CHAPTER LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This chapter will enable readers to do the following:

1. Understand extremist ideologies and behavior in the United States
2. Differentiate between left-wing and right-wing extremist movements
3. Analyze domestic terrorism in the United States
4. Discuss international terrorism in the United States
5. Understand lone-wolf terrorism in the United States

OPENING VIEWPOINT: LYNCHING—VIGILANTE COMMUNAL TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Lynchings were public communal killings. On most occasions, they were racially motivated hangings or burnings of African American males. Lynch mobs would typically abduct the victim, drag him to the place of execution, physically abuse him (often gruesomely), and then publicly kill him. Lynchings exhibited the following profile:

- White mobs
- Killings of African Americans (usually men) and others
- Physical abuse, including torture, mutilations, and the taking of “souvenirs” from the corpses (bones, toes, etc.)
- Symbolic protection of the white community
- Symbolic warnings to the African American community

Photography was commonly used to record lynchings, and it was not uncommon for members of lynch mobs to pose proudly next to the corpses. This is significant
because the use of the camera to memorialize lynchings testified to their openness and to the self-righteousness that animated the participants. Not only did photographers capture the execution itself but also the carnival-like atmosphere and the expectant mood of the crowd.\footnote{Note}

The term lynching comes from Charles Lynch, a colonial-era Virginia farmer who, during the American Revolution, acted as a judge who hanged outlaws and pro-British colonials (Tories). From 1882 to 1968, nearly 5,000 African Americans are known to have been lynched. Some had been accused of crimes, but most were simply innocent sacrificial victims.

**Note**

Unlike many terrorist environments elsewhere in the world, where the designations of *left* and *right* are not always applicable, most political violence in the United States falls within these designations. Even nationalist and religious sources of domestic political violence have tended to reflect the attributes of U.S. leftist or rightist movements. It is only when we look at the international sources of political violence that the left and right designations begin to lose their precision in the United States. Table 8.1 shows groups responsible for terrorist incidents in the United States, from 2001 to 2011.

**Table 8.1**  
Groups Responsible for Most Terrorist Attacks in the United States, 2001–2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Number of Attacks</th>
<th>Number of Fatalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Earth Liberation Front (ELF)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Animal liberation Front (ALF)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Al-Qa’ida</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Coalition to Save the Preserves (CSP)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Revolutionary Cells-Animal Liberation Brigade</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Al-Qa’ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ku Klux Klan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Minutemen American Defense</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Justice Department</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** These are all groups attributed responsibility for attacks in the GTD between 2001 and 2011. If responsibility for an attack was attributed to more than one group, then both are listed. The total number of attacks with attributed groups is 90. Seven of those attacks list a second perpetrator, resulting in 97 attributions of responsibility.


United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation.
Part II Threats and Vulnerabilities

Within American culture, mainstream values include free enterprise, freedom of speech, and limited government. Depending on one’s ideological perspective, the interpretation of these mainstream values can be very different. Consider the following examples:

- Free enterprise may be viewed with suspicion by the far left but considered sacrosanct (untouchable) by the far right.
- Freedom of speech would seem to be a noncontroversial issue, but the right and left disagree about which kinds of speech should be protected and which should be regulated.
- The role of government is a debate dating back to the time of the American Revolution. The right and left disagree about the degree to which government should have a role in regulating private life.

Also, mainstream American values of past generations, such as Manifest Destiny and racial segregation, have been rejected by later generations as unacceptable extremist ideologies. Thus, conceptualizing the political left, center, and right will shift during changes in political and social culture.

The discussion in this chapter will review the following:

- Extremism in America
- Left-wing terrorism in the United States
- Right-wing terrorism in the United States
- The New Terrorism in the United States
- Lone-wolf terrorism in the United States

Extremism in America

Domestic terrorism in the United States is rooted in extremist ideologies and behaviors emanating from the political left and right and from international sources. These attributes reflect political conditions unique to the United States, including American policies that are opposed from abroad by international actors. The notion of violent extremism growing from American political interaction is often misunderstood. To facilitate your appreciation of the unique qualities of the American case, it is instructive to briefly survey the American left, the American right, and international terrorism in the United States. Table 8.2 compares the championed groups, methodologies, and desired outcomes of typical political environments on the left, at the center, and on the right.
Table 8.2  Typical Political Environments

