.

after, they say, not the art. But then they expose their anti-free speech leanings by finger-wagging and threatening that we shouldn't be surprised if another white-power maniac kills people thanks to this hateful music scene. That—and I'm so glad I work at Gawker now so I can say this—is a total crock of shit.

To follow Futrell and Simi's logic, let's fight drug culture by cancelling the Electric Daisy Carnival, a massive electronic music festival that's become as synonymous with MDMA as it has dubstep. Let's also cut down on drunk driving by banning football games, at which tailgaters young and old get blotto all day before getting in their SUVs and driving home. And, of course, let's eliminate violence in the inner city by totally banishing hip-hop from our nation, which, as Tipper and her ilk argued for years, is the real reason young black men kill each other at heartbreaking rates.

Revealing a lack of understanding of the role of hate rock and other forms of white nationalist popular culture in terms of recruitment and identity formation, and in the creation of an imagined community, Jefferson replicates the narrative that hate rock is just music, while neglecting the very different ways that other expressions of violence, masculinity, and belonging in music and movies manifest themselves. Instead, Jefferson offers familiar arguments about free speech, about many individuals had listen to the music without committing violence, and how there is no casual proof. He might as well have argued that guns don't kill people, music doesn't kill people, bad people kill people:

Because the truth is that thousands and thousands of people just like Wade Page have for decades been listening to the same kind of hatecore he enjoyed, and yet very few of them have done what he did. In the same vein, neither will most Marilyn Manson fans go on a shooting rampage like that of his late fans Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, who executed a host of their classmates at Columbine High School.

Over the past few days, Wade Page's friends and family have shed some light on his recent history: Page was an alcoholic who was discharged from the military in 2001 for showing up to a formation drunk. He was then fired from a trucking job in 2010 because got arrested for a DUI. After that, he found work hard to come by, and the bank foreclosed on his house in January of this year. By then he was 40 and living with no money, no job, no family, and few ways to escape his alcoholic haze. It would certainly be tidy to say that the music made Page do it, but that neglects to acknowledge that hate, rage, and the eagerness to implode are also emotions every broke alcoholic probably feels, neo-Nazi or no. Interestingly, End Apathy put out one record before Page died. It was called *Self Destruct*.

Jefferson and others misunderstand the role of hate rock and what it tells us about white nationalist movements.

Randy Blazak, an associate professor of sociology, chronicles the power of hate rock as a tool in the ideological war white nationalists are waging in America.¹² It represents an important instrument in its epistemological assault on truth, knowledge, and justice:

Because they offer such a charged form of expression, hate rockers have served as a powerful recruiting tool for the white power movement. And in turn, the movement's political organizations have provided some of the music's major distribution channels. The genre has long been promoted by established white supremacist groups like Aryan Nations and the National Alliance. In 1999, the National Alliance purchased Resistance Records in an attempt to expand the reach of the label. These umbrella groups facilitated the sale of the music at rallies and marches, as well as T-shirts and publications, including Resistance, the Rolling Stone of the hate rock scene.

While noting the decline of hate rock (a similar story to the decline in white supremacist video games), Blazak notes how the decline in itself reinforces the white nationalist worldview and narrative: "The bad news, however, is that, in a subculture that thrives on heightening narratives of frustration and decline, further decline may only spur people like Wade Page to act on their hatreds."

This decline, moreover, reminds us that white power remains unpopular, demonized, and taboo. Nevertheless, popular culture matters to advocates of white power. They consume it, often quite critically, offering interpretations that reiterate their racial worldviews. They produce it, understanding it to be an important means of recruiting, connecting, and framing the wider world. In many ways, whether elaborating conspiracy theories, racist propaganda, or a soundtrack for the revolution, advocates of white power are obsessed with popular culture. And without an understanding of it we cannot grasp the complexities of white nationalism or their place in a broader field of racial discourse.

And while antipathy is clear, in both the foregoing analyses and in the life and death of Page, we have argued throughout that a full understanding of white power in context demands moving beyond hate and the framing of race and racism it encourages. We have no doubt that Page had hate in his heart, but what anchored and animate his sense of self, his worldview, and ultimately his actions was much more complex and challenging.

¹² Blazak (2012).

Equivocation as Excuse

Little says more about the state of racism and prevailing misunderstandings of white power in the USA today than the rapidity with which pundits transformed a conversation about white power, racialized violence, and hate rock into a critique of hip-hop. Indeed, a number of discussions of the spree killing at the Sikh temple outside of Milwaukee, echoing broader political currents, reference the evils of hip-hop as both a defense and a scapegoat.

