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May 01, 2009

# The good fight: variations in explanations of the tactical choices made by activists who confront organized white supremacists

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# THE GOOD FIGHT: VARIATIONS IN EXPLANATIONS OF THE TACTICAL CHOICES MADE BY ACTIVISTS WHO CONFRONT ORGANIZED WHITE SUPREMACISTS

A dissertation presented

by:

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to
The Department of Sociology and Anthropology

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in the field of

Sociology

Northeastern University Boston, MA April 2009

# THE GOOD FIGHT: VARIATIONS IN EXPLANATIONS OF THE TACTICAL CHOICES MADE BY ACTIVISTS WHO CONFRONT ORGANIZED WHITE SUPREMACISTS

by

Stanislav Vysotsky

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Northeastern University, April 2009

### **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation seeks to understand the tactical differences between two groups of anti-racist activists who confront white supremacists. I dub these activists non-militant and militant anti-racists based on their tactical preferences. Non-militant anti-racists engage in what are understood to be conventional and demonstrative tactics. While militants are also likely to engage in similar tactics, their tactical repertoire also includes confrontational and violent approaches. I am particularly interested in how the two groups of activists explain the differences in their tactical choices; and therefore, posit that each group will use ideological explanations and perceptions of threat to explain their tactical choices.

Using a snowball sampling methodology, I developed a sample of 24 anti-racist activists. These activists were given a quantitative survey in order to establish their tactical preference. The survey consisted of an original index developed to establish the militancy of the respondent. Survey results yielded a bi-modal distribution of scores that suggests a distinct difference in tactical preferences among anti-racist activists and confirms the categorization of activists into non-militant and militant categories.

Additionally, interviews were conducted with all of the participants in order to 1) validate the results of the quantitative measure of militancy, 2) establish ideological orientation and test whether it had an influence of discussion of tactical preference, and 3) gauge the level of threat perceived and its influence on tactical preference.

The results of the survey and interview data indicate distinct differences in tactical preferences between non-militants and militants. Non-militants worked with existing

community and state institutions, developed educational campaigns, used symbols to demonstrate opposition to white supremacists in their community, and held explicitly non-violent and non-confrontational rallies away from the site of white supremacist events. Militants are also willing to engage in such tactics, but their tactical repertoire also includes disruption of white supremacist activity, confrontational rallies at the sites of white supremacist events, acts of violence, and activity in subcultures where white supremacists operate and organize.

The interview data demonstrate a clear difference in how non-militants and militants explain their tactical preferences. Non-militants adhered to a liberal ideology, but did not make explicit reference to their ideological position to explain their tactical preferences. I posit that this is a result of hegemonic dominance of liberalism. Non-militants need not use ideological language to explain their tactical choices because they are considered normative in contemporary, American society. Conversely, militants, who self-identified ideologically as anarchists, were more likely to explain their tactics in ideological terms. They were more likely to explain their militancy in terms of direct action and a hostility toward the state and formal institutions.

I conceptualize threat as taking three unique forms: 1) physical threat based on the anti-racists membership in a group targeted by white supremacists, 2) political threat based on the ideological difference between supremacists and anti-racists, and 3) spatial threat based on the contestation of physical and metaphorical subcultural spaces. Non-militants perceived little to no threat; and therefore, their tactical preferences reflect the lack of threat that they perceived. Militants, on the other hand, had a much stronger sense

of threat. The respondents in this study reported that they had been targeted for violence as a result of their sexual orientation or their categorization by white supremacists as "race traitors." Additionally, militants perceive white supremacists as a political threat because supremacists stand in direct ideological opposition to the militants and attempt to subvert their political activity. White supremacists were also seen as posing a spatial threat because their presence in certain subcultures signals an ideological shift within the subculture which is also accompanied by increased levels of violence.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

A project such as this is impossible without the words and ideas of the participants who volunteered to be interviewed for this dissertation. I would like to begin by thanking the twenty-four individuals who took the time from their busy lives and hectic activist schedules to take part in this project and the countless others who are part of the broader movement in opposition to organized white supremacists. Their beliefs and dedication served not only as inspiration for this work, but for my own commitment to anti-racism. I hope that this project does justice to the importance of opposing white supremacy in all its forms and aids the anti-racist movements that I have studied in their work against organized supremacists.

I would like to also thank my dissertation committee: Prof. Jack Levin, Prof.

Judith Perrolle, Prof. Kathrin Zippel, and Prof. Dianne Dentice. Since my first Sociology of Prejudice course with Jack Levin fifteen years ago, he has served as a vital supporter of my work in sociology. Over the years his input and support has helped me to develop professionally and personally into the scholar that I am today. I consider him to be more than an advisor and colleague, but a genuine friend. Judith Perrolle has served as a constant source of support since my first teaching assistant assignment with her in my first year of graduate school. Her theoretical input has challenged me to develop a strong analysis of concepts and ideas that has aided me greatly in the dissertation writing process. She once bragged to me that every student that has her on a dissertation committee finishes, and I'm proud to say that I will not disappoint her. Kathrin Zippel's expertise in social movements has been vital to this project. Her knowledge of social

movement theory and scholarship has kept me grounded in the literature on a project that could have easily devolved into simple description or ideological ranting. The commentary and critique that she has provided to this project from its inception has served to produce a work that I am truly proud of. The scholarly and professional advice that she has provided me has been invaluable in my professional development over the last few years. Finally, Dianne Dentice's scholarly insight into the inner workings of the white supremacist movement gave her a unique perspective on the social movement that opposes it. Her comments have aided me in drafting a strong work on a countermovement that has rarely received scholarly attention. I thank you all for your support and input in this process.

In addition to my dissertation committee, I would like to thank the community of scholars who have also supported me in this endeavor. Specifically, I am indebted to my colleagues on the faculty and staff of the Sociology Department at Willamette University: Jade Aguilar, Emily Drew, Linda Heuser, Kelley Straw, and Honey Wilson. By giving me endless support (both material and emotional), advice, and encouragement, you enabled me to complete this project and move into a new stage in my development as a sociologist. I look forward to working with you for years to come.

I would like to acknowledge the support that I have received from all my friends. My fellow graduate students at Northeastern University have given me more aid than they could ever know. Although there are too many who have come and gone over the years to list everyone individually, I'd like to specifically thank Eric Madfis, Tammi Arford, Sarah Cope, and Trish Morris for keeping me connected even when I was so far away.

I'd like to thank all my friends in Portland and Baltimore who are too numerous to name individually who have had to listen to me kvetch and explain my work for years; your patience and understanding has been most-valuable. I must give a special acknowledgment to Marci Gerulis-Darcy. Since my first days in the graduate program at Northeastern University we have been the best of friends. You have given me a plethora of advice, support, and appropriate distraction that has kept me grounded throughout this process. I truly appreciate our friendship and thank you for being there for me over the years.

An endeavor such as this would be impossible without the support of my family. I would like to thank Kay and Larry Orrell for giving me a space where I could work without distraction, giving me endless amounts of material and emotional support, and understanding when I would emerge dazed at the end of a day of writing. This dissertation would not have been possible without everything that you have provided me for the last five years. You have always welcomed me into your home and treated me like family and for that I am forever grateful. I'd like to thank my parents, Arkady and Faina, and my brother and sister, Radim and Lena. You have always given me the love and support that I've needed. This project could not have been done without you. While I struggled to make this project a reality, you have fed me and given me a quiet space to work in, distracted me when I needed it, listened to me when I complain, and politely beared with me while I made grandiose plans for the future. I thank you for being a truly loving family and making all of this possible. You now have a doctor in the family!

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to Elizabeth Orrell. Since the moment we met, you have giving me endless inspiration, encouragement, entertainment, understanding, and especially, love. You have always been there for me through the trials and tribulations of this dissertation process. I am forever thankful for everything that you've done for me. Your intellect has nourished me, your humor has sustained me, and your compassion has inspired me. I love you with all my heart and thank you for everything you've done for me. I could not have done this without you.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

# INTRODUCTION

On January 12, 2002 the World Church of the Creator<sup>1</sup> (WCOTC) organized a rally in York, PA to protest the growth of the city's immigrant population and recruit new members. The WCOTC was joined in its efforts by supremacists from the National Alliance, the Hammerskin Nation, and other groups. This gathering of approximately 70 supremacists was met by a counter-protest of several hundred anti-racist activists and community members. The standoff between white supremacists and protesters erupted into violence leading to 25 arrests (AP 2002a). In August of that year the WCOTC and the National Alliance planned a joint rally at the Israeli embassy in Washington, DC. Violence broke out between militant anti-racists and white supremacists at a Baltimore hotel where white supremacists had spent the night before the rally. The attack on white supremacists and the bus that they had been traveling in led to the arrest of 28 anti-racist protesters (AP 2002b). In 2005 and 2006, rallies by the National Socialist Movement have resulted in massive rioting and several dozen arrests in Toledo, OH (Toledo Blade Staff 2005), and violent clashes between white supremacists and counter-protesters at a rally in Orlando, FL led to the arrest of 17 anti-racists (AP 2006). A recent rally organized by the National Socialist Movement in Washington, DC resulted in clashes between white supremacists and counter-protesters resulting in 4 arrests (Constable and

.

This organization has since been forced to change its name due to copyright infringement and is currently known as the Creativity Movement.

Vargas 2008). These extreme cases only represent a portion of the total number of violent incidents between white supremacists and anti-racists that occur on the street, in subcultural spaces, and even in the homes of activists on both sides.

Public officials, academics, mainstream anti-hate groups, and others have criticized the tactic of violent confrontation as counterproductive because they view it as giving white supremacists unnecessary exposure in the press, providing white supremacists with the violent confrontation that they are seeking, inciting further violence by white supremacists, and generally disrupting public order. Despite such admonitions a segment of the anti-racist movement persists in using violence as a primary element of their tactical repertoire in movement-countermovement (MCM) conflicts with white supremacists. Critics of violence as a countermovement tactic have posited a "positive" response to the public activities of white supremacists. A number of community groups and coalitions have attempted to oppose white supremacist events and organizing efforts in their communities by holding peaceful, often celebratory events that are intended to bring a positive spirit to counter what they believe to be the violence and negativity of both the white supremacists and their militant, anti-racist opposition (Rabrenovic 2007).

The two distinct approaches have created a schism within the anti-racist countermovement along tactical lines. Those who favor non-confrontational events away from the site of white supremacist activity admonish confrontational activists as being violent and disorganized (ADL n.d.), negative and unnecessarily confrontational (Stinson 2005), or similar to the white supremacists (Brian Levin quoted in Enkoji, Stanton and Vovakes 2002; Milstein; 2006; SPLC 2000). Activists who choose confrontational

tactics claim that they are refusing to ignore the activity of white supremacist, publicly challenging white supremacist groups, and engaging in effective tactics that deny "hate groups the opportunity to monopolize public spaces and... the chance to turn public spaces into danger zones for people of color, women, immigrants, gays and lesbians, the disabled and others" (ARA 2004b). While debates regarding the tactical approaches of both sides are ongoing in the anti-racist countermovement and certain quarters of public discourse, there has been little scholarly study of the movement itself.

# **Key Questions and Purpose**

The schism within the anti-racist movement presents a unique opportunity for social scientific inquiry. Because there has been virtually no study of the movement by social scientists, a number of key questions have remained unanswered in the movement's internal debates and public discussions. First, what are the tactics of the anti-racist movement and do individual members align themselves with specific tactical repertoires? This implies more specific questions regarding why activists make specific tactical choices. Specifically, I am interested in the role that ideology and perceived threat play in the explanations of individual activists tactical repertoires. What ideologies do different types of anti-racists subscribe to, and what influence, if any, do these ideologies have on tactical repertoire? What threats do anti-racists face from white supremacists? Does the level and type of threat faced by anti-racists serve as a means of explaining anti-racists' tactical choices?

This dissertation seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of the anti-racist movement and the dynamic that exists both within the movement and between anti-racists

and white supremacists. I am particularly interested in the tactical choices of anti-racist activists in response to white supremacist activity who I label as militant and non-militant based on their willingness to use confrontational and/or violent tactics in response to white supremacists. Non-militant activists' tactical repertoire is limited to conventional activities (e.g. activity within the legal system, activity within the political system, and media activity) and non-disruptive demonstrative activity (e.g. public rallies legal protest marches, and symbolic actions). Militants' tactical repertoires include both conventional tactics as well as confrontational (e.g. boycott, blockade, or disruption of meetings) and violent tactics (Kriesi et al. 1995).

Using interview and survey data collected from 24 anti-racist activists, I present descriptive information regarding the tactics used by both non-militants and militants in response to white supremacists. Building on social movement literature on the relationship between ideology and social movement activity, I explore the relationship between the tactics of the two wings of the anti-racist movement and the political ideologies held by individuals in both groups. I argue that militant anti-racists make direct links between their tactical militancy and ideological radicalism. Additionally, I explore the effect of three distinct types of threat on tactical militancy: physical threat based on membership in a group targeted by white supremacists, political threat that results from direct political activity that is oppositional to white supremacists, and spatial threat that results from participation in social and/or cultural spaces where white supremacists operate. It is my contention that militancy is, at least in part, a response to

the intensity and immediacy of threat faced by activists within that wing of the movement.

This study should contribute to both activist and scholarly discourse on social movement activity. Social activists may use the data provided within to develop a greater understanding of the diversity of beliefs and motivations for tactical choices.

Specifically, it is my hope that it will serve to heal at least some of the schisms within the anti-racist movement by providing explanations for activity and placing them in the context of beliefs and emotions. The research is, however, specifically designed to contribute to the broader body of scholarly work on social movements. The careful study of the anti-racist movement will apply existing concepts from social movements theories developed for countermovements and new social movements and synthesize these into a discussion of contemporary opposing movements. In addition, it will synthesize a number of perspectives on social movements through its focus on discussions of tactics and ideology. Finally, the research on the role of threat in motivating tactical choices presents a significant development in the synthesis of social movement theory and the social psychology of emotions.

# **Contemporary American Anti-Racism**

There are number of social movements that may be considered anti-racist movements currently active in the United States including movements that oppose individual racial prejudice, movements that address racist structural practices, movements that attempt to eliminate racism as a system of oppression, and movements that organize in opposition to grassroots white supremacist organizing activities and organizations.

There has been some debate in activists circles regarding the proper label for activists who combat white supremacists who are the subject of this dissertation. For this work, I will be using anti-racist as it is consistent with existing scholarly work (O'Brien 1999a; 1999b; 2001) and common usage in American society. It has been argued that the proper term for such a movement is anti-fascist because the activists involved are directly organizing against authoritarian, white supremacist groups rather than many of the systemic and structural components of racism. However, the term, white supremacist, will be used in this work to generally refer to a number of organizations that hold authoritarian, far-right views that include a belief in theocracy and heterosexism in addition a desire to establish a society based on the strict supremacy of already dominant racial groups (read: whites). However, the individuals who I interviewed did not limit their opposition to strictly white supremacist organizations and often view the extreme theocratic or Christian right (for a thorough description of these groups see Berlet 2004) as another target of countermovement activity.

The countermovement to the white supremacist movement in the United States contains a broad group of organizations and individuals ranging from non-militant watchdog groups such as the Southern Poverty Law Center and Anti-Defamation League to militant groups such as Anti-Racist Action with any number of church groups, community organizations, and political parties in between. While the non-militant watchdog and community groups operate with little controversy from the media and general public, militant anti-racists are often highly criticized by scholars, public officials,

mainstream anti-racist groups, and others for their confrontational tactics and violent actions.

The organizations that participate in non-militant activity tend to model an "instrumental" form of social movement activity (Kriesi et al. 1995). They are generally oriented toward asking for policy changes or concessions from state (often in the form of enforcement of anti-hate or other laws designed to protect citizens from white supremacist groups). This focus tends to draw such groups to work cooperatively with the state and engage in conventional social movement activity that does not alienate the state and its supporters. Because of this relationship to the state and choice of action, the non-militant tactical repertoire is often limited to general education campaigns, symbolic displays of opposition to hatred that are designed to demarcate boundaries between "mainstream" community and "outsider" white supremacists, and opposition rallies that are purposely non-confrontational which are held away from the location of white supremacist events or preferably at a different time or place (Rabrenovic 2007). While this movement is at heart a countermovement to white supremacists, in many ways it is also posited as a countermovement to militants who are often viewed as equally dangerous radicals.

Militant anti-racism incorporates a wide variety of organizations and subcultures including Anti-Racist Action (O'Brien 1999a, 1999b, 2001), anti-racist skinheads (Sarabia and Shriver 2004; Blazak 1995), anarchists, communists and socialists, punk rockers, and the occasional Zionist. In many respects, the bulk of the militant wing of the anti-racist movement represents a countercultural new social movement (Kriesi et al

1995). The movement is focused on identity (punk, skinhead, anarchist, etc.) and externally oriented (opposing white supremacist movements). It's tactical repertoire consists of cultural markers (anti-racist patches, music, etc.), publications (fliers, magazines, newspapers, websites), and direct action (confrontational protests). The militant anti-racist movement generally may be viewed as a countermovement to white supremacist movements because it often reacts to maneuvers and events by white supremacists; although, more proactive elements have organized their own movement events and activities. In addition, the movement's militancy may be explained by its belief that the American political system is a closed system that provides tacit support for white supremacists. The countermovement becomes necessary because there is little institutional support and response to white supremacist organizing.

### **Research on the Anti-Racist Countermovement**

Sociological research into the contemporary anti-racist movement has most often focused on the master frames held by anti-racists and how these frames influence anti-racist praxis. The most significant research into contemporary anti-racist movements has been conducted by Eileen O'Brien (1999a, 1999b, 2001). Using interview data with members of the Anti-Racist Action (ARA) organization as well as the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, O'Brien collected data on activists that she terms as actively anti-racist rather than individuals who are "unprejudiced" or "nonracist" because they register low on such scales in opinion surveys. These activists purposely challenge racism in the society and in their personal lives. Among the interviewees, it is the members of ARA studied by O'Brien that would best be described as anti-racist because

as the organizations platform states, "[ARA] support[s] abortion rights and reproductive freedom. ARA intends to do the hard work necessary to build a broad, strong movement against racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, discrimination against the disabled, the oldest, the youngest and the most oppressed people. We want a classless society" (ARA 2004a). This organization works to combat white supremacy in all its forms rather than solely focusing on race.

O'Brien provides descriptive data on the individuals involved in the organization giving researchers a much needed insight into the type of people engaging in militant anti-racist activity. The individuals interviewed ranged in age from young adults to senior citizens, worked in a variety of occupations, and came from a variety of economic backgrounds. In a sense, they portray a cross-section of the American public and demonstrate a commitment of anti-racism among whites that crosses class-lines. In terms of activity, O'Brien focuses on the effects of anti-racist work on individuals' daily lives. She points out that white anti-racists often suffer from strained relationships with other whites and even hostility from individuals who do not share their point of view or vision. A brief mention is given to actual threats of violence faced by activists at the hands of white supremacist groups. Finally, the anti-racists' views of race itself are interrogated and point to some interesting patterns. Individuals involved in the race-specific work of the People's Institute held more critical views of race than did the individuals involved with ARA. That is not to say that ARA members did not have a commitment to fighting racism, but they had a more "color-blind" analysis of race than the individuals involved with the People's Institute.

This research has given important sociological insight into white anti-racism and provides a good overview of the movement. However, it does not delve deeply into the struggles between ARA and white supremacist organizations or interrogate the differences between activists' tactical choices. O'Brien's research compares activists with two very different targets; and therefore, two different tactical approaches. By comparing activists whose primary activity is focused on changing individual racist behaviors in an attempt to eliminate systems of white privilege to activists who confront white supremacists in order to disrupt organized racist organizations, O'Brien gives insight into the breadth of contemporary anti-racism, but does not cover the internal conflict among groups who oppose organize white supremacists. My research is designed to provide an overview of this specific subset of the anti-racist movement and explain important internal differences within this tendency that have not been explored in social science literature.

# **Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation seeks to understand the tactical differences within the ant-racist movement by grounding it in social movement theory. Chapter 2 will discuss the social movements literature and theoretical basis for the analysis of the anti-racist movement. It will introduce the framework for analysis of the anti-racist movement by explaining how it reflects elements of countermovements, new social movements, and radical social movements. In addition, I will discuss the concept of tactical repertoires with particular attention paid to discussion of conventional and unconventional tactics and the role of violence in social movement tactical repertoires. The chapter continues with an overview

of the influence of ideology on social movement activity. Finally, I will discuss the role of threat in social movement activity and the relationship between physical, political, and spatial threat to tactical choice. This chapter will also present the expectations of findings relevant to the questions under analysis in its discussion of ideology and threat. Chapter 3 will present the method of data collection including sampling methodology, the instruments involved in data collection, and basic information regarding the sample of respondents. Chapter 4 presents tactical repertoires beginning with a discussion of white supremacist tactics. As a movement that opposes white supremacist activity, the tactics of the anti-racist movement will be juxtaposed to those of the white supremacist movement and differences between non-militant and militant tactics within the anti-racist movement will be contextualized as responses to white supremacist activity. Chapter 5 covers the role of ideology in determining the tactical choices of anti-racist activists. Chapter 6 will cover aspects of the role of threat in determining the tactical choices of anti-racist activists. It will begin with a focus on the differences in threats to the physical safety of respondents and how these have affected their participation in anti-racist activity. The level of threat felt by anti-racists based on their political activity, specifically as anti-racists and as participants in other social movements will be directly tied to individual anti-racists tactical choices. The scope of personal threat will be expanded by contextualizing it in a discussion of white supremacist activity within subcultural spaces and communities.. Finally, Chapter 7 will present a discussion of the findings as a whole and conclusions that may be drawn from them.

# **CHAPTER 2**

# MOVEMENTS, TACTICAL REPERTOIRES, IDEOLOGY, AND THREAT

This dissertation draws on several concepts and theories developed primarily by social movement scholars to explain the tactical choices of the anti-racist movement. The internal differences in the choice of tactics, ideology, and levels of threat faced by members of the anti-racist movement reflect differences in types of social movements. Because the anti-racist movement generally responds directly to the organizing efforts and social movement activities of the white supremacist movement, it can broadly be characterized as a countermovement. In addition, much of its activity reflects the scholarship on "post-materialist" or "post-industrial" movements (Jasper 1997: 7) or more broadly "new social movements" (NSM) (Cohen 1985; Melucci 1989; Offe 1985). Dentice and I (2008) argue that the white supremacist movement operates in a manner that makes it as much a NSM as the leftist movements that most NSM scholars have focused on in their discussions of contemporary movements. As a countermovement to the white supremacists, the anti-racist movement demonstrates many elements of NSMs as it responds to supremacist actions. Specifically, the tactical repertoire of the anti-racist movement is derived from its responses to the white supremacist movement and its own identity as an NSM. In addition, the tactical differences reflect the reform or radical orientation of groups within the broader movement (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000). The differences between tactical choices of the anti-racist movement also reflect distinct

differences in ideology of the individuals involved in anti-racist activity. The tactical choices of anti-racist are also the result of responses to the threat that anti-racist activists perceive is posed by white supremacist activity.

# **Social Movement Types**

Social movement theories dating from the late 19th century until the late 1960s essentially viewed social movement activity not as political phenomena but as irrational group phenomenon and hence as being no different from other mass phenomena such as panics, crowds, and crazes. This perspective resulted in an analysis of social movement participants, and by extension social movements themselves, as irrational psychological reactions to social stimuli. These theories were predicated on the assumption that social movements, along with other forms of collective behavior represent a breakdown of social norms or order in the society. Individuals who are most effected by such breakdowns are therefore most likely to engage in social movement activity as a response to their changing life situation (Buechler 2000). These presumptions were challenged by social movement scholars and led to the development and theoretical dominance of resource mobilization (RM) theory in the United States. This theory is based on the presumption that individuals engage in social movement activity as a rational choice and that the actions of social movement members are rational responses. RM analysis focuses on the effective ability of movements to acquire and marshal resources. The RM perspective also recognized that social movements may work in opposition to one another to secure resources and ultimately achieve success. In recent decades social movement analysis has focused on the qualitative shift in movement activity toward "new social

movements." Movements categorized as NSMs place greater focus on identity, operate outside of traditional left-right political dichotomies, and engage in cultural activity as political activity (Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994). Social movements differ significantly in terms of "structure, ideology, and successes" between reform and radical movements (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000: 573).

# **Countermovements**

Traditional sociological analysis has envisioned two key actors in the field of social movements: a social movement that acts to make some form of policy change and a state that is the object of social movement activity. However, this model of social movements is limited and does not take into account the effect of social movement activity on opponents outside of the state. To remedy this issue, a study of countermovements has developed. Mottl (1980) originally conceived countermovements as a response to the successes of progressive social movement challenges to state policy. Countermovements mobilized constituencies that traditionally held economic, political and social power to defend their positions of privilege against challenges by social movements. This analysis portrays countermovements as intrinsically conservative in their political orientation and as a recent phenomenon that has developed in response to the progressive challenges of social movements since the 1950s. In addition, the countermovement is as focused on gaining concessions from the state as the social movement that it has organized to oppose.

Meyer and Staggenborg (1996: 1632) view "countermovements as networks of individuals and organizations that share many of the same objects of concern as the social

movements that they oppose." Movements and countermovements are interested in receiving concessions from the state in terms of public policy decisions and compete for media exposure and public approval. They argue that rather than referring to them as movement and countermovement, the term "opposing movements" may be a more accurate description of their dynamics (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). Therefore opposing movements operate in a similar political sphere on a common issue that affects them. The white supremacist/anti-racist MCM dynamic is a clear indication of this concept of opposing movements. Both movements have developed on opposite sides of social debates around a number of economic, political, and social issues. The most obvious of these issues often being the fight for racial, ethnic, religious, gender, and sexual equality. However, white supremacists and anti-racists have also taken oppositional positions on issues such as globalization, free-trade, and the "war on terror." While some have tried to point out what appear to be similar ideological positions among white supremacists and militant anti-racists (SPLC 2000), a closer analysis of the political positions of both sides and their proposals for remediation of issues such as globalization or the war in Iraq demonstrate significant differences.

In his study of the Israeli settler and peace movements, Samuel Peleg (2000) sought to develop a distinction of movement and countermovement among opposing movements, determine what factors influence the arenas in which movements and countermovements operate, and establish the role that MCM confrontation plays in dynamics between opposing movements. On the question of distinguishing which opposing movement is the countermovement, Peleg (2000: 238) asserts that "[There] is

no way to indicate who is the movement and who is the countermovement unless an issue is presented." For each issue, the social movement will be the initiator of action, public debate, and possibly moves to change policy and the countermovement will arise in opposition to the activities of the initiating movement. The anti-racist movement's position of responding to white supremacist activity would generally put it in the position of countermovement. However, should white supremacists act in response to anti-racist organizing, the anti-racists would be considered the movement and white supremacists would be the countermovement in this model. Movements and countermovements will operate in similar arenas until such time as the movement begins to falter. At this point, the movement or countermovement will shift arenas in order to maintain and reinvigorate their followers. However, both movement and countermovement are capable of "being active on several fronts, switching back and forth among them according to developing circumstances" (Peleg 2000: 251).

This behavior is evident in white supremacists' use of youth culture as a means of building a recruitment base and disseminating propaganda. The initial efforts of white supremacists to recruit and propagandize the Punk rock and skinhead subculture resulted in significant opposition from the subculture (Berlet and Vysotsky 2006; Corte and Edwards 2008; Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk 2006). This opposition led white supremacists to organize within other youth subcultures and forced anti-racists to attempt to counter this activity. However, white supremacists have not abandoned the Punk/skinhead subculture entirely and have achieved a resurgence of sorts within it in

recent years (Berlet and Vysotsky 2006; Corte and Edwards 2008; Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk 2006).

In order for MCM dynamics to occur successfully both movements must be able to "match each other in capabilities and prospects; otherwise, one will eclipse the other to its demise" (Peleg 2000: 251). This is most obvious in the consistent conflict between militant anti-racists and white supremacists. In contested subcultures and social spaces where one side is dominant, the other is likely to concede a "loss." However, in spaces where both sides are equally matched or one side has not established dominance, a series of actions will occur between opposing movements in an attempt to displace the influence of the other. Peleg's (2000) model of MCM dynamics may be applied to anti-racist movements in a manner that previous models could not be.

Yet, movement-countermovement dynamics are not as simple as opposing movements vying for state recognition of their claims. Zald and Useem (1987) demonstrate that countermovements develop in response to social movement activity regardless of political affiliation.

[Movements] of any visibility and impact create the conditions for the mobilization of countermovements. By advocating change, by attacking the established interests, by mobilizing symbols and raising costs to others, they create grievances and political opportunities for organizational entrepreneurs to define countermovement goals and issues. Movements also have a 'demonstration effect' for political countermovements – showing that collective action can effect (or resist) change in particular aspects of society' (Zald and Useem 1987: 247-8).

The implication is that countermovements result from the mere existence of social movements as they lay the groundwork and set an example that action on a particular

issue is possible. When a countermovement comes on the scene, it begins to interact with a social movement in a manner that is often independent of the state. In fact, each side begins to operate in response to the other with the state only occasionally intervening on behalf of either party. This dynamic is evident in the actions of the anti-racist countermovement. Its very formation is based on the existence of a white supremacist movement that challenged state activity on behalf of racial minorities, women, homosexuals, and a number of other historically oppressed groups. Anti-racist groups arose in response to heightened extremist activities by white supremacists and see themselves, in part, as a reaction to that movement. The state often acts as an intermediary between these white supremacists and anti-racists and is perceived by both as acting in the interest of its opposition. In case of militant anti-racists, the state is seen as either actively supporting white supremacists through cross-organizational membership (e.g. police and military who are involved in white supremacist movements) or tacitly supporting white supremacists by providing them with access to public spaces and protection.

### New Social Movements

If one accepts the proposition that opposing movements operate in a similar field, then one must analyze the specific type of movement that these clashing tendencies engage in. In recent decades social movement scholars have recognized a qualitative shift in social movement activity. Broadly these changes have been dubbed "new social

movements." These movements were found to have different concerns, organizational structures, political orientations, and strategic operations from the social movements that had preceded them. As such, they tended to focus on identity and the construction of both movement and broader cultures.

Unlike previous social movements, new social movements place a high priority on the development of collective and personal identity and social activism as intrinsic to individual lifestyle. These movements consist of individuals who, unlike movement members of the past, do not have a clear relationship between their structural role and movement participation. Movement members tend to be members of the "new middle class" (individuals with high levels of education, economic stability, and jobs in service occupations of the "knowledge industry), "decommodified or peripheral groups" (groups that are not part of the labor market by virtue of their social status), and aggrieved members of the "old middle class" (Offe 1985). These movements cluster around broad identities such as age cohort (youth), gender, or sexual orientation or develop broad based concerns like nuclear disarmament or environmental protection (Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994).

As a result of this broad support base and potential constituency, NSMs have developed belief systems that do not adhere to traditional ideological boundaries of left

The "newness" of new social movements has been the subject of some debate among social movement scholars (see Pichardo 1997 for a comprehensive critique); however, the focus on identity and "post-industrial" or "post-material" (Jasper 1997: 7) values and goals of many movements since the 1960s lends credibility to the assertions of new social movement scholars.

and right. They have instead constructed systems that contain a plurality of ideas and propose practical solutions and greater democracy in political and economic decision making processes (Cohen 1985; Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994; Melucci 1985; Offe 1985). These lead to the development of movements as unique identities. New social movements develop new "set[s] of beliefs, symbols, values, and meanings related to sentiments of belonging to a differentiated social group" (Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994: 7).

Members are active in the construction of their identity as an alternative to existing norms of identity and develop alternative interpretations of everyday life (Cohen 1985; Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994; Melucci 1989). By constructing new meaning to social life and social relationships, participants in new social movements merge collective and individual identity. Rather than engaging in mass social action, social movement membership is seen as an action in and of itself. This process transforms everyday experiences into political activities. To paraphrase a cliche, for new social movements the personal becomes the political. Social movement activity involves issues of sexuality, food consumption, health, and other intimate aspects of an individuals life (Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994). Through the processes outlined above, new social movements develop unique individual identities and transform them into countercultural forms of resistance.

In order to develop alternative identities for their members and new forms of social interaction, NSMs require unique forms of organization and prioritize certain tactics over others. The demand for democratic decision making in economic and

political spheres combined with new social movements' desire to develop alternative models within the social movement has resulted in the development of new forms of movement organization. New social movements tend to reject traditional mass-based political parties, labor unions, and social movement organizations because they view them as centralized and bureaucratic. In their place, they posit the decentralized, diffuse, and segmented groups (Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994).

The preferred model of organization within new social movements is a network of local "affinity groups" that have ties to one another, but no direct organizational structure. This allows them to maintain their individual autonomy while still creating the possibility of mass action around common issues (Jasper 1997). In addition, new social movement groups tend to prefer direct democratic or consensus based decision making models to representative, hierarchical models (Jasper 1997; Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994). The form of organization chosen by new social movements demonstrates the "credibility crisis of the conventional channels for participation in Western democracies" (Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 199: 8) which has resulted in the development of alternative forms of social organization that seek to develop more direct means of social change than are possible through traditional political channels (Cohen 1985; Melucci 1989).

The targets of demands have also changed drastically as new social movements turn away from the state to other social institutions to make demands for change (Jasper 1997; Offe 1985). As a response to these conditions, new social movements have often chosen to engage in largely symbolic forms of protest such as civil disobedience. These disruptions demonstrate both the willingness of participants to actively intervene in

processes that they feel must be changed and the possibility of new forms of social interaction embodied in the social movement (Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994). The form of organization and choice of tactics of new social movements demonstrates their desire to construct alternative social systems within existing ones.

Hanspeter Kriesi and his colleagues (1995: 84) have developed a typology of NSMs based on their "logic of action (identity/instrumental) and their general orientation (internal/external)." This typology leads to three distinct categories of social movements: instrumental, subcultural, and countercultural. Instrumental social movements, as the name implies possess a logic of instrumental action or activity toward a specific policy goal or change and are therefore externally oriented. These movements tend to operate within the conventional political structure and engage in conventional forms of political activity. They often enjoy support from factions within the state; and therefore, face very little state-sponsored repression. Subcultural movements are focused on activity based around group identity and possess and internal orientation. These movements are based on developing a sense of collective identity; and if they do engage in external activity, it is often instrumental in its form which involves a certain amount of support from sympathetic sectors of the state. Countercultural movements have a logic of action "derived from their collective identity from conflicting and confrontational interaction with other groups" (Kriesi et al. 1995: 84). While collective identity is strong in countercultural movements, they are oriented toward external changes in economic, political, and social policy and structures. This confrontational orientation isolates countercultural movements from state support and often results in repression. The

typology described above allows one to make distinctions between contemporary movements.

The new social movements analysis points to critical changes in social movement form since the 1960s. This trend has focused on the active construction of movement and personal identity as a unitary concept. These new identities are reflected in the diffuse social base of new social movements. As new identities are constructed, the social movement begins to develop alternative symbols and activities that display its social vision in everyday activity. Because of this, new social movements are likely to develop non-hierarchical, diffuse, and direct-democratic methods of decision making and organization and prefer them over pragmatic concerns. Finally, new social movements are likely to engage in direct forms of social protest that involve symbolic action against their targets.