Activism on the left, right, and center can be distinguished by a number of characteristics. A comparison of these attributes is instructive. The representation here compares their championed groups, methodologies, and desired outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Left Fringe</th>
<th>Far Left</th>
<th>Liberalism</th>
<th>Moderate Center</th>
<th>Conservatism</th>
<th>Far Right</th>
<th>Fringe Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Championed groups</strong></td>
<td>Class/ nationality</td>
<td>Class/ nationality</td>
<td>Demographic groups</td>
<td>General society</td>
<td>General society</td>
<td>Race, ethnicity, nationality, and religion</td>
<td>Race, ethnicity, nationality, and religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology/process</strong></td>
<td>Liberation movement</td>
<td>Political agitation</td>
<td>Partisan democratic processes</td>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>Partisan democratic processes</td>
<td>Political agitation</td>
<td>“Order” movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desired outcome</strong></td>
<td>Radical change</td>
<td>Radical change</td>
<td>Incremental reform</td>
<td>Status quo or slow change</td>
<td>Traditional values</td>
<td>Reactionary change</td>
<td>Reactionary change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter Perspective 8.1 summarizes what is meant by extremist ideology and behavior.

**CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 8.1: Understanding Extremism**

Extremism is a radical expression of one’s political values. Both the content of one’s beliefs and the style in which one expresses those beliefs are basic elements for defining extremism. Thus, a fundamental definitional issue for extremism is how one expresses an idea, in addition to the question of which belief one acts upon. It is characterized by what a person’s beliefs are as well as how a person expresses his or her beliefs. Both elements—style and content—are important for an investigation of fringe beliefs and terrorist behavior.

Thus, no matter how offensive or reprehensible one’s thoughts or words are, they are not by themselves acts of terrorism. Only those who violently act out their extremist beliefs are terrorists. Extremists who cross the line to become terrorists always develop noble arguments to rationalize and justify acts of violence directed against enemy nations, people, religions, or other interests.

In essence, extremism is a precursor to terrorism; it is an overarching belief system terrorists use to justify their violent behavior. It is characterized by intolerance toward opposing interests and divergent opinions, and it is the primary catalyst and motivation for terrorist behavior.

**Left-Wing Extremism in the United States**

The American left traditionally refers to political trends and movements that emphasize group rights. Several trends characterize the American left: labor activism, people’s rights movements, single-issue movements, and antitraditionalist cultural experimentation. Examples include the following:
• **Labor activism.** Historically, labor activism and organizing have promoted ideals frequently found on the left. The labor movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was highly confrontational, with violence emanating from management, the unions, and the state. Socialist labor activists such as Samuel Gompers were quite active in organizing workers. However, the mainstream American labor movement was distinctive, in comparison with European labor movements, in that the dominant labor unions generally rejected Marxist and other socialistic economic ideologies.¹

• **People’s rights.** There have been a number of people’s rights movements on the American left. In the modern era, activism on the left has generally promoted the interests of groups that have historically experienced discrimination or a lack of opportunity. Examples of people’s rights movements include the civil rights, women’s rights, Black Power, gay rights, and New Left movements.

• **Single issue.** Single-issue movements such as the environmentalist and peace movements have also been common on the left.

• **Questioning traditions.** One facet of the left has been a tendency toward anti-traditionalist cultural trends. Manifestations of this tendency have included experimentation with alternative lifestyles and the promotion of countercultural directions such as drug legalization.²

On the far and fringe left, one finds elements of Marxist ideology and left-wing nationalist principles. Terrorist violence from the left has usually been ideological or ethnonationalist in nature. It has typically been carried out by covert underground organizations or cells that link themselves (at least ideologically) to leftist rights movements. Although there have been human casualties as a direct result of leftist terrorism, most violence has been directed at nonhuman symbols, such as unoccupied businesses, banks, or government buildings. Law enforcement officers have also occasionally been targeted, usually by ethnonationalist terrorists. The heyday of leftist terrorism in the United States was from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s.