Perhaps not surprisingly, in *The New Republic*, John McWhorter rehearsed this well-worn conversation to turn the killings into another referendum on hip-hop. “It has been fashionable,” he asserts, “to speculate on whether the White Power music he [Wade Michael Page] listened to helped stoke him into the senseless murders he committed . . . such speculations,” he suggests, are both “incoherent” and “pointless—and they are marked, above all, by a cloying air of self-congratulation.” To “prove” his point, he invokes the tried and tested “hip-hop” comparison as if it represented mainstream rap, failing to note, of course, that he is specifically talking about a small subset of hip-hop music:

A comparison with another musical genre helps put the debate into relief. Indeed, in assessing White Power music’s influence on Page, it helps to acknowledge that rap music—savored by people of all colors, ranging in age from “youth” to middle-aged—has its own tendency to celebrate the indefensible. Some practitioners casually boast about hurting women—whether attacking a partner during intercourse (Cam’ron, “Boy, Boy”), or kicking a woman in the stomach to make her abort (Joe Budden, “Confessions II”) and, of course, all varieties of maiming and murder.

However, nasty as all of this is, and whatever one might say about its implications for the street culture that produced it, it’s all symptom rather than cause. Those who listen to rap—including myself—are not passively consuming its message, but actively seeking it as a release. Indeed, last I heard, the enlightened take on rap lyrics is that their violence must be taken not as counsel but as poetry, poses of strength from disenfranchised people—“Black Noise” as Brown’s Tricia Rose calls it. Other academics, priding themselves on their connection with the music, crown the makers of violent rap as “Prophets of the Hood” (Imani Perry, Princeton) or “Hoodlums” (William Van Deburg, University of Wisconsin), the latter meant as an arch compliment to men celebrated for speaking truth to power.¹³

¹³ McWhorter (2012).

And there is more than a little bit of truth to this treatment of rap's violent strain. It is, indeed, an attitude that functions as a response to the frustrations of everyday life. In that light, rapademics have been fond of noting that old-time "toasts" among black people had their violent strains as well. Despite the prevalent anxieties in the 1990s about the social consequences of rap music, evidence that the music causes actual violence never actually surfaced.

These arguments are as tired as they are simplistic; the failure to see any difference between rap music and hate rock is absurd on every level. Yet, they keep getting published. Importantly, invoking the purported ills associated with hip-hop simultaneously recycles dangerous stereotypes about blacks and lets whites off the hook. Indeed, it encourages white readers to misrecognize the force of white racism and dissociate themselves from deeper structural arrangements, while essentially giving a pass to the violence, antipathy, and dehumanization at the core of white power music specifically and thinking more generally. It is as if McWhorter would like to conclude: there are haters everywhere, stop picking on isolated whites who do bad things and pay attention to the ubiquitous threat of black pathology.¹⁴

Cord Jefferson, as noted above, also invokes hip-hop in his larger, misguided defense of neo-Nazi music. For Jefferson, like McWhorter, history and context do not matter; ideology has no connection to action. In their world, we are all the same, all equal, all individuals who have free will to act of our own accord without reference to social location, dominant frames, or the burdens of the past. Such free agents animate the new racism of twenty-first-century America, mobilizing white privilege under the cover of abstract liberalism and individual liberty.

Responding to some comments from readers, Jefferson invoked hip-hop as part of his defense of hate music.

I can see where you're coming from to a degree, but I worry that it's splitting hairs. I'm almost positive that there are people in this world who have listened to NWA's "Fuck the Police" or Ice-T's "Cop Killer" and later attacked cops, and those are only the songs that really go in on police. Dozens—perhaps hundreds—of other rap songs either lightheartedly disparage cops or outright fantasize about cops getting killed. If we're talking about fictional distance, you run into a problem when it comes to hip-hop and the police force. The same goes for hip-hop and misogyny.

In other words, if rap music isn't blamed for violence against the police—which it has been, and one familiar with Tipper Gore (to take one example he himself invokes) should know this—and more, if many people can listen to it without

14 Similar critiques might be leveled at scholarly investigations that simplistically juxtapose hip-hop and hate rock (see Etter (2009), Hamm (2009)).

engaging in violence, then the music is irrelevant, which again runs selectively counter to the demonization of blackness and hip-hop.