New social movement activity is of particular interest to my understanding of the anti-racist movement because it draws specific distinctions between organizations within the anti-racist movement non-militant and militant based on Kriesi et al.'s (1995) distinction between instrumental and countercultural movements. The tactical repertoire of organizations and activists within the anti-racist movement is also contextualized through an understanding of NSM activity. Specifically, the focus of militant anti-racists on subcultural activity and the importance of subculture to the political conflict between white supremacists and anti-racists. This conflict is in part the result of the opposing groups engaging in similar forms of NSM activity within the bounds of certain youth cultures. As such, the ideological positions of militants and the spatial threat that they

face from white supremacists is a result of both opposing movements being classified as NSMs. It is therefore imperative to understand the conflict between white supremacists and anti-racists as one that is in many respects defined by each movement's classification as a new social movement.

### Radical Social Movements

Social movement scholarship has traditionally been biased toward the activity of reform oriented social movement organizations (SMOs). Even when radical movement organizations are incorporated into analysis or directly analyzed there is a bias toward hierarchical, bureaucratic forms of organization, measures of success that focus on mass acceptance or state concession, and ideologies focused on reform of existing social systems (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000). When analysis of radical social movement organizations does occur, it often relegates them to the periphery of social movement activity (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000) or views them as a necessary evil acting for the benefit of more reform oriented movements by creating a "radical flank" which makes the demands of moderate organizations seem more reasonable and therefore more likely to be conceded to by states and other power-holders (Haines 1988). In response to these biases in social movement scholarship, Kathleen Fitzgerald and Diane Rodgers (2000) have developed a ideal typical model that distinguishing between traditional, reform oriented social movement organizations and radical social movement organizations (RSMOs). This model is predicated on the idea that "RSMOs need to be analyzed on their own terms;" therefore, RSMOs are distinguished from other more moderate social movement

organizations by their unique forms of "structure, ideology, tactics, communication, and definitions of success" (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000: 577).

The structure of the moderate SMOs that have been given preference in social movement research is often highly bureaucratic. The moderate SMO has a strong hierarchical structure of leadership that organizes a mass base and mobilizes it for action. As Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000: 579) note, "Too often, movements are portrayed as being tied to one great leader who influences people to act. The success of the movement may then depend on the strength and longevity of its leader." This is rarely the case for RSMOs whose structure is purposely non-hierarchical. The ideal typical RSMO is a participatory democratic organization which is egalitarian in its orientation. This type of organization is driven by membership involvement which creates "indigenous" leaders who are developed through experience and action (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000: 578).

The ideology of moderate SMOs is based on enacting reforms to the existing economic, political, and/or social system. They place an "emphasis on being a contender in the existing political system" (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000: 578) which orients them directly toward calling for government action. As a result, moderate SMOs will engage in nonviolent, legal action.

On the other hand, RSMOs have a radical agenda which emphasizes structural changes. Rather than relying on existing structures, RSMOs seek to form radical networks and rely on building global consciousness and connections to supplant structures that they see as fundamentally flawed. As such, RSMOs are critical of, if not outright hostile to, the state and the use of state power to resolve contentious issues.

Because they do not rely upon the state, RSMOs engage in non-legalistic, direct action to affect change. They are also more likely to innovate their tactical repertoire because RSMOs possess "the freedom of being not constrained by moderate financial supporters" (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000: 584) or a desire to not alienate the state and other potential allies within the system.

As such, the tactics of RSMOs are sometimes intentionally designed to bring attention to the group and the specific grievances that it has. While moderate SMOs have direct access to and are able to rely on mainstream forms of communication, RSMOs are often ignored and/or misrepresented by the mainstream media. Therefore, RSMOs rely on alternative forms of communication that are often both part of their tactical repertoire and the culture of the organization: music, street theater, pamphlets, newsletters, and more recently, the internet as means of communication (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000).

Finally, Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000) note that the assessment of success varies significantly between moderate and radical SMOs. Moderate SMOs have a potential to access plentiful resources; therefore, they are able to manipulate said resources to maintain the longevity of the organization. Ultimately, success for the moderate SMO is measure in achieving reform of the existing economic or political system. For RSMOs success is not as easily measured as scholars of social movements would hope. RSMOs have limited resources which inspire creative action and the tactical innovation discussed above. They are often purposely short-lived organizations by design as means of staving off the bureaucratizing tendencies of long-term activism and/or the intense opposition and government surveillance that often accompanies radical action. For the RSMO, success

is often measures not in terms of longevity, popularity, or concessions from power, but in terms of contribution to the larger radical agenda. RSMOs success may be measured in both short-term goals of local organizations and the contribution that RSMOs make toward larger, long-term goals of structural and systemic change. Much of what constitutes radical action is done in the name of movement building and radicalizing the larger social movement agenda. For RSMOs working with the state and other power-holders is almost in conceivable. As Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000: 587) state, "for RSMOs to gain acceptance from a system that they critique would be anathema."

The differences between moderate and radical SMOs presents a clear challenge for scholars of social movements as both types of organizations often work within the same social movement. Many of these differences are evident within the anti-racist movement in its militant and non-militant wings. I will discuss these differences in the following chapters through in depth discussion of the tactics and ideology of the anti-racist movement. The non-militant wing of the movement more closely resembles the moderate SMOs described above while the militant wing is clearly its radical foil.

## **Tactical Repertoires**

Social movement interactions are limited by a series of actions that are generally prescribed as appropriate. Charles Tilly (2006) has described social movement activity using a dramaturgical metaphor. For Tilly, the activities of social movement actors are performances that involve the social movement and a number of other key actors. The collection of these performances becomes the tactical repertoire of the social movement. Theoretically there is an infinite continuum of repertoires available to use by any social

movement actor or group of actors. However, at any point in time, the number of available repertoires becomes bound by the cultural history and opportunity. "Repertoires vary from place to place, time to time, and pair to pair. But on the whole, when people make collective claims they innovate within limits set by the repertoire already established for their place, time, and pair" (Tilly 2006: 35). Because of this influence of culture, history, and precedent, repertoires are purposely flexible. Tilly (2006) describes a continuum of the availability of repertoires ranging no repertoire to weak repertoire to strong repertoire to rigid repertoire. Each availability is based on the familiarity that actors have with repertoires, the preference for a particular repertoire, the possibility for innovation, and shifts in the circumstances under which a repertoire can be enacted. The variation in repertoires can ultimately be explained by changes in the political opportunity structure (POS) of a given society. The POS includes, "(a) the multiplicity of independent centers of power within the regime, (b) the openness of the regime to new actors, © the instability of current political alignments, (d) the availability of influential allies or supporters, (e) the extent to which the regime represses of facilitates collective claim-making, and (f) decisive changes in a to e" (Tilly 2006: 44). Therefore when changes in the POS occur rapidly, repertoires of contention involve a great deal of innovation on the part of both power holders and challengers. As this cycle comes to an end, there is a demobilization and shift in innovations and available repertoires.

Implicit in this definition of repertoire is that repertoires are "interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests... in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties" (Tilly and Tarrow 2007: 4).

While this definition leaves a space for countermovement activity, it focuses almost entirely on actions where the state becomes one of the primary actors in social movement activity. There has, however, been some discussion of tactics within the literature on countermovements. Zald and Useem (1987) pay particular attention to tactics in their overview of MCM interaction. Their discussion of tactics involves three key types of activities: damage or destruction of the other group, preemption or dissuasion of group mobilization, and recruitment of the other group's members. Damage or destruction is used primarily to "try to raise the cost of mobilization for the other group" (Zald and Useem 1987: 260). These actions include, but are not limited to, gathering information, limiting the flow of resources, portraying the movement in a negative light, and direct attacks against the movement. A countermovement may gather information on its opposition in an attempt to discredit the movement leadership or the movement as a whole; therefore undermining its ability to effectively operate. Limiting the flow of resources is akin to cutting off vital necessities for a movement to operate or even survive leaving it unable to mobilize. Portraying the movement in a negative light further discredits the movement giving it little ability to draw new members or wage effective campaigns. Finally, direct attacks against a movement raise the cost of participation to level that decreases the likelihood that individuals will continue to be involved in the movement. Preemptive strategies are developed "in ways that undercut the moral and political basis of a mobilization or counter mobilization" (Zald and Useem 1987: 264). These strategies are designed to put opponents on the defensive and force them to make to act in response to the mobilizing movement's actions potentially placing them in the

undesirable position of being an immoral or inappropriate actor. Finally, persuasion and recruitment involve attempts by social movements to convince members of opposing movements to disengage from their commitments to a movement and actively work for the opposition. While this tactic is difficult in the short term, it is useful in a long-term struggle and aids in the effectiveness of the other tactics discussed.

By combining study of NSMs and POS Kriesi and his colleagues (1995) developed a typology of social movement strategies and action forms including conventional, demonstrative, confrontational, and violent<sup>2</sup>. Conventional action forms consist of juridical (lawsuits and activity within the legal system), political (activity within existing systems of political power), and media-directed activities. Demonstrative activities include, "public assembly/rally; demonstration/protest march (if legal and nonviolent); protest camp; collection of money or goods for party in political conflict;... recruitment of volunteers for party political conflict; festival or celebration with political content; [and] nonconfrontational symbolic or playful actions" (Kriesi et al. 1995: 267). Confrontational actions may have both legal forms such as "boycott...; hunger strike; politically motivated suicide; disruption of institutional procedures (if legal); [and] confrontational but legal symbolic or playful actions" and illegal forms such as "illegal demonstrations (if nonviolent); tax boycott; and other forms of illegal boycott; blockade; occupation...; disruption of meetings and assemblies; illegal noncooperation; bomb threat

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This typology also involves a direct-democratic component that takes the form of people's initiatives and referenda. While these activities are important for the study of social movement activity in general, they apply less to the anti-racist countermovement under discussion in this dissertation.

(if no actual bomb was placed); [and] symbolic violence" (Kriesi et al. 1995: 267).

Finally violence entails both light forms including: "limited property damage; theft; burglary; threats to persons; [and] violent demonstrations (if movement-initiated)" and heavy forms including: "bomb or fire attacks and other severe property damage; sabotage; [and] physical violence against persons" (Kriesi et al. 1995: 268). Kriesi and his colleagues (1995) note that unconventional tactics include demonstrative, confrontational, or violent actions.

The typology of NSMs developed by Kriesi and his colleagues (1995) states that each type of social movement lends itself to different tactical repertoires based on the orientation of the movement under analysis. In the political climate of low repression and general acceptance of unconventional political action that is characteristic of western "democratic" societies, instrumental social movements develop moderate tactical repertoires. Subcultural movements tend to engage in moderate, non-confrontational activity because of their identity orientation which also allows them to turn inward in times when public activity becomes unfeasible. Countercultural movements, by their nature, derive their identity from confrontation with their opponents, particularly the state. They are therefore more likely to engage in actions that are confrontational and/or violent. *Violence* 

The study of violence and social movement activity has often gone hand-in-hand. The earliest theorists of collective behavior often focused on the most violent and outrageous forms of collective action in the form of riots, mobs, panics, crazes, etc. (Buechler 2000). It was believed that social movements turn to violence because

individuals lose their identity and autonomy in the crowd and may, in fact, revert to a more animalistic state when they are in a large group (LeBon [1896] 1978). Later studies followed LeBon's deindividuation thesis by assuming that violence on the part of social movement actors resulted from members acting on the commands of totalitarian leadership (Kornhauser 1959). It is only with the advent of relative deprivation theory that one begins to view collective violence as a response to structural forces rather than a purely irrational action by individuals (Gurr 1970). The theoretical model begins with individuals experiencing relative deprivation which leads to frustration. This frustration is politicized through ideologies (implicitly carried by social movements) and translated into political violence. Gurr (1970) puts particular emphasis on the relative nature of deprivation and claims that neither individuals who are objectively deprived nor in a similar objective position are more likely to engage in revolutionary activity. It is not until the development of the resource mobilization school that political violence becomes viewed as a rational action by social movement members.

The resource mobilization perspective takes as a given the assertion that social movements participation is "simply politics by other means" (Gamson 1990: 139) and that individuals who engage in social movement activity are actually rational actors. The presumption of rationality on the part of resource mobilization theorists was justified using Olson's (1965) and Oberschall's (1973) rational-choice economic model of social movement participation. This model states that individuals engage in social movement activity after making a rational calculation as to the relative costs and benefits of participation. In this model, the use of violence is but one of a number of resources used

by social movements to attain their ends. Gamson (1990) argues that the use of violence is critical to social movement success in terms of either goal attainment or support. In his landmark study of American social movements, he found that movements that used violence and did not have a stated goal of state displacement were likely to succeed. Conversely, movements that were themselves victims of repressive violence were unlikely to succeed. Gamson (1990) is quick to point out that violent repression of social movements was just as likely to be at the hands of other social movements as it was at the hands of the state. In this respect, the study of repressive violence in *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Gamson 1990) may be one of the earliest works to discuss MCM dynamics.

Piven (2006: 25) points out that "[Violence by protesters is often treated as a moral issue" and that the moralizing that occurs in debates over the use of violence "ignores the violence inherent in the institutional routines...that are often the target of the protests." The use of violence and nonviolence by social movements is then a purely strategic move on the part of organizers and participants. Violence may be employed to defend the ongoing activity of disruption of everyday activity that, as noted earlier, is often employed by social movements in their attempts to gain concessions from power. The strategic use of violence may also be employed offensively to disrupt routine activities and the implementation of policies that are targets of social movements (Piven 2006).

Charles Tilly's (1978) work in *From Mobilization to Revolution* further contributes to the understanding of the rational choice of violence as a tactic by social

movement actors. At any given time, social movements have a number of options in terms of tactical choices. These actions are defined in part by their history and the cultural norms regarding the use of such a tactic for dissent, particularly whether the tactic is considered a legitimate means for airing grievances or achieving one's goals. From the repertoire of available tactics, groups will make choices based on how appropriate the use of the tactic is, how effective the tactic will be, whether it has been used by other groups, and whether it will lead to significant repression. In regard to violence as a tactic Tilly (1978) argues that it a) must have some form of historical precedence that makes it available in the repertoire, b) must be seen as legitimate by the members of the group that use it and possibly by the society at large, and c) must be effective in achieving the goals of the group in question. Violence as a tactic is therefore bound by the cultural norms and political structures of any given time period.

Beginning in the 1960s, a number of radical social movements have chosen violent and confrontational protest as a means to highlight grievances and attempt to create social change. Changes in the structure and beliefs of social movements have led to the development of new social movements that have developed a qualitatively different "set of beliefs, symbols, values, and meanings related to sentiments of belonging to a differentiated social group" (Johnston, Laraña and Gusfield 1994: 7) from the social movements of the past. These movements generally reject participation in the state and civil society and desire to prefigure directly democratic societies within the movements themselves models (Cohen 1985; Jasper 1997; Johnston Laraña and Gusfield 1994; Melucci 1989). Certain elements of new social movements have turned to subculture and

counterculture as a means of creating social change, maintaining movement identity, and building movement participation (Kriesi et al. 1995). New social movement relationships with the political structure have profound effects upon their propensity for violence. Countercultural movements that are oriented toward external social change, yet are predicated on a common identity are least likely to find allies in the political mainstream in part because they are less likely to find political parties that reflect their specific identity and social vision and in part because attempts at alliance with the political mainstream are viewed as co-optation of the movement or a door to state repression rather than recognition. They are therefore more likely to engage in mobilizations and to use confrontational and violent tactics (Kriesi et al. 1995). For new social movements, tactical choice is expressly linked to their relationship to the POS and their self-identification.

The question of effectiveness of social movement tactics has been hotly debated by social movement scholars. Of particular interest is the effectiveness of confrontational and even violent tactics. While the popular cultural contention has been that the use of confrontational and violent tactics is ineffective and that in "democratic" societies participation in the electoral process will lead to a proper redress of grievances (Piven 2006), social movement scholarship has been critical of this position. In his study of social movement outcomes, William Gamson (1990) discusses the use of violence by social movements. His initial findings indicate that violence was in fact effective in gaining social movements some form of success as long as their goal was not state displacement. In a later revision of his study, Gamson (1990) noted that it was not

violence, per se that was effective, but that the use of unconventional strategies that led to social movement success. These strategies often resulted in additional media exposure that built consciousness of the issues raised by the movement or support for the movement itself. Frances Fox Piven (2006) places these tactical choices into a context of relations of power. She notes that "[The normal routes created by electoral-representative institutions provide at best a twisted and obstacle-strewn path for popular influence, when they provide any path at all" (Piven 2006: 16). The popularly conceived politics of electoral participation is one that has been marred by disenfranchisement, ideological distortions, business domination, and a number of other factors that have created a decided inegalitarian process. Broadly, power is conceived as "the control of resources, especially in control of wealth and force, or in the institutional positions that yield control over wealth and force" (Piven 2006: 19). In this respect, the vast majority of the population has little in the way of power: economic, political, or social. However, social movements possess disruptive power where people are able to "disrupt a pattern of ongoing and institutionalized cooperation that depends on their continuing contributions" (Piven 2006: 21). In this conception of social movement activity, strategies and tactics that are conventional are ultimately ineffective because they are unable to disrupt the ordinary relations of power in the society. It is for this reason that the unconventional tactics of social movements are often viewed as confrontational or even violent (Piven 2006).

## **Political Ideology**

Social movement scholarship has traditionally made links between political beliefs and social movement activity. Political beliefs, generally referred to as ideology, have been characterized in a number of contradictory ways by social scientists in general and social movement scholars specifically (Gerring 1997; Oliver and Johnston 2000). Ideology is characterized pejoratively by some scholars and positively by others.

Scholars have used ideology to malign social movement activity, to situate it in a Marxist theoretical tradition, and to explain the variations in social movements.

Scholars within the collective behavior school generally used ideology pejoratively in relation to social movement activity. For these scholars ideology is an irrational or illogical analysis of what is generally a functional, pluralist society. Gurr's (1970) conception of ideology in his theory of relative deprivation is a clear depiction of the irrationality of the rank-and-file social movement participant. Since deprivation is not an objective condition individuals who join revolutionary movements do not necessarily adhere as strongly to movement ideologies as the leadership. "The subtleties of justification articulated by revolutionary leaders penetrate to many of their followers in a congeries of phrases, vague ideas, and symbols" (Gurr 1970: 195). Ideology for rank-and-file members appears to serve more as an internal justification for violence than an explanation of their condition. The implied understanding is that individual members of revolutionary organizations are dupes or patsies of leaders. Although he does not use the term, Neil J. Smelser's (1962) generalized beliefs are synonymous with ideology. In explaining responses to social strain, the generalized belief develops as individuals

develop meanings for the social situations that occur. This process must occur through interaction of individuals experiencing strain. The generalized belief attributes the source of strain as well as the appropriate response to it. While this attempt to link individual perception (generalized beliefs) and social structure (conduciveness, strain, control) is groundbreaking in terms of social movement analysis, Smelser (1962) continues the collective behavior tradition of presumed irrationality be implicitly equating panics, crazes, and outbursts with social movements by uniformly applying his conditions to all of these activities. Ralph Turner and Lewis Killian (1972) also follow the trend of contradictory analyses of ideology common in the collective behavior school. On the one hand, their definition presents a positive conception of ideology as "maps that tell the individual how to look at events and people, and they provide a simplifying perspective through which the observer can make sense of otherwise overwhelmingly complex phenomena and find definiteness in otherwise vague and uncertain impressions" (Turner and Killian 1972: 270). Oliver and Johnston (2000: 43) note that "Turner and Killian emphasize ideology as a product of active social construction processes by which people understand their circumstances and their possible courses of action." In this definition, ideology is not necessarily the product of an elite leadership as in Gurr's conception cited above. It is the active process of individuals involved in social movement activity. However, the use of the phrase "simplifying perspective" may imply an irrationality on the part of social movement participants that is consistent with previous works. Despite their best attempts to portray ideology as a positive influence on social change, the

scholars of the collective behavior school fell into the trap of pejorative language in their descriptions.

George Rudé (1980) attempted to resolve this apparent contradiction in the treatment of ideology by social movement scholars by placing it in a distinct historical context. He traces the evolution of the term from its benign origin as a shorthand for "the theory of ideas in general" (Rudé 1980: 15). Oliver and Johnston (2000: 42) point out that the term first took on a pejorative meaning "in 1803 when the 'ideologues' were suppressed by Napoleon Bonaparte." It is with the work of Karl Marx ([1845] 1983) that ideology takes on the pejorative meaning of "The ideas of the ruling class." He continues "the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it" (Marx [1845] 1983). The ideology of the ruling class being the dominant ideology of any given era thus instill within the proletariat a "false consciousness." Rudé (1980: 17) points out the clear contradiction that this concept of ideology poses for Marx because, "to end its subjection and break through the 'false reality' that capitalism had imposed on it, the proletariat... must develop a 'true' consciousness, or class consciousness, peculiar to itself." Rudé interprets this to mean that the proletariat must develop its own set of ideas in the course of class struggle. This challenges the orthodox Marxist conception of ideology as simply the preserve of the capitalist class.

The relationship between class struggle and ideology is, however, not fully developed by Marx and is therefore left open to theoretical development by scholars that followed in his tradition. Rudé (1980) points to the work of Georg Lukács and Antonio Gramsci as major steps in identifying the relationship between proletarian ideology and class struggle. Lukács borrowing argued that "'Total truth'... could only be attained through class struggle" (Rudé 1980: 21). For Lukács, the bourgeoisie could not achieve "total truth" because it was unable to harmonize it's class interests with attempts to alleviate the "false reality" of capitalism. The proletariat, however, in the process of class struggle would develop a "'true' knowledge or awareness" (Rudé 1980: 21). The problem in Lukács' conception of ideology as "total truth" developed in class struggle is that it is intimately linked to active revolutionary activity. The development of proletarian ideology is therefore a part of the mission of class struggle. Rudé turns to Gramsci to unlock the development of ideology from the bourgeoisie and from explicit class struggle. Gramsci (quoted in Rudé 1980: 22) makes a distinction between "historically organic ideologies; those, that is, which are necessary to a given structure and ideologies that are arbitrary, rationalistic, or 'willed.'" If this distinction is made, then ideology is no longer anchored in the dominant class. Gramsci creates room for not only popular ideas, but also ideas developed by "trained agents" (Rudé 1980: 23) of the proletariat. In illuminating his concept of hegemony, "the process whereby the ruling class imposes a consensus, it's domination in the realm of ideas, by largely peaceful means. This happens through control of the media of indoctrination in that part of the state that he terms 'civil society': through press, church, and education' (Rudé 1980: 23).

In response to hegemony, the proletariat develops its own counter-ideology through the trained agents mentioned above – "organic intellectuals" – whose primary role is to "equip their own class with the new ideology [read: Marxism]" (Rudé 1980: 23). In doing so, the proletariat can not only develop its own ideology, but can defend against attacks by agents of hegemony.

Following in these traditions, Rudé undertakes a study of the "popular ideology" which he describes as follows:

Popular ideology... is not a purely internal affair and the sole property of a single class or group: that in itself distinguishes it from ideology as 'class consciousness' or its antithesis.... It is most often a mixture, a fusion of two elements, of which only one is the peculiar property of the 'popular' classes and the other is superimposed by a process of transmission and adoption from outside. Of these, the first is what I call the 'inherent' traditional element... based on direct experience, oral tradition or folk-memory and not learned by listening to sermons or speeches or reading books. In this fusion, the second element is the stock of ideas and beliefs that are 'derived' or borrowed from others, often taking the form of a more structured system of ideas" (Rudé 1980: 28, italics in original).

Ideology, therefore, develops in the course of protest and struggle. It is a combination of ideas developed theoretically and lived experience. Rudé applies this vision of ideology to a number of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century struggles. However, his study is limited to those eras and is implicitly limited to the materialist struggles of the time. This limitation calls into question the relevance of ideology to contemporary "post-materialist" struggles engaged in by new social movements.

With the increase in the dominance of the resource mobilization perspective in the study of social movements, the study of ideology fell out of favor because of the collective behavior school's bias toward the irrationality of ideology and the focus on

post-materialist movements for recognition and the means with which they were or were not successful. As scholars have moved to study new social movements, there has been a renewed call to incorporate the role of ideology into social movement analysis (Oliver and Johnston 2000; Zald 2000). Oliver and Johnston (2000) argue for the renewed study of movement ideology by distinguishing it from the study of "frame alignment processes" which has become extremely popular among social movement scholars. While they praise the framing analysis for "bringing ideas back in," they also note that frames are not the equivalent of ideologies. Framing, message construction by social movements, is distinctly different from ideology which Oliver and Johnston (2000: 43) define as, "a system of meaning that couples assertions and theories about the nature of social life with values and norms relevant to promoting or resisting social change." The frame; therefore, is the message whereas the ideology is the idea behind the message. The ideas themselves have specific interpretations of right and wrong, behavioral norms, and both simple descriptions and complex theories. Oliver and Johnston (2000: 44) assert that by studying ideology, scholars can connect "theories about society with a cluster of values about what is right and wrong as well as norms about what to do." This analysis will illuminate similarities and differences within and between social movements and the organizations that compose them. The direct study of ideology as defined above may also help to explain the perceived irrationality of social movement actors in the face of contradictory evidence or movement failure.

Because and ideology links theory, norms and values in one interconnected system, what may seem to outsiders as an unreasonable attachment to a belief or norm can frequently be understood as a defense of core values by defending the

whole belief system in which they are embedded. Conversely, what may seem to outsiders to be vacillation in belief or abandonment of prior beliefs may be seen by activists as realistic reappraisal of their theory of society or their strategies as they seek better ways to pursue their core values (Oliver and Johnston 2000: 44).

In this context, the choices of social movement actors are seen as rational and bounded by the demands of the ideology to which they subscribe. This conception also explains necessary complexity of changes in ideology as a result of countermovement activity discussed by Zald and Useem (1987). The call to incorporate ideology as more than an aspect of framing by Oliver and Johnston asks for a reevaluation of the nature of social movement analysis.

Mayer Zald (2000: 1) makes such a demand of social movement scholars in his argument that all social movement activity be redefined as "ideologically structured action (hereafter ISA)." Zald discusses the failures of resource mobilization and political process theories to properly address many of the issues that have developed in social movement scholarship in recent decades, particularly issues of identity, culture, framing and ideology. To remedy this, he argues that social movement scholarship be redefined on the basis of "ideologically structured behavior" which he defines as "behavior which is guided and shaped by ideological concerns – belief systems defending and attacking current social relations and the social system" (Zald 2000: 3-4). Ideological concerns, Zald's shorthand for ideology, may be complex, well defined, and strongly elaborated or simple, symbolic, and locally relevant. They are generally better developed and more coherent among movement leaders and "Cadres" than among "casual adherents, sympathizers, and by-stander publics" (Zald 2000: 4). Core ideologies are not necessarily

shared by all SMOs or their members and ideologies may be more or less coherent during different phases of movement activity. In keeping with the Marxist conception of ideology discussed in the work of Rudé above, Zald (2000: 4) states that, "Ideology both emerges and manifests itself in practice." In citing the work of Garner (1996), Dalton (1994), and McAdam (1982), Zald points out the influence of ideology on access to resources, tactics, and forms of organization. The argument is concluded by pointing out the relevance of ideology to study of the family and education, polity and the state, movements inside or outside of the party system, the consequences for movements of party and electoral politics, movements and parties sharing common ideologies, and state leadership (Zald 2000). This call would broadly expand the arena of social movement analysis and would serve to incorporate some of the disparate tendencies in contemporary social movement scholarship.

Using the definition of ideology developed by Oliver and Johnston (2000: 43) discussed above and following in the tradition of analyzing social movement activity as ideologically structured action (Zald 2000), this dissertation seeks in part to analyze the role of ideological differences and their relationship to the tactical choices of anti-racists. As a countermovement, the anti-racist movement organizes in opposition to the values and norms of the racist ideology as they are manifest in both social movement and everyday behavior. The anti-racist movement incorporates a number of ideologies that stand in direct opposition to fascism. However, the diversity of ideologies held by anti-racists also has direct effects on the manifestation of countermovement activity in terms of tactics that are deemed appropriate. It is this distinction that I have chosen to study in

this dissertation. The ideological and tactical differences between anti-racists have led me to formulate distinct expectations regarding the relationship between ideology and the tactical preference of anti-racists. Specifically, I expect that non-militant anti-racists are more likely to adhere to ideologies such as liberalism that stress reform and a willingness to work within existing state and community structures, and that militant anti-racists are more likely to adhere to an anarchist ideology that stress radical change through direct action and working outside of or indirect opposition to existing state and community structures. These expectations elaborate the ideological differences within the anti-racist movement and seek to link them to specific tactical choices from the broad repertoire of anti-racist activity.

#### **Threat**

Much like ideology, the relationship between emotions and social movement scholarship has been fraught with contradictions. The early scholars of collective behavior placed a great deal of emphasis on the influence of emotion on social movement activity and generally described this phenomenon in a pejorative sense. With the rise of resource mobilization and its rationalist approach to the study of social movements, emotions took a back seat to the study of organizations and their ability to effectively (or ineffectively) build and manage a variety resources. The subsequent study of political processes and opportunities also left little room for discussion of emotions (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2000). Even the return to the study of culture in social movement scholarship did not bring with it a renewed attention to emotion (Jasper 1998). However, emotions have made a gradual return to social movement scholarship. Recent work by

James Jasper (1998) as well as Jeff Goodwin, James Jasper, and Francesca Polletta (2000) has provided a broad overview of scholarship on the role of emotion in social movement behavior and has challenged social movement scholars to incorporate emotion into their analysis.

A key component of the emotion in social movement activity is the concept of threat. Tilly (1978: 134) states that a given amount of threat tends to generate more activity than the same amount of opportunity." Jasper (1997: 116) has pointed out that "anything can be seen as threatening, and any perceived threat can become the target of protest." He points out that protest is more likely when human activity rather than nature is understood as the cause of the threat. Research on the relationship between threat and social movement activity has pointed out a number of types of potential threat: physical threat, understood as a the fear of direct physical harm; political threat, understood as a perception that one's (or a group's) ability to wield social power and maintain control of legal institutions or the freedom of expression is under attack; and economic threat, understood as the challenge of control of economic institutions and the ability of an individual or group to participate in the market.

The relationship between physical threat and social movement activity has been strongly documented in studies of AIDS activism. Deborah Gould (2002) argues that the lack of political opportunity coupled with the immediate threat of physical harm posed by AIDS was the primary motivating factor in mobilization for activists around the issue. Griff Tester (2004) builds on this assessment to point out that the lack of institutional opportunities led to a unique identity formation among people with AIDS and their allies

who in turn developed alternative services when conventional ones were not available.

M. Kent Jennings and Ellen Andersen (1996) indicate that the threat posed by AIDS was directly related to support of confrontational tactics. In their survey, individuals who were themselves infected with HIV or had experienced loss of someone close to them as a result of AIDS were more supportive of and more willing to engage in confrontational forms of protest. It is this sense of urgency from direct perceptions of threat that inspires the use of confrontational tactics. I expect to find that militant anti-racists are more likely to be threatened by white supremacists than non-militants, and that the type of threat that militants face is more likely to take the form of direct threats as a result of their identity as members of groups targeted for white supremacist violence.

Economic and Political threat have also been found to motivate social movement activity. Nella Van Dyke and Sarah Soule (2002) have found that structural changes within American society have direct effect on membership in right-wing patriot/militia organizations. Their findings indicate that the economic threat of "the loss of manufacturing jobs and farms is associated with higher levels of patriot/militia organizing at both the state and local level" (Van Dyke and Soule 2002: 514). In their study of campaigns against welfare reform Ellen Reese, Vincent Gaidraitis and Eric Vega (2005) found that the threat of economic instability posed by welfare reform along with a history of activism on poverty issues led to higher rates of mobilization. Political threat has a similar relationship. Van Dyke and Soule (2002) also found that perceived threats to the political status of white men was a key motivator in patriot/militia movement membership. Legislative gains by women at the state level and increases in non-white

populations correlated directly with membership in patriot/militia organizations. These findings indicate a tension over resources that is consistent with a resource mobilization perspective on social movement activity. Political threat may also be tested in relation to anti-racist activism against white supremacists. I expect to find that militant activists are more likely to perceive white supremacists as a threat to their ideological position and political organizing efforts.

In addition to these types of threat, I propose an additional spacial threat that can be understood as a perceived loss of space that is integral to social movement activity.

Charles Tilly (2000) points out that contentious action always takes place in some form of physical space, spacial distributions greatly effect the potential for mobilization, and these spaces have significant meaning to social movement actors. Social movements may establish safe spaces which take on three distinct forms:

geographic areas where contentious claim making gains protection from routine surveillance and repression because of terrain, built environment or legal status...; segregated institutions in which legal privilege, organizational structure, social composition, or governmental neglect permits otherwise forbidden conversation and action...; [and] public occasions on which authorities tolerate or even encourage large, extraordinary assemblies in selected sites, thus providing opportunities for both airing of generally forbidden claims and access to large audiences to those claims (Tilly 2000: 144).

Free spaces describes "small-scale settings within a community or movement that are removed from the direct control of dominant groups, are voluntarily participated in, and generate the cultural challenge that precedes or accompanies political mobilization" (Polletta 1999: 1). These spaces can take three distinct forms: transmovement, indigenous, and prefigurative. Transmovement structures provide ties between activists

across geographic, organizational, and temporal lines. Indigenous structures develop within specific communities and initially are not formally oppositional. Prefigurative structures are "[explicitly] political and oppositional (although their definition of 'politics' may encompass issues usually dismissed as cultural, personal, or private), they are formed in order to prefigure the society the movement is seeking to build by modeling relationships that differ from those characterizing mainstream society" (Polletta 1999: 11). Robert Futrell and Pete Simi (2004) point out that prefigurative spaces are crucial to the white supremacist movement. White supremacists often focus on subculture as the primary prefigurative space within which they operate. This places them in direct conflict with anti-racists within said subcultures (Futrell and Simi 2004; Berlet and Vysotsky 2006). I expect to find that militant activists are more likely to face direct threats from white supremacists as a result of their involvement in subcultures where white supremacists attempt to organize.

The choices in tactics made by anti-racists may be directly linked to the intensity and type of threat that they face. Non-militants may face less of a direct threat from white supremacists specifically because they are not individually targeted by white supremacists, do not view white supremacists as a direct political opponent, and do not engage in activity in the same subcultural spaces as white supremacists. Conversely, militants should face a greater, more direct threat as a result of their being directly targeted by white supremacists particularly because of a direct ideological conflict and their participation in subcultures where white supremacists are active.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### STUDYING THE ANTI-RACIST MOVEMENT

The process of researching the contemporary, American anti-racist movement began for me through lived experience long before I was even cognizant of the field of sociology or viewed graduate education as a viable option. Many Americans understand white supremacist movements as a historical anomalies – the hooded Klansmen of reconstruction and reaction to the civil rights movement and/or German Nazis marching in precision formation to war against the forces of democracy and freedom – long destroyed by social progress and war. A contemporary white supremacist movement seems anachronistic or completely irrelevant, and a movement in opposition to white supremacy seems irrelevant in a society where an African-American is the Democratic nominee for president. For a Jewish punk rocker in the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, the white supremacist movement was both very real and very much a threat, and anti-fascism was part-and-parcel of the subculture. As an on and off activist in the antiracist movement, I have been able to observe the inner-workings of the movement through numerous "cycles of protest" (Tarrow 1994: 153). As my scholarly interest in social movements developed, it began to intersect with elements of my social and political activity.