In sum, *left-wing extremism* is future oriented, seeking to reform or destroy an existing system prior to building a new and just society. To the extent that leftists champion a special group, it is usually one that is perceived to be unjustly oppressed by a corrupt system or government. This group is commonly a class or ethnonational category that, in the leftists’ belief system, must receive the justice and equality that has been denied it. In championing their cause, leftists believe that either reform of the system or revolution is needed to build a just society. In this sense, left-wing extremism is *idealistic.*

### Right-Wing Extremism in the United States

The American right traditionally encompasses political trends and movements that emphasize conventional and nostalgic principles. On the mainstream right, traditional values are emphasized. Examples include family values, educational content, and social order (“law and order”) politics. It is also common on the American right (unlike in the European and Latin American rightist movements) to find an infusion of fundamentalist or evangelical religious principles.

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¹ For a more detailed discussion of labor activism, see the section on the mainstream American labor movement.

² For a comprehensive overview of far-left movements in the United States, see the section on single-issue movements.
On the far and fringe right, one finds that racial, mystical, and conspiracy theories abound; one also finds a great deal of antigovernment sentiment, with some fringe extremists opting to separate themselves from mainstream society. Terrorist violence has usually been racial, religious, or antigovernment in nature. With few exceptions, terrorism from the right has been conducted by self-isolated groups, cells, or individual lone wolves. Unlike most leftist attacks, many of the right’s targets have intentionally included people and occupied symbolic buildings. Most ethnocentric hate crimes—regardless of whether one considers them to be acts of terrorism or aggravated crimes—come from the far and fringe right wing. This type of ethnocentric violence has a long history in the United States. “Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the United States has witnessed several episodic waves of xenophobia. At various times, Catholics, Mormons, Freemasons, Jews, blacks, and Communists have been targets of groups . . . seeking to defend ‘American’ ideals and values.”

Chapter Perspective 8.2 discusses the differences between hate crimes and acts of terrorism.

Right-wing terrorism has occurred within different political and social contexts, from Ku Klux Klan violence during the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s to neo-Nazi violence in the 1980s to antigovernment and single-issue terrorism in the 1990s.

In sum, right-wing extremism is generally a reaction against perceived threats to a group’s value system, its presumption of superiority, or its sense of specialness. Rightists often try to preserve their value system and special status by aggressively asserting this claimed status. They frequently desire to return to a time of past glory, which, in their belief system, has been lost or usurped by an enemy group or culture. In this sense, right-wing extremism is nostalgic.

**CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 8.2: Are Hate Crimes Acts of Terrorism?**

Hate crimes refer to behaviors that are considered to be bias-motivated crimes but that, at times, seem to fit the definition of acts of terrorism. Hate crimes are a legalistic concept in the United States that embody (in the law) a criminological approach to a specific kind of deviant behavior. These laws focus on a specific motive for criminal behavior—crimes that are directed against protected classes of people because of their membership in these protected classes. Thus, hate crimes are officially considered to be a law enforcement issue rather than one of national security.

The separation between hate crimes and terrorism is not always clear because “hate groups at times in their life cycles might resemble gangs and at other times paramilitary organizations or terrorist groups.” They represent “another example of small, intense groups that sometimes resort to violence to achieve their goals by committing . . . vigilante terrorism.” Among experts, the debate about what is or is not terrorism has resulted in a large number of official and unofficial definitions. A similar debate has arisen about how to define hate crimes because “it is difficult to construct an exhaustive definition of the term . . . Crime—hate crime included—is relative.” In fact, there is no agreement on what label to use for behaviors that many people commonly refer to as hate crimes. For example,
in the United States, attacks by white neo-Nazi youths against African Americans, gays, and religious institutions have been referred to with such diverse terms as hate crime, hate-motivated crime, bias crime, bias-motivated crime, and ethno-violence.

Are hate crimes acts of terrorism? The answer is that not all acts of terrorism are hate crimes, and not all hate crimes are acts of terrorism. For example, dissident terrorists frequently target a state or system with little or no animus against a particular race, religion, or other group. Likewise, state terrorism is often motivated by a perceived need to preserve or reestablish the state’s defined vision of social order without targeting a race, religion, or other group. On the other hand, criminal behavior fitting federal or state definitions of hate crimes in the United States can have little or no identifiable political agenda other than hatred toward a protected class of people.

It is when political violence is directed against a particular group—such as a race, religion, nationality, or generalized “undesirable”—that these acts possibly fit the definitions of both hate crimes and terrorism. Terrorists often launch attacks against people who symbolize the cause that they oppose. In the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, and elsewhere, many individuals and groups act out violently to promote an agenda that seeks to “purify” society. These crimes are committed by groups or individuals who are “dealing in the artificial currency of . . . ‘imagined communities’—utopian pipe dreams and idealizations of ethnically cleansed communities.”