Revealing a lack of understanding of the role of hate rock and other forms of white nationalist popular culture in terms of recruitment, identity formation, and in the formation of an imagined community, Jefferson replicates the narrative that hate rock is just music. Forgetting or not knowing that centrality of white racism to development of popular music over the past century, to the cultivation of taste, to the creation of styles and audiences, to the production of objects of adoration, consumption, and identification. Clearly hip-hop music or action films don't foster identity, community, and a sense of belonging based on violence, a sense of superiority, and a culture/ideology based in hate. There is much to be critical about in terms of some rap music, some action films, some video games, but none of them compare to the soundtrack to white supremacy. Different game ... different planet ... different reality. Do these genres of popular culture function as propaganda? Do they produce revenue for organizations committed to white nationalism, retrograde racial politics, and even the coming race war? Do they play a leading and self-conscious role in the recruitment of youth to advance these projects? Efforts to reimagine hate rock as simply popular culture, applying the debates commonplace to the culture wars and ubiquitous in regards to the first amendment, fail to see how this music (as with other forms of white-nationalist produced-popular culture) operates as propaganda, as an assault on truth.

Maybe Cord Jefferson and others needs to crack open history books to truly understand the music. In Nazi Germany, Joseph Goebbels, who was the Minister for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, initiated "synchronization of culture, by which the arts were brought in line with Nazi goals."¹⁵ Was this just popular culture; was opposition to their propaganda akin to Tipper Gore? Was the Nazi party's use of newspapers and film simply a cultural production? We wonder: would those who dismiss any discussion of the music, of the video games produced by white supremacists, of the various videos, be so quick to dismiss the posters of Nazi Germany or the ways that Al Qaeda has used video games? Would the discussion be "did these posters or video games" cause terrorism? Why are we not examining the ways that white supremacists use the music to recruit, to disseminate a worldview based in violence, hate, and white supremacy?

The failure to look at the ideology, at grammar, and the message within hate rock is revealing. The discussion cannot and shouldn't just be about whether "hate music" leads to violence. White supremacy leads to the violence; it leads to the music; it leads to video games from white nationalists that encourage players to take pleasure in killing people of color. The discussion needs to be about

15 Retrieved on January 7, 2014 from www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007519.

how the music contributes to a worldview; how it represents an epistemological challenge to truth; how the music reifies a belief that whites are victims, that civilization is under attack. It is propaganda and therefore it is important to examine how it compels action, how it dehumanizes people of color, how it solidifies bonds within white-nationalist communities through construction of the Other, and how it other spreads a narrative of white victimhood, dangerous criminals of color, threatening Jews, and a society that is increasingly inhospitable to white America.

The Normalcy of Racism and Power

The media, as noted above, appeared ill equipped, if not unable, to talk about white supremacists. They tended to make Page exceptional and his actions senseless—in the process, muting white power and its deadly consequences. Yet, as noted by Rinku Sen in *Colorlines*,¹⁶ these murders “are neither senseless nor random, and the vast majority of such incidents here involve white men. Racism holds a terrible logic, for a concept with no grounding whatsoever in science or morality, yet too many white people don’t see any pattern.” Equally powerful, Harsha Walia reminds readers to break down the walls between extreme and mainstream, between individual and societal, to look at this violence not as yet another instance of a bad apple but yet another of the rotten trees:

The crimes of white supremacists are not exceptions and do not and cannot exist in isolation from more systemic forms of racism. People of colour face legislated racism from immigration laws to policies governing Indigenous reserves; are discriminated and excluded from equitable access to healthcare, housing, childcare, and education; are disproportionately victims of police killings and child apprehensions; fill the floors of sweatshops and factories; are over-represented in heads counts on poverty rates, incarceration rates, unemployment rates, and high school dropout rates. Colonialism has and continues to be shaped by the counters of white men’s civilizing missions.¹⁷

“It would be a mistake to dismiss Page was an isolated actor from a lunatic fringe disconnected from the mainstream of U.S. society. In fact, the reality is that white supremacy is a persistent, tragic feature of the American cultural and political landscape,” writes Jessie Daniels, “The extreme expressions of white supremacy—like this shooting, or like some of the violent images and messages

16 Sen (2012).

17 Retrieved on January 14, 2014 from <http://racialicious.tumblr.com/post/28854181503/harshawaliahatecrimesalwayshavealigicontheoakcreekgurudw>.

previously circulated in print and now online—are part of a larger problem. White supremacy is woven into the fabric of our society and it kills people.”¹⁸

It is tempting to poke the finger at Page, to distinguish him from us. He must be deranged, a nut, or somehow off to commit such a senseless act. It is easy to call him and others like him out for having warped visions of race, for performing hate rock, and for using violence to foster social change. On some level, though, as difficult as this is to contemplate, he is us. Race and racism continue to shape how we know ourselves and others, what we find beautiful, moving, and meaningful, and what movies, music, and other media find their ways into our lives. We hope that by engaging with Page and taking up the little considered views of other advocates of white power we have advanced understandings of white nationalism and popular culture.

18 Retrieved on January 7, 2014 from www.racismreview.com/blog/2012/08/06/sikh-temple-shooting-white-supremacist-kills-7.

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