This study follows the spiral model developed by Creswell (1998: 142) wherein "the researcher engages in the process of moving in analytic circles rather than using a linear approach." As a participant in the anti-racist movement, I developed a curiosity

regarding the dynamics of the schism between militant and non-militant wings of the movement discussed in Chapter 1. This interest led me to develop the research questions and expectations that inform this study. In order to operationalize the questions and expectations, I developed a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures (see Appendix A: Interview Questionnaire and Appendix B: Interview Schedule) that would 1) establish a distinct difference between militant and non-militant anti-racist activists, 2) gauge the influence of ideology on tactical choices, 3) distinguish the level of threat faced by anti-racist activists in both camps, and 4) gauge tactical choices as responses to threat. As part of the spiral of research activity, analysis and presentation of the data will combine the results of surveys and interviews of anti-racist activists, observations made as a participant in the movement, and content from militant and non-militant publications and Websites. This "triangulation" of methods serves to increase the validity of the study and the reliability of the measures, as well as to reduce researcher bias (Creswell 1998: 202; Schutt 2006: 108).

### Sampling and Data Collection

It is virtually impossible to obtain an estimate of the total population of anti-racist activists in the United States. While it is typical for the number of attendees at a direct counter-protest against white supremacists to number in the hundreds, if not one thousand or more, the number of militants within that protest may range from as few as a dozen to hundreds. However, the number of active movement participants, as opposed to sympathizers or by-standers, is hard to calculate in a protest setting as sympathizers and by-standers mobilize with long-term activists to engage in direct confrontation and

violence against white supremacists. The population of non-militants is equally hard to establish. As noted in Chapter 1, some of the better known non-militant organizations consist of professionals with a membership base of financial contributors who may or may not consider themselves as active members of a movement against white supremacists. Local, grassroots, non-militant organizations may be short-lived as activists move on to other issues of local importance after the white supremacists have "left town" or ceased an active campaign in the region. Militant organizations such as ARA do not keep active member rolls to ensure the safety of their members (from white supremacist retaliation and police prosecution) and the organization's size can only be gauged by the number of chapters<sup>1</sup>. In addition, access to this population is limited due to their distrust of individuals outside of the movement because they may be viewed as informants for police or white supremacist organizations. Therefore, without a sampling frame or even the possibility to use cluster sampling techniques, obtaining a nationally representative sample of anti-racists, let alone representative samples of militants and non-militants becomes impossible.

The number of ARA chapters is notoriously unreliable as the organization is a loose network of local groups. Chapters typically join and leave the organization within a span of 6 months or less. Active chapters disband and new chapters are formed that may not be officially recognized by the organization. As of the summer of 2008, the majority of chapters on the organization's primary point of contact, an internet Website, have contact email addresses that are no longer in use. In addition, the ready availability of ARA literature, cultural paraphernalia (buttons, patches, t-shirts, etc.), and increases in communication abilities has led to a reputation of ARA existing as "a kid with a PO Box (or email address)" rather than a network of committed groups and individuals. However, the ARA network does have a number of long-term, reliable chapters that served as stable contact points for obtaining respondents for this study.

When a probability sample is not possible, a number of non-probability options may be used by researchers to obtain a reliable sample of a population under study (Schutt 2006). Non probability samples are also recommended "when a research question calls for an intensive investigation of a small population" (Schutt 2006: 152). My research on the anti-racist movement meets both criteria. I employed a snowball sample because my experience with the movement under investigation provided me with direct contact with "key informants" (Schutt 2006: 301) with the militant wing of the movement. These individuals were asked to participate in the study and aid in the recruitment of others who in turn provided contact to other potential participants. To supplement this process, I also conducted an internet search for ARA chapters, American anti-racist organizations, and organized groups of anti-racist skinheads. All potential participants were sent a recruitment letter describing the nature of the study and asking them for initial consent to participate in the study<sup>2</sup>. Key informants were also encouraged to forward the recruitment letter to individuals who they believed could be potential participants with instructions to contact me if they were willing to participate. A similar process was used to obtain information for non-militant anti-racists.

An additional problem arose in the course of recruiting participants for this research and establishing trust. As expected, some potential participants had a distrust of individuals who wish to interview them for fear that they may be agents of the state or

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Research was conducted under the protocol agreed upon with Northeastern Universities Institutional Review Board. Under this protocol a separate consent form was given to participants to sign before proceeding with the research. In addition, one participant gave recorded verbal consent to have the interview recorded "in accordance with state law."

white supremacists attempting to obtain information about the movement. Others were worried about misrepresentation by scholars who purport to be objective yet present subjective information regarding the movement, especially its militant wing. These concerns could easily be addressed by asking key informants in the movement to "vouch" for my credibility as a movement member and scholar. When such vouches were unavailable, I relied on my own history as a movement activist to assuage such concerns. Despite my best efforts an additional concern was raised that an objective portrayal of the militant wing of the movement would provide "insider" information to police and/or white supremacists who would use it to repress the movement. I attempted to address this concern by reiterating my position as a neutral researcher who did wish to undermine the anti-racist movement or put its members in danger of repression at the hands of the state or white supremacists, and that the research did not present tactical information that was not publicly available. It is impossible to determine the effect this discussion had on recruiting potential participants, but subsequent correspondences indicate that the concern was adequately addressed for those who chose to participate.

The snowball sampling method yielded 37 potential participants. Of these, seven did not respond to follow-up contact for interviews and six were not interviewed because research had reached a saturation point "when new interviews seemed to yield little additional information" (Schutt 2006: 312). At this point in the research process the number of respondents that were classified into non-militant and militant groups presented even comparison groups. All six of the potential interviewees who were not interviewed were affiliated with militant anti-racist activists and organizations and I

believe that these interviews would not have yielded additional information regarding that subgroup. Interviews were conducted with a total of 24 anti-racist activists who resided in all regions of the United States.<sup>3</sup> The interviews were conducted in a location of the respondent's choosing which included coffee shops, participants' workplaces, the homes of participants, and my home. The survey and interview process varied in length ranging from slightly over 11 minutes for the shortest to 1 hour and 27 minutes for the longest. The typical survey and interview process lasted approximately 40 minutes. The data collection process began with the participant answering the first question on the survey form (see Appendix A) with a follow-up question from the interview schedule (see Appendix B). The participant was then asked to answer the second question on the survey form at which point some participants volunteered justifications for their answer to the survey question as part of the interview process. The remainder of the interview was conducted in a semi-structured manner from the interview schedule with occasional calls for clarification and/or follow-up. The survey and interview process concluded with the participant completing the demographic information portion of the survey. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed at a later date. In order to protect the confidentiality of respondents, each survey was assigned a random identification number which was also assigned to the interview in order to correspond survey and interview

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In order to protect the confidentiality of the respondents, I cannot specify the geographic location of the participants in this study. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, many antiracist activists face serious threat from white supremacist groups and take great pains to not have any information about them that may present clues to white supremacists regarding their location and place them or people associated with them at unnecessary risk.

data. A pseudonym was also randomly assigned to each participant for purposes of quotation. Because the research design does not call for conversational analysis, the interviews were edited during the transcription process to remove false starts, incomplete phrases, repetitions of words, filler words, and non-verbal sounds (Powers 2005). The transcripts were then coded to validate the results of the survey on tactical preferences, test for effects of ideology on tactical preference, and test for both the level of threat felt by participants and its effect on their tactical choices.

# **Measures of Items Under Investigation**

Measures of Militancy

This study compares two distinct wings of the anti-racist movement. I have dubbed these non-militant and militant based on their tactical preferences. The operational definitions of non-militant and militant are based largely on Kriesi et al.'s (1995) distinction between conventional and non-conventional forms of political participation with non-militants preferring "conventional" and "demonstrative" forms action and militants being willing to engage in "confrontational" and "violent" actions. Although numerous scholars have studied the differences between militant and non-militant social movements and organizations, their measures do not necessarily reflect the distinctions found within the anti-racist movement or reflect the tactical repertoire of said movement. In order to operationalize this difference, I developed a series of measures quantitative and qualitative of militancy.

The initial measure of militancy consisted of a nine item list of potential responses to a white supremacist event (see Appendix A, item 1). Participants were asked to rate

the effectiveness of each potential response of a 5-point scale, with 1 rated as least effective and 5 rated as most effective. The responses to these items were then entered into an SPSS database in order to create an index of militancy. It is important to note that in order to create the militancy index, the responses to items a (Holding a rally at a different location and/or at a different time) and b (Holding a peaceful counter-rally at the site of the event) were reverse coded as they are the least militant potential responses and consistent with conventional and demonstrative forms of protest (Kriesi et al. 1995). Additionally, there was little difference in preference for items g (Using signs, banners, etc. to demonstrate your opposition to the event and its participants), h (Distributing literature to the community in which the event is held), and I (Distributing literature to the participants of the event) between all respondents; therefore, they were not used to establish the militancy index. The final index consisted of the coded responses to items a through h with scores ranging from 7 to 25 with a median score of 16 and two distinct modal scores (9 and 21). This perfect bi-modal distribution allowed me to split the responses into two distinct groups based on scores: non-militants had a score below the median on the index while militants scored above the mean. Descriptive differences between the two groups will be discussed later in this chapter.

In order to validate the index described above, I developed a series of qualitative measures of militancy that were used as part of the interview schedule. Upon completion of the first question on the survey form, participants were asked to list the three responses that they were most likely to engage in and to explain why to the interviewer (see Appendix B, item 1). The participants responses were transcribed and later coded into

the database to be analyzed in relation to their militancy scores. In addition to the follow-up question regarding tactical choices, participants were given a series of scenarios regarding white supremacist activity and asked to explain what they believed to be the most effective and appropriate response to each scenario (see Appendix B, item 2). As with the previous measure, the responses to each scenario were transcribed and individually coded in order to validate measures of militancy. The distinctions in the tactical repertoires of militants and non-militants will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4. *Measures of Ideology* 

Gerring's (1997) work points to the vast diversity of definitions of ideology in social science literature. For the purposes of this study, I rely on the definition posited by Oliver and Johnston (2000: 43) of ideology as "a system of meaning that couples assertions and theories about the nature of social life with values and norms relevant to promoting or resisting social change." There are number of possible measures of ideology that may be used in social science research. The simplest measures would be political party affiliation which would implicitly give the researcher some indication of the values, norms, and beliefs of the participant. Similarly, one could measure the participant's self-identification on a left-right continuum and validate the measure with a follow-up question about how one defines political left vs. right (Marsh 1977). While these measures of ideology are extremely valid and useful, they would not get at the relationship under study in this research. Instead, I designed the interview schedule to give participants a number of opportunities to discuss their tactical choices in the light of ideological influence. In this sense, political ideology may be teased out through an

analysis of responses to virtually all of the qualitative, interview questions. Certain questions were also purposely geared toward illuminating ideological differences between respondents.

The initial set of interview questions regarding tactical choices (see Appendix B, items 1 and 2) open up the possibility for participants to justify potential action using ideological statements that either directly reference ideology or speak to values and norms that reflect an ideological stance. Questions regarding organizational involvement and alliances (Appendix B, items 3, 4, and 6) also serve as measures of ideology because organizations have specific platforms and ideological orientations that are consistent with major schools of ideology. The interview item regard the participant's activist biography (Appendix B, item 7) also yielded important ideological references. In addition, there are several more direct measures of values, norms, and beliefs that are distinctly ideological in nature. Items regarding the concept of being an "ally" to traditionally oppressed groups (Appendix B, item 8), the relationship of the state to white supremacist organizations (Appendix B, item 9), and the issue of free speech for white supremacists (Appendix B, item 10) are all designed to produce specific references to ideology. The data from these measures will be presented in detail in Chapter 5.

## Measures of Threat

As a concept, threat is an extremely broad term. In previous works, threat has been operationalized as fear of physical harm (Gould 2002; Jennings and Andersen 1996; Tester 2004), fear of a loss of political rights or power or economic power (Reese, Gaidraitis and Vega 2005; Van Dyke and Soule 2002). For the purpose of this study, I

will define threat as a fear of physical harm or a loss of control over economic activity, political rights, or social spaces and activities as a result of white supremacist activity. This sense of fear may be felt indirectly or directly. An indirect threat is one that is not specifically focused on an individual participant in the research or one that cannot be carried out. The individual experiencing this threat feels a general sense of fear regarding white supremacist activity, but has a perception that she/he has a low likelihood of actually experiencing any sort of intimidation or violence at the hands of supremacists. A direct threat is one that is made specifically against the participant with some sense by the recipient that it may be carried out. This threat is felt more intensely and results in greater emotional trauma to the individual.

As a variable under analysis, threat was operationalized directly using a series of simple, direct questions (see Appendix B, item 11) and indirectly as part of the question of the participant's history of anti-racist activism (Appendix B, item 7). The participant was simply asked if she/he had ever felt threatened by white supremacists. If the participant answered no, then a follow-up question inquired as to why. In the event of an affirmative answer, the participant was asked a series of follow-up questions designed to illuminate the nature of the threat and the effect that said threat had on the participant. In addition, some participants discussed receiving threats from and/or being victims of incidents of violence committed by white supremacists as part of their biography of anti-racist activism. The data collected on threat proved to be surprisingly rich and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

# **Description of the Sample**

As stated before the sample of individuals involved surveys and interviews of 24 anti-racist activists. After developing the militancy index described above, the respondents were classified into categories of non-militant and militant. The participants divided equally among both categories with 12 respondents in each. In this section, I will present some basic descriptions of the sample as a whole and the individual non-militant and militant comparison groups<sup>4</sup>.

# The Sample of Anti-Racists

Because this movement is primarily focused on opposing white supremacy, the question of the racial make-up of the movement is often foremost in the minds of scholars and the general public. All too often the issue of racism is conceptualized as a problem of people of color (O'Brien 2001). With the apparent success of the Civil Rights Movement ending the era of legal, de jure racism many whites presume that American society has achieved the goal of color-blindness made famous by Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech (Bonilla-Silva 2006). However, scholars, activists, and social commentators have all noted that, "The well-meaning white people... ha[ve] to combat, actively and directly, the racism in other white people" (Malcolm X quoted in O'Brien 2001: 1-2). This places responsibility for confronting white supremacy squarely in the hands of other whites. The racial demographics of this study reflect this assertion with an

<sup>4</sup> 

For descriptions of each individual respondent including pseudonym and selected demographic information, see Appendix C: Description of Participants.

overwhelming majority of participants identifying their race as white<sup>5</sup>. The remaining participants identified themselves as African-American, Latino/Latina, Bi-racial, and multi-racial. Although these results cannot be generalized to the movement as a whole, they validate O'Brien's (1999a; 1999b; 2001) findings that whites are indeed active in the anti-racist movement.

While race may be the central issue of concern for white supremacists, the movement has also targeted individuals based on religion, sexual orientation, and even gender through its support of patriarchal social arrangements. These demographic categories; therefore, become of primary interest to scholars of anti-racist movements. The survey form asked two distinct questions regarding the religious identity of participants. The first question asked what religion the respondent currently identified with and a follow-up question asked what religion the participant was raised in. The reasoning behind the dual measures of religion lies in the unique position that religion plays in white supremacist discourse. Religion, Judaism in particular, is viewed as intrinsically tied to race. If an individual was "born' Jewish, she/he is forever understood to be Jewish by the white supremacist movement regardless of religious identification in later life (Ezekiel 1995). Because Jewish organizations such as the ADL and Simon Wiesenthal Center are often at the forefront of activism against white supremacy in the public eye, one would assume that the sample would contain a large number of Jewish

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For detailed information regarding counts and percentages of respondents in each of the categories discussed in this section, see Table 3.1: Select Demographics of All Anti-Racist Activists Interviewed.

participants. However, this was not the case. Only 2 participants in this study identified themselves as having grown up in the Jewish tradition and no one identified her/himself as currently practicing Judaism. The vast majority of participants identified Christianity as the religious tradition in which they were raised. This may reflect a phenomenon similar to that of race wherein anti-Semitism is a Christian problem just like racism is a white problem.

The trend of small proportions of participants from groups that have been traditionally targeted by white supremacists begins to change with regard to sexual orientation and gender. While not making up a majority of the sample, individuals who identified as homosexual or bisexual represent nearly one-third of the sample. The gender make up of the sample tended to skew toward larger female participation with almost two-thirds of respondents identifying as such. Because this is a non-representative sample, the gender distribution may not reflect the movement as a whole. The proportion of women in the sample reflects in part a greater willingness among female non-militants to participate. Several male non-militants were not interviewed because of attrition due to a lack of follow-up on their part to requests for interviews. The interview and survey data yielded consistent answers from male and female respondents within the two comparison groups – non-militants and militants responded in a similar manner regardless of gender.

The final descriptions of the sample are concerned with socio-economic status indicators such as education, job title, and income. The educational attainment of participants in this study was incredible high in comparison to the overall American

population (U.S. Census Bureau 2008). Over one-third of the sample had some form of graduate education or a graduate degree in comparison to 8% of the general population. One quarter of the sample had completed a bachelor's degrees and another 29% had some college education as compared to the 17% and 19% respectively of the general population. Thirty percent of the participants were currently enrolled as students in an institution of higher learning. This high level of education was reflected in the occupations of participants. The vast majority of the respondents held professional jobs in areas such as education, program managers and directors, health care and social work, and a number of other professional positions (for a complete list of occupations see Appendix D: List of Participants' Occupations). The participants' income distribution is surprisingly skewed much lower than their educational and occupational statuses would infer. Exactly one-half of the participants reported an income of under \$35,000 placing them in either the underclass or the working poor. The remaining respondents reported incomes that would place them in the middle and upper-middle classes (Gilbert 2008).

A final descriptive note regarding the age of participants. Due to human subjects restrictions, all of the participants in this study were over age 18. I do not believe that this presents a bias in the data as the participants are "seasoned" activists that can speak as "key informants" for the movement. The largest distribution of participants fell into the 26-35 year-old age group. The next largest age group was activists over age 50 with individuals age 36-50 making up one-fifth of the sample with only 2 individuals in the age 18-25 category.

Table 3.1 Select Demographics of All Anti-Racist Activists Interviewed		
Category	Total	Percent
Race		
White	19	79.2%
African-American	1	4.2%
Latino/Latina	1	4.2%
Bi-Racial	1	4.2%
Multi-Racial	2	8.3%
Current Religion		
None/No Religion/Atheist	13	54.1%
Christian	4	16.7%
Unitarian Universalist	3	12.5%
Pagan	3	12.5%
Religion Raised In		
Christian	21	87.5%
Jewish	2	8.3%
None/No Religion	1	4.2%
Gender		
Female	15	62.5%
Male	9	37.5%
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	15	62.5%
Bi-Sexual	6	25%
Homosexual	3	12.5%
Age		
18-25	2	8.3%
26-35	10	41.7%
36-50	5	20.8%
50 and over	7	29.2%

Table 3.1 Select Demographics of All Anti-Racist Activists Interviewed		
Category	Total	Percent
Education		
High School	2	8.3%
Some College	7	29.2%
Bachelor's Degree	6	25%
Master's Degree	7	29.2%
J.D.	1	4.2%
Some Graduate School	1	4.2%
Income		
\$0-15,000	7	29.2%
\$15,001-35,000	5	20.8%
\$35,000-50,000	4	16.7%
\$50,000-100,000	5	20.8%
\$100,000 and over	3	12.5%

The demographics listed above mask some key differences between the two groups of anti-racists under investigation. When analyzed based on their level of militancy, the two groups possess very different characteristics.

### The Non-Militants

As stated previously, non-militant anti-racists were individuals whose score on the militancy index was below the median score of 16. The median score on the scale for this group of activists was a 9 which translates to a mean rating per item in the index of 1.5 indicating a high rating of effectiveness for non-confrontational and non-violent tactics and a low rating of effectiveness for confrontational and violent tactics. The demographics of this group also differed from the sample as a whole.

As can be expected, the non-militants as a whole were largely white<sup>6</sup>. However, all of the people who identified as African-American, Latino/Latina, and Bi-racial as well as one of the two people who identified as multi-racial were found among the nonmilitants. Additionally, one of the two people who identified themselves as being raised in the Jewish tradition was in this group of activists. Women outnumbered men 3 to 1 in the non-militant group, and only 3 people identified themselves as non-heterosexual. The non-militant group is older than much of sample making up all of the age 36-50 group and most of the over age 50 group. The non-militant group is also much more highly educated than the militant group. The majority of non-militants have had some graduate experience with most receiving a graduate degree. The remaining non-militants had either received a bachelor's degree or had some college education. This is reflected in the occupations and income of the non-militant group. The vast majority of the group held professional occupations with the remaining individuals being retired. A similar proportion of non-militants had incomes that would qualify them for middle or upper class status (Gilbert 2008).

It is clear that the non-militant group represents an older, more established proportion of the sample. Although a larger proportion of the group would be classified into racial categories that would be targeted by white supremacists, the group as a whole is not likely to encounter much supremacist activity. They are also structurally positioned

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For detailed information regarding counts and percentages of respondents in each of the categories discussed in this section, see Table 3.2: Select Demographics of Non-Militant Anti-Racist Activists.

to reap many of the rewards and privileges of American society which should have significant impacts on their ideological position, and ultimately their tactical approach to dealing with white supremacist activity.

Table 3.2 Select Demographics of Non-Militant Anti-Racist Activists		
Category	Total	Percent
Race		
White	8	66.7%
African-American	1	8.3%
Latino/Latina	1	8.3%
Bi-Racial	1	8.3%
Multi-Racial	1	8.3%
Current Religion		
None/No Religion/Atheist	5	41.7%
Christian	4	33.3%
Unitarian Universalist	2	16.7%
Pagan	1	8.3%
Religion Raised In		
Christian	10	83.3%
Jewish	1	8.3%
None/No Religion	1	8.3%
Gender		
Female	9	75%
Male	3	25%
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	9	75%
Bi-Sexual	2	16.7%
Homosexual	1	8.3%

Table 3.2 Select Demographics of Non-Militant Anti-Racist Activists		
Category	Total	Percent
Age		
26-35	1	8.3%
36-50	5	41.7%
50 and over	6	50%
Education		
Some College	1	8.3%
Bachelor's Degree	4	33.3%
Master's Degree	5	41.7%
J.D.	1	8.3%
Some Graduate School	1	8.3%
Income		
\$0-15,000	1	8.3%
\$15,001-35,000	1	8.3%
\$35,000-50,000	3	25%
\$50,000-100,000	5	41.7%
\$100,000 and over	2	16.7%

## The Militants

Militant anti-racists possessed a score of at least 16 on the militancy scale. The median score for this group of anti-racists was 21 which indicates a low rating of effectiveness for non-confrontational and non-violent actions and a high rating of effectiveness for confrontational and violent tactics. The demographics of this group are substantially different from the non-militant group.

Given the racial demographics of the non-militant group as proportion of the whole sample, the militant group is overwhelmingly white with only one person

identifying as multi-racial<sup>7</sup>. This racial makeup may be a problem of sampling as my experience in the movement has brought me into contact with a number of militants who are people of color. Regardless of this experience, the vast majority of people in the militant wing of the anti-racist movement are white. The same can be said of the religious background of militants. Only one militant indicated that she was raised in a household that followed the Jewish religious tradition. Half of the militants identified themselves as non-heterosexual which may reflect the level of threat faced by these individuals. Also, exactly half of the militant sample identified as female which contradicts internal movement critiques of militant anti-racists as male dominated and prone to macho hooliganism (Anarchist Tension 2008; HPWombat 2001). Militants were generally younger than non-militants with three-quarters in the 26-35 year-old age group. One militant was over age 50 and the remaining two were age 18-25. All of the students in the general sample were identified as militants and made up slightly over half of the militant sample. Half of the sample had completed some college with one-third receiving either a bachelor's degree or master's degree. The remaining two militants had completed high school or received an equivalent degree. Educational attainment may be

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For detailed information regarding counts and percentages of respondents in each of the categories discussed in this section, see Table 3.3: Select Demographics of Militant Anti-Racist Activists.

The individual in question was raised in a mixed Jewish-Christian household. However, the ideology of white supremacists would classify someone with this kind of upbringing as exclusively Jewish because of the racialization of religious practice in regard to Judaism that is inherent in white supremacist ideology. The Jewish classification is also part of respondent's self-identification as an individual with a Jewish heritage that is inherent to the respondent's ethnic identity.

explained by the age of the sample; however, as most of the sample is older than typical college age, it is unlikely to be a factor. Additionally, most of the students in the militant sample were working students who balanced full or part-time working class jobs with full-time education. Just under half of the militants held professional jobs such as software developer, researcher, registered nurse, social worker, and teacher. One-quarter held working class jobs while two militants worked in jobs that were harder to classify (independent contractor and student group coordinator). The remaining two were unemployed. The occupations of militants also explain their income and potential class positions. Half of the sample of militants earned an annual incomes of less than \$15,000. One-third of the militants earned between \$15,000 and \$35,000 placing them into what Gilbert (2008) would classify as the working poor or on the lower rungs of the working class. The remaining two militants earned incomes that placed them into the middle and upper middle class respectively.

Table 3.3 Select Demographics of Militant Anti-Racist Activists Interviewed		
Category	Total	Percent
Race		
White	11	91.7%
Multi-Racial	1	8.3%
Current Religion		
None/No Religion/Atheist	8	66.7%
Pagan	2	16.7%
Unitarian Universalist	1	8.3%

Table 3.3 Select Demographics of Militant Anti-Racist Activists Interviewed		
Category	Total	Percent
Religion Raised In		
Christian	21	87.5%
Jewish	2	8.3%
None/No Religion	1	4.2%
Gender		
Female	6	50%
Male	6	50%
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	6	50%
Bi-Sexual	4	33.3%
Homosexual	2	16.7%
Age		
18-25	2	16.7%
26-35	9	75%
50 and over	1	8.3%
Education		
High School	2	16.7%
Some College	6	50%
Bachelor's Degree	2	16.7%
Master's Degree	2	16.7%
Income		
\$0-15,000	6	50%
\$15,001-35,000	4	33.3%
\$35,000-50,000	1	16.7%
\$100,000 and over	1	16.7%

#### **CHAPTER 4**

#### THE TACTICAL REPERTOIRES OF ANTI-RACISTS

Social movements engage in a variety of activities designed not only to bring about change in economic, political, or social systems; but also, to build and maintain both the organization of which they are a part of and the movement as a whole.

Countermovements like the anti-racist movement have a unique position in that they are not only advocates for social change in regard to racism in American society, but they are also opposed to movements that advocate racial hate and violence. As a movement against white supremacy, the anti-racist movement responds to the actions and activities of its opponent while simultaneously presenting its own agenda and building its own organizations and movement. The range of activities and actions available to a social movement is referred to as the "repertoire" of the movements (Tilly 2006; Tilly and Tarrow 2007).

Countermovements are generally understood as responding to the successful organizing efforts of a social movement (Zald and Useem 1987) or as movements that operate on opposite sides of a key social issue (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996; Peleg 2000). These definitions of countermovements may be synthesized to define countermovements as opposing movements on a particular issue who focus their tactical repertoire on the activities of their opposition. Therefore, in order to truly understand the repertoire of the American anti-racist movement, one must have an understanding of the repertoire of its opponent, the white supremacist movement. This understanding is

or an attempt to pre-empt white supremacist activity. The tactical differences between non-militant and militant anti-racists are most evident in the types of responses they advocate to the activities of white supremacists.

Non-militant anti-racists engage in tactics that are decidedly conventional and non-confrontational. In part this stems from a genuine desire to be as inclusive as possible. Non-militants rely heavily on mainstream institutions as allies in their response to white supremacist activity. When faced with the threat of white supremacist activity in their community, non-militants turned to the state, local schools, community institutions, and the media as coalition partners in demonstrating opposition to a white supremacist presence. Additionally, non-militants believed that their community must be educated about white supremacy and the white supremacist movement in an attempt to innoculate it against white supremacist recruitment tactics. Non-militants also believed that they should have some form of direct response to white supremacists which usually takes the form of symbolic demonstrations of their non-support for supremacists and/or a community rally held as an alternative to white supremacist events. Finally, there was an effort on the part of some non-militants to attempt to counsel white supremacists by finding common ground with them in an attempt to at minimum develop some sort of understanding and ideally draw them away from the movement.

While militant anti-racists do not shy away from using many of the same conventional and non-confrontational tactics as their non-militant counterparts, they are also more likely to engage in non-institutional and more confrontational tactics in

response to white supremacists. The most common non-institutional response to white supremacists utilized by militant anti-racists is grassroots organizing that builds opposition to white supremacists from the bottom-up. Militants respond directly to white supremacists by organizing rallies and protests directly aimed at confronting white supremacists at the site of their rallies and events and by disrupting both the activities of the social movement and individual white supremacists in order to raise the cost of movement participation. These anti-racists were also more likely to address the subcultural activity of white supremacists by developing an anti-racist presence within subcultures that white supremacists target for recruitment and social movement activity, organizing specifically anti-racist events, and adopting an aesthetic consistent with the subculture that reflects an anti-racist orientation.

### The Tactical Repertoire of White Supremacists

*Propaganda Campaigns – Literature and Rallies* 

The public face of the white supremacist movement is often its propaganda campaigns which primarily consist of literature distribution and events such as rallies and concerts held in highly visible locations. White supremacist literature distribution presents much of the ideology of the movement. It is crafted to specifically play on the general publics interests and fears while presenting the white supremacist movement as a legitimate alternative to existing political structures. This is achieved, in part framing the information presented in an intellectual context (Berbrier 1999; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 2000). The literature often attempts to cite academics and scholars as sources relying on the presentation of often refuted data as legitimate fact (Dobratz and Shanks-

Meile 2000). In addition, the literature often plays on frames the concerns of the movement in populist terms (Berlet and Lyons 2000; Berlet and Vysotsky 2006) often laying the blame for social ills on either elites within the society who are always characterized as working in concert with Jewish conspirators or on people who are marginalized by the social system who are characterized as tools of the same Jewish conspirators in their efforts to attack and destroy whites. The combination of intellectualization and fear mongering gives the propaganda a unique appeal to Americans who may be suffering from economic disempowerment or anomie as a result of changes in the structure of society (Berlet and Lyons; Blazak 2001; Blee 2002; Daniels 1997; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 2000; Ezekiel 1995; Kimmel and Ferber 2000).

Public events by white supremacists are at their base an example of "demonstrative" social movement behavior (Kriesi, et al. 1995). Rallies, in particular, are often organized around a specific issue that the white supremacist movement is seeking to make a claim on. Although the issues around which white supremacists have laid claims have included from economic concerns (opposition to free trade agreements), immigration, and American foreign policy (the Iraq war and U.S. support of Israel). The surface level rhetoric on many of these issues reflects the populist concerns of many Americans (Berlet and Lyons 2000) – the deindustrialization of the American economy, the impact of immigration on the cultural, economic, and political landscape of American society, and the death toll in an unpopular war that many believe was started based on fabricated evidence. However, once the surface is scratched, the blame for all of these claims rests solely on Jews and people of color (Berlet and Lyons; Blazak 2001; Daniels

1997; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 2000; Ezekiel 1995; Ridgeway 1995). The public events serve as not only means of transmitting the message of the movement, but also as a key element in movement membership. Attendance at a rally publicly demonstrates one's commitment to the movement and serves as a bonding experience for those who participate (Ezekiel 1995; Ridgeway 1995). Rallies and other public displays such as television appearances or even developing a "presence" at countercultural events like Punk and Black metal shows serve as a means of recruitment. Individuals who feel economically, politically, or socially marginalized may be inspired by public displays of white supremacy to become involved in movement activity and may seek out members of the movement in order to become active (Blazak 2001; Corte and Edwards 2008). *Internet Activity* 

The internet provides a series of unique opportunities for the white supremacist movement. Organizations with a clear presence on the net have also become nationally recognized in both the movement and mainstream discourse as they have developed the resources to continue with their work. An internet presence for white supremacists has become crucial because the Web provides an organization with a number of key resources: recruitment of new members, reinforcement of the ideology of existing members, distribution of materials and financing, and coordination of events.

Whether or not the internet is an effective tool for white supremacist recruitment efforts has been a topic of debate among scholars who study the movement (Burris, Smith and Strahm 2000). Devin Burghart (1996) has claimed that the internet cannot replace face-to-face interaction and may not add to existing propaganda efforts. However, more

recent studies have found that there is in fact support for the argument that white supremacist websites may serve as a point of recruitment into the movement. White supremacist websites rely on what Elisa Lee and Laura Leets (2002: 929) refer to as persuasive storytelling, "the use of narrative to persuade or convince." The typical website will feature news or announcements designed to convince the visitor of the group's perspective and bring her or him into the movement. These varying approaches were defined as high narrative, "spoken or written presentations that include plots and main characters," and low narrative "messages that do not link actions or events together in a meaningful way or forms of presentation and argument that do not include plots or character identification," as well as explicit, "statements in which the content is consistent with the speaker's intention," and implicit, "statements in which the speaker's intention and the message content are at times inconsistent" and which "convey multiple meanings or interpretations" (Lee & Leets, 2002: 933). Much of the content of contemporary white supremacists sites involves implicit content. As would be predicted, it was found that people who already agree with the message were most likely to be persuaded by the message regardless of their level of narrative or explicitness. Respondents who self-identified as neutral in initial agreement often found hate sites almost as persuasive as those who agree at the outset (Lee & Leets, 2002). The effects of implicit or "soft sell" messages were tested by Kevin Borgeson and Robin Valeri (2004). Their research compared college student's ability to discern whether a website contained white supremacist content based on content. In their initial study, students could not discern the white supremacist origins of a website when obvious cues to anti-Semitism

were removed proving that a "soft sell" approach which masks the white supremacist group as a "neutral" source of information may be effective in propagating prejudice and hatred (Borgeson and Valeri 2004). Burris, Smith and Strahm (2000: 231) found that the density of density of white supremacist Websites "provides [racist] skinheads with sources of ideological indoctrination and connections to adult organizations that may keep them in the movement." In addition to content, white supremacists Websites facilitate membership in the movement by providing membership forms, discussion forums, access to email lists, photographs of members and events, and information of movement activity (Gerstenfeld, Grant and Chiang 2003).

The potential new recruit is not, however, the primary target of white supremacist activity on the internet. Much of the activity of "hate sites" is geared toward existing members. Ironically, the content that has been studied for its recruitment potential also provides important functions for existing members. The growth and popularity of discussion forums on websites allows already committed members to discuss ideas and develop ideology is a space that is safe from criticism and backlash. The "persuasive storytelling" studied by Lee and Leets (2002) is also used by existing movement members to justify their membership and validate their actions. Robert Futrell and Pete Simi (2004) point out that the internet serves as "prefigurative space" where white supremacists can construct an all white society and develop their unique sense of culture and community.

Just like any other movement operating in the United States today, the white supremacists must rely on money in order to finance their activities. The association

between the white supremacist movement and youth subcultures has been a financial goldmine for the movement. While concerts by racist bands are extremely rare and often result in violence and a loss of money, the record business is booming. At the beginning of this decade, European white supremacist music labels earned an estimated 3.4 million dollars (Corte and Edwards 2008) and the largest American label, Resistance Records, earned approximately 1 million dollars. With demand for white supremacist music remaining steady for years to come, it is unlikely that this source of funds will dry up. In fact, it is more likely to increase as the movement expands to other genres of music and through aggressive marketing on the internet (ADL 2001; Burghart 1999). The Web also serves as a means of selling more traditional forms of propaganda by the racist right such as books, periodicals, and radio programs as well as non-traditional forms of expression of racist sentiment such as clothing and jewelry. Finally, nearly every organization on the right solicits donations from its members and supporters. The internet allows these groups to solicit to a much wider audience via its websites and email lists. The groups may even create "legal defense funds" for their comrades who are facing legal charges due to their racist activities. It is not uncommon to see a solicitation for a donation on behalf of a defense fund for a racist facing hate crime charges. By creating an advertising space for their movement online, the internet facilitates the ability of the white supremacist movement to extract revenue from a much wider audience than before by widening the reach of their communication network.