Note

a Steven E. Barkan and Lynne L. Snowden, Collective Violence (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2001), 105.
b Ibid., 106.
c Barbara Perry, In the Name of Hate: Understanding Hate Crimes (New York: Routledge, 2001), 8.

Sources of International Terrorism in the United States

International terrorism in the United States has historically included anti-Castro movements, Jewish groups opposing the former Soviet Union’s emigration policy, Irish Provos (the Provisional Irish Republican Army), and sporadic spillovers from conflicts around the world. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, most international terrorism in the United States has come from spillovers originating in Middle Eastern conflicts. Incidents such as the September 11, 2001, homeland attacks indicate that practitioners of the New Terrorism have specifically targeted the United States as an enemy interest.

Operatives carrying out Middle East–related attacks inside the United States have often been foreign nationals who attack symbolic targets, specifically intending to kill people. Some of these attacks have been carried out by prepositioned cells. The members of these cells were drawn from groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, which have had operatives and supporters living in the United States. Collaborative efforts by these and other groups illustrate the internationalization of the New Terrorism, its
loose organizational structure, and its potential effectiveness inside the United States. Other attacks have been carried out by homegrown jihadists sympathizing with the international movement.

- Case in Point: Conspiracy Theories on the American Right

The modern far and fringe right have produced a number of conspiracy theories and rumors. Although they may seem fantastic to nonmembers of rightist movements, many adherents of these theories live their lives as if the theories were an absolute reality. The Patriot movement and related tendencies, in particular, adhere to recent conspiracy theories (further discussion of the Patriot movement is provided later in this chapter).

Conspiracy theories reflect the political and social environments that give rise to the theories, and three phases of modern conspiracy beliefs may be identified.

**Phase 1 Conspiracies: Communist Invaders During the Cold War**

- Rumors “confirmed” that Soviet cavalry units were preparing to invade Alaska across the Bering Strait from Siberia.
- Thousands of Chinese soldiers (perhaps an entire division) had massed in tunnels across the southwestern border of the United States in Mexico.
- Thousands of Vietcong and Mongolian troops had also massed in Mexico across the borders of Texas and California.

**Phase 2a Conspiracies: The New World Order Replaces the Communist Menace**

- Hostile un-American interests (which may already be in power) include the United Nations, international Jewish bankers, the Illuminati, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Trilateral Commission.
- Assuming it is Jewish interests who are in power, the U.S. government has secretly become the Zionist Occupation Government (ZOG).
- The government has constructed concentration camps that will be used to intern Patriots and other loyal Americans after their weapons have all been seized (possibly with the assistance of African American street gangs).
- Invasion coordinates for the New World Order have been secretly stuck to the backs of road signs.
- Sinister symbolism and codes have been found in the Universal Product Code (the bar lines on consumer goods), cleaning products, cereal boxes, and on American paper currency (such as the pyramid with the eyeball).
- Sinister technologies exist that will be used when ZOG or the New World Order makes its move. These include devices that can alter the weather and scanners that can read the plastic strips in American paper currency.
- FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) has built concentration camps for the day when patriotic Americans will be interned.
Phase 2b Conspiracies: Formation of “Citizens’ Militias”

With these and other conspiracy theories as an ideological foundation, many members of the Patriot and related movements organized themselves into “citizens’ militias,” and scores of militias began to be formed during the 1990s. At their peak during this growth period, it is estimated that 50,000 Americans were members of more than 800 militias, drawn from 5 to 6 million adherents of the Patriot movement. After the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, a general decline in Patriot organizations and militias occurred. This decline reversed after the 2008 election of President Barack Obama, when the number of these organizations increased steadily.