The communications possibilities of the internet have been very useful in allowing for white supremacists to come together in events which help to strengthen the

movement. These events can be categorized into three distinct types: cultural events, political events, and training events. Cultural events are gatherings of white supremacists focused around music or other exchanges of cultural products. These are typified by white supremacist concerts staged by either organized hate groups or skinheads. Political events may be defined as rallies or conferences. Rallies are public events staged to draw attention to the group, while conferences are often private affairs which are designed to further indoctrinate members in the ideology of the movement and establish a sense of solidarity among the often factional racist right. Finally, training events are designed to teach individuals tactics in fighting the race war or committing individual hate crimes. The internet serves as an important source of information on these events.

New Social Movement Activity – Identity and Culture

With its focus on race as a marker of identity, the white supremacist movement shares many common elements with what are typically understood as leftist new social movements (Berlet and Vysotsky 2006; Vysotsky and Dentice 2008). The distinct identity of white supremacists as both white people and overt racists is expressed through a complex cultural construction of prefigurative spaces (Futrell and Simi 2004) and youth subcultures that coalesce around music (Berlet and Vysotsky 2004; Burghart 1999; Corte and Edwards 2008; Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk 2006).

Like many NSMs, the white supremacist movements seeks, in part, to create the world which its members hope to achieve in contemporary society by developing what are known as prefigurative spaces. It does so by creating a unique culture of white supremacy. This culture is evident in the everyday lives of white supremacists. Futrell

and Simi (2004) have outlined specifically the way in which white supremacists develop a series of physical and virtual prefigurative spaces that serve to indoctrinate new members, reinforce existing membership commitments, and model a future all white society. The largest of such spaces exist in the form of temporary gatherings of white supremacists at events such as the Aryan National Congress or Hammerfest where individuals from across the country (and occasionally around the world) gather together to solidify existing social bonds, create new ones, and discuss ideology and the movement. A number of white supremacist organizations have also attempted to create distinct communities by purchasing land upon which their members can live and build ideal typical white communities. This practice has expanded to incorporate the conscious creation of "Pioneer Little Europes" or distinct, all white communities motivated by white supremacist ideology outside of movement compounds (Dentice and Vysotsky 2008). Additionally, white supremacists rely on a series of spaces that have been designated by movement members as "white only" or have important cultural resonance such as bars and musical venues, German and other European restaurants, and confederate monuments. Finally, the homes of white supremacists serve as the ultimate prefigurative space because they offer the greatest amount of control. Homes serve as spaces where white supremacists can indoctrinate future generations by offering child care and home schooling for their own children and the children of compatriots. The home also serves as a gathering place for movement members, a place where they can bring new recruits, a "hostel" for traveling movement members both domestic and foreign, and ultimately a "safe" space where racist beliefs can be expressed openly (Futrell and Simi 2004).

The most significant development in white supremacist movement culture in recent decades has been the linking of the movement to segments of various youth cultures and the expression of white racist ideology in the lyrical content of musical acts within those subcultures (Berlet and Vysotsky 2004; Burghart 1999; Corte and Edwards 2008; Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk 2006). Since the late 1970s music and the subcultures that have accompanied certain styles of music have become the primary tool of white supremacist organizing efforts. Although there was some resistance to this type of organizing effort in its early days (Berbrier 1999; Perry 2000), most white supremacists have generally come to accept and even exalt youth subculture as an integral part of the movement. The white supremacist movement has become active in three distinct youth subcultures that are represented by distinct musical genres: Punk/Skinhead, Black Metal, and Gothic/Industrial/Noise/Apocalyptic Folk (Berlet and Vysotsky 2004; Burghart 1999). Ugo Corte and Bob Edwards (2008: 1) have found that the white supremacist movement uses music to "1) recruit new adherents, especially youth, 2) frame issues and ideology to cultivate a White Power identity, and 3) obtain financial resources." White supremacists, however, do not hold monopoly control over these subcultures or musical styles; therefore, it is incorrect to associate a particular music or subculture with the white supremacist movement (Berlet and Vysotsky 2006; Corte and Edwards 2008). White supremacists in these subcultures use an elaborate system of symbols to designate their political position and distinguish between allies and enemies within the subculture<sup>1</sup>

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For a partial list of white supremacist symbols see Burghart (1999) available online at http://turnitdown.newcomm.org/images/stories/Soundtracks/symbolsofhate.pdf.

(Berlet and Vysotsky 2006; Burghart 1999; Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk 2006). Music and the contemporary subcultures that accompany it have become a critical form of white supremacist activity.

#### Hate Violence

The white supremacist movement is unique in that unlike any other American social movement it has an ideological commitment to genocide. Despite attempts to frame the movement as mainstream and nonviolent (Berbrier 1998a; Berbrier 1998b; Berbrier 1999; Perry 2000), there are still numerous members who openly advocate and occasionally commit acts of violence (Ezekiel 1995; Levin 2007; Levin and McDevitt 2002). It is hard to gauge the number of acts of hate violence perpetrated by white supremacists because the vast majority of hate crimes are thrill crimes committed for "fun" or "bragging rights" among friends by individuals who are not members of any organized group. Only a small proportion of all hate violence may be attributed to individuals who are on a mission and therefore likely to be involved with (or consider themselves involved with) a white supremacist group (Levin and McDevitt 2002). A distinction can, however, be made between the types of individuals who commit acts of hate violence into dabblers and hatemongers. Dabblers are individuals who are not wholly committed to hate as an ideology and lifestyle. They may be no different from others in their community or may experimenting with an identity (Levin 2007). These individuals typically commit thrill type hate crimes. If they are experimenting with identity, one may assume that they are at least marginally involved in the white supremacist movement or aspire to be. The hatemonger is actively involved or openly

holds bigoted beliefs. This individual often seeks to act on these beliefs because violence is an ideological imperative in his belief system (Berlet 1992; Garner 1996; Lyons 1995; Passmore 2002). Additionally, research on white supremacist skinheads indicates that violence plays a primary role in the subculture (Blazak 2001; Hamm 1993). Racist skinheads use violence as a means of recruiting new members by presenting themselves as heroic, macho, champions of the underdog. They were also likely to use violence to maintain their hegemonic control of subcultural space by attacking anti-racist skinheads, people who were perceived to be outsiders, or individuals identified as racial/ethnic minorities or homosexuals. "The goal was that the skinheads would be seen as 'kicking ass' and doing something about the problem of threats to ascribed status" (Blazak 2001: 991). Because of the ideological motivation and perceived movement benefits, violence by members of white supremacist organizations is the norm rather than an exception.

# Leaderless Resistance

Given the authoritarianism of white supremacist ideology, one would assume that the movement was highly centralized. While consolidation was a trend in the movement throughout the 1990s (Blazak 2001), the new millennium has brought with it a trend of greater decentralization as old guard movement leaders have died and organizations have splintered (Berlet and Vysotsky 2006). The trend toward splintering may indicate disorganization within the movement were it not for the growing popularity of the organizing tactic of leaderless resistance.

After the downfall of the white supremacist terrorist group commonly known as,

The Order, a number of key leaders of the movement were unsuccessfully tried on federal

conspiracy charges related to the group's activities (Ezekiel 1995). In the aftermath of these events many in the movement latched onto an idea that had been promoted by Klansman Louis Beam (1992). The concept of leaderless resistance or lone wolf strategy involves a number of small, independent cells engaging in acts of resistance to a common enemy. These cells have no formal links or command structure and are tied together only by a common ideology and goal. The leaderless resistance movement may possess a symbolic figurehead such as a pubic figure or inspirational author who may choose targets or goals, but does not coordinate activity. The movement becomes a series of small, independent groups rather than one large organization. This strategy is designed to insulate the movement from potential repression as a result of government infiltration and/or criminal prosecution. It also has the additional benefit of preventing the white supremacist movement from being tied to a single leader whose death or imprisonment could lead to movement failure. This has been evident in recent years as the deaths of prominent leaders like William Pierce and Richard Butler as well as the imprisonment of leaders like Matthew Hale has not led to a decline in white supremacist organization or activity.

### **Resisting the White Supremacist Movement**

The white supremacist movement presents several challenges to its opponents.

The framing of white supremacist propaganda in terms that are acceptable to the average American or in intellectual arguments requires a strong, in-depth analysis and counterargument. In addition, opposition to the distribution of white supremacist propaganda and the organization of public events by movement organizations and members opens

anti-racists up to criticisms of censorship and violations of free speech rights in the United States. White supremacist websites are often hosted online by members of the movement or by providers who have strong commitments to allowing anyone to have an internet presence regardless of their ideological position. Because much of what constitutes movement activity occurs within a distinct movement culture or youth subcultures, the average concerned citizen is not likely to be aware of movement activity or have access to the means to oppose it. Finally, the leaderless resistance or lone wolf strategy often reduces anti-racist activity to a game of whack-a-mole where a local group is successfully opposed in one part of the country only to have others organize in another. Anti-racists often find themselves chasing white supremacists and reacting to their activity rather than building a strong movement against more structural forms of bigotry. Yet, despite all of these obstacles, anti-racist activists across the country and around the globe persist in developing a countermovement to white supremacist activity.

Despite having two distinct tactical positions, the non-militant and militant wings of the anti-racist movement do have some basic tactical similarities. Both wings of the movement believe that education is of crucial importance to both wings because it is often the key in mobilizing potential opposition. There is also general agreement that the white supremacist movement requires some form of direct response; however, there is significant disagreement over the specific form of response. Non-militants believe that a direct response involves symbolic displays of resistance to white supremacists and solidarity with their potential targets as well as an event or rally that will galvanize the community in opposition to white supremacists without confronting them. Militants

argue for a direct confrontation with white supremacists and call for the use of any means, including violence, to stop them. This often leads militants to use a variety of tactics designed to disrupt the activities of white supremacists. Additionally, militant anti-racists engage in activities that serve to both build an anti-racist presence within subcultures that white supremacists target for recruitment and as movement spaces and to dissuade white supremacists from participating in these subcultures. Non-militants take a more mainstream approach – working with the state, schools, community organizations, and the media to present a unified community response to white supremacists. These broad tactical approaches manifest themselves in specific actions taken by non-militants and militants to oppose white supremacists.

Table 4.1 Tactical Repertoires of Non-Militant and Militant Anti-Racists		
Tactic	Non-Militant	Militant
Educational Efforts	Community education regarding white supremacist groups and organizing efforts	Education regarding the potential threat posed by white supremacists
		Education as a means of building grassroots efforts to oppose white supremacists
Direct Responses	Symbolic representations of opposition to white supremacists	Confrontational rally at the site of white supremacist events
	Peaceful counter-rally away from the location of white supremacist events and potentially at a different time	Disruption of white supremacist activity
Allies	State agencies (including Police)	Anarchists
	Schools Community Organizations Mainstream Media	Radical Unions Other militant anti-racist organizations
Subculture	N/A (non-militants were not involved in subcultures where white supremacists are active)	Organize explicit anti-racist events Maintain anti-racist presence at events and in spaces where white supremacists organize and operate Display anti-racist symbols in subcultural aesthetic

# The Tactical Repertoire of Non-Militant Anti-Racists

Non-militant anti-racists reported a greater likelihood to support and engage in activities that are considered conventional or demonstrative (Kriesi, et al. 1995). When asked what would be their first preference for a response to a white supremacist rally and concert (Appendix B, Item 1), eleven out of twelve non-militants stated that they would like to hold a rally at a different time or different location. The remaining non-militant respondent preferred to hold a non-violent rally at the site of the white supremacist event. In all cases, non-militants believed that the event should be as non-confrontational as possible. Conversely, activities that are confrontational or violent were given low levels of support and were considered inappropriate responses to white supremacist organizing. They were quick to point out the ineffectiveness of confrontation and violence.

I think confronting supremacists one-on-one isn't effective, I think it adds a lot of bad karma and confrontation that is in anger and a lot of negative energy that isn't helpful to anybody. Because they're just as passionate about their cause as I would be against that cause. And there's no way to find even ground on that level and there's no way to find something in common to work together on. I think being confronted by someone that is opposing my views is more likely to make me more passionate about defending my views than the opposite (Belinda).

Daniel's comments confirm this belief and add a crucial element of positive response, "I don't think confrontation or violence accomplishes anything. I think setting a good example, offering alternatives does." Like other non-militants, Daniel believes that a key point of any response is to develop an alternative to the white supremacist event. These alternative responses are more likely to incorporate existing community and state institutions. In terms of direct response to white supremacist activities non-militants favor organizing educational events and forms of direct response that are non-

confrontational that take the form of symbolic resistance and community rallies.

Ultimately, the non-militants believed that it was possible to come to some form of understanding with white supremacists or to demonstrate to white supremacists that their ideas were unwelcome.

Institutional Responses – The State, Schools, Community Institutions, and The Media

When faced with the threat of white supremacist activity, it is common for non-militant anti-racists to look to formal institutions for aid in developing their response.

When asked how they would respond to a series of scenarios in which white supremacists engaged in a variety of activities (see Appendix A, item 1), non-militant activists showed a distinct preference for working with local government agencies such as police, city/town councils, and schools. They also felt that working with existing community organizations and agencies would increase their legitimacy and allow them to organize an effective and appropriate response. Finally, non-militants believed that working with the media would alert the public to the dangers of white supremacist activity and provide their position a positive representation to the community.

Consistent with Kriesi and his colleagues' (1995) conception of conventional action as having a "juridical" component where activists utilize administrative, criminal and civil laws to achieve their goals, non-militant activists seek to involve police in matters of white supremacist organizing whenever it is possible or appropriate. This was particularly true when the white supremacist activity was at a specific location such as a school or record store. When asked what they felt would be the most appropriate and effective response to white supremacists handing out sampler CDs at a local high school

(Appendix B, item 2c), some non-militant anti-racists stated that getting the courts (Evelina) or police involved may be part of an effective approach to stopping that form of activity. Evelina made a strong case for using the existing laws to keep white supremacists off of school grounds, "we have fairly strict security laws... we have a really good case for getting them to cease and desist and move along." This type of action may, of course, involve a police presence. Jane felt that police should generally be alerted to the presence of white supremacists as part of a larger school security issue, "I would contact [city] public school's police and let them know that this was going on so they could be on alert around the school and get whoever was doing this away from the premises." In response to a scenario in which a white supremacist was seen hanging out in local music stores (Appendix B, item 2d), Anna commented, "Hopefully, law enforcement is alerted to it." However, asking for the aid of police was not restricted to scenarios where white supremacists had made themselves publicly visible. As part of the response to white supremacist flyers being distributed in her community, Hilary called the police to inform them of this activity. In response to the hypothetical scenario of white supremacist flyers left on people's doorsteps in neighboring communities (Appendix B, item 2a), several individuals stated that the police should be informed. Nathaniel best summarized this position, "it would be good for the police to be on the lookout if you have people preparing that kind of trouble." In general, the police are seen by nonmilitants as an effective ally in their efforts to stem white supremacist activity.

In addition to police involvement, many non-militants believed that local governments, politicians, and community organizations could be helpful in their

responses to white supremacist activity. This was most often the case when discussing potential responses to flyering by white supremacists in a community. Jane was particularly optimistic about the support that her organizing efforts would receive from her councilman, "our neighborhood councilman and he does participate regularly in events that we have in our neighborhood so I would definitely have him involved." Hilary noted that the role of organizations that work against white supremacy is to bring issues before local government bodies, "They [local anti-racist organization] could speak before the city council," and Nathaniel believed that "It's good for mayors and city councils... to say 'we don't tolerate that kind of stuff [white supremacist literature], that's not how we are here." He also noted that social service agencies may be useful tools in intervening with white supremacist recruitment of at risk youth. These responses are consistent with Gordana Rabrenovic's (2007) findings that local government leaders are crucial to diffusing potential tensions that develop around issues of bigotry. Community organizations were also seen as strong allies in building a unified response to white supremacist activities. Anna stated that, "we [her local anti-racist organization] certainly would move pretty quickly to... faith communities, and NAACPs, and whatever organizations there are who have an interest in this work." Evelina's experience in responding to white supremacist activity was similar, "it's been easier to do a targeted response and get involved with the neighborhood association, and a number of groups and pull together.... the community response was pretty resolved, pretty speedy, and very united front I think about." Generally, non-militants stated that developing a broad, community coalition of local governments, and community organizations that

emphatically stated their opposition to bigotry was an important response to the activity of white supremacists.

School administrators and teachers were seen by many non-militants as key actors in efforts to head off white supremacist efforts to recruit young people. In response to the scenario involving distribution of white supremacist music on school grounds, most nonmilitants responded by calling upon school officials to intervene on the community's behalf. Anna was particularly vocal about her willingness to work with the schools, "I would hope that the school would have some kind of response as opposed to not having done anything and then hearing about it from the kids in the community.... I as an individual would go to meet with the principal and make them aware... work with the school system and make sure that they understand the dangers involved with it." Celia echoed many non-militants belief that school administrators and teachers must take the lead in educational efforts in response to white supremacist recruitment campaigns. Her first step in responding to a music distribution campaign by white supremacists at the local high school would be to "contact the administration of the high school and encourage staff members from the high school who know the students to be there to interact with the students and have conversations with the students about what that's all about, and maybe have conversations in the school about the music that the white racist group is handing out." Daniel encouraged "assemblies and workshops in the school to counter [the white supremacists'] message." In general, non-militants believed in a topdown educational response to white supremacist recruitment efforts of youth. They

advocate educational programs originating from the administration and teachers that can help students oppose white supremacists.

Finally, media involvement was a key factor in building the necessary support within the community that many non-militant groups sought to build. In response to white supremacist flyering campaigns the anti-racist organization with which Nicole was involved actively engaged the media to make people aware of her organization and its work, "What we did was, both talk to the local media -- we got engaged with the local newspaper early on and met with their editorial board....we wanted the local paper, which is broadly read in our community, to be aware that there as an active and coalesced local voice in opposition to this, and what we were trying to do." Hilary pointed out that media support was crucial in building a community-wide response to a white supremacist rally in her city. The local newspaper printed a full-page poster symbol of tolerance and community unity and distributed it inside the paper. In addition, they ran a full-page advertisement that consisted of a petition against the white supremacist group's presence in their community. She also pointed out that an anti-racist organization can "call a press conference" to present information to the community regarding the activities of white supremacists. Non-militant anti-racists believed that the media was an effective tool in their organizing efforts.

### Educational Efforts

Non-militants strongly believe in the power of educational campaigns as a deterrent to white supremacist activity. Since the decline in the popularity of overt expressions of racism, the white supremacist movement has become a marginalized,

underground phenomenon. As such, it has fallen off the radar screen of most Americans. When white supremacist activity does occur, many people seem to view it as coming "out of the blue." Additionally, given the populist rhetoric of the movement discussed at the beginning of this chapter, there is potential that individuals may begin to accept some of the basic premises of white supremacist ideology. Because of these factors, non-militant anti-racists focus a lot of energy into educational campaigns as a response to white supremacist activity. These campaigns seek to educate the public about the nature of white supremacist ideology and the movements that promote it as well as tactics that non-militants believe are effective in combating it.

Educational campaigns are viewed as fundamental to non-militant activity. Two-thirds (n=8) of non-militants stated that they would be likely to participate in some form of informational campaign in opposition to white supremacist organizing efforts<sup>2</sup>. Many of those discussed the importance of making the community aware of the danger of white supremacist beliefs and activities. When asked why she would participate in distributing literature to the community in which a white supremacist event was taking place, Anna responded, "it's important to educate the community... this is a threat to be taken seriously and help them understand why." Belinda echoed Anna's sentiment, "to let

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When asked which three items in Appendix A, item 1 the respondents are most likely to participate in, the vast majority (n=11) of non-militants chose item a (holding a rally at a different location and/or at a different time) as their first choice. The total numbers of non-militants who chose informational campaigns (Appendix A, items 1g and 1h respectively) is the sum of non-militant respondents who indicated that they would engage in this activity as their second or third choice of response to white supremacist organizing.

people know what's going on and that this is happening and get involved." Others believed that educational campaigns helped to create solidarity and bring the support of community leaders and build a broader support base.

I think that [an educational campaign in the form of literature and signs] was instrumental in getting more of the leaders: the municipal leaders, the school superintendents and principals, and even business people by having some literature that explained exactly what we were going to do and what our intent was, what our goals were and what we stood for could help people see that we were concerned about their safety and we respected them as well as the issues that we were trying to bring to them. (Hilary)

Education allows non-militant anti-racists to develop a broad support base for their activities by providing information to what they believe is a community sympathetic to their ideas.

Non-militants also saw education as an effective response to a number of white supremacist organizing efforts. When asked how to best respond to a white supremacist literature drop, Belinda stated the following:

I believe that for counter information, to inform people who's letting it out, who's distributing that information, where it came from, what's the basis, what those people believe. And then to try and get some informational tools as far as why its important that people should care, and why its important that people to speak out against it and how to interrupt somebody that they might know that are saying racist comments and stuff like that. I would take [the literature drop in the community] as an opportunity to do that.

This comment reflects the broad functions of an educational campaign: it points out the source of the literature (white supremacist groups), it gives people information on the broader ideological context of the literature (racism and Nazism), it gives people a rationale for opposition, and it provides the tools or resources for people to oppose it.

There was a general consensus that the best response to white supremacist literature was

an educational campaign. Additionally, many believed that the most effective response to white supremacist music distribution at a high school was educational campaigns, specifically because the school provides an ideal forum for such an activity. Ross, who is employed in education, stated that he "would educate students in the classroom. I think it's got to be a classroom dialogue or have an assembly or something...we educate people saying there's still things out there... this is what's being said." Belinda, again, notes the importance of using education as tool for organizing an anti-hate effort by students, "I'd take that as an opportunity to send out the opposite propaganda and bring the students and kids on board. Find something that will help them unite. Why it matters to them that people aren't discriminated against. How it affects them." The educational campaign is not meant to only inform the students of the dangers of white supremacists, but also to build a sense of solidarity among adolescents and a broader movement against hate. The educational programs proposed by non-militants serve to open up a dialog about issues that the anti-racists believe will lead to greater tolerance.

[Part] of what needs to happen is to give students an opportunity to talk about what that action [response to distribution of "hate rock" in school] involves and what the music is saying. It might be good to have a class or a workshop or something that any kids who are curious could come to and hear parts of the music and maybe read the written words... and get people to talk about how it affects people... and what is the intent of this group giving it to them (Hilary).

In the minds of non-militant anti-racists, broader tolerance will translate into a grassroots movement in opposition to white supremacists.

# Direct Responses

While some police departments, government officials, and even anti-hate organizations advocate ignoring white supremacist rallies and other public events, non-militant anti-racists advocate presenting a non-confrontational response that demonstrates their opposition. The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission (n.d.: 7) summarizes the rationale for taking some form of action, "When hate or bias related incidents occur, ignoring them completely usually leads to an increase in violence primarily because the perpetrators are usually looking for responses to their actions. If nothing is said or done, they continue committing the acts simply because they have proven that they can." The response can take any number of forms ranging from a symbolic representation of their opposition to white supremacists to a distinct rally or other event that is designed to demonstrate harmony in the community and an opposition to the white supremacist event.

A popular tactic of non-militants that requires no confrontation with white supremacists is the use of a symbolic action to demonstrate one's opposition to white supremacists. Nathaniel describes one such response to a neo-Nazi rally in his hometown that the organization that he is affiliated with had organized known as the "Lemonade Project."

The idea is if life gives you lemons, make lemonade. And so when the neo-Nazis were going to be coming to town for a rally at a certain date time and place we said, 'okay, for every quarter hour that their rally lasts, will you pledge to donate to any of these five human rights groups X amount of money?' And people could say yes, I'll give five dollars for every fifteen minutes that the neo-Nazi rally lasts. And we had five human rights groups that work to protect the interests of the kinds of people that the neo-Nazis pick on: blacks, immigrants, gays and so forth.

And so we raised... somewhere over six thousand dollars I think. And it would have been a lot more, if we'd had a chance to get more publicity out and do more things.

This type of project individuals to take a stand against white supremacy without having to overtly come out and oppose the rally. It also serves to build important resources in communities that are targeted by white supremacists. Nathaniel continues by describing the benefits and functions of the "Lemonade Project."

I think [it] is effective because what it does is provides the Nazis a disincentive to have a long rally because as long as their rally lasts, we're racking up more money in donations to the kinds of groups they oppose. And people loved it. People thought it was a great way to counter them and to raise money. And then we awarded the money at a big festivity afterward and had speakers and participants and stuff being able to affirm the group. So it was good publicity for affirming human rights. And a positive community response.

This project allowed Nathaniel's community to oppose white supremacists, build resources for groups that promote human rights, and bring the community together in a way that is purely symbolic because it does not directly stand in opposition to white supremacist activity. It builds an alternative to the white supremacists alongside their organizing efforts and strengthens existing opposition to them.

Another symbolic response that has become common among non-militants is the use of a specific symbol of tolerance displayed by a community to demonstrate its opposition to white supremacists. This was inspired by the "Not in Our Town" campaign of Billings, MT. In response to a series of hate incidents that included a brick being thrown through the window of a Jewish home displaying a menorah, the local newspaper printed 10,000 copies of a full-page picture of a menorah that citizens could place in their windows to demonstrate their solidarity with the family that had been victimized (The

Working Group n.d.). Inspired by this action, the non-militant anti-racist group that Hilary was involved with developed a similar response to a white supremacist rally that was to be held in her home town. She described the process:

I think that was a tremendous gain that we were able to secure by coming up with a design and the very short statement of support for respect and diversity that was attached to it. Getting out that throughout the schools and throughout the community, getting it posted up in businesses all through the downtown and here and there throughout the county having it run in the newspaper ads, all of that became identifiable then to the community as something that they could support and something that other people were supporting, that they could feel more and more comfortable showing that they could take a stand there.

Much like the "Lemonade Project" the symbol allowed community members to express their solidarity with one another and support anti-hate efforts without having to directly confront white supremacists. Businesses in particular could actively display their opposition to white supremacists who may want to patronize them before or after the rally without having to actively deny service to anyone. The white supremacists who came to Hilary's home town could see by the poster in the window or sticker on the car that they were not welcome.

Following the Southern Poverty Law Center's call to "Find another outlet for anger and frustration and for people's desire to do something. Hold a unity rally or parade to draw media attention away from hate" (Carrier, Kilman and Willoughby 2005), non-militants have developed peaceful, celebratory, non-confrontational alternatives to directly confronting white supremacists. As stated earlier, nearly all of the non-militant anti-racists chose this as their preferred response to white supremacist organizing efforts. All of the non-militants had either organized or attended such rallies. Evelina described

the rally that the anti-racist with which she worked had organized, "it wasn't a direct confrontation with participants of the white supremacist event. It was an entirely separate diversity celebration that we were involved with and we found that we had pretty good community turnout and participation and there wasn't a lot of threat of harm or violence to those who attended." Nathaniel pointed out how a rally at a different location and at a different time demonstrates a greater support for anti-racism in the face of white supremacist organizing, "we're doing a separate thing where we should be able to vastly out draw them and... when we vastly out draw them, in terms of public participation and community support that affirms community and we do it in a non-violent way." The non-confrontational rally also provides a space where community members can gather safely and celebrate the diversity of their community as Nicole pointed out:

We decided to have a counter-rally, pro-diversity rally not so much to be specifically oppositional to them but to give the community something affirmative...that was intentionally diverse. We had really energetic and diverse performers. We had dance performances and music, and entertainment for kids, lots of cops present.... We were more regaining the ground from them and affirming ourselves.

All of the non-militants also believed that to even hold a counter-rally that was designated as non-violent had the potential for confrontation and violence. As Hilary pointed out, "if you announce you're going to have a counter-rally, even if it's being announced as a peaceful counter-rally because the supremacists are there, you're there, the probability of something happening between you can be very high." Ross pointed out that a confrontational rally could serve to distract from the intended message of the protesters, "in direct confrontation, a lot of times your mission loses, you lose a lot of your purpose

when you're in a confrontation like that, people pay attention to the fight rather than the anti-hate message and I think you have a lot more ability to promote peace in a separate setting." A celebratory rally at another location and on a different day or at a different time was seen by non-militants as the most effective way of bringing together the community and demonstrating a strong message against bigotry.

# Finding Common Ground

As anti-racist activists, non-militants all emphatically opposed the prejudice and ideology of white supremacists. However, some of the respondents also believed that a crucial response to white supremacist activity was developing an understanding of the individuals who are involved in the movement. They often attributed people's involvement in white supremacy to psychological or other problems and believed that making an effort to interact with white supremacists may help to pull them away from the movement.

These types of responses were most common in regard to the scenarios that involved the actual physical presence of white supremacists in a context where they could be engaged in a one-on-one or small group conversation. Ross spoke to the idea that individuals involved in white supremacist movements are expressing some form of psychological trauma:

I think a lot of times someone's experienced a lot of pain and a lot of times if they have someone listen and know how the other person feels a lot of times it's really not the racism there's other issues beneath the surface so I think trying to find out what's going on with that person would be a good strategy before I do anything else...I would consider a light confrontation to start with to find out what's going on there...and a lot of times they will willingly engage in dialogue.

Belinda was also willing to engage in a "light confrontation" to try to develop a dialogue with white supremacists in a one-on-one setting, "I might go up to that person and say 'your belief system is really hard for me to handle, and I understand that you believe as you believe but it's very painful for a lot of people." Hilary saw a one-on-one interaction as a means for discussing larger political issues, especially, if the discussion was spearheaded by someone that the white supremacist saw as a peer.

[Talk] to that young person about what they think about the music... why are they wearing and what it means to them... it might be a good opportunity for some of our young people to not only stay on top of 'is this person really a Nazi?' and 'is this store selling Nazi music?' but be able to talk to them in general about social issues because there could be a good deal of confusion in that person's mind about how best to respond to a social issue that they're in pain from.

Nathaniel believed that a strong confrontational approach could in fact push an individual further into white supremacist organizations, "engage him in conversation... [not] jump to the worst, not overreact in ways that would make him a cause celebre for neo-Nazis to organize around." In general, non-militants who were willing to engage in "light confrontations" believed that a respectful discussion could work to turn people away from the movement. Ross felt that such a dialogue could be a positive step toward pulling someone out of the movement, "a lot of times they will willingly engage in dialogue and I think that if you treat someone with respect that that respect may transcend and then eventually the clothes may go away." Tessa reaffirmed the humanity and right to dignity of white supremacists, "I think it's really important not to demonize people who do this stuff because their actions are pretty heinous, but they are people with a right to dignity and respect." Engaging white supremacists in conversation was viewed by many non-

militants as a means of developing a rapport that could be translated into moving people away from the movement.

# The Tactical Repertoire of Militant Anti-Racists

Unlike their non-militant comrades, militant anti-racists did not shy away from confrontational or violent tactics (Kriesi, et al. 1995). However, it would be a false characterization to say that militants would not engage in activities that would be considered non-militant. Militants rated confrontational tactics with much greater approval and were more willing to engage in confrontational tactics, but rated educational and symbolic activities such as flyering or using signs and banners to demonstrate opposition as highly as non-militants. Darby explains the rationale of many militant anti-racists in choosing a specific tactic:

I think that there is no place for forms of moralism over pacifism or other forms of tactics. That it's really simply a question of what will effectively politically incapacitate and also militarily incapacitate these [white supremacist] organizations.... You have to recognize that these groupings typically... interact with a political base and they have some sort of military support structure... that's inherent in them. You have to confront the political structure, the political base...and you have to confront the military apparatus that is sustained by that political base and that means confronting it with whatever tactics you have at your disposal.

Militants often see their activity in terms of a specific goal of stopping white supremacist activity. This is achieved using several key tactics: grassroots organizing, specifically bottom-up forms of organizing, direct protest of white supremacist events and activities, disruption of white supremacist activities and events using violence if necessary, and active participation within the youth subcultures that white supremacists operate in.

## Grassroots Organizing

For militant anti-racists, grassroots organizing is an important component to opposing white supremacists. Whenever possible, militants will seek to develop a grassroots response to white supremacist organizing efforts that is based on a non-hierarchical structure. This means that they are less likely to rely on official channels to aid in their efforts. Militants consciously eschew law enforcement, politicians, and other state agencies in their activities, often developing an incredibly hostile relationship with them. Instead, their efforts are focused on developing bottom-up forms of resistance that come from communities and subcultures that are most threatened by whites supremacists. A key component of this type of organizing is educational and informational campaigns because they can elaborate the position of the militants without it becoming distorted through media lenses or falsely represented by public officials. Ultimately, militants wish to offer support to communities that are threatened by white supremacists.

The militant approach to grassroots organizing is rooted in the belief that communities can organize themselves if given the proper tools. This was evident in the responses to the scenario regarding white supremacist literature distribution. Because a literature distribution campaign is an initial stage in a white supremacist recruitment campaign, many militants believed that a community based response was necessary. Darby points out that a discussion with the community is an important initial step in developing a strong response:

Getting in and engaging the people that are targeted, having conversations with them, trying to ascertain what their responses are, what their grievances are, whether or not this attempt to relate to them is actually working. And then attempting to organize in that same space... [in a way] that embraces some of the rebellious urges and instincts that are likely to emerge out of the grievances that people are facing right now.

Eowyn stated that engaging in a grassroots organizing campaign serves as a precursor to more militant forms of resistance, "The people in the neighborhood should be talked to and consulted to see what their reaction is and whether or not they need any physical or emotional support.... Then, if at all possible, directly confront the people responsible."

A number of participants believed that community meeting or town hall forum was an effective response to white supremacist literature campaigns. Damon described the ideal scenario for a forum:

what I would lean towards would be to say, 'ok, here's an opportunity to say to people, here's what they actually believe' because generally [white supremacists] put forth their positions, 'let's talk about it, let's talk about it in a community meeting, let's get together and talk about why they thought that they could organize in this community, and let's talk about who in this community they will target and what we can do to protect them, and then let's talk about some of the things that we can do in this community to make sure that they know that if they come around again that they better drive really fast.'

Again, the common element of militancy is found in the ultimate goal: creating a space where white supremacists are not only not tolerated, but are quite literally afraid to enter.

Educational and informational campaigns are particularly important for militants because they have all too often been stigmatized by mainstream media, academics, government officials, and even some anti-racist organizations (Brian Levin quoted in Enkoji, Stanton and Vovakes 2002; Milstein; 2006; Stinson 2005; SPLC 2000).

However, just as with their non-militant counterparts, most militants viewed education and information as keys to organizing against white supremacists. In particular, they

believed that literature campaigns were critical toward building community understanding of the threat posed by white supremacists. Brock explains that in response to white supremacist literature campaigns, "The immediate thing would be to do counterinformation, counter-propaganda, blanket the same areas and more areas, if you can. Eve echoes this sentiment by stating, "I think an effective response would be to go around and flyer the same community with anti-supremacist information pamphlets." Lydia points out that information serves as a means of protecting people who may be threatened by supremacists, "contact other people in the community to let them know that there are organized white supremacists afoot." In all of these cases, the goal is again to develop a militant response and a positive perception of militants as working with the community to stop white supremacist activity.

The final element of a grassroots campaign by militants is to provide support to a community in which white supremacists have been active. Unlike non-militants, this support is not symbolic, but takes the form of physical, direct action against supremacists. As part of the informational campaign discussed above, many militants believed that information should be given so that people who are threatened by white supremacists can call upon activists to support and protect them rather than relying on police or the courts. Lydia believes that an important part of an awareness campaign requires militants to "provide information like watch awareness or something like that, you know, like, 'call this number if you see this activity again,' that sort of thing." In Eowyn's statement above, she notes that "The people in the neighborhood should be talked to and consulted to see what their reaction is and whether or not they need any physical or emotional

support", she continues by stating that a militant group can provide "[literature] explaining the threat, any information on the people who did it, and contact for support should be given." In many communities across the country, militants have provided protection for people who have been directly threatened by white supremacists. This activity has endeared them to these communities as individuals who are willing to take action against white supremacists.

# *Direct Response – Rallies and Protests*

As can be expected, militant anti-racists are not ones to allow white supremacists to act without taking some form of counter-action. The form of that counter-action is often as direct a response as possible to white supremacist activity. Militants are not likely to organize a symbolic campaign against white supremacists, instead preferring to directly engage in what Kriesi and his colleagues (1995) refer to as "demonstrative" actions.

Militants did not completely rule out holding a counter-rally at another location or at another date/time, although they generally did not rate it as very effective. Helena summarizes the militant position and her experience with organizing such a response, "recently we did that because of the fact that it's difficult to know, we didn't know where the [event] was going to be so we organized a rally and it did help to bring media attention to the issue and I think... it was good in that way and also brought together people who were really interested in this issue who had before that not really known one another and it really started the antifa presence in [city] again." Similar to many other militants, the group that Helena worked with chose this type of counter-rally as a strategic

choice because the location of a direct protest was impossible to determine early enough in order to organize an effective protest directly at the location. The experience provided two unintended benefits: positive media attention that ultimately led to the cancellation of the white supremacist event when the media confronted the managers of the venue in which it was held, and the development of a stronger anti-racist organization that can effectively respond to future forms of organizing.

Direct protest were much more preferable to a counter-rally away from the site of the white supremacist event. Militants generally felt that protests at the location of a white supremacist event were more direct and provided the participants with much more control over the outcome of the event in general, particularly when they involve some form of direct action. Adria reflected this sentiment in the following statement, "I feel like a lot of the time the people that would be attending those [events], Nazis and white supremacists, react to this culture of fear and I think that standing up and showing that you're not afraid does the most damage." This is consistent with the position taken by ARA that "Whenever fascists are organizing or active in public, we're there. We don't believe in ignoring them or staying away from them" (ARA 2004a). Militants are willing to engage in direct protest of white supremacist groups.

# Disruption of Activities

The choice of what form the protest takes is directly motivated by strategic concerns. When asked what their primary motivation for holding a counter-rally to white supremacists (Appendix A, item 2), three quarters of the militants (n=9) surveyed responded by choosing "disrupt the political activity of the supremacist movement." Of

the remaining three militant participants, one chose a number of the goals listed, but included disruption of the political activity of the supremacist movement among his choices. This disruption can take a variety of both nonviolent and violent tactics depending on the situation in which the taking place and the resources of the individuals involved.

Nonviolent forms of direct action were generally preferred as a means of stopping white supremacists events. When asked how they would respond to a white supremacist rally being organized in a nearby community (Appendix B, item 2a), militants generally began with the nonviolent tactic of placing economic pressure on businesses that would cater to the white supremacists: the venue owners and hotels and restaurant that may service the people who will undoubtedly attend from out of town. Kam described the process involved in getting a venue to cancel a white supremacist event:

The most appropriate and effective response is to try and get that event cancelled. You can do that by finding out where the venue is and going after the owners of the venue... talking to whoever owns it. Usually people that own it don't know what the venue is actually used for.... The owners usually don't know. If they're informed, the majority of the time they'll cancel the event outright. If there is opposition, you can bring community support and show opposition to the venue, make it bad for business, and usually that'll work. If it's bad for business, then almost anyone, even if they're a white supremacist, will end up canceling.

By placing economic pressure on a venue, militants can often force the event to be cancelled and disrupt the activity of the movement. Brock adds that "If you get them to move the location enough, it's going to not be a successful event. Especially, if you can do that the night before." By making it hard to secure a venue for the event, anti-racists can often prevent an event from occurring. In the event that the event cannot be

cancelled, Mark points out that "[if] you can't get there before, maybe you can do other things like some kind of civil disobedience or direct action... basically put yourself between the hate group and their venue." Additionally, a similar tactic may be used to shame the owners and managers of hotels where white supremacists are planning on staying and restaurants at which they may be eating. Mark continues, "if you can find out where people coming in what hotels they're staying at and then phone-jamming the hotels or showing up at the hotels when they're there, before they get there or getting in between the venue and the hatemonger doesn't necessarily have to begin at the venue." By preventing the event from occurring or the white supremacists to attend the event, militants ultimately succeed in preventing their opponents political activity.

In the event that the location of a white supremacist event is not known or the event is being held in a public space where participants have a first amendment right to gather, militants have developed a series of nonviolent responses that are designed to interfere with the organizers of the event's ability to continue with their plans for the event. Kam points out that an event can be cancelled by "finding out where the Nazis in town that are organizing logistics are living and working and trying to get them evicted from their houses and fired from their jobs because if they don't have a job or a house, it's a lot harder for them to organize." Eowyn explains how public shaming can often lead to individuals dropping out of open attempts to organize, "Letting their neighbors, bosses, and everyone else know they are involved with hate groups might be enough to make them back off." By bringing pressure to the organizers of an event, militants can force individuals out public activity in the movement.

If nonviolent tactics are unsuccessful or inappropriate in a situation, militant antiracists are not averse to engaging in acts of violence in order to disrupt the activities of white supremacists. The mean rating of effectiveness given to "using violence against attendees of the event in order to disrupt the event or to prevent the event from occurring" (Appendix A, item 1d) by militants was 4.0 indicating that they found the violent tactic somewhat effective. Kam points out that such a tactic "doesn't rely on them getting a different event, but it goes after [the white supremacists] themselves." He continues by making a self-defense argument, "it's not an attack out of the blue, it's self-defense because they're violent. If they get the chance, they would do the same to us." Lydia compared violent tactics to nonviolent ones, "I don't think any of the other methods work because boneheads<sup>3</sup> are in their nature inherently violent, that's what their politics are and they aren't easily swayed by rallies or things like that, especially rallies utilizing peaceful tactics or whatever. I think that it's one of those situations where you have to fight fire with fire when it comes to white supremacists." Militants were especially likely to recommend violence in situations where white supremacists could be confronted one-onone. In response to scenarios where white supremacists are distributing music at a high school (Appendix B, item 2c) and where a white supremacist is seen at a local music store, (Appendix B, item 2d), most militants made overt references to engaging in

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This is a common term of derision used by anti-racists against white supremacist skinheads. Because the skinhead subculture has its origins in the culture of Jamaican immigrants to England in the late 1960s and was multi-racial, traditional skinheads consider themselves non-racist or actively anti-racist. The term is therefore used to delineate true, anti-racist skinheads from individuals who may look the part but do not properly represent the subculture.

violence: "Beat them up" (Helena), "you might want to beat him up" (Eve), "I think somebody should hit him in the face with a bottle" (Lydia), "they would get beat down" (Damon), "it may be necessary to...get violent" (Eowyn), and "they're basically gonna have to fight for [their ability to control a space]" (Brock). Others made more vague allusions to violence: "make it hard for them to [distribute white supremacist music]" (Mark), and "stop them any way you can" (Eve). Generally, the violence is contextualized. Militants did not engage in mindless violence against individuals that they perceived to be white supremacists. Violence in a one-on-one situation, especially, in the record store scenario, is always preceded by intelligence gathering and a confrontation. This process is designed to weed out ignorant individuals and posers<sup>4</sup> who may appear to be white supremacists. Mark describes this type of scenario:

I think the first thing would be in like a really assertive way [saying], 'what's up with your shirt?' The only explanations I think I could get that would suggest further conversation would be... 'oh, I'm just trying to be shocking or piss people off' like some kind of ridiculous things like that or maybe there are some people who don't really know, particularly with some kinds of racist music and stuff like that, particularly I think with some of the [black] metal shit or something like that. You know, that's kind of like a kitschy kind of sub-genre to be into right now and people don't even realize that some of these bands really have a serious even historically violent, racist message that they're sending so they might be just like wearing the shirt to be ironic that they listen to [black] metal. Maybe they really are [black] metal fans and don't realize that this is the message of the music. And then you would see what happens from there.

4

This term is used to describe individuals who may be aspiring to be members of a subculture, but lack the insider credibility and authenticity to be considered full members. In the current context, it is used to describe individuals who may be wearing items that indicate white supremacist affiliations, but are not actually involved in the movement. These may be people who aspire to join, but lack the contacts or individuals who wear these symbols to be shocking or outrageous.

However, a very different scenario develops when the individual is in fact involved in a white supremacist group. Damon describes the policy that his organization developed in such scenarios:

the rule that we tried to put forth was do not attack people while they're alone. And the reason for this was that we believed that individual Nazis, boneheads, whatever could be converted, and some of them were. But we felt that if you took a gang of anti-racists and attacked these folks that, attacked them physically and by that I mean people with baseball bats and stuff jumping out of the car and beating the shit out of them, that it would drive them further into their neo-Nazi brotherhood. And so what we tried to put forth was once people get the tattoos that signals a certain level of membership so it was ok to talk with them, it was ok to approach them in a group and say, 'Why are you wearing these? Why did you get those and why are you in this town? What do those mean to you?' It was ok to confront them and to tell them that they should not be exposing [white supremacist symbols] and if they continue to expose them, that they would get beat down. And it was also ok if they had been known to be part of gangs which were attacking people, that we would retaliate and we did retaliate against individuals after they'd been warned that if they attacked people, if they were known to be part of gangs which I meant by that groups of 3 or 4 or 5 boneheads who would attack people and do so in a very public manner, in clubs or other places.

This type of approach was reflected in most of the militants' responses that involved acts of violence – an individual would not be met with violence if she or he was not active in the movement or if she or he was willing to repudiate movement affiliation. Individuals that are known organizers and activists or persist in maintaining a white supremacist identity are considered acceptable targets for violence. Violence was also considered acceptable as a form of self-defense because anti-racists often faced the threat of violent attacks from white supremacists (Blazak 2001; Maynard 1990; Sarabia and Shriver 2004; Snyders 2008).

As a tactic, violence was not exclusively reserved for individuals involved in white supremacist activities. Militants generally accepted the use of violent tactics against the venue in which white supremacists held their events. Lydia points out that when white supremacists organize a rally, "You should find out where it is and completely do everything within your power to destroy it.... I would say whatever means necessary to keep them from coming to town." Kam believed that damage or destruction to a venue that is hosting a white supremacist event was effective because "it's physically impossible for them to hold it at that same venue and if they try to do it at some other place, you can go after those places as well." Eowyn argued that damage to the venue "sends the message that people who allow white supremacist to rally will be held accountable, and discourages them from continuing support, with a venue, anyway, and makes it harder for them to rally." Property destruction was considered an acceptable tactic, although it was less common because access to venues is often limited and public events by white supremacists are rare.

#### Subcultural Activities

The bulk of whites supremacist activity occurs in the context of subcultures where they believe their message will be received openly or in the general subculture of white supremacy.<sup>5</sup> In response to this militant anti-racists have attempted to both intervene in

5

In some cases, such as with white supremacist skinheads, the subculture and social movement culture have successfully blended into one subculture. It may in fact be hard to distinguish individual subcultures from the white supremacist subculture as whole as older adherents die off and younger members with subcultural affiliations begin to set the tone for the movement as a whole.

the subcultures that white supremacists are active in and develop their own unique subculture that reflects the ideas and values of their movement. This is achieved by creating music, art, and other cultural products that are specifically anti-racists, organizing concerts and other subculturally oriented events, and acting as security against white supremacist activity within subcultural spaces.

Anti-racists have been active in youth subcultures for several decades. As a reaction to the attempts by white supremacists to recruit members through the Punk rock and skinhead scene (Berlet and Vysotsky 2006; Blazak 2001; Hamm 1993; Maynard 1990; Snyders 2008), individuals within the subculture developed a backlash against racism creating a split within the subculture (Berlet and Vysotsky 2006). The anti-racist stance within Punk became predominant as influential individuals within the scene asserted a commitment to left-wing politics that included anti-racism. The most prominent and vocal opponents of racism within the subculture were bands who often incorporated anti-racist lyrics into songs and specifically wrote music designed to attack white supremacists within the subculture. Records and more recently CDs from bands with anti-racist messages and affiliations often feature artwork that is ardently anti-racist. The militant anti-racists in this study believed that it was critical to use such music as part of a larger effort to counteract white supremacist organizing among youth. The most common response to the white supremacists handing out sampler CDs scenario was one similar to the following from Brock, "you can always make up again counter-sampler CDs, usually, anti-fascist and anti-racist music, and it tends to be much better so that works out pretty easily." Editorial comments regarding the quality of the music aside, the campaign to provide music with and anti-racist message to teenagers who would be potentially drawn to white supremacist music is an ideal countermovement form of target recruitment (Blazak 2001). By using similar tactics, anti-racists may be able to win over adolescents who would otherwise become involved in white supremacist activities.

The Punk and skinhead aesthetic involves a public display of fandom through the wearing of clothing that features artwork developed by bands and associated artists within the subculture. For anti-racists, this becomes another common battleground against white supremacists. As discussed in the previous section, the public display of white supremacist imagery often signals a commitment to movement ideology and membership. Therefore, it is equally important that individuals display their commitment to anti-racism as a marker for others who have a similar anti-racist commitment and as an example to newer members of the subculture of its opposition to white supremacists in their midst. This is most easily done through the display of band related artwork and names of bands that have taken a stand against racism within the subculture. It may also be achieved by wearing clothing or other items that have specifically anti-racist insignia. Such public displays combined with posters, flyers, and stickers that have anti-racist messages serve to discourage white supremacist activity. As Helena explains how public displays of antiracist imagery are effective against white supremacists by creating an intimidating presence, "having your name out there, having flyers and stickers and your presence there. I think people feel like, 'oh, there's this underground army of people that are opposing us.' So it doesn't necessarily need to be big dudes, but it can be."

With subculture serving as a contested space between white supremacists and anti-racists, events such as concerts take on a greater importance because they serve to reinforce the subculture. Specifically anti-racist events actively challenge white supremacist activity while reflecting the subcultural preferences of youths that may serve as potential targets for recruitment. These events present an anti-racist alternative to similar concerts organized by white supremacists. They also set the subcultural boundaries between racist and anti-racist space. Again, in response to white supremacist music distribution at a local high school most militants responded with comments similar to Mark's, "you could have concerts and stuff like that... like Rock Against Racism or Rap Against Racism type of things that were geared towards students at the school where they could get into music and stuff like that beforehand." Presenting potential recruits with a subcultural alternative is an important element of the bottom-up, grassroots organizing discussed earlier in this chapter.

Finally, militants often serve as a security force within subcultures. Punk and Oi!<sup>6</sup> shows that do not have an overtly anti-racist association are often seen by white supremacists as legitimate sites for recruitment activities (Blazak 2001). Anti-racists have often attended such events in order to "defend" the space from white supremacists.

6

Oi! is a mid-tempo form of Punk rock with simple choruses often based on English pub songs and soccer chants that is associated with the skinhead subculture. It's lyrics often reflect themes of working class alienation and violence. The earliest Oi! bands were left-wing and anti-racist, but certain segments of the subculture were later co-opted by neo-Nazis. Today, most Oi! is either decidedly non-political or anti-racist reflecting the beliefs of its skinhead and Punk fan base. However, there are still numerous white supremacist Oi! bands who operate within a limited, racist subculture.

White supremacists will also occasionally attend events that are specifically anti-racist in an attempt to intimidate activists which often leads to confrontation and violence.

Militant anti-racists also provide protection to individuals within the subculture who have been threatened with violence by white supremacists. Their willingness to use violence against white supremacists makes militant anti-racists ideal individuals to provide such services against white supremacists who are intent on being violent.

For militant anti-racists, the lines between activism and lifestyle become consciously blurred. Whether it is because the activist in question was involved in a subculture in which white supremacists recruit or because the activist was led to the subculture because of her or his anti-racist stance, the importance of being an anti-racist is reinforced with daily social interactions. Militant anti-racists participate in subcultures to create a climate where white supremacy is not tolerated. As participants in the subculture and visible activists, militants find themselves in spaces where direct contact with white supremacists is more likely. This direct contact often facilitates the types of confrontations discussed above. Unlike their non-militant counterparts, militant anti-racists live a lifestyle where active white supremacists are a tangible everyday reality.

### **Conclusion: Overview of Anti-Racist Tactics**

Similarities Among Non-Militants and Militants

Despite the significant differences between non-militant and militant anti-racists, there are several tactics that both types of activists can agree on. There is clearly universal belief that white supremacist activity must be addressed. While some have argued that white supremacists are best ignored, anti-racist activists of all stripes

generally agree that some form of response must be organized to white supremacist activity. Both types of anti-racists believe that engaging in educational and informational campaigns. Activists in both groups overwhelmingly chose "distributing literature to the community in which the [white supremacist] event is being held" as a preferred tactic that they would be likely to engage in. Educational and informational campaigns are seen by all anti-racists as important to building community support for their efforts against white supremacists. In addition, there was virtually universal agreement that a community that is educated about white supremacists movement s and their organizing tactics will be inoculated against white supremacist activity. A community understanding of the nature of white supremacist groups would aid them in understanding the threat that such groups pose. By actively engaging community members both types of anti-racists engage in some form of community organizing. In general, the form of this organizing is grassroots on the part of both types of anti-racists. While the style of organizing varies between non-militants and militants, both sides believe that it is essential to have community support to engage in successful campaigns against white supremacists. The similarities among the two types of anti-racists, however, do not make up for the vast differences between them.

Differences Between Non-Militants and Militants

The differences between non-militant and militant anti-racists stems from a fundamental difference in the goals of the activists involved. Non-militants overwhelmingly (n=10) chose "send a message of tolerance and unity to the community" as the primary goal of holding a counter-rally against a white supremacist event." In stark

contrast, only one anti-racist chose the same response. As stated above, the vast majority of militants believed that their primary goal was to "disrupt the political activity of the [white] supremacist movement." These differences in goals of course inform the varying strategies of non-militants and militants that are reflected in their tactics.

Although both types of anti-racist activists believe that a direct response to white supremacist activity is necessary, the form of that response varies greatly. Non-militants prefer to respond with actions that ask people to make a symbolic statement regarding their opposition to white supremacists. Rather than confront white supremacists directly, non-militants instead organize events that are intended to serve as alternatives to the white supremacist event and demonstrate the overwhelming opposition to white supremacists. However, the events are targeted at the community at large rather than the white supremacists. Militants, on the other hand, choose to directly confront the white supremacists as part of their strategy to disrupt the movement. Militant tactics are focused on preventing white supremacist events from occurring. In the event that they cannot achieve that goal, militants engage in activities that raise the stakes for participation in white supremacist events. In most cases, militant activity is specifically targeted against the white supremacists themselves.

The different types of responses also lead to an important difference over the question of acceptable forms of opposition. Non-militants adamantly oppose tactics that are confrontational and especially violent. In general, they believe that under no circumstances should a white supremacist event be confronted. In fact, the opposition to confrontation is was so strong among non-militants that only three rated using non-

violent tactics such as sit-ins, blockades, and other forms of civil disobedience to prevent the white supremacist event from occurring as somewhat effective or very effective. Of those three, only two chose the tactic as one of the three that they would be most likely to engage in commenting about the historical efficacy of nonviolent social change. Violent tactics were anathema to non-militants and were to be avoided at all costs. Militants were generally more amenable to confrontation and the use of violence, if necessary. For these activists, the choice of tactic was often dependent more upon the situation and which would be more effective. Confrontation, however, is an important element of any militant response because it directly indicates to white supremacists that they have opposition and that their presence is not welcome in the community or subcultural space. Violence was generally seen as a component of that confrontation.

The most striking difference between non-militants and militants in terms of tactics had to do with the space within which both groups of anti-racists organize. Non-militants worked almost exclusively within the broad community in which they lived organizing people who were opposed to a white supremacist presence that they viewed as coming from outside the community or at the very least not reflecting community values. The responses of non-militants to questions regarding white supremacist activity in terms of high school recruitment (Appendix B, item 2c) and subcultural presence (Appendix B, item 2d) was indicative of their lack of familiarity with the culture of white supremacists. While militants advocate broad-based, bottom-up community organizing in opposition to white supremacists, they also believe in strong intervention where white supremacists are most active. They're activism originates in the subcultures where white supremacists are

active and their actions are often focused on eliminating the threat that white supremacists pose. This is often achieved through active participation in the subculture as members of bands, organizers of concerts, and as security forces against white supremacists when they are present. These experiences legitimate the diversity of tactics that militants are willing to engage in, especially the use of violence. As Helena points out, "I think that [violence] was effective in keeping them from going to, from being a part of the Punk subculture, like, they were too intimidated to come to shows. So I don't think that shunning them or attempting to somehow win them over would have been as effective as them knowing if you come to this place, then they'll get beat up."

The non-militant commitment to a small variety of tactics may ultimately prove constraining as white supremacist activity moves away from the "demonstrative" actions of public rallies and other well advertised events to more private, subcultural activity (Futrell and Simi 2004; Futrell, Simi and Gottschalk 2006). As white supremacists fall off the radar of non-militant groups, symbolic displays of opposition and community rallies draw a sharp chasm between this type of anti-racist and white supremacist groups. The activities of the white supremacists that are targeted at recruiting youth who feel some form of social strain (Blazak 2001) cannot be adequately addressed by non-militants who, as discussed above, seek to bring them back into fold of the community. This was reflected in the inability for some non-militants to respond to the music store scenario: "I don't really know what kind of response you'd have to that" (Daniel), "it's a public place so I'm not really sure what could be done" (Jane), and "There's not much you can do about that" (Anna). Conversely, militants embrace a diversity of tactics. Mark believed

that any of the tactics listed on the survey form are appropriate for him to engage in because "I think any kind of response that can be put together is better than like not having any response at all." Eowyn had a similar response adding a component of community education, "I believe that it is essential to disrupt white supremacism activities using whatever tactics are necessary, and then to let the community know why." Marika saw tactics as defined by the situation, "really depending upon the context of where the event's happening, who you're dealing with, the tactics that I would use changes so dramatically." Finally, Adria believed that any of the tactics could be used in combination with one another, "I feel like if you combine some of them may be more effective than keeping these as individual actions." While both non-militants and militants develop innovative tactics, militant anti-racists have a broader tactical repertoire from which to choose because they are not constrained by prohibitions against the use of violence and they find themselves in much more direct contact with white supremacist activities.

#### Anti-Racist Tactics as Countermovement Tactics

As two types of activists in the anti-racist countermovement, non-militant and militant tactics should reflect some of the patterns of countermovement activity. The activities of non-militants and militants may be compared to the models of countermovement activity proposed by Zald and Useem (1990). The differences between militant and non-militant tactics also reflect the moderate/radical schism described by Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000).

The typology of tactics proposed by Zald and Useem (1990) and discussed in Chapter 2 proposes that countermovements engage in three broad categories of activity against an opposing social movement: damage or destruction of the other group, preemption or dissuasion of group mobilization, and recruitment of the other group's members. In analyzing the tactics of non-militants and militants, one can gauge whether each type of anti-racist is appropriately countering white supremacists. Non-militants clearly do not engage in damage or destruction of the other group or act to preempt or dissuade white supremacist mobilization. They're commitment to nonviolence prevents non-militants from directly attacking the group in any form. As will be discussed in the following chapter, a number of non-militants specifically referenced the political right of white supremacists to organize and operate. Additionally, the activity of non-militants is not focused on the white supremacist group itself. Following the recommendations of the Southern Poverty Law Center and other mainstream anti-hate groups (Carrier, Kilman and Willoughby 2005; Lexington-Fayette Urban County Human Rights Commission n.d.), non-militants choose to organize their own events rather than working to stop those that are organized against white supremacists.

Consistent with Piven's (2006) assertion that nonviolence and violence are purely strategic moves, militants work on multiple levels and engage in a variety of tactics to damage and destroy white supremacist organizations and preempt or dissuade their mobilization. Militants put pressure on the hosts of white supremacists events to cancel them, they pressure businesses not to cater to white supremacists, and even place pressure on the white supremacists themselves by "outing" them to their employers, landlords, and

neighbors. This raises the costs of membership in a white supremacist movement significantly. Damage and destruction to the location of white supremacist events or spaces that support white supremacists also serves to damage or destroy the movement or preempt or dissuade mobilization. The use of violence is consistent with Gamson's (1990) findings that social movements that faced violent opposition were more likely to fail in achieving their goals or any type of social acceptance. Brock explains how the consistent use of violence and other pressure tactics can effectively shut down a white supremacist organization:

[The] tactics work incredibly well here. To the point where I've seen organizations crumble in a year just from sustained confrontation.... I think that there's something that's kind of universal amongst fascist groups is that they're attempting to present an image of power and that power is integral to the idea of fascism, and so, if you are able to disrupt their organizing, are able to send them running, they cannot present an image of power when they're tail is between their legs basically. And so that's the kind of thing where it's going to work in different degrees and it really, it's a matter of how sophisticated they are, how much they have a cultural tie, that the population has a cultural tie, to the kinds of thing they're saying, etc., etc., but it's probably somewhat universal thing, as long as fascist movements are kind of bound by that idea of power.

Because white-supremacist movements place so much value on presenting themselves as strong warriors and superior individuals (Blee 2002; Daniels 1997; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 2000; Kimmel and Ferber 2000), consistent harassment and violence by militant anti-racists serves to undermine a key frame and subverts the effective operations of their organizations. Additionally, by creating a climate of anti-racism within subcultures, militant anti-racists also preempt or dissuade white supremacists from organizing within said subcultures and facilitating the development of a white supremacist counterculture.

There is some agreement of the importance of recruiting members of the white supremacist movement into anti-racist activism among both militants and non-militants, although both types of activists disagree as to the means of achieving this goal. Non-militants prefer a psycho-therapeutic approach that involves "listening" to the problems of white supremacists and attempting to find common ground. They believe that by providing respect and support to "wounded individuals" the strain (Blazak 2001) that they are experiencing will be addressed. Militants, on the other hand, do not believe in psychologizing structural strain. Their approach often involves a combination of peer pressure and political organizing. Peer pressure in the sense of demonstrating, often in a confrontational manner, that white supremacists will not be tolerated in their subculture. At the same time, militants propose a political agenda that counters many of the "grievances" that white supremacists are attempting to organize around. Providing ideological alternatives to white supremacist rhetoric often helps to address the materialist concerns that drive individuals into white supremacist movements.

The activities of nonviolent anti-racists are designed to develop a movement independent of white supremacist activity. While they are often in response to the public activity of white supremacists, the symbolic responses and community alternative rallies serve to build a pluralist community movement rather than a direct response to white supremacists. Militant activity follows the classical countermovement tactics described by Zald and Useem (1990). They organize in response to white supremacist activity and work to actively oppose the movement by damaging or destroying its organizations, preempting or dissuading mobilization, and recruiting its members.

The tactics of militant anti-racists typify those of RSMOs described by Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000) whereas non-militants follow the moderate SMO model. Non-militant anti-racist activism incorporates a number of large, bureaucratic, professional organizations with direct relationships to the state and the media. Even at the grassroots level, there non-militants place great importance in working within existing structures of power to achieve their goals and often receive a positive reception from the media. Non-militant tactics, in part, reflect the importance of maintaining this relationship. Militants, on the other hand, develop purposely small, grassroots organizations that operate directly at the site of contention (subcultures and other contested spaces). Their tactics focus on taking direct action against white supremacists to prevent them form acting. Because they do not have direct relationships with the media, militant actions are often misrepresented. They, therefore, rely on alternative media in the form of educational and informational campaigns to promote their activity and explain the rationale for their actions.

Non-militant anti-racist tactics are oriented toward developing a pluralist, community movement that as Nathaniel put it, "lift up our values" rather than confronting and opposing white supremacists. Militants follow the tactical model developed by Zald and Useem (1990) much more closely choosing to confront the activity of the white supremacist movement and disrupt its activities. The tactics of non-militants also reflect the actions of moderate SMOs that work with the state and receive positive media attention. Militants represent a RSMO approach to countermovement activity by taking

direct action against white supremacists and developing grassroots alternative forms of outreach to the communities in which they operate.

#### **CHAPTER 5**

#### IDEOLOGY AND ANTI-RACIST TACTICS

Ideology has not been a popular concept for study in social movements circles. The term itself has traditionally been used pejoratively by social scientists to describe a set of belief systems that are considered false or inappropriate (Gerring 1997; Oliver and Johnston 2000), and so it is no wonder that the study of ideology as a factor in social movement activity has fallen out of favor with the rise of the rationalist studies of the resource mobilization school (Oliver and Johnston 2000; Zald 2000). However, in recent years there has been a renewed call to incorporate ideology back into social movement work. Pamela Oliver and Hank Johnston (2000) have reasoned that the turn to culture, and specifically to frames and framing processes, in social movement studies is a good step toward the reincorporation of ideology into social movement research. They argue, however, that frames are not equivalent to ideology, and that furthermore, ideology informs much of what is described in the literature on frames and framing. Ultimately, the study of ideology must take precedence in social movement research. Mayer Zald (2000) developed an argument that goes beyond Oliver and Johnston's by articulating the position that all social movement activity is in fact "ideologically structured action." In his view all social movement activity is ideological activity. It is motivated and bound by the ideologies held and developed by actors in the social movement sphere. Therefore, all social movement study must include some study of ideology.

There are a number of ways to distinguish between ideologies. For the purposes of this study, a dualistic distinction which groups ideologies into two categories may be the simplest and most appropriate as there are two broad types of activists under analysis. Kathleen Fitzgerald and Diane Rodgers (2000) make such a distinction in their analysis of moderate and radical SMOs. As part of this analysis, a differentiation is made between the ideology of moderate and radical SMOs. Moderate SMOs operate based on an ideology of enacting reforms within the existing system. Much of their activity involves acting within already established structures and working as part of the political system. Therefore, the actions of moderate SMOs orient them toward seeking state action or approval. RSMO ideology, on the other hand, calls for fundamental structural change. Activists involved with RSMOs do not rely on existing structures because they view them as fundamentally flawed. Instead, they seek to develop new sets of structures and new forms of consciousness that can supplant those that already exist. As a result of this ideological position, RSMOs are critical of or even hostile toward state action and cooperation. As I will explain, this distinction is mirrored in the ideologies of nonmilitant and militant anti-racists with non-militants taking a moderate position and militants a radical one.

Following in the spirit of Oliver and Johnston's and Zald's call for greater incorporation of ideology into the study of social movements, this chapter will analyze the ideological differences between non-militant and militant anti-racists. After describing these differences and situating them in the dichotomy of moderate and radical SMO ideology, I will explain how these ideological differences impact the tactical

choices of the two groups of anti-racists. It is my contention that non-militants generally adhere to moderate, liberal ideologies that stress working within the system which informs and guides their choices of action. Militants adhere to radical, anarchist ideologies that inform their tactical repertoire.

# The Ideologies of Anti-Racists

As can be expected, there are vast ideological differences between non-militant and militant anti-racists. Non-militant anti-racists possess a moderate, liberal ideology that is reflected in their belief in the freedom of speech and a free marketplace of ideas (including white supremacist ideas), the power of a civil society, and an interventionist state that is guided by populist sentiment through democratic participation. Militant anti-racists are guided by a radical, anarchist ideology that is founded on the idea of taking direct action against a perceived ill with little respect, if not outright disdain, for established law (and practice) and formal authority. These ideological differences form the core of each wing's belief system.

#### Liberalism and Non-Militant Anti-Racists

Contemporary liberalism was born in the fires of revolution and social upheaval. As an ideology that developed in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, liberalism challenged the established order of western Europe. The ideology of classical liberalism was based on three key premises: "the state should be limited in its right to intervene in civil society,... the state is established voluntarily and operates with the consent of its citizens,... [and] the free development of individuals should be the aim of society" (Garner 1996: 132-133). These principles have guided many of the political and social

changes that occurred in Europe and North America during liberalism's formative period and have guided similar changes throughout the world to this day (Garner 1996).

Liberalism takes as its subject the free individual, presuming that every person has certain "inalienable rights" that cannot be denied. However, the liberal believes that absolute freedom will lead to absolute disorder and that the state must intervene to protect the free individual from harm. That protection must be produced through democratic process and universally applied through a legally prescribed due process (Wallerstein 1996).

The question of the necessity of state intervention led to schism in liberalism between what Roberta Garner (1996: 136) dubbed "negative liberalism" and "positive liberalism." The negative liberals "emphasized more and more strongly that the state was not to interfere with the economy" (Garner 1996: 136) arguing that economic nonintervention was consistent with the first and third premises of classical liberalism defined above. This position has come to define contemporary American conservatism and libertarianism. Positive liberals "considered the goals of individual development and citizen participation more weighty than the standard of no government intervention in the economy" (Garner 1996: 136-137). They believe that economic inequality often influences political inequality and the state must act to reinstate formal legal equality by dampening the negative effects of economic inequality. Garner (1996: 137) also explains that "humanitarian and environmental concerns seem to point toward the need for social programs and government regulation." The positive liberal position is most often equated with liberalism as a whole in contemporary American society and will be discussed as such for the duration of this dissertation. Contemporary liberalism, therefore, applauds

state intervention on behalf of groups who are seen as not able to fully participate in the economic, political, or social system. The state must act to protect the rights of people who are unequal by virtue of arbitrary categorizations such as race and gender. The state must also act to preserve the civil society that is the basis for modern, democratic societies.

Liberalism is often understood to be the dominant ideology in Europe and North America (Garner 1996; Wallerstein 1996). As liberalism has come to be ideologically dominant, it has developed into a "hegemonic ideology" (Garner 1996). As the state began to reflect the liberal position, the revolutionary ideas of liberalism were transformed into the idea that change should be slow, organic, and methodical (Garner 1996; Wallerstein 1996). "Thomas Jefferson had written of watering the tree of liberty with the blood of tyrants; this sort of rhetoric came to seem a bit violent and reckless" (Garner 1996: 135). Instead liberals preferred to work within existing state structures given their openness to citizen input and change. The state began to be viewed by liberals as a potential agent of change rather than an intransigent oppressor. After all, the ideology of the state, and by extension Western, democratic society as a whole, were the basic principles of liberal ideology:

the state should remain separate from civil society; every society should have a large, autonomous sphere of private and voluntary relationships; the state's sphere should be limited; individualism is a beneficial ideology; capitalism... is and should be the prevailing economic system; states should operate only by rule of law; individuals have extensive rights concerning their person, their property, and their political actions; some form of representative democracy is desirable; and freedom or liberty is a central value (Garner 1996: 140).

It is in this sense of hegemony that liberalism represents a moderate ideological position in American society. Contemporary liberalism reflects the beliefs of most Americans and calls for change to take place within the confines of the existing system. Radical methods are to be avoided at all costs and the aid of the state is to be sought in resolving any disputes of problems that may arise.

The non-militant anti-racists who participated in this study may generally be characterized as liberals. Much of their anti-racist work is within organizations that seek to build bonds within civil society. This is very often displayed by their choices of allies in the struggle against white supremacists. They were also more likely to work with the state on opposition to white supremacists and regarded the state as an ally and fair partner in their activities. Non-militants also expressed a number of key tenets of liberal ideology in the course of their interviews. They were more likely to support free speech rights for white supremacists and discuss white supremacist speech in the context of a free market of ideas. They also believed in an interventionist state in the sense that they would call upon the aid of the state to protect them from white supremacist threats.

Following in the liberal tradition, non-militant anti-racists placed a great deal of emphasis on utilizing civil society, the associations and organizations that exist outside of the state (Garner 1996), as a counter-force to white supremacist activity. They held firm in their belief that white supremacists do not reflect the beliefs of the greater community in which they were attempting to organize. Nathaniel properly expresses the desire for the civil society of his city, embodied in the notion of community, to "express our values of equal rights, human rights, dignity for everybody and so forth." This is achieved by

non-militants through the development of strong pluralist networks of affiliations that are the hallmark of the liberal vision of civil society. Most of the activists interviewed for this study were involved with other SMOs besides those that are specifically focused on anti-racist organizing; however, there is a strong qualitative difference between the types of social movements that non-militants and militants are active in. Non-militants focused their energy toward organizations that work around issues of identity recognition (NOW, PFLAG, and Japanese American Citizens League), community safety and nonviolence issues (Safe Schools Coalition, Students Together Advocating Nonviolence & Diversity, Battered Women's and Children's Shelter, Domestic Violence Prevention), Human Rights and Justice (Amnesty International and Access to Justice), and pacifism and opposition to war (Fellowship of Reconciliation and Veterans for Peace). Non-militants' choices of allies also reflect a focus on civil society as the base for community organizing efforts. The non-militant anti-racists in this study identified a broad range of potential allies including: mainstream civil rights and anti-hate organizations such as the NAACP, the Urban League, and Souther Poverty Law Center; religious organizations, particularly interfaith organizations and African-American churches; and groups affiliated with local schools such as the PTA, student organizations, and even school administrative bodies. The ties between these varying organizations and non-militant anti-racists serve to build bonds between their actions against white supremacists and the communities that they are a part of.

One of the fundamental principles of liberalism is the belief in the freedom of speech and expression and the free marketplace of ideas within which that expression can

take place. Non-militants overwhelmingly supported the freedom of speech and expression for white supremacists. When asked "What do you think of the argument that supremacists have a free speech right to express themselves?" (Appendix B, item 10), non-militants overwhelmingly affirmed white supremacists rights. All of the non-militant participants believed that white supremacists did have such a right. Nathaniel summarizes the non-militant position on freedom of speech and expression by white supremacists with the following statement:

They do and some people will say that what they're saying is so bad that they shouldn't have a free speech right.... The first amendment pertains to all speech including unpopular speech. The way to counter bad ideas is to get better ideas out there. I don't support things that are intended to stifle speech in ways that violate the first amendment, but I do think that we should expose falsehoods, hold people accountable for speech that directly leads to hate crimes, I mean it's the old shouting fire in a crowded theater kind of thing. There are some kinds of things where the proximate risk of physical harm is so immediate and so severe that that's where you draw the line, but I don't like the idea of just trying to prohibit these people from speaking. That's un-American.

Like many of his fellow non-militant anti-racists, Nathaniel ardently believes in the right of free speech and free expression. Non-militants generally believed that the best opposition to speech and expression by white supremacists was more speech and expression. Consistent with liberal ideology, non-militants believed that they would be more successful in a free marketplace of ideas. As Nicole points out, "the solution to [hate speech] isn't suppressing that speech, or the government preventing it from being expressed, but better speech." There is a consistent belief on the part of non-militants that their ideas will be the most logical and popular; and therefore, they will win general acceptance. For some non-militants, like Belinda, free speech also opens up a space to

address the "issues" that have led people to become involved in white supremacist movements, "I believe it needs to be counteracted and educated because if they don't speak out, and if they don't talk about what they're feeling, then the underlying reason for those feelings won't be discussed and there is no opportunity for healing." Some non-militants expressed concern over the potential for violence as a result of white supremacist rhetoric, "I believe they have a right to be vocal about their beliefs..., but that can only go so far and once they've crossed that line and they're advocating killing people, hurting people and damaging property then they're breaking the law, and that's not ok" (Jessica). This position is consistent with the liberal belief that the state must interact to protect the safety of its citizens and the general social order (Garner 1996; Wallerstein 1996). The non-militant anti-racists interviewed for this study all affirmed the liberal belief in freedom of speech and the free marketplace of ideas as the successful terrain in which to fight ideologies that they disagreed with.

Unlike militant anti-racists, non-militants genuinely believe that the state acts in their interests. Although many non-militants were critical of systemic white supremacy that they believed may be made operational by the practices of the U.S. federal government, they did not attribute such things to local and state governments where they lived. Daniel's response to the question of "Do you believe that there is a relationship between the state and white supremacists?" (Appendix B, item 9) summarizes the non-militant position, "in Western [state] I think the government promotes equality, perhaps in some areas the government may be more complicit in some things, indirectly, if not

directly, but I don't think so here." Nathaniel explains this indirect relationship in his answer to the same question:

it doesn't have to be explicit. It doesn't have to be the government creating white supremacist groups in order to keep black people down.... We have a long history of the government acting in very racist ways. So when some tiny minority of people end up forming white racist organizations, white supremacist, that's not a surprise given everything else that goes on in our culture. The government doesn't need to start those organizations directly.

Yet, despite this condemnation of the broader American government as racist, non-militants still believe that the state, at least at the local level acts as a fair and reputable ally in their activities against white supremacists. As discussed in Chapter 4, non-militants actively sought out the support of local politicians and governments in their efforts to oppose white supremacists. Many of the non-militants interviewed held paid and unpaid positions within state and local government in agencies that promoted diversity, multiculturalism, or human rights. The non-militants interviewed certainly believed that at least at the local level, the state acted in the interests of pluralism and opposed white supremacist activities and organizations.

Possibly the most substantial ideological information from non-militant antiracists in this study came in the lack of direct ideological language in their answers. This
is sharply contrasted to the answers of militants which will be discussed shortly. Nonmilitants very rarely identified their ideological position in their interviews and were
often taken aback by the ideological implications of questions regarding the state, free
speech, and even alliances. I attribute this lack of ideological forthrightness with the
hegemonic status of liberalism in contemporary American society (Garner 1996). To

adhere to liberal principles is to be normal, average, and in the case of social movements, moderate (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000). The comments discussed so far indicate a general acceptance of liberal ideology among non-militants, yet they did not identify as such in the course of often very politically charged questions. The non-militant respondents saw themselves as members of the community who took action against a particular group that was viewed by them as outsiders and not representing the values of their community. Values that are liberal; yet because of its hegemonic dominance, are not seen as such. This understanding of liberal ideology as hegemonic will be extremely important in the discussion of the relationship between ideology and tactics later in this chapter.

#### Anarchism and Militant Anti-Racists

Anarchism developed as a distinct strand of socialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Guerin 1970). Contemporary anarchism has splintered into a diversity of branches that are based on a variety of historical circumstances and philosophical influences. However, the core of the theory has not changed since it's early theoretical articulations.

ANARCHISM..., the name given to a principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government - harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements concluded between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption, as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilized being. In a society developed on these lines, the voluntary associations which already now begin to cover all the fields of human activity would take a still greater extension so as to substitute themselves for the state in all its functions. They would represent an interwoven network, composed of an infinite variety of groups and federations of all sizes and degrees, local, regional, national and international temporary or more or less permanent - for all possible purposes: production, consumption and exchange, communications, sanitary arrangements, education,

mutual protection, defence of the territory, and so on; and, on the other side, for the satisfaction of an ever-increasing number of scientific, artistic, literary and sociable needs. Moreover, such a society would represent nothing immutable. On the contrary - as is seen in organic life at large - harmony would (it is contended) result from an ever-changing adjustment and readjustment of equilibrium between the multitudes of forces and influences, and this adjustment would be the easier to obtain as none of the forces would enjoy a special protection from the state (Kropotkin [1910] 2001).

Kropotkin's description summarizes the key principles of anarchism: direct opposition to the state and other formal structures of authority, an opposition to capitalism and the free-market system, and a belief that the masses of people can manage their own affairs if given the freedom and opportunity (Guerin 1970; Kropotkin [1910] 2001). Anarchists believe that the social changes necessary for their vision of society to come to fruition will be achieved through revolution because those who hold power will not relinquish it voluntarily. Anarchist praxis focuses on working to build anarchist models of social organizations within the framework of the existing society and taking direct action against the state and other forms of authoritarianism (Avrich 1988; Graeber 2002; Guerin 1970).

The anarchist opposition to the state comes from a belief that the state is tyrannical and authoritarian. As evidence, anarchists present a litany of the state's abuses:

To be governed is to be watched over, inspected, spied on, directed, legislated, regimented, closed in, indoctrinated, preached at, con-trolled, assessed, evaluated, censored, commanded; all by creatures that have neither the right, nor wisdom, nor virtue.... To be governed means that at every move, operation, or transaction one is noted, registered, entered in a census, taxed, stamped, priced, assessed, patented, licensed, authorized, recommended, admonished, prevented, reformed, set right, corrected. Government means to be subjected to tribute, trained, ransomed, exploited, monopolized, extorted, pressured, mystified, robbed; all in the name of public utility and the general good. Then, at the first sign of resistance or word of complaint, one is repressed, fined, despised, vexed, pursued,

hustled, beaten up, garroted, imprisoned, shot, machine-gunned, judged, sentenced, deported, sacrificed, sold, betrayed, and to cap it all, ridiculed, mocked, outraged, and dishonored. That is government, that is its justice and its morality! (Proudhon quoted in Guerin 1970: 15-16)

For anarchists the state, no matter how liberal or democratic, can never act in the interests of the population. Daniel Guerin (1970: 17) describes the anarchist position on democracy as follows:

The people were declared sovereign by a "trick" of our forefathers... The people rule but do not govern, and delegate their sovereignty through the periodic exercise of universal suffrage, abdicating their power anew every three or five years. The dynasts have been driven from the throne but the royal prerogative has been preserved intact. In the hands of a people whose education has been willfully neglected the ballot is a cunning swindle benefitting only the united barons of industry, trade, and property.

The state is seen as truly representing the interests of the powerful classes, or in a worst case scenario, the interests simply of the people who comprise the organs of the state. In the anarchist analysis, the state has not only a monopoly on the legitimate use of force (Weber [1919] 1958), but ultimately a monopoly on all behavior within its boundaries and will gladly repress and destroy any activity that it finds threatening.

Anarchist ideology is anti-capitalist because it views such a system as inherently exploitative and unnaturally authoritarian. The anarchist critique of capitalism is based on the socialist presumption that labor is exploited by the "capitalist class" (Berkman [1929] 2003: 2). Anarchists generally understand capitalism to be an economic system where the working class produces much of the substance of everyday life only to have it appropriated and sold back to them by the capitalist class who also appropriate all of the wealth that is generated by selling the products on the open market. As the capitalists

reap the economic benefits of trade, the working class is given a static wage that it must use to maintain its survival. Additionally, modern production is such that no individual worker produces an entire item by herself or himself. "[All] that we have, all wealth, is the product of the labor of many people, even of many generations... all labor and the products of labor are social, made by society as a whole" (Berkman [1929] 2003: 3, italics in original). The solution for classical anarchists to this dilemma is direct ownership, in whole, of all property by the common mass of workers (read: communism). However, anarchists differ from other socialists in that they believe that giving the state control of any or all industry will inevitably lead to a formation of new forms of hierarchy, authority, and ultimately exploitation (Berkman [1929] 2003; Guerin 1970; Kropotkin [1910] 2001). Anarchists, therefore, believe that the abolition of capitalism must go hand-in-hand with the abolition of the state.

Because anarchists believe that the state only serves the interests of those who hold power economically, politically, and socially, they seek to create models of an anarchist society within the framework of the existing system. In this sense, anarchist ideology is predicated on constructing a prefigurative society to model the future (Avrich 1988; Guerin 1970). Anarchists have, therefore, been involved in social movements that are countercultural in their orientation or place a strong emphasis on prefigurative politics. Unfortunately, they are also seen as incapable of making compromises because their ideology has strict prohibitions against working within existing institutions and especially with the state. The focus on prefigurative action has developed in anarchist ideology into a preference for direct action tactics that involve directly attacking the

targets of their opposition. Taking direct action often places anarchists at odds with more moderate activists and with agents of the state (Graeber 2002).

In terms of social movement activity, much of what Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000) identify as radical is in many ways consistent with anarchist ideology<sup>1</sup>. Anarchists believe in developing organizations that are purposely non-hierarchical and operate on some model of direct democracy. As discussed above, anarchists abhor working with the state and instead seek to develop alternative forms of social organizations to replace state action. Also, anarchist ideology is hostile toward capitalism and anarchists work to develop distinctly anti-capitalist resources in their social movement activity. For anarchists people power effectively supplants all other resources. Finally, anarchists are committed ideologically to taking direct action rather than waiting for top-down reforms and policy decisions.

Militant anti-racists generally identified themselves as anarchists. When asked about their social movement activity outside of the anti-racist movement (Appendix B, item 6), most of the militants that stated that they worked on other projects of economic, political, and social justice (n=7) listed some anarchist project or organization as one that they had worked with. Many of the participants also referred to anarchist ideology in the course of their interviews punctuating their remarks with comments such as "I'm an anarchist" (Kam). Others saw anti-racist activity and analysis as integral to developing an

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One of the RSMOs analyzed by Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000), the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), is generally identified as an anarchist organization despite it having never officially declared an ideological affiliation.

appropriate anarchist political analysis, "a lot of the anarchist endeavors ultimately should have defeating white supremacy as a main keystone" (Helena). Additionally, anarchists were also listed as an ally in anti-racist organizing activity (Appendix B, item 4).

Anarchism is a key ideological influence on the militant anti-racists interviewed in this study. In the course of interviews, participants who identified as militants discussed the importance of direct action; expressed a hostility toward institutions of civil society (especially moderate, non-militant, and professional anti-racist organizations), law, and legal principles; and generally believed in taking non-state action against white supremacists.

As discussed in Chapter 4, militants were much more likely to directly act against white supremacist groups. Where non-militants often responded with confusion or non-intervention, militants advocated direct, often violent action to counteract the activities of white supremacists. Militants responded to scenarios describing white supremacist activity with calls to directly protest or intervene in their activities. They also justified their participation in acts of violence and destruction as being necessary to directly stop the activities of white supremacists. Kam points out the militant desire to take direct action in his comments regarding white supremacists' right to free speech (Appendix B, item 10):

I'm gonna go and actively oppose them and try and get their events shut down. Even if they don't commit crimes against me, it could be crimes against someone I know or someone I don't know that, you know, is innocent, doesn't deserve it and so to say that they have a free speech, it's almost like saying they have a free right to go around and commit hate crimes and beat up people which is the logical end-point of their ideology, and to just give them free space to do that is irresponsible and immoral.

This comment places action, particularly violent action, against supremacists into a defensive context. Like Kam, many other respondents felt that some action had to be taken to prevent white supremacists from acting on their beliefs. Others saw militant anti-racist activity as an effective outlet for their desire to engage in direct action activity. Brock described how his participation in anti-racism developed out of his experiences in the anti-globalization movement:

I started out with anti-globalization activism, and I did that for probably about a year and started doing anti-fascist stuff because it was a point in my life where I was actually looking for a lot of stuff to do and anti-globalization stuff was like once every year and a half that something actually happened, and I didn't particularly identify with ecological stuff or the things that kind of built up the anti-globalization movement. And that was at a time... when there actually was quite a bit of activity by white supremacists and by neo-Nazis and so it really was at the point where I was just like 'I have this interest in doing stuff regularly' and I found out about anti-fascist work and there was something to do like every few days. Really, like it was pretty intense for a long time, and so I did it.

The anti-globalization movement, with a militant wing that has an anarchist style of direct action (Epstein 2001; Graeber 2002) that is similar to the activity of militant anti-racist groups, serves as a starting point for a number of militants. Similarly, the experience of direct action brought Mark to anti-racist activity, "I joined an organization that was organizing around that, where we used direct methods such as Copwatch and also street demonstrations as a tool of preventing police brutality and that organization had a history of... having opposed overt racist organizations and later as being a member of the organization there were instances where that presented itself again." The direct action philosophy of the anti-police group that Mark was a part of was translated into action against white supremacists. Consistent with anarchist ideology, militants advocated

direct action against white supremacist groups rather than the indirect activities of non-militants.

As activists inspired by anarchist ideology, militants were generally disapproving of, and often directly hostile to institutions of civil society, the law, and legal principles. They viewed all of these as ineffective in achieving their goal of eliminating the white supremacist movement and as suppressing what militants believe to be effective activities in favor of maintaining public order or moral principle. As discussed above, moderate, non-militant anti-racist organizations seek to mobilize civil society as a bulwark against white supremacist activity. Militants see this mobilization as repressing their direct actions against white supremacists. Mark summarizes the militant position by explaining how moderate, non-militant anti-racist organizations often viewed militant activity more critically than they viewed white supremacists:

[The] activities of these other groups have confirmed our general disdain for their methods. Particularly when we've seen how given the choice, some of these groups would take a stand against us that was more radical and harsh than the stand that they would be willing to take against the white supremacists themselves. So we found that a little disingenuous that if they were going to feel that the white supremacists were worth tolerating, then they should also feel the same way about us. That's kind of caused their viewpoints to be discredited.

Kam explains that non-militant, professional anti-racist organizations are often hostile toward militant anti-racists and their political allies, "sometimes the same groups that are supposedly anti-Nazi, anti-white supremacist will also turn in militant anti-fascist as being 'terrorists' or something so they kind of lump us all together which is ridiculous."

Other militants saw a greater collusion between the state and white supremacists, often citing the use of white supremacist groups in suppressing radical activity under the

COINTELPRO period of the 1960s and 70s. Others pointed to how the relationship between non-militant organizations and the state pollutes the objectives of anti-racism, "I just think all of the larger ones, Southern Poverty Law Center, etc., are just so tied in with the FBI that any tendency to work with them is going to discredit those of us who think that the state... continues to generate it's own forms of white supremacy that are equally or more destructive than any of the neo-fascist groups" (Damon). Others also saw the state as the source of persistent white supremacy. "Obviously at the local level you can look at the police and look at the power that they have and look at where they're patrolling and how they're patrolling in those neighborhoods and look at 911 responses and you can see racism just from that" (Adria). Helena points out how state policies create the social conditions that white supremacist movements use to recruit new members and build a political base:

I think that... the state... basically provides the vehicle to create the situation for grassroots fascism to spread and also has it's own system of white supremacy in place.... I think that in part, obviously, working class white people are set against working class black people or Mexican immigrants or whatever.... That does come from above.... I think that there is this grassroots sentiment that can flourish particularly now when you have a declining economy, all these things that basically the state's created to help further corporate interests. I think they created awesome conditions for grassroots fascism to spread.

Consistent with anarchist ideology, militants do not believe in the legitimacy of the state or what has been termed civil society. They see both as agents of repression and believe that the state especially encourages white supremacist groups by creating the structural conditions under which they can flourish.

Finally, militants showed an absolute disdain for the legal principle of free speech when it was applied to white supremacists. When asked if they believed that white supremacists had a free speech right to express themselves (Appendix B, item 10), only one militant responded that they did. The vast majority of militants did not agree with the statement with most of the militants (75%, n=9) emphatically answering no and only two stating that supremacists did, but it should be curtailed in some way. The opposition to the principle of free speech for white supremacists was based on distinctly anarchist justifications. Lydia angrily summarized the position of the militants who opposed free speech rights for white supremacists:

Then they have a free speech right to suck my dick! That's the most ridiculous argument I've ever heard. I hate that argument. I think that that's a liberal argument that they say because they don't want to actually fight them and I think that... it's a really safe way to go, "oh, but it's part of our rights" and all this crap, you know, "freedom of speech, blah, blah, blah" and "if they can't speak, you can't speak." A lot of people can't speak and don't have the space to speak starting from when militancy that was coming from people of color first started to hit the presses or whatever with the Black Panther newspapers, the Young Lord newspapers, those people were instantly silenced, that's 40 years ago, of course, but it hasn't changed today like those papers are still silenced, but white supremacists are able to go, and you know, whatever.... So, yeah, I think that's ridiculous! Ridiculous argument!

Lydia points out the contradiction between the liberal principles of the state and repressive practices. She also notes that the state rarely curtails the speech of white supremacists while simultaneously repressing the speech of people of color who criticize the state. Helena also express a critique of the construct of free speech itself:

I think that the freedom of speech for white men is really not as important as for the people that are already marginalized and that already – basically when you have boneheads in your community able to have a platform, it makes it so that other people can't be in your community, it makes it so queer people, or brown

people, or any of the groups that [the supremacists] actively are violent towards or condone genocide of aren't going to be in your community anymore so I think [the people's who are targeted by supremacists] right to be able to feel safe and exist in the world without feeling like they're about to be attacked supercedes the right of people that already have huge amounts of entitlement in the world to spout off their bullshit. And freedom of speech doesn't mean, like I don't really respect that anyways necessarily, but I think that also it doesn't mean that you have to give them a platform. That doesn't mean that you have to have them come to your college and sit on the stage and have an audience. [The supremacists] can say whatever walking down the street, you know, but it's a different thing than actively organizing or being given a venue.

For Helena, the question of white supremacist speech again comes down to an abuse of existing power and privilege. White supremacist speech is expressed by people who already possess a great deal of social power by virtue of their race and it directly impedes the freedom of other people. The safety of people who are targeted by white supremacists supercedes their privilege to express their genocidal intent. Finally, Helena points out that the freedom of speech does not need to be equated with providing a space or platform for white supremacists to express their beliefs. While they may have certain rights, others have the right to not provide a platform for such speech, effectively isolating white supremacists. Others believed that white supremacist speech was a direct precursor to violence.

I don't believe that because there's groups that I'm ideologically opposed to that I believe have the right to speak, but Nazis, the white supremacist groups are a direct threat to my physical well being. I feel like if they're allowed to speak because, if they have events and like they're allowed to speak, they get their members all hyped up and go out and commit hate crimes and it's happened.... Even if they don't commit crimes against me, it could be crimes against someone I know or someone I don't know that, you know, is innocent, doesn't deserve it and so to say that they have a free speech, it's almost like saying they have a free right to go around and commit hate crimes and beat up people which is the logical end-point of their ideology, and to just give them free space to do that is irresponsible and immoral (Kam).

Eowyn expressed a similar sentiment, "If it was just speech, maybe, but it never is. It's an attempt to organize. Their 'speech' is not just critical ideas to be discussed, it's a direct attempt to incite violence and enact genocide. They say so themselves. Every song, every pamphlet." For militants white supremacist expression is never a case of abstract ideas that make up the core of the liberal concept of a marketplace of ideas. These are not just broad concepts that can be reviewed on the merits of their arguments. White supremacists express a direct intent to commit genocide and do so in much of what qualifies as "protected speech" in the American legal system. For militants, such speech is not an abstract expression but a direct precursor to violence and the actions of white supremacists prove this assertion. The anarchist analysis becomes fairly clear in militant assessments of the time-honored liberal tradition of free speech and expression: free speech is a privilege of the powerful (capitalists, whites, etc.) and is used by people in power to suppress their opponents (the working class, people of color, etc.). The free speech rights of white supremacists rarely threaten a white supremacist system and do not need to be suppressed by the state.

While militants believe that white supremacist movements must be suppressed, they do not advocate state action against white supremacists. This was indicated by their unwillingness to have the state act to suppress the free speech rights of whites supremacists despite militant opposition to white supremacist expression. Damon's comments on the role of the state echo those of most militants:

I think [white supremacists] have a right to begin their speech. I don't think they have a right to end it and that was the slogan we used in [city]. I'm a believer in the historical understanding of free speech in the United States which is that it was

something that was achieved through revolutionary struggle and has been suppressed time and time again especially against groupings such as the IWW. So when Nazis assert that they have a free speech right, it's pretty easy to laugh at it since it's the very first thing every neo-fascist grouping has done when it's achieved power is immediately smash any groupings attempting to assert that. More importantly, I don't think that that debate is the one that groups want to get into as to whether the free speech rights of neo-fascists are being suppressed. I think far more fruitfully it's to look at what they actually do and one of them may speak, but they're actual organizing activity besides beer parties is to go out and disrupt the lives of people: attack them physically, attack neighborhood activities, disrupt people as they are going about their everyday lives in fairly vicious manners and that makes them holding a public rally kind of a secondary aspect of what they actually do.

Militants argue that state suppression is used to maintain a political order to which they are themselves opposed and empowering the state to act in such a way is ultimately a threat to them. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, they do believe that some form of suppressive activity must occur. Damon, again, explains the fundamental contradiction in this militant position:

There are people who truly want to fight neo-fascists..., then you have to talk to them seriously and you have to say, 'ok, what is going to be the counter-force to [white supremacists]?' and at that point I believe people have to say, 'ok, using these small meetings in church basements or student unions or is it somebody you can actually get together people with guns and organizing power and take them on.' That's the state, but the minute that you're sucked into that trajectory..., then you can't really work with those honest but less effective folks who represent a true alternative.

For militants the need to effectively oppose white supremacists requires taking direct action which is often violent. The state's monopoly on the legitimate use of violence is viewed as extremely problematic. Collaboration with the state in suppression of white supremacists will discredit militants in the eyes of a larger anti-state social movement, but non-cooperation with the state places them in conflict with it and leads to their own

suppression. These contradictions inform the militants' choice to take direct, often violent action against white supremacists despite potential repercussions and repression from the state.

# **Ideology and Tactical Repertoires**

The influence of ideology upon the tactical repertoires of non-militants and militants is evident in their discussions of responses to white supremacist actions and activities as well as the anti-racists own roles in the movement. While both non-militants and militants expressed clear ideological differences, there was an even greater difference between the role of ideology in informing the tactical repertoires of the different groups of activists. In an apparent challenge to the concept of ideologically structured action (Zald 2000), non-militants very rarely viewed their tactical choices as a reflection of their ideological position. However, given the hegemonic influence of liberalism and the consistent tactical repertoire of SMOs with a liberal orientation, I argue that non-militant tactics are a reflection of their ideology. In contrast, militants were much more likely to explicitly reference their ideology when discussing their tactical choices. The tactical repertoire of militants more openly reflects the ideological positions of these activists. Unlike their non-militant counterparts, the militants interviewed in this study are much more acutely aware of the role that ideology plays in their struggle against white supremacists.

Swimming in a Sea of Hegemony: Ideology and the Tactical Repertoire of Non-Militants

In her survey of ideology and social movements, Roberta Garner (1996) states that
liberal ideology does not preclude the use of violent and confrontational tactics by social

movements that are influenced by it to achieve their goals. However, her analysis also points out that this occurs in situations where the liberals find themselves in opposition to existing structures of power. In contemporary American society liberalism has risen to political dominance and has eschewed much of its radical rhetoric in favor of a moderate platform of steady progressive change (Garner 1996). Moderate progressive change often takes the form of working within existing structures of power and developing relationships with the state that are cordial, if not entirely cooperative (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000). Because of these conditions, the tactical repertoire of contemporary liberals has become limited to a series of nonviolent, non-confrontational actions (Churchill 1998; Gelderloos 2007). The non-militant anti-racists interviewed in this study clearly adhere to a liberal ideology and their tactics, as discussed in Chapter 4, adamantly rejected violent and confrontational approaches and actively sought state support for their activities. Yet, in the course of their interviews, non-militants did not explicitly discuss such connections. I believe that this lack of connection results from the hegemonic status of liberalism in American society.

The distinct preference by non-militants of juridical and demonstrative tactics to the exclusion of confrontational and violent tactics was most often explained by reference to the negative effects of confrontational tactics. Non-militants juxtaposed their perception of the negative outcomes of confrontational and violent tactics — loss of message, negative perception, generation of hostility, general lawlessness, etc. — against the positive outcomes of juridical and demonstrative activities — building community, generating a positive message, creating a safe community, etc. The concentration on

these tactics reflects an understanding of the importance of building and maintaining community bonds, a key component of the liberal concept of civil society. Additionally, these tactics do not threaten the power and legitimacy of the state (Churchill 1998; Gelderloos 2007); and therefore, allow non-militants to maintain a comfortable working relationship with politicians and local government agencies which reflects a liberal belief in working within the existing structures of power to achieve one's goals.

Finally, the tactics employed by non-militants are typical of the moderate SMOs described by Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000). It is at this point that the relationship between non-militant anti-racist tactics and liberal ideology becomes most apparent.

Because the tactics of non-militants are moderate and self-described as "mainstream," they reflect the perceived norms of the community within which they operate. With liberalism having achieved hegemonic dominance over ideology within the United States, the norms of the community to which non-militants refer are undoubtedly forged by liberal values and beliefs. It is therefore not unreasonable to discuss one's tactical choices without reference to ideology. While non-militant tactics are ideologically informed, they need not be discussed in an ideological context because they are informed by an ideology that is presumed to be shared by not only the activists in question, but the community as a whole. Therefore, it is possible to take for granted the liberalism of non-militants, especially when it is verbalized in reference to related issues other than tactics. 

Swimming Against the Stream: Ideology and Militant Tactics

In sharp contrast to non-militants, the militants interviewed in this study grounded much of their activity in ideology. The rationale for the use of militant tactics was often

couched in language that reflected the anarchist ideology of the interviewees. For these activists militancy was synonymous with ideologically defined behavior. The militants were more likely to reference their anarchist politics in discussions of their anti-racist activity. Their actions themselves were rooted in anarchist and other social movement activity, such as the anti-globalization movement, with strong anarchist overtones. They also consistently preferred to engage in activity that required some form of direct, non-state action that reflected their ideological commitments.

When discussing their tactical choices, militants were likely to make direct references to their ideological position. It was common for militants to interject their affiliation with anarchist or other "revolutionary organizations" into discussions of tactical repertoires used against white supremacist. All of the militant anti-racists interviewed in this study saw their participation in anti-racist activism as part of a larger struggle for social change that was radical in its orientation. Their participation in anti-racism was just one of a number of campaigns that also used direct action methods and anarchist praxis to achieve their goals. Some came to anti-racism from participating in non-hierarchical and militant activity as part of the anti-globalization movement; others were involved in small, anarchist collectives and developed their tactical repertoire as part of such movements; and yet others described their participation in militant tactics as a direct outgrowth of their involvement in activities against police power. What all of the militants appear to have in common is a willingness to attribute their tactical choices to their anarchist ideology.

This was clearly evident in their desire to develop a tactical repertoire that is centered around the idea of taking direct action against their opponents. Unlike nonmilitants, the militants in this study believed that state action was highly problematic in response to white supremacists. The state was not seen as a potential ally, but as a force of repression that acts in its own self-interest – maintaining power. Thus, cooperation with the state pollutes the intentions of most non-militant anti-racist organizations. In the eyes of militants, this was particularly true of larger, professional anti-racist organizations that had close ties to the state because of their reliance on juridical strategies. Some militants used one of the slogans of ARA (2004a) to describe their preference for nonstate action, "we don't rely on cops or courts to do our work for us." Instead, militants take direct action against white supremacists because, as with most other forms of social movement activity, they believe that it is more effective to create a unique alternative rather than rely on existing structures. Non-state action gives militants a greater autonomy in their tactical decisions and helps to explain the greater support for a diverse tactical repertoire among militants that includes all forms of action. Just as the radical groups described by Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000) are free from the constraints of maintaining a flow of resources from sponsors with a distinct stake in the social system, so too are militants free from the pressures of pleasing politicians and civil society. Direct action also becomes particularly necessary when, as described in Chapter 4, militant anti-racists come face-to-face with white supremacists within subcultural spaces and must defend their ideological position against individuals whose ideology calls for their elimination.

#### **CHAPTER 6**

#### THREAT AND ANTI-RACIST TACTICS

As opposing movements, the anti-racist and white supremacist movements often focus much of their activity directly at one another rather than opposing one another in making claims against the state or other parties. The contemporary white supremacist movement is especially ideologically driven toward violent conflict with its opponents. The movement's ideology is rooted in fascist glorification of violence and specifically in the use of violence to suppress political opponents (Berlet 1992; Lyons 1995; Garner 1996; Passmore 2002) and they are likely to see attacks on political opponents as part of their "mission" (Levin and McDevitt 2002: 91). Therefore, anti-racists are more likely to face direct threats of violence from the movements that they oppose. This is extremely different from the dynamics of other opposing movements. While many of them have occasional skirmishes with their opponents, these are often defined by the tension of their opposing positions and not by an ideological drive of one side to completely eliminate the other as part of a larger campaign of genocide and violence. Because many of the opposing movements studied by social movement scholars are focused on making opposing claims upon the state, they are more often likely to act in a manner that gives them credibility with state bodies and builds a support base among the general population. In contemporary American society, white supremacists have no such aims. They regard themselves as revolutionaries fighting the existing system (Berlet 1992; Lyons 1995; Garner 1996; Berlet and Lyons 2000; Passmore 2002; Berlet and Vysotsky

2006) and see their active opponents as legitimate targets for repression. This belief places anti-racists in immediate danger of experiencing some form of violence from white supremacists. This chapter will discuss the threat faced by anti-racist activists.

It is my contention that said threat is used by militants to justify their tactical choices as not only strategic, but necessary to maintain what Jasper (1997: 122) refers to as "ontological security" which he defines using Giddens' (quoted in Jasper 1997: 123, italics in original) terminology as "an autonomy of bodily control within predictable routines." These activists generally face a greater threat from white supremacists than their counterparts who prefer non-confrontational and nonviolent tactics. This threat may come in three distinct forms: 1) physical; 2) political; and 3) spatial. Physical threat is the fear of physical harm or danger at the hands of white supremacists which is often the result of individuals being specifically targeted for violence. Political threat involves a threat to the political activity of anti-racists as a result of their adherence to an ideology that is directly contradictory to that of white supremacists. Spacial threat manifests itself when white supremacists attempt to engage in political activity within subcultures that are spaces of contestation between them and anti-racists. While these three types of threat are unique, they are not mutually exclusive and may overlap for militant anti-racists. Overlapping threats may in fact increase the intensity of the threat felt by militants.

# **The Intensity of Threat**

Given the white supremacists' ideological drive to violently eliminate their opposition, one would presume that all anti-racists would face a similar amount of threat. However, this was not the case in this study. When asked if they felt threatened by white

supremacists (Appendix B, item 11), non-militants and militants gave very different responses. Compared to militants, non-militants were much less likely to feel threatened by white supremacists. Of those non-militants who were threatened, the type of threat and their reaction to it was much less intense than that of militants.

Table 6.1 Distribution of Threat Felt By Anti-Racists		
	Felt Threatened	Did Not Feel Threatened
All Respondents	16 (66.7%)	8 (33.3%)
Non-Militant	5 (41.7%)	7 (58.3%)
Militant	11 (91.7%)	1 (8.3%)

Roughly half of the non-militants in the sample stated that they did not feel threatened by white supremacists. Those who stated that they had felt threatened by white supremacists were asked a follow up question of whether they had been directly threatened by white supremacists (Appendix B, item 11). The direct threats that non-militants faced were exclusively verbal and/or written. The non-militants who had been threatened directly also reported that they felt very little trauma from these experiences. While some reported feeling angry (Nicole), upset (Hilary), and even scared (Tessa), others felt flattered (Evelina). The overwhelming emotional response from non-militants who felt threatened by white supremacists was concern for their fellow activists, "I am more concerned about what their damages to other people that they see more vulnerably. Particularly, like the activists that I work with, at, and for. Those people are in a different

level of danger" (Evelina). While there is a recognition of the danger posed by white supremacists, most non-militants felt that they were not in immediate danger of attack.

Militants were much more likely to feel threatened by white supremacists. An overwhelming majority of the militants in the sample answered that they felt threatened by white supremacists. Two of the militants who indicated that they felt threatened had not been directly threatened by white supremacists, but both indicated that they were indirectly threatened verbally. Of the remaining nine militants who received direct threats, only one received verbal threats exclusively. The remaining two-thirds of the militant sample were the victims of violence at the hands of white supremacists and of that group four had received verbal or written threats that preceded that violence. As Darby pointed out, "I've been beaten by them, too, so they've followed through on those threats."

Militants were much more likely to be traumatized by the threats and violence that they experienced at the hands of white supremacists. Helena described her reaction to an extremely violent attack by white supremacists as experiencing post traumatic stress disorder. Kam described his reaction to direct threats as follows:

It feels shitty cause... if you're threatened, some of the times you can't do [anything] because usually they'll only threaten you if they feel like they can, if they outnumber you or if they're physically larger than you... and if they're physically larger than you, you're feeling threatened by them, you start getting a bunch of adrenaline and you start being scared because you could get hurt, you could get hurt bad because they could stomp you, possibly even kill you so it's scary.

The level of violence experienced by militants at the hands of white supremacists increases their general anxiety about their personal safety. However, all of the militants

felt that such threats also inspired action. Lydia points out that "[they] just make me feel like we need to get organized." Despite her extremely traumatic experience, Helena was motivated to continue with her militant anti-racist activism:

I think that all sorts of people live in terror all the time all over the world and here in the United States – I think about black people being lynched or something, I think I can take this on.... I think that's what really makes you an ally is when you say like, "no, I'm joining this team." I guess getting your ass kicked by a bunch of white supremacists is when you're on that team. It's like we talk a lot about no race and trying to get rid of your whiteness and blah, blah, I guess that's to me that's what really did it. It's like, it is really renouncing it in that way... it's just too core to who I am to wanna be fighting injustice.

The intense threat felt by militants is a strong motivating factor for becoming organized against white supremacists activity. Whether it is to maintain their own "ontological security," a means of acting on their ideological position regarding race and racism, or as a means of organizing a broader movement, militants believe it is essential to work to stop white supremacist organizing through a variety of tactics. This belief stems from a need to provide protection for themselves from white supremacists.

The experiences of non-militants and militants point to distinct differences within the two groups regarding the threat that each faces from white supremacists. Non-militants clearly face very little threat whereas militants appear to be under constant threat. In their discussions of the nature of the threat that they face, militants not only indicate the interplay of the different types of threat, but also point to the importance of taking an uncompromising stand against white supremacist groups as a matter of necessity. This argument is altogether missing from non-militant discussions of threat, even amongst those who faced a threat from white supremacists.

### **Physical Threat**

The intensity of threat faced by most militant anti-racists is manifested in direct threats to their physical well being. With the vast majority of militants having experienced some form of violence at the hands of white supremacists, their sense of personal physical security is violated. In sharp contrast, non-militants never faced such direct threats. The majority of non-militants faced no threat at all; with only a sizable minority having been threatened. The militants in this sample were much more cognizant of the physical threat that they faced from white supremacists. In part this is the result of them being directly targeted as members of specific categories designated by white supremacists as enemies.

It is interesting to note that most of the anti-racists, non-militant and militant alike, recognized that white supremacists do target activists in the oppositional group for violence. Celia, a non-militant anti-racist, makes this evident in her explanation for why she does not feel threatened, "because I'm not a member of, except for standing up for members of the oppressed communities, in which then case I would be targeted, but that doesn't bother me." Yet, even when non-militants are directly threatened verbally by white supremacists, they still believe that they are not at much risk of experiencing violence. The non-militants believed that they were protected from white supremacists. Nicole pointed out that the community in which she lives would bond together to protect her from potential violence through non-violent action, "I feel very certain that the community when called upon is willing to coalesce and come together and reject them and not fall prey to their invitation to engage in similar name calling or violence for

which our community members would be arrested or hurt." Ross pointed out that his group had organized "peace keepers" to act as security at their events. Hilary, who acted as a door person at an event and was confronted by a white supremacist relied on the aid of the police who were called to remove the individual. Evelina's occupation within a local government structure also served to protect her from direct physical violence, "I'm insulated within a government organization. You'd have to be pretty plum crazy to come bugging me when I've got the sheriff right over here and the jail, all very convenient." The relationship that non-militants have with their communities and local government, especially police, help to insulate them from white supremacist violence. For non-militants the sense of urgency that guides confrontational and violent tactics (Jennings and Andersen 1996) is thoroughly lacking. Their tactical responses may be exclusively symbolic, demonstrative, and juridical because they face little personal threat from white supremacists.

On the other hand, the physical threat faced by militants often derived from their status in the eyes of white supremacists as members of targeted "minority" groups or "race traitors." While all anti-racists are viable targets for white supremacist violence, the militants appear to be much more likely to be targeted. Although the sample of militants is almost exclusively white, exactly one-half identified themselves as non-heterosexual. White supremacists movements have a long history of targeting individuals who they identify as "sexually perverse" as victims of violence and eventual extermination. The contemporary movement is especially obsessed with control of sexuality and the establishment of heterosexual dominance (Daniels 1997; Ferber 2000). Individuals who

are homosexual, bisexual, or perceived to be non-heterosexual therefore become legitimate targets for violence in the eyes of white supremacists (Levin and McDevitt 2002). This was clearly the case for the militants in the sample. Openly homosexual respondents such as Adria and Lydia indicated that they had been "queer bashed" on various occasions over the course of their lives by white supremacist skinheads. By virtue of their expressed sexual orientation, half of the militants face a daily threat of violence at the hands of white supremacists and other bigots.

Additionally, as white anti-racists all of the militants face a threat of violence as "race traitors." Eowyn contextualized her sense of physical threat in relation to her Jewish partner and activist friends. When asked, "do you feel threatened by white supremacists?" she responded with the following statement:

Yes. Maybe not so much for myself by myself, but my partner is Jewish and we are both active in anti-racist politics and ultra-left or anarchist organizing, and we live with each other and near other activists. I do not think this is the same threat that a person of color feels every day of their life and I am not trying to make that comparison for myself, but yes, I do feel that they would do me or my partner or my friends or my neighbors harm.

She is cognizant of the fact that her relationship with a Jewish partner makes her the target of white supremacist derision and potential violence (Daniels 1997; Ferber 2000) and adds that her own activist work places her at risk for white supremacist retaliation.

Damon explains the severity of the threat that militants face with an anecdote regarding a direct threat against him:

When the police report on the small group of [city] boneheads who were pulled over by the cops was turned over to us... they listed what they found in the car. So here's 4 young boneheads and they had 6 guns: 1 revolver, 3 semi-automatics, 1 shotgun, 1 rifle...; 3 baseball bats; a crow bar, every one of them had at least one

knife, maybe a couple of them had 2 knives, and they were looking for us. They weren't looking for unnamed individuals. They named who they were looking for because a lot of the boneheads weren't very smart.... But yeah, they've said they're going to kill me in particular and people that I hang out with a number of times and they've made those attempts in great seriousness so I think I have to at least respect their intentions.

Helena indicated that when she faced a potentially deadly attack from white supremacist skinheads they had specifically targeted her friend for being a former white supremacist turned anti-racist, "my friend was a former Nazi in England who had turned Redskin¹ so they were, you know, they wanted to murder him, basically. So, they knew who we were at the time." Helena's friend was viewed as particularly traitorous by the white supremacists and his associates were similarly vilified. As known "race traitors" militant anti-racists face a much more direct threat of violence than non-militants. They are targeted by white supremacists in very public ways and feel the potential danger of white supremacist violence on an almost daily basis.

The intensity of the threat faced by militants makes the potential for violence a much more everyday reality for militants. Unlike their non-militant counterparts, militants often cannot turn to the police who often view them as a rival gang to white supremacist skinheads. As discussed in Chapter 5, the anarchist ideology of many militants also views police as at best ineffective (often arriving after the fact when

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This term applies for skinheads who openly identify with leftist politics, specifically socialism, communism and anarchism. The Redskin moniker is designed to distinguish leftist anti-racist skinheads from other anti-racist skinheads who may adhere to politically conservative beliefs (especially nationalism) or identify themselves as non-political on issues other than racism. It is not meant to imply any derision of Native Americans or support for the Football team from Washington, DC.

violence does occur) or at worst sympathetic to the white supremacists. Additionally, the belief in a necessity to take "direct action" against white supremacists often stimulates the willingness to use more militant tactics. For militants, the use of confrontational and violent tactics becomes a necessity for maintaining their own personal safety and ensuring the safety of others in their community. This becomes clear in Damon's response to the violent attack that he faced from a Klan leader, "When the head of the [state] KKK had his hands around my throat trying to strangle me at that point, yes, I felt threatened. After I knocked him down and attempted to break his nose, no, I did not feel threatened."

From a strategic standpoint, anti-racist militancy ensures that the white supremacist threat is neutralized. When Damon managed to turn the tide against his aggressor, he also gave himself a sense of empowerment and protection. The strategic efficacy of violence on the part of militant anti-racists discussed in Chapter 4 becomes evident in the context of sustained threats to the personal safety of militants. If the consistent acts of damage or disruption to the white supremacist movement have the effect of limiting its activity, then white supremacists are unable to engage in acts of violence against individuals that they would normally target. This ultimately serves the immediate goal of maintaining the physical safety and security of militant activists and others who may be the targets of white supremacists for violence.

### **Political Threat**

The physical threat posed by white supremacists occurs within the context of a larger political struggle. Despite the characterizations of white supremacists as violent thugs by the media and criminal justice professionals, they are a highly organized social

movement. As such, they have a clearly defined ideology and a set of specific social and political goals that they wish to achieve and a series of strategies for how to achieve them. Consistent with Meyer and Staggenborg's (1996) and Peleg's (2000) conceptions of opposing movement activities, the dynamic between white supremacists and anti-racists is largely defined by the political ideology and activity of white supremacists and their opposition. The threat of white supremacists is therefore much greater than the simple physical security at the heart of the struggle between movements. It is a threat born of a struggle over key issues by movements on two clearly different sides who view themselves as direct opponents. It is here that the ideological differences between non-militants and militants begin to interact with their position against white supremacists.

The two wings of the anti-racist movement view white supremacists as two very different types of political threat. For non-militants, white supremacists undermine their vision of liberal pluralist community and are seen as a aberration that threatens a united and open community. Militants recognize this political threat posed by white supremacists, but also see them as a distinct threat to their more transformative, revolutionary agenda. For militants, white supremacists pose a direct political threat because they present a reactionary critique of the existing system that may appeal to a similar political base as that of the militants and are willing to use violence to maintain their political dominance.

As discussed in Chapter 5, non-militants generally adhered to liberal ideology. A hallmark of that ideology is the extension of political rights and juridical equality to all citizens within a nation (Garner 1996). White supremacists present a direct challenge to

this ideal because of their insistence on a racial hierarchy and the inherent supremacy of whites. Although white supremacist movements are not likely to achieve any changes in government policy, they still serve as a political threat to non-militants.

The ideology of white supremacy challenges the civil society of the communities in which they operate. Non-militants consistently point to the necessity for maintaining community unity in the face of white supremacist activity. This strategy of demonstrating community solidarity is indicative of the intensity of political threat attributed to white supremacists by non-militants. For the non-militants in the sample, the white supremacist movement operates as an aberrant minority position within their community. As such it represents a potential threat rather than an immediate one. By marshaling community members, local politicians, and businesses to demonstrate their opposition to the white supremacist movement, non-militants essentially believe that they are neutralizing the political threat posed by the movement. In the face of widespread community disapproval, the white supremacist movement loses all of its political currency for non-militants and is effectively discredited. Non-militants view the political threat of white supremacists as marginal and easily contained using the strength of community opposition and civil society.

Militants understand the potential of white supremacists to undermine liberal values of freedom and legal equality. However, they attribute a much greater level of political threat to the white supremacist movement because they view it as directly politically opposed to their ideology and working to recruit within the same political base (Hamerquist 2002). The white supremacist movement has a long history of acting to

suppress the political activity of the radical left which militant anti-racists recognize. They have a clear understanding that white supremacists have specifically targeted them for violence rather than petty harassment. As discussed above, much of the political activity of militants places them in direct confrontation with white supremacists to the extent that militants find themselves personally threatened by white supremacists. This may be contrasted with non-militants whose political activity does not place them in direct confrontations with white supremacists.

The greater political threat posed by white supremacists to militants lies in their ability to appeal to a similar political base. Darby points out that white supremacist "ideals are typically some form of cultural trapping that... are a window dressing for routing people away from really addressing more fundamental, structural grievances that are typically oriented around economy, community, culture, and over who has a right to determine power relationships and dynamics within those spheres of existence." In an influential text for the militant anti-racist movement, Don Hamerquist (2002) and J. Sakai (2002) both point out the dilemma that white supremacist movements in contemporary American society pose for anti-racists. As the white supremacist movement adapts to contemporary concerns, it moves into a political territory that has long been the preserve of the left – globalization and capitalism. The critiques that the white supremacist movement proposes under a variety of ideological banners address issues that are of primary concern to many working people in the United States. The white supremacists, therefore, become a strong political competitor for supporters of radical social change with the anarchists that make up much of the militant movement.

Helena's experience in becoming involved in militant anti-racism reflects this "battle of ideas" in her working class community:

in the town where I grew up there was definitely a pretty big Nazi population in the city across the river. It was very like 'the other side of the tracks,' you know, and it was basically because of the loss of blue collar jobs like a bunch of industry had moved out so there's all these white men who were angry because they couldn't get the same kinds of jobs that their dad did and the property value there declined... and it was like really ripe for recruiters and there would be these creepy, middle-aged men that would come in and start hanging out with the teenagers.... There was a real fascist presence there and so they were intermingled.... And for me, always I felt like there was this real ideological war, like it was all these working class people were being recruited into fascism and those were the same people that could be potential revolutionaries and just got totally derailed into this asinine world view. So I felt like it was this ideological war, like they were taking all of our potential anarchist army and turning it into boneheads.

This experience was also reflected in the experiences of other anti-racists. Most had come to anti-racism as part of their work in other political organizations and found that they had to address the political activity of white supremacists as part of that action.

Militant anti-racists recognize the political threat that white supremacists pose to their own organizing efforts. As the quote from Helena suggests and research verifies, white supremacists specifically target communities that are experiencing economic hardship for recruitment (see for example: Ezekiel 1995; Daniels 1997; Ferber 2000; Blazak 2001).

The recruits in these communities then become foot soldiers in a political struggle with the left. Since the contemporary white supremacist movement has an ideological drive toward the use of violence, they pose a much greater threat to militants than their non-militant counterparts. Militancy becomes a practical stand against an opposing movement that has an ideological imperative to use violence against it.

On the surface, it would appear that the non-militant position would be more favorable in a political struggle with white supremacists. Non-confrontation and non-violence clearly place one on a morally higher plane. Nathaniel, a non-militant activist and prominent pacifist in his community explains this position in response to the question of why he does not feel threatened by white supremacists:

If somebody were to pick on me personally, I'm prominent enough in this community and well-liked enough that anybody who would pick on me would become the community's biggest as shole in terms of public opinion. Because I'm known as somebody who is strictly nonviolent. I'm perhaps the community's most prominent pacifist. So if somebody were to do something violent to me, it's real clear who the bad guy is. So there's protection from having a good record in this way, a good record in the community.

Maintaining a prominent and positive position in the community, it is argued, is much more effective at protecting someone from supremacist violence than violence which will be repudiated by said community and thus alienate those who use it. However, militants counter that when faced with a movement that calls for your physical destruction, the moral high ground becomes untenable.

For militants, the use of confrontational tactics is an important political tool. It demonstrates to a movement that highly values violence that its opponents will not simply acquiesce to their demands, but will resist. If white supremacists rely on intimidation to achieve their goals, the confrontational and violent actions of militants serve to undermine the effectiveness of these threats. When faced with the political threat of white supremacist organizing, militants take the stand that they have acted to respond directly to that threat rather than insulating themselves against it.

## **Spacial Threats**

Political activity occurs within specific physical spaces (Tilly 2000; Martin and Miller 2003). The threat that white supremacists pose to anti-racists is bound to the physical spaces within which each movement operates. Space becomes fundamental to the perception of threat that white supremacists can pose to an individual. This is true not only in terms of physical proximity, but in terms of the everyday activities and use of space by members of the different opposing movements. Non-militants and militants indicated extremely different uses of space and described very different types of spacial threat posed by white supremacists. Non-militants did not have much contact with white supremacists in the spaces within which they engage in everyday activity. Additionally, the threat that white supremacists presented to non-militants was a vague threat to the integrity of a broad community. For militants the threat of white supremacist violence was much "closer to home." Militants were much more likely to be involved in subcultures where white supremacists were active in recruitment and "prefigurative" political activity (Blazak 2001; Futrell and Simi 2004). They are therefore more likely to have day-to-day experiences that have the potential of bringing them into contact with white supremacists and vice-versa. White supremacists also pose a much greater threat to a more immediate sense of space for militants as their activities alter the fundamental meaning of subculture for its participants.

For non-militants, white supremacists generally pose an extremely indirect threat.

This becomes most evident when discussing the spacial threat that they pose. Most militants do not have direct contact with white supremacists and develop their knowledge

regarding the movement from educational materials provided by watchdog groups. This may be the strongest variable in explaining the lack of threat felt by non-militants.

Those who responded that they did not feel threatened by white supremacists often made direct reference to the physical distance between themselves and the supremacists. As Daniel points out "I've never had personal contact. They're always 'out there' with they're effects and they've been with other people." Direct physical proximity had very little effect on this perception. Hilary, who had been verbally threatened by a white supremacist when she barred him from entering a non-militant event, stated that she generally did not feel threatened because "they're not everywhere and they're usually not where I am."

Space was crucial for non-militants in terms of providing a sense of security and safety. "I don't feel threatened at the moment because I'm in my own home" (Jessica).

Anna points out the safety she feels as part of a middle class, politically liberal community:

that's pretty much by virtue of this homogenic, passive, little community here in [city1]. I know that it exists but they're not -- there's not a strong foothold. There've been attempts in the past, there've been pockets of individuals who have purposed that mindset, but to feel threatened by it is to say it too strongly. I am not naïve about their presence but I don't feel threatened.

This response is indicative of the non-militant mindset. She understands that white supremacists exist and are active in her community, but the community as a whole appears to have rejected them, so they pose very little personal threat.

The spacial threat that white supremacists pose for non-militants is to the cohesion of their community. Non-militants overwhelmingly saw white supremacy as a

danger to the values of their community. This was indicative in their responses to scenarios regarding white supremacist activity (Appendix B, item 2). Non-militants generally believed that white supremacist activity posed a threat to the security of their community. The logical response would be to rally the community together and demonstrate to the supremacists that they are not welcome. This is consistent with Rabrenovic's (2007) findings that white supremacists target communities that may be experiencing racial conflict, but may be rebuffed with a strong community presence that demonstrates opposition without direct confrontation. The non-militants believed that such a response was not only appropriate, but necessary. Indeed, because they face little direct threat of white supremacist violence, non-militants are likely to approve of such responses. This may also explain why non-militants were unable to respond to scenarios that involve white supremacist activities outside of a broader community context. Many non-militants were at a loss as to how to respond to white supremacist activity at high schools or at music stores (Appendix B, item 2c and item 2d) because they have no experience with this type of social activity. While they recognize the potential threat this may pose to the community, they have no context for how to respond outside of having a conversation with the white supremacists to try to convince them of the error of their ways. This lack of day-to-day experience limits the tactical repertoire of non-militants.

Militants possess no delusions about the threat that white supremacist pose to them. This is largely the result of a much greater amount of contact between them and the supremacists. The contact often occurs as a result of subcultural activity on the part of the militant activists. Because much of the activity of contemporary white

supremacists occurs within the context of youth-oriented subcultures which they view as prefigurative spaces for social movement activity (Blazak 2001; Futrell and Simi 2004; Berlet and Vysotsky 2006), they are much more likely to face opposition from members of the subculture who do not share their political orientation. This is particularly true in the context of the Punk and Skinhead subcultures. The white supremacist movement has had a long history of organizing within these subcultures because it has perceived them as spaces that where individuals may be receptive their message. By playing off of existing themes and aesthetics, white supremacists have managed to develop a foothold within these subcultures (Hamm 1993; Wood 1999; Blazak 2001; O'Hara 2001; Berlet and Vysotsky 2006). However, these attempts at recruitment have been met with strong resistance from within the subcultures themselves (O'Hara 2001; Sarabia and Shriver 2004; Berlet and Vysotsky 2006). Punks and Skinheads have been at the forefront of developing a strong opposition to white supremacists because they pose an immediate threat to these subcultures broadly and to the physical safety of its members. The physical spaces that are crucial for subcultural activity: bars and other music venues, music stores, and other locations where Punks and Skinheads "hang out" become the literal battlegrounds for a conflict over the ideological orientation of the subculture.

Militant anti-racists are often at the forefront of this conflict because they have taken the strongest stances in response to white supremacist organizing efforts within their communities. As activists within the subculture, they are actively targeted by white supremacists for their involvement not only in anti-racist activity as in the cases of Helena discussed above, but also for their subcultural activities as organizers of events. Darby,

an anti-racist skinhead described the context of threats and violence direct toward him, "T've hosted or been a part of events that have been threatened." Militants' participation in subcultural activities places them in spaces that facilitate direct, physical contact between them and white supremacists. Unlike their non-militant counterparts, militants do not have the privilege of being sheltered from the everyday activities of white supremacists. Helena explains how the context of violence within her local Punk scene led to her involvement in militant anti-racist activism:

[Racist skinheads] would come to Punk shows and no one would really know what to do and we sort of figured it out as we went along.... [They] were extremely violent, they would cause fights, they would start fights with Punks all the time or would prey upon us and beat us up while we're walking home and stuff and so we got kind of militant and had to be organized, and that's kind of how I got involved with it. And then it slowly got more sophisticated... and there's more sophisticated things we can do than just be like "get out of here" and beat them up.

The consistent interaction with white supremacists in subcultural spaces made Helena and her fellow activists within the subculture legitimate targets for the violence that she suffered that was discussed earlier in this chapter. She and her friends were known to white supremacist skinheads as anti-racist activists and were specifically targeted for violent attack. Eowyn also noted that white supremacists target known anti-racists when she listed an attack on an local anti-racist Skinhead bar as one her reasons for becoming involved in militant anti-racist activity. Unlike non-militants, militants have a greater likelihood of being in the same physical space as white supremacists because of their interest in similar subcultures.

In addition to the increased likelihood of violence because of confrontation within specific spaces, militants also recognize the danger that white supremacists pose to the subculture itself. White supremacist activity within the Punk and Skinhead subcultures creates a situation where subcultural space becomes the focal point of contention. The spaces within which subcultural activity takes place become marked as "safe spaces" for anti-racists or the "prefigurative spaces" of white supremacist activity. Brock makes such a distinction when discussing the context of his response to white supremacists hanging out at a local music store (Appendix B, item 2d):

it's usually apparent, depending on the situation, it depends on whether the place that he's hanging out is particularly sympathetic towards anti-fascism or whether they tend to be a little more sketchy, if it's like a Doc [Marten] store run by like fence-walker skinheads<sup>2</sup>, I'm not gonna be that brash to like, you know, but if it's like the kind of place that I'll hang out in comfortably and everything, I would probably just confront him, get him to basically admit what he is or at least refuse to admit that he isn't 'cause usually a lot of times kids won't come out and say it, but at that point is basically tell them that they're not welcome and everything. You know, it becomes a thing where if they want to hang out there, they're basically gonna have to fight for it and at that point it's just not usually worth it to them so they'll move on.

Like many militants, Brock recognizes that there are subcultural spaces that are identified as being friendly or receptive to white supremacists and is unlikely to individually challenge them in those spaces for fear of inviting attack. However, he is willing to confront white supremacists over control of neutral spaces or spaces identified as anti-

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This term refers to skinheads that have not taken a distinct position on the issue of racism and white supremacy. These individuals are viewed by anti-racists as especially problematic because their sympathies cannot be easily determined and they may in fact side with white supremacists in political conflicts within the subculture. They are also viewed by many white supremacists as potential recruits and sympathizers; and therefore, present an additional challenge to anti-racists.

racist. However, spaces that are identified as white supremacist are also legitimate targets for militant activity because they serve as a base from which the movement may safely operate (Futrell and Simi 2004). Therefore, militants will often also target these spaces for collective action because they pose a distinct threat.

The threat of a loss of space moves beyond basic resource mobilization concerns over having a "base of operations" from which the social movement can operate or the symbolic meaning that the space may provide for a movement (Tilly 2000). For many subcultural participants, the loss of space to white supremacists also provides a distinct physical threat. Marika pointed out that white supremacist activity increased the level of violence within her local Punk scene. This is consistent with Blazak's (2001) observation that white supremacists use violence within subcultures as a means of recruitment and of establishing dominance. Helena confirms this in the quote above. As white supremacists become involved within the Punk and Skinhead scenes, the level of overall violence increases. The ideological imperative toward violent action coupled with a subcultural norm of violence (Hamm 1993) transforms Punk and Skinhead spaces into places that are dangerous for all but a small percentage of racist thugs who may ultimately control them. Militants believe that they have little recourse but to turn to violence as a means of selfdefense against white supremacists and of wresting control of these spaces away from them.

The use of confrontational and violent tactics by militants becomes a "necessary evil" in defending a subcultural space against white supremacist incursion. White supremacists have often focused on Punk and Skinhead subcultures as distinct places

where they may successfully recruit potential members. The spaces within which subcultural activity occurs become contested by opposing movements in the struggle for white supremacy. White supremacists often engage in violence as a means of establishing dominance within these spaces which leaves their opponents little recourse but to fight back or leave the subculture altogether. Those who choose to confront the supremacists often become involved in militant anti-racism as a result of their subcultural activity. As members of the subculture, they face a much greater likelihood of contact with white supremacists who, to paraphrase Darby from earlier in this chapter, have not only made threats, but carried them out. The importance of the subculture as a "free space" (Polletta 1999) for both white supremacists and anti-racists makes it an important locus for contention between the two movements.

#### **Threat and Tactical Choice**

There are significant differences between the intensity and type of threats faced by non-militants and militants. The vast majority of non-militants face very little threat from white supremacists. Most clearly identified that they did not feel threatened by white supremacists. The few who had been threatened also did not view the threats as incredibly pressing. In part, this may be the result of the type of threat that they faced. Non-militants were the targets of verbal and written threats exclusively. Their experiences indicate that they have little reason to worry that such threats would be carried out because of their role in the community and their positive relationship with the police. Non-militants also did not view white supremacists as a pressing political threat. Although white supremacist ideology was viewed as problematic, its marginal status does

not pose a distinct threat to most non-militants. As such, white supremacists had little chance of making their agenda part of state policy; and therefore, pose no threat to the polity of communities in which non-militants live. The marginal status of white supremacists also indicates that non-militants are likely to have any direct interaction with them. They are therefore unlikely to follow through on the verbal or written threats that they've directed at non-militant anti-racists. White supremacists are unlikely to pose a threat to the spaces that non-militants frequent which gives them a general sense of being protected against white supremacists.

Militants, on the other hand, have a much more direct sense of threat from white supremacists. Three-quarters of the militants in this study had been the victims of white supremacist violence which was often preceded by verbal or written threats. Militants perceive themselves as being legitimate targets for white supremacist violence as a result of their belonging to groups that white supremacists have publicly directed threats against. Additionally, white supremacists pose a political threat to militants because of their attempts to recruit from a similar political base. Because of their anarchist ideological orientation, militants are branded political enemies of white supremacists and are prioritized as targets for repression. The two opposing movements also have similar political bases among the working classes and address similar issues of economic and political disempowerment with radically different solutions. Successful political activity on the part of white supremacists undermines the militant's own political activity and builds a movement that calls for violence against radical leftists which increases the sense of personal threat. The intensity of these threats is compounded by the fact that militant

anti-racists and white supremacists often find themselves in similar subcultural spaces. For nearly three decades the white supremacist movement has been actively recruiting and operating within the Punk and Skinhead subcultures. These subcultures, however, have their roots in the working class and generally possess a left-wing orientation. White supremacist activity in these subcultures threatens the ideological integrity of these subcultural spaces by transforming them into "prefigurative spaces" of white supremacy. The physical spaces that members of the subcultures frequent become battlegrounds as militant anti-racists attempt to defend subcultural space against white supremacist incursion. This conflict places militants at much greater risk of violence from white supremacists because they increase the chances of coming in contact with one another as a result of their subcultural activities. In general, militants face much greater physical, political, and spacial threat from white supremacists.

The relationship between tactical choice and threat becomes much more obvious in light of these differences. Jennings and Andersen (1996) point out that the intensity of threat has a direct relationship on tactical preference with activists who face the most intense threat being more willing to engage in confrontational tactics. The limited tactical repertoire of non-militants is consistent with these findings. Non-militants are cognizant of the fact that their non-militant tactics serve to insulate them from potential violence at the hands of white supremacists. Their willingness to work with the state, especially the police and legal agencies, also gives non-militants a certain level of protection from whites supremacists. Non-militants, generally, view their tactics as part of a strategy of community building and developing unity rather than as a defense against the eminent

threat of white supremacist violence. In this context, conventional and non-violent demonstrative tactics are the most reasonable response to the perceived marginal threat that white supremacists pose.

The relationship between intensity of threat and tactics becomes even more evident when discussing militant anti-racists. The intensity of threat that they face is extremely high and often requires the use of confrontational and violent tactics. Although militants face a high level of threat from white supremacists, their reactions are not based on irrational emotion as their critics might imply. Militants recognize the strategic value of confrontation and violence as a means of reducing the level of threat that white supremacists pose to them and their communities. Because militants are already facing violence at the hands of white supremacists, they do not have the privilege of taking a non-violent stand. Militants believe that non-violence is not an option against an opponent who seeks to physically intimidate you into inaction at best and completely destroy you at worst. Confrontation and violence serve to undermine the power of the political argument of white supremacists whose ideology is predicated on their ability to successfully marshal power and violence against their enemies. Finally, the belief that subcultural spaces must be defended against the threat posed by white supremacists also requires confrontational or violent tactics. For militants being faced with an opponent whose strategy is to fight for control of a space, non-violence becomes the equivalent of compliance. White supremacists often rely on intimidation to control subcultural spaces. When this is challenged and successfully overcome, they lose their credibility and ability

to control the subculture. Ultimately, militants are responding strategically to the physical, emotional, and spacial threats that white supremacists pose.

#### **CHAPTER 7**

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This work began as a very simple project to understand the differences between two distinct wings of one social movement. The differences within the anti-racist movement, however, are more complex and nuanced than simply a series of tactical choices. In developing this study, I asked three distinct questions that led me from a broad conception of the anti-racist movement to specific understanding of the way in which it constructs its tactical repertoire: (1) what are the tactics of the anti-racist movement and do individual members align themselves with specific tactical repertoires? (2) what ideologies do different types of anti-racists subscribe to, and what influence, if any, do these ideologies have on tactical repertoire? and (3) what threats do anti-racists face from white supremacists, and does the level and type of threat faced by anti-racists serve as a means of explaining anti-racists' tactical choices?

By answering these questions I hoped to provide anti-racist activists with a greater understanding of the ideology and motivations of both wings of the movement. It is my belief that such an understanding would contribute to the development of a stronger strategy in combating white supremacist organizing efforts and activities. However, scholarly works such as this are not solely concerned with mending rifts within social movements. By placing this study in the context of social movement scholarship on countermovements and new social movements, my goal is to contribute to the greater body of scholarly literature. This study seeks to make connections between the divergent

hypothesized that non-militant and militant anti-racists use ideology and threat as explanatory factors for their tactical choices. This chapter will begin by addressing the latter purpose with a summary of the basic findings and discussion of their impact on existing scholarly work on social movements. I will conclude with the relevance of this research to the anti-racist movement as a whole.

# The Tactical Repertoires of Anti-Racist Activists

Like any other countermovement, the anti-racist movement has developed a distinct tactical repertoire designed to oppose the activity of white supremacists.

However, the movement is not uniform in its use of certain types of tactics. The tactical preferences of the activists in this study may be categorized with two distinct labels: non-militant and militant. The tactical repertoire of non-militants is limited to conventional and non-confrontational tactics such as educational campaigns, symbolic demonstrations of opposition to white supremacists, rallies and events away from the white supremacist event, and attempts to counsel white supremacists through "understanding." These tactics reflect, in part, the non-militants desire to work with community leaders and power brokers. While militant activists were willing to utilize many of the same tactics as non-militants, they also added much more confrontational and violent tactics to their repertoire. Militants were much more likely to directly confront white supremacists and use violence as a means of opposing them.

The non-militants in this study generally believed that the first step in opposition to white supremacists was broad based community education in conjunction with

community institutions and leaders in order to inform the public about the organizing efforts and style of supremacists. The purpose of this activity was two-fold: to innoculate the community against white supremacist organizing and to bring together a coalition of informed citizens who would oppose white supremacists. This broad coalition of community members and leaders can then be rallied to demonstrate opposition to white supremacist groups. This was achieved through display of symbols designed to demonstrate community solidarity in both opposition to the supremacists and support for individuals who they target. These symbols are disseminated with the aid of local newspapers, school administrators, and other community members who are supportive of the non-militant campaign. Ultimately, non-militants believe that the single most important form of opposition to white supremacists comes in the form of an organized event that not only demonstrates community opposition to white supremacists, but also serves to draw attention away from the "negative" white supremacist activity and focus on the "positive" display of community unity. Additionally, white supremacists believe that through understanding the ideas and motivations of individual white supremacists they may be able to build some form of human bond that can convince individuals to leave the movement.

Although militants have no direct opposition to engaging in most of the tactics employed by non-militants, their tactical repertoire included a number of more confrontational and even violent actions. The most non-confrontational tactics employed by militants involved grassroots educational campaigns and subcultural activity. Militant educational campaigns are similar to their non-militant counterparts in that they provide

basic information regarding the white supremacist movement. However, the goal of militant education campaigns is often to inform individuals of the danger posed by white supremacists in an effort to spur them to "direct action." One of the significant differences between militants and non-militants in terms of tactical repertoires involves engaging in activity within subcultures that are targets of white supremacist recruitment or have high levels of white supremacist involvement. This takes the form of maintaining a physical presence within the subculture. The presence of militant anti-racists is most evident in public displays of insignia and other imagery that contains anti-racist symbols and sentiments consistent with the subculture. These can be seen on clothing, banners and posters, and record or cd cover art; all of which may be reproduced as tattoos on individuals as permanent markers of commitment to anti-racism. Additionally, militants are likely to organize distinctly anti-racist events designed to demonstrate opposition to white supremacists within the subculture. Although these most often take the form of musical events, they may also include educational events and film screenings. Generally, non-confrontational tactics employed by militants are designed to build resistance to white supremacists and inspire direct action against them.

The fundamental difference between militants and non-militants is their willingness to engage in confrontational and violent action against white supremacists. Militants overwhelmingly supported the use of confrontation as an effective means to oppose white supremacist events and organizing efforts. They also did not shy away from using violence against white supremacists in order to deter them from participating in movement activities. Militants advocated organizing direct, oppositional events at the

sites of white supremacist events and activities and advocated the use of a variety of tactics including nonviolent blockades of event locations, damage or destruction to the location of the event, and attacks on event participants. Confrontation was seen as crucial to the tactic of disrupting the white supremacist movement. By raising the stakes of participation in the white supremacist movement through confrontation and violence, militants hoped to dissuade individual supremacists from participation, and ultimately suppress the movement as a whole.

# **Ideology and Tactical Choice**

The differences between non-militant and militant anti-racists do not simply end in choice of tactics. Non-militants and militants adhere to distinctly different political ideologies. Non-militants were more likely to agree with many of the basic principles of contemporary left-liberalism; whereas militants generally identified themselves as anarchists and revolutionaries. These ideological differences were reflected in the tactical preferences of both groups of anti-racists.

Non-militants generally expressed beliefs that were consistent with contemporary, American forms of left-liberalism or what Garner (1996) refers to as "positive liberalism." Much of their activism was within organizations that serve to build bonds within civil society as a means of opposing the destructive influence of white supremacists on community institutions. Additionally, non-militants sought to build alliances with the state which they saw as not only a fair partner in their efforts, but also as a necessary defender of their communities against white supremacist threats. Finally, non-militants adamantly supported the rights of white supremacists to free speech and free expression.

Although non-militants expressed a number of liberal sentiments, they did not openly refer to themselves as liberals nor did they identify their tactics as those of liberals. However, this does not preclude the possibility that there is a link between liberal ideology and non-militant tactics. The political dominance of liberalism in the United States and Western Europe has led to the ideology becoming "hegemonic" and socially normative (Garner 1996). If liberalism is indeed hegemonic, then one would not need to openly identify as a liberal nor acknowledge that one's activity is informed by liberalism; one would simply need to express beliefs consistent with and behave in a manner that is consistent with liberal principles. The conventional and demonstrative tactics (Kriesi et al. 1995) of non-militants reflect many of the principles of liberalism. Education campaigns are predicated on the concept of an informed civil society necessary for political activity under liberalism. Displays of symbols and "unity" rallies serve to bolster civil society against the threat of white supremacist authoritarianism. Finally, consistent with liberalism's belief in an interventionist state that serves to protect the interests of civil society and maintain equality, non-militants desire work with the state and existing institutions to rally the community against white supremacists and rely heavily on the state to protect them from white supremacist violence.

Militants openly identified themselves as anarchists, anti-authoritarians or revolutionaries, in many cases using all three terms interchangeably. As self-identified anarchists, the militants expressed a general animosity toward the state and civil society as repressive forces in society. They saw these as acting against fundamental change in American society which included white supremacy. Additionally, they viewed liberal

principles such as free speech and free expression with great disdain; expressing a belief that these principles were often violent to suppress left-wing social movements and the organizing efforts of oppressed populations. They argued that white supremacists used such principles to foment and encourage violence against vulnerable populations. Militants also believed that the state often acts in support of white supremacists by providing them with protection at events and occasionally using them as a repressive force against social movements seeking greater economic, political, and social equality. In general anarchists advocate taking direct action for social change and the militants in this study were no different. They believed that communities affected by white supremacist activity should take their own direct action to oppose them.

Militant tactics reflect many of the anarchist principles discussed above. The fundamental belief in taking direct action to achieve social change is reflected in the militants' use of both non-confrontational and confrontational tactics. Participation in subcultures where white supremacists have a presence is designed to build a grassroots resistance to supremacists that does not rely on the state or outside authority.

Confrontational and violent tactics are the most conspicuous forms of direct action because they involve the direct use of force against white supremacists. In these cases, militants are directly confronting white supremacists rather than "sending a message" by organizing an alternative event. Violence, specifically, involves direct physical contact with white supremacists and has the end result of visible outcome. In this sense, militants believe that these tactics are forms of direct action. Additionally, militants adamantly oppose working with the state and similar institutions. They view the state as colluding

with white supremacists and unresponsive to militants' concerns over white supremacist violence, often viewing the conflict as no different than gang wars within a youth subculture. Consistent with anarchist ideology, the state serves to suppress the direct action of the militants in order to maintain order. The end result of this suppression is the continued political activity of white supremacists. Unlike their non-militant counterparts, militants often referenced their anarchist, anti-authoritarian, and revolutionary ideologies in discussing their tactical choices and believed that these tactics reflected their ideological position.

### **Threat and Tactical Choice**

Movement-Countermovement dynamics generally imply some feeling of threat by opposing movements (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996; Mottl 1980; Peleg 2000; Zald and Useem 1987). However, rarely does that threat result in direct threats of violence between opposing movements. The dynamic between anti-racists and white supremacists differs from many other MCM dynamics because white supremacists have an ideological imperative to use violence to permanently eliminate their political enemies and subjects of their hatred. Therefore, anti-racists are more likely to face direct threats of violence at the hands of white supremacists. Nevertheless, there are extreme differences between the amount and type of threat that militant and non-militant anti-racists experienced from white supremacists. These differences in threat also inform the differences in the activists' tactical preferences.

The intensity of threat felt by non-militant anti-racists was significantly less than that of militants. Just over half of the non-militant sample did not feel any threat from

white supremacists. Of the militants that did feel threatened, only four were actually threatened any point in their history as anti-racist activists, usually as a result of their anti-racist activism. The respondents who had been threatened had received verbal or written threats, but never experiences any physical altercations or incidents of direct violence. All of the non-militants in the sample believed that they were protected against the possibility of violence at the hands of white supremacists by both the police and the community in general. Police were responsive to non-militant calls for protection and most non-militants pointed out that they felt safe in their communities, and that if they were the targets of violence, it would only serve to further discredit the white supremacists in the eyes of their community. Most non-militants viewed the white supremacist threat as "out there" (Daniel) and believed that white supremacists were outsiders who were attempting to make their presence felt in a community that is not their own. Under these circumstances, it is no wonder that non-militants believe that they are not under any threat.

Given this lack of threat, non-militants' non-confrontational tactical repertoire becomes a logical response. Because they have strong ties to the state and trust in its ability to protect them, non-militants do not fear white supremacist violence; nor do they wish to alienate a potential partner and protector. If white supremacists are a threat from outside the community and highly unlikely to pose a direct threat to the non-militants in this sample, then taking direct, confrontational action appears to be strategically heavy-handed. Certainly, the use of violence and direct confrontation appears unnecessary when supremacists are only likely to make vague written and verbal threats that can be

forwarded to police who can be called upon for protection should the people making threats decide to act on them. In this context, non-militant tactical choices appear to the most rational response to white supremacists.

In possibly the sharpest contrast of this entire study, almost every militant felt threatened by white supremacists. Militants were also more likely to have received direct threats from white supremacists and as Darby pointed out "they've followed through on those threats." Most of the militants in this study had been the victims of some form of violence at the hands of supremacists and suffered some form of emotional trauma as a result of said violence. The threat posed by white supremacists manifests itself in three distinct forms: 1) physical threat based on the anti-racists membership in a group targeted by white supremacists, 2) political threat based on the ideological difference between supremacists and anti-racists, and 3) spatial threat based on the contestation of physical and metaphorical subcultural spaces. Despite experiencing such violence, the militants believed that they had to continue with their anti-racist activism and felt a greater desire to engage in militant activity.

Militants were more likely than non-militants to be threatened by white supremacists based on an identity characteristic. Half of the militant sample identified as bisexual or homosexual which makes them instant targets for white supremacist violence because they are viewed as perverse or abominable (Daniels 1997; Ferber 2000); some had reported being "gay bashed" by white supremacist skinheads. Many of the militants also stated that they felt threatened as a result of their "race traitor" status in the eyes of

white supremacists. As white people who actively organized against supremacist activity, they were especially targeted by white supremacists for violent retribution.

White supremacists also posed a greater threat to the political activity of militants. Many militants see themselves as activists and organizers for radical social change and believe strongly in developing a grassroots, working class movement for social change. White supremacists have also traditionally recruited from within the working class. In recent years, the supremacist movement has focused on issues that have been the traditional reserve of the left: capitalism, globalization, and ecological devastation. The recruitment of working class people into supremacist groups undermines the organizing efforts of militants in two way: it takes away potential members of a left-wing social movement and builds a potential violent oppositional force to progressive and anti-racist movements. Many of the militant respondents reported that they became involved in anti-racism in part as a result of white supremacist threats to other forms of political activism in which they were involved. White supremacists, therefore, generally undermine the militants' political activity and inspire them to act against supremacy.

The militants in this study believed were usually involved to some extent in subcultures that at one time or another had a white supremacist presence. White supremacists specifically target youth subcultures such as Punk, Skinhead, Gothic/Industrial, and Black Metal because they have an oppositional position to mainstream society; and therefore, serve as ideal locations to find potentially sympathetic alienated recruits (Blazak 2001; Berlet and Vysotsky 2006; Corte and Edwards 2008; Futrell and Simi 2004). The logic of the supremacists is that these subcultures can serve

as a "prefigurative space" for building a broader social movement once they have become dominated by white supremacists (Futrell and Simi 2004). For militants, this is an unacceptable position. This type of white supremacist activity poses a threat to the ideological integrity of subcultures such as Punk and Skinhead have a strong left-wing, working class history. However, the greater threat comes in the effect that a white supremacist presence has on the subculture; specifically, the increase in violence that is associated with a white supremacist presence (Blazak 2001). If white supremacists are allowed to become active in a subculture, the experience of many militants has shown that the subculture becomes mired in violence and ultimately serves to build the supremacist movement.

Given the higher level of threat, militants are likely to view confrontation and violence as viable options in response to white supremacists. Militant anti-racists' experiences with the police often justified their ideological orientation toward a distrust of police because they arrived after the fact and often viewed the conflict as a "gang war" or behaved in a manner that demonstrated sympathy with the supremacists. If the police are not to be trusted to protect militants, then they must act to protect themselves and the subcultures in which they participate. Because white supremacist ideology is constructed around building a movement through demonstrations of power through violence, confrontation and violence not only serve to protect anti-racists and the subcultures that they participate in but also to undermine the supremacists' ideology. A movement based on asserting power and control through violence appears irrelevant when it cannot follow through on its promises due to mass resistance. Confrontation and violence became

forms of defense against the political threat posed by white supremacists. Finally, the militants' tactics directly demonstrate to white supremacists that they are not only unwelcome in certain subcultures but also that their very presence will be met with strong and vigilant resistance. The intensity of threat posed by white supremacists to militant anti-racists served as an explanation for the necessity of militant tactics for most of the militants in this study.

# **Implications of the Findings**

The research presented in this dissertation makes a strong contribution to the literature on social movements; and specifically, the literature on the anti-racist movement. Given the dearth of social movements literature on the anti-racist movement, this dissertation serves to inform both the casual reader and scholarly community about the tactical repertoires, ideology, and emotional motivations that inform the movement. The discussion of the tactical repertoire of the anti-racist movement points to two distinct wings within this specific countermovement and implies an interesting dynamic between them – a three way dynamic between the white supremacist movement, the non-militant anti-racists, and the militant anti-racists. My findings on the relationship between ideology and tactics serve to validate the theoretical propositions of Zald (2000) and Fitzgerald and Rodgers (2000) regarding the influence of ideology on social movement activity and the differences between radical and moderate social movements in terms of ideology and tactics, respectively. The findings on the role of threat in tactical choice reinforces Jasper's (1997; 1998) assertion that emotions, and threat especially, serve as a major motivating factor toward action and Tester's (2004) and Jennings and Andersen's

(1996) findings regarding the importance of threat in the choice of militant tactics.

Additionally, this study develops the concept of threat to include three distinct types experienced by anti-racists: physical, political, and spacial.

Tactical Repertoires and Differences Within a Countermovement

The differences in tactical repertoires point not only to a vast schism within the anti-racist movement, but to two very different ways of relating to the subject of opposition, the white supremacist movement, and ultimately to one another. This creates a dynamic where all parties in this MCM dynamic are in opposition to one another. To be sure, both the militants and the non-militants oppose white supremacists and viceversa, but the data indicate that there is a great deal of animosity between non-militants and militants over tactical choice. Non-militants view militants as potentially dangerous and in many cases see their tactics as being similar to those of the supremacists. As a rule, they believed that militants' choice of confrontation and violence was ineffective and potentially dangerous. Conversely, militants view non-militants as agents of repression who are standing between them and their goal of stopping the white supremacist movement. If tactical choice and goals are measures of the relationship between non-militants, militants, and white supremacists, then the schism within the antiracist movement appears to be less a schism and more of a difference between two distinct social movements operating in the same field with very different goals and targets.

Non-militant opposition to the white supremacist movement is indirect because their tactics are not geared specifically toward demonstrating resistance. Instead,

members of the non-militant anti-racist movement overwhelmingly believed that the primary goal of opposing white supremacists was to "send a message of tolerance and unity to the community." While this motivation and the tactical repertoire that accompanies it qualifies the non-militant anti-racist movement as a countermovement in the traditional sense (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996; Peleg 2000; Zald and Useem 1987), it lacks the tactical requisites of a countermovement: 1) damage or destruction of the other group, 2) preemption or dissuasion of group mobilization, and 3) recruitment of the other group's members (Zald and Useem 1987). It's tactical repertoire appears to be similar to Kriesi and his colleagues' (1995) instrumental new social movements who seek to win recognition and influence within the state and other structures of power. The non-militant anti-racist movement seeks to establish legitimacy and draw attention away from other social movements rather than directly opposing them.

The militant anti-racists more readily fit Zald and Useem's (1987) tactical model for countermovements. The use of confrontation and violence are primarily tactics designed to damage or destroy the other group through physical force. Similarly, militant anti-racists work to prevent events from occurring by informing location owners and managers about the nature of the event, blockading the event location, and using property damage or violence against participants as tactics designed to preempt or dissuade white supremacist mobilization. Finally, one-on-one confrontations are in part attempts to force white supremacists to repudiate their membership in the movement. While this is not a direct form of recruitment of the other group's members, it does open the door for recruitment as former white supremacists often find a clear support network among the

anti-racist movement that allows them to successfully transition out. In such confrontations white supremacists are given a chance to openly renounce the movement and to take steps to distance themselves from active participation. Militant anti-racists attempt to develop support networks that provide protection for former white supremacists from violent retribution from their former comrades and the means to distance themselves from the movement<sup>3</sup>. In this sense, the militant anti-racist movement represents a more direct countermovement because it focuses specifically upon the movement that it opposes.

## On the Same Playing Field

The differences in tactical repertoire above highlight the important relationships between non-militants and militants and the white supremacist movement. Non-militant tactics generally draw movement members and supporters away from the physical and metaphorical loci of white supremacist activity. They provide an alternative to the white supremacist movement and demonstrate a repudiation of the movement in favor of a different form of social activity. Militants, on the other had, operate in many of the same subcultures and physical spaces as white supremacists. In this respect, the new social movement activities of identity construction and subcultural activity often bring militants into direct confrontation with supremacists.

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For example, Damon, a militant anti-racist, describes how his organization developed relationships with tattoo artists who would cover up racist artwork for free on former white supremacists who wanted to leave the movement. Such relationships are crucial to giving former white supremacists a feeling of support as they begin to move away from the movement.

Peleg (2000) states that opposing movements operate in similar fields and follow one another into new fields as old ones become dominated by one side or the other. The same appears to be true of the dynamic between militants and white supremacists. As more social movements became associated with subcultures and countercultures (Kriesi et al. 1995), the white supremacist movement also choose to become involved in subcultures that it believed to be hospitable to its message, modeling the style and tactics of left-wing new social movements (Futrell and Simi 2004; Hamm 1993; Vysotsky and Dentice 2008). Because social movements in these subcultures followed the "countercultural" pattern of new social movement activity which blended strong oppositional identity with confrontational and violent tactics (Kriesi et al. 1995), white supremacist activity was confronted and resisted, often employing violence. Additionally, the oppositional identity of anti-racism was blended with the subcultural style making overt displays of political ideology requisite for subcultural and movement membership on both sides. As white supremacists tried to form their own version of the subculture, they were actively resisted by anti-racists who developed their own form of the subculture and confronted the bigots within it.

By operating in the same subcultural field, militants present a much stronger opposition to white supremacy than their non-militant counterparts. They provide a direct confrontation to white supremacists in a space where they are active and model an alternative that is consistent with subcultural identity. By doing so, they incorporate identity construction and subcultural activity that is typical of new social movements (Johnston Laraña and Gusfield 1994; Kriesi et al. 1995).

The relationship between anti-racists ideological beliefs and their tactical choices points to a strong validation of Zald's (2000) concept of social movement activity as ideological structured action. Differing ideologies clearly underpinned both non-militant and militant tactical choices. In the case of the non-militants, their liberalism was not as evident as the militant's anarchism; however, it is my assertion that it was equally influential.

Although non-militants did not express any strong ideological explanations for their tactical choices, it was still evident that they were informed by hegemonic liberalism (Garner 1996). The non-militant's relied on tactics that reflected core beliefs in the freedom of speech and expression, a general trust of the state as neutral arbitrator in disputes, a belief in the importance of civil society in maintaining social order, and the need for the state to intervene to ensure equality under the law. In this respect, their tactical choices are clearly reflections of the ideology of liberalism as understood in contemporary American society. Despite the fact that they did not openly articulate their tactical choices as reflecting ideological concerns, it is clear that they are driven by them.

Militants provide a much stronger example of IDA. They were overwhelmingly conscious of their own ideological position and were more likely to explain their tactical repertoire as resulting from their ideological position. As anarchists, militants understood the role that ideology plays in constructing their tactical repertoire. Their distrust of the state led to a belief in taking direct action. The primary forms that direct action against white supremacists takes are confrontation and violence. As anarchists, the militants in

this study reject the premise that the state holds a monopoly on repressive violence and instead have chosen to act on their own behalf. In doing so, they demonstrate that their tactical repertoire is reflective of their ideology and point to the importance of ideology in grounding social movement activity (Zald 2000).

The relationship between ideology and tactical choice, especially in the case of the militants, provides partial validation of Zald's (2000) claim that social movement activity can be understood as ideologically structured action. In the case of anti-racists, ideology informs the disparate tactical repertoires of non-militants and militants. Each side choosing tactics that are consistent with their respective liberal and anarchist ideologies. These tactics are not only reflective of their ideologies, but are also explained using the ideologies to which each side adheres.

### Standing *Up* to the *Threat*

The research on threat and tactical repertoires presented here makes several key contributions to the literature on the social psychology of social movement activity. By analyzing the relationship between the threat felt by anti-racists from white supremacists and their tactical choices, this study confirms existing concepts and develops several original relationships between threat and tactical choice. First, it confirms Jennings and Andersen's (1996) findings linking intensity of threat to confrontational tactics. Second, it presents threat as a multi-faceted concept that moves beyond Jasper's (1997) conception of "ontological security." Finally, the concept of spacial threat is introduced as a major motivator for action. The findings in this study are; however, incomplete and leave a number of key questions for future research.

The basic assumption of this study states that the intensity of threat felt by antiracists will have a direct effect on their willingness to engage in confrontational and
violent tactics. Following the work of Jennings and Andersen (1996), I found that
individuals who faced the most direct and serious threats from white supremacists were
most likely to engage in confrontational and violent actions. Non-militants faced little or
no direct threat from white supremacists and the rationale for their tactical choices
reflected the relative safety that they felt. Conversely, the vast majority of militants had
faced some form of direct threat from white supremacists and were the victims of
violence. The increased intensity of threat faced by militants was clearly evident in their
discussions of their tactical preferences. Militancy, as a tactical choice is in part a result
of the intensity of threat felt by activists.

The threat that white supremacists pose to anti-racists move beyond the basic sense of safety and security of livelihood that Jasper (1997) described as "ontological security." For militants, especially, the white supremacist movement represents direct political and social competition. The movement was described by many militants as a political opponent because it appeals to a similar base on similar issues. Contemporary white supremacist movements have also learned to frame their rhetoric in language that is strikingly similar to the radical leftist positions of many militants. As a direct political opponent, the white supremacist movement not only subverts the militants' ability to build their own political movements, but its growth represents a potential danger to militants in the form of a potentially violent opposition that will work to repress them.

The concept of space as a location for contestation by social movements is not new (see for example: Polletta (1999), Tilly (2000), and Martin and Miller (2003)). However, space has not been studied as a locus of contention between opposing movements. The struggle between white supremacists and militant anti-racists over subcultural spaces demonstrates that space is an important resources in the competition between opposing movements. Both see subcultures as a key recruiting ground and base from which to build movements. The subcultures also often serve as prefigurative spaces which can model social movements' long-term goals (Futrell and Simi 2004). As such white supremacists pose a distinct threat to the subcultural spaces that anti-racists are active in. The clash between militants and white supremacists often manifests itself as violence within subcultures. This may serve to explain the rationale behind criminal justice professionals' characterization of such struggles as gang activity. To the outside observer, the conflict over a subcultural space appears to be a conflict between rival gangs over territory. However, in reality, the violence is a reflection of the potential threat that white supremacists pose to not only the integrity of the space itself but the subculture as a whole.

The data collected on threat provides clear insight into the role of emotion on social movement tactics. By validating several existing studies on the importance of threat to militant tactics, I provide further understanding of the motivations and explanations of tactical choice. This study also expands the categories of threat that social movement participants face to include the concept of spatial threat that incorporates both physical and metaphorical subcultural spaces in its analysis.

## **Areas of Future Study**

Like all scholarly work, the completion of this study does not signal the end of all understanding of the subject under investigation. The findings of this study leave several important questions for future investigation. First, can the findings of this study be applied to the anti-racist movement globally? Second, do the findings only apply to the anti-racist movement or can they be generalized to other social movements? Third, are there other factors that affect tactical choice that were not evident in this study? Finally, how do white supremacists, as the opposing side in the MCM dynamic, view the anti-racist movement?

Because this study interviewed key informants, it serves as a snapshot of the movement at a specific time and place. Due to constraints of time and research design, this study presents a small sample of a much larger national and global movement. While my observations and movement literature provide validation and some sense of the relevance of the findings to the movement under study, additional study and expansion of the sample under investigation will strengthen the findings. Future studies may need to incorporate quantitative measures of ideology and threat in order to further validate the qualitative data provided. An expansion of the sample may also provide statistically significant differences in quantitative measures that ensures generalizability.

Additionally, because the white supremacist movement and the anti-racist movement are not uniquely American phenomena, replication of this study globally or comparatively in

other nations may provide interesting points of comparison. It is my prediction that the influence of ideology and threat will be similar, if not stronger, in such a study<sup>1</sup>.

This study presents the dynamic within one specific countermovement in the United States – the anti-racist movement. However, the literature on countermovements has focused on a number of opposing movements that focus on the full gamut of economic, political, and social issues present in American society. Do these movements have similar schisms based on tactical preference, ideology, and threat? Can the differences between radical and moderate social movements (Fitzgerald and Rodgers 2000) be explained incorporating similar models of ideological difference and threat? What other explanations do militant activists in other social movements use to explain their tactical choices? By comparing the anti-racist movement to other countermovements and other social movements, I believe that it may be possible to determine some general principles of tactical difference, ideology, and threat.

Because this study only analyzed two distinct factors in relation to tactical preference, ideology and threat, my research may have missed other factors that are crucial in explaining the tactical difference between segments of a social movement. A broad-based study of explanatory factors for tactical difference may resolve this issue by giving social movement participants the chance to explain in detail why they choose the tactics that they choose. By incorporating quantitative measures of factors besides

The interviews featured in *Antifascist Attitude*, a recently produced, independent documentary on Russian anti-fascists, feature ideological positions and scenarios of threat similar to those expressed by militant anti-racists in this study.

interviews featured in Antifascist Attitude

tactical preference, future studies should provide some measure of causality that is impossible given the limitations of this particular study. An extended interview schedule consisting of additional qualitative measures may also open up opportunities for additional explanatory factors regarding tactical choice.

While this study does present important information regarding the dynamic between opposing movements, it is one-sided in its focus on the anti-racist movement. The threat variable is especially dependent on the mobilization of white supremacists. It may be interesting to compare the findings of this study to white supremacists' perceptions of the anti-racists that they oppose. Do the white supremacists recognize the differences between non-militant and militant anti-racists and adjust their tactical repertoires in response to the type of anti-racist movement that they face? Are white supremacists purposely targeting militant anti-racists because of their militant opposition? How do white supremacists feel about the conflict over subcultural space? Do they see it as essential to their social movement mobilization or simply an outgrowth of existing subcultural activity? A detailed study of the attitudes and actions of white supremacists would serve to compliment this study.

By answering many of the questions discussed above, I believe that scholars can develop not only a greater understanding of militant tactics within social movements, but also the dynamics between movements and countermovements. A strong understanding of these concepts and principles will result in stronger and more effective social movements.

# **Implications for Anti-Racists**

This study was not conducted solely for purposes of intellectual curiosity. It was my goal from the beginning to engage in research that would have some impact on the movement under study. I believe that the results of this study may be valuable to the antiracist movement as a whole. The findings in this study serve as indicators of the differences between non-militant and militant anti-racists and have the potential to develop greater understanding of the tactics and motivations for each wing of the movement. It is my hope that this understanding will bring with it a greater tolerance of tactical diversity. In doing so this study has the potential to aid anti-racists in developing successful strategy and praxis in their struggle against organized white supremacists.

This study provides detailed information regarding the different tactical repertoires of non-militant and militant anti-racists and insider opinions on the rationale behind these tactics. This is especially useful for militants because, as stated in Chapter 1, there is a great deal of vilification and malignment of their tactical preference. By placing militant tactics in the context of ideology and threat, non-militants may begin to understand the motivations of the anti-racists that they often condemn as unnecessarily violent and confrontational. The levels of threat faced by militants have the potential to elicit at minimum a sense of understanding behind the perceived necessity to take militant action. This understanding can serve to create a dialog between the two sides that may make each more effective in opposing white supremacists.

The presentation of tactical repertoires in this study opens up an opportunity to discuss the effectiveness of current strategies and tactics against white supremacists.

Both non-militants and militants are provided with a concise overview of the current publicly available information on anti-racist tactics. They are then able to evaluate the effectiveness of such tactics in relation to each side's stated goals regarding their opposition to white supremacists. Additionally, the information provided in this study allows both sides to discuss the effectiveness of the other's tactical choices and their relationship to ideology. In doing so they are able to make informed decisions regarding potential alliances or strengthening the differences so that each is recognizable as a unique social movement rather than as two sides of the same countermovement. It is ultimately my hope that this research will build a stronger anti-racist movement.

By providing information on the anti-racist movement's tactical repertoires, ideologies, and threats faced from opposing movements I hope to give the anti-racist movement a work that may serve to bolster its activities. It is my hope that this work will provide a greater sense of understanding of the motivating factors behind militant antracism that are often left out of debates regarding their tactics. This understanding is meant to provide the movement with a greater understanding of the role that militancy plays and provide some sense of unity in struggle against white supremacists. In doing so, I also hope that the movement as a whole develops strategies and tactics that can be effective in opposing white supremacists. I hope that this will serve as another tool in the fight against organized white supremacists.

# APPENDIX A

# INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1.	Please rate the effectiveness of the following activity as a response to public events by supremacist movements on a scale of 1(least effective) $-5$ (most effective)					
	<ul> <li>a. Holding a rally at a different location and/or at a differ</li> <li>b. Holding a peaceful counter-rally at the site of the even</li> <li>c. Using non-violent tactics (sit-in, blockade, other civil oprevent the event from occurring:</li> </ul>	t:disobedience) to				
	<ul> <li>d. Using violence against attendees of the event in order or to prevent the event from occurring:</li> <li>e. Causing damage or destruction to the location of the experimental partial parti</li></ul>					
	<ul> <li>f. Verbally confronting potential participants:</li> <li>g. Using signs, banners, etc. to demonstrate your opposition its participants:</li> </ul>					
	h. Distributing literature (flyers, anti-fascist newspapers of to the community in which the event is held:	or magazines, etc.)				
	i. Distributing literature (flyers, anti-fascist newspapers of the participants of the event:	or magazines, etc.)				
2.	The primary goal of holding a counter-rally against a suprema (circle one):	cist event is to				
	a. Send a message of tolerance and unity to the communi	ty				
	b. Confront the supremacist movement					
	c. Disrupt the political activity of the supremacist moven	nent				
	d. Stop the event from occurring					
	e. Get media coverage of the counter-rally					
	f. Get positive media coverage of the counter-rally					
	g. Initiate violence by supremacists					
	h. Other (please explain to the interviewer)					
Demo	raphic information					
3.	What is your gender?					
	a. Male					
	b. Female					
4.	What is your sexual orientation?					
	a. Homosexual					
	b. Heterosexual					

Bi-sexual

c.

5. Please identify which age group you belong to. 18-25 26-35 b. 35-50 c. 50 and older d. 6. How would you identify your race/ethnicity? African-American/Black Latino/Latina b. Asian/Pacific Islander c. d. European-American/White Native American e. Arab/Middle Eastern f. Bi-Racial g. Multi-racial h. A race/ethnicity that is not listed (please specify) i. 7. Please describe the religious tradition in which you grew up? Jewish a. Muslim b. Christian c. A religion that is not listed (please specify) d. 8. Please describe the religious tradition with which you currently identify? Jewish a. Muslim h. Christian c. d. A religion that is not listed (please specify) 9. What is the highest level of education that you have completed? High school graduate (or equivalent degree) a. b. Some college Bachelor's degree c. d. Master's degree Ph.D. e. f. A category that is not listed (please specify) 10. Are you currently employed? If yes, what is your job title?

11.

Are you a currently a student?

- 12. What is your current yearly income?
  - a. \$0 \$15,000
  - b. \$15,001 \$35,000
  - c. \$35,001 \$50,000
  - d. \$50,001 \$100,000
  - e. \$100,001 or more

225

#### APPENDIX B

#### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

"Could you please answer question 1 on the survey form?"

1. Of the responses listed above, please list the three that you would be most likely to engage in. Please explain why.

"Could you please answer question 2 on the survey form?"

- 2. Please respond to the following scenarios with your personal opinion regarding the most appropriate and effective response to each situation.
  - a. Small packets of pamphlets and newspapers from supremacist groups have been found on every doorstep in several neighboring communities.
  - b. The White Aryan Nationalist Front, a neo-Nazi organization, is planning on holding a rally and concert in a town near your home town in 2 months.
  - c. Three supremacists have been giving out "Pure White Records," a well known supremacist music label, sampler CDs at a local high school.
  - d. A young man with supremacist markings on his clothing has been seen hanging out at local music stores.
- 3. Are you involved in any organizations that oppose white supremacist groups and organizing efforts? If yes, which ones (you need not name the specific organization)? If no, could you tell me which ones you were involved with in the past?
- 4. Are there groups, organizations, or individuals that you may not be a member of that you would consider allies in the opposition of white supremacists? If yes, which ones (you need not name the specific organization)? What is your opinion of these groups? What is your relationship to these groups?
- 5. What is your level of awareness of the methods and tactics of other organizations that actively oppose white supremacist organizing? Have these had an influence on any of the organizations that you've been a part of? How?
- 6. Are there other groups that you work with on projects of economic, political, or social justice? (Are you involved in any other organizations?) If yes, which ones (you need not name the specific organization)?
- 7. Could you tell me how you became involved in anti-racist activism? What led you to this type of activism? How did you become involved with the organization that you engaged in anti-fascist activism with?

- 8. Do you consider yourself to be an "ally" of traditionally oppressed groups in American society? If yes, please explain in detail what, in your opinion, being an "ally" entails and how you work towards that goal?
- 9. Do you believe that there is a relationship between the state and white supremacist organizations? If yes, what is that relationship? If no, then why not?
- 10. What do you think of the argument that supremacists have a free speech right to express themselves?
- 11. Do you feel threatened by supremacist groups? If yes, have you ever been directly threatened by members of supremacist groups? If yes, how? How did these threats make you feel? (If no, why not?)

"Could you please complete the demographic information section of the survey form?"

APPENDIX C
DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Table C.1 Select Demographics of Participants								
Name	Militancy Score	Sexual Orientation	Age	Race/ Ethnicity	Current Religion	Education	Income	
Non-Militar	nts							
Anna	13	Heterosexual	50+	Latina	Christian	Some Graduate School	\$35,001- \$50,000	
Belinda	11	Heterosexual	36-50	White	None	Some College	\$50,001- \$100,000	
Celia	9	Heterosexual	50+	White	Unitarian	Master's Degree	\$50,001- \$100,000	
Daniel	9	Bisexual	50+	White	None	Master's Degree	\$35,001- \$50,000	
Evelina	9	Bisexual	36-50	Multi- Racial	Unitarian	Bachelor's Degree	\$50,001- \$100,000	
Hilary	8	Heterosexual	50+	White	None	Bachelor's Degree	\$0- \$15,000	
Jane	13	Heterosexual	26-35	African- American	Christian	Bachelor's Degree	\$50,001- \$100,000	
Jessica	10	Heterosexual	50+	White	None	Master's Degree	\$35,001- \$50,000	
Nathaniel	9	Heterosexual	50+	White	Christian	Master's Degree	\$15,001- \$35,000	
Nicole	8	Heterosexual	36-50	Bi-Racial	None	J.D.	\$100,000 or more	
Ross	10	Heterosexual	36-50	White	Christian	Master's Degree	\$100,000 or more	
Tessa	7	Homosexual	36-50	White	Pagan	Bachelor's Degree	\$50,001- \$100,000	
Militants								
Adria	22	Homosexual	26-35	White	None	Master's Degree	\$15,001- \$35,000	
Andreas	21	Heterosexual	26-35	White	Atheist	Some College	\$15,001- \$35,000	

Table C.1	Select Demographics of Participants						
Name	Militancy Score	Sexual Orientation	Age	Race/ Ethnicity	Current Religion	Education	Income
Brock	24	Bisexual	26-35	White	Unitarian	High School	\$35,001- \$50,000
Damon	19	Bisexual	50+	White	None	Master's Degree	\$100,000 or more
Darby	20	Heterosexual	26-35	White	None	Some College	\$15,001- \$35,000
Eowyn	19	Heterosexual	26-35	White	None	Some College	\$0- \$15,000
Eve	21	Bisexual	18-25	White	None	Some College	\$0- \$15,000
Helena	21	Heterosexual	26-35	White	Pagan	Bachelor's Degree	\$0- \$15,000
Kam	24	Heterosexual	18-25	White	Atheist	Some College	\$0- \$15,000
Lydia	20	Homosexual	26-35	White	None	Bachelor's Degree	\$15,001- \$35,000
Marika	21	Bisexual	26-35	Multi- Racial	Pagan	High School	\$0- \$15,000
Mark	25	Heterosexual	26-35	White	Not Specified	Some College	\$0- \$15,000

#### APPENDIX D

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS' OCCUPATIONS

Social Worker

Construction

Taxi Driver

Teacher

Writer

Freelance Software Developer

Community Program Manager

Student Group Coordinator

**Executive Director** 

School Social Worker

**Public Affairs Director** 

**Independent Contractor** 

Veterinary Assistant

Web Designer

Mental Health Counselor

School Principle

Retired (2 respondents)

Researcher

Civil Rights Investigator

Special Education Educator

Program Manager

Registered Nurse

\*Two participants did not enter an occupation category. Both respondents indicated that they were students. It is my assumption that this indicates that they are full-time students.

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