Some militia members joined to train as weekend “soldiers,” whereas other militias organized themselves as paramilitary survivalists. Survivalism originated during the Cold War’s Soviet–U.S. rivalry, when many people believed that a nuclear exchange between the superpowers was inevitable. They moved into the countryside, stocked up on food and weapons, and prepared for the nuclear holocaust. Many militias and members of the Patriot movement adapted this expectation to the New World Order conspiracy theory. Militia members who became survivalists went “off the grid” by refusing to have credit cards, driver’s licenses, Social Security numbers, or government records. The purpose of going off the grid was to disappear from the prying eyes of the government and the New World Order or ZOG. Several principles are common to most Patriot organizations and militias:

- The people are sovereign. When necessary, they can resist the encroachment of government into their lives. They can also reject unjust government authority.
- Only an armed citizenry can counterbalance the authority of an oppressive government.
- The U.S. government has become oppressive, so the time is right to organize citizens’ militias.
- It is necessary for citizens’ militias to train and otherwise prepare for the day when an oppressive government or the New World Order moves in to take away the sovereignty of the people.
- The potential for political violence from some members of the armed, conspiracy-bound Patriot movement has been cited by experts and law enforcement officials as a genuine threat.

Phase 3a Conspiracies: 9/11 “Truther” Conspiracy Theories

A number of conspiracy theories emerged in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, part of the so-called “truther” movement. These include the following theories:

- The U.S. government allowed the attacks to happen.
- Explosives destroyed the Twin Towers in a controlled detonation, as evidenced by the vertical fall of the Towers and debris that was pushed through the windows.
• A missile hit the Pentagon, as evidenced by the small size of two holes in the building.
• World Trade Center Building 7 was brought down by controlled explosions.

**Phase 3b Conspiracies: Post-911 Conspiracy Theories**

Other conspiracy theories gained traction in the years following the September 11 attacks. These include the following theories:

• President Barack Obama was not born in the United States (so-called “birther” conspiracies), is a socialist, and is secretly a Muslim.
• The New World Order is spraying toxic chemicals in the atmosphere. These may be seen in the contrails of aircraft.
• The Federal Reserve System will be used to create a one-world banking system.
• Military training exercises such as Jade Helm 15 in 2015 are actually preludes for seizing firearms, declaring martial law, and (in the case of Jade Helm 15) invading Texas.

Table 8.3 summarizes and contrasts the basic characteristics of contemporary left-wing, right-wing, and international political violence in the United States. This is not an exhaustive profile, but it is instructive for purposes of comparison.

### Table 8.3 Attributes of Terrorism in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Activity Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ideological Profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leftist</strong></td>
<td>Marxist; left-wing nationalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rightist</strong></td>
<td>Racial supremacist; antigovernment; religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“Old” international terrorism</strong></td>
<td>Ethno-nationalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>“New” international terrorism</strong></td>
<td>Religious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 8.1 reports tactics used in terrorist incidents in the United States from 1970 through 2011.

![Tactics Used in Terrorist Attacks in the United States, 1970–2011](image)


**Note:** This figure includes up to three tactics per case. We excluded “unknown” (11). The total tactics included is 2,645.

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**Left-Wing Terrorism in the United States**

The modern American left is characterized by several movements that grew out of the political fervor of the 1960s. They are fairly interconnected, and understanding their origins provides instructive insight into the basic issues of the left. One should bear in mind that none of these movements were fundamentally violent in nature, and they were not terrorist movements. However, extremist trends within them led to factions that sometimes espoused violent confrontation, and a few engaged in terrorist violence.

**New Left** A movement of young leftists during the 1960s who rejected orthodox Marxism and took on the revolutionary theories of Frantz Fanon, Herbert Marcuse, Carlos Marighella, and other new theorists.

**Generational Rebellion: New Left Terrorism**

The **New Left** was deeply affected by the war in Vietnam, the civil rights movement, and the turmoil in inner-city African American communities. A number of terrorist groups and cells grew out of this environment. Although the most prominent example was the Weatherman
group, other groups such as the Symbionese Liberation Army also engaged in terrorist violence. The United Freedom Front proved to be the most enduring of all New Left terrorist groups of the era.

**The Weathermen/Weather Underground Organization**

The Weatherman group—known as the Weathermen—jelled at the June 1969 Students for a Democratic Society national convention in Chicago, when SDS splintered into several factions. The Weathermen were mostly young, white, educated members of the middle class. They represented in stark fashion the dynamic ideological tendencies of the era as well as the cultural separation from the older generation. Although they and others were sometimes referred to collectively as the “Crazies,” they operated within a supportive cultural and political environment.

From the beginning, the Weathermen were violent and confrontational. In October 1969, they distributed leaflets in Chicago announcing what became known as their Days of Rage. The Days of Rage lasted four days and consisted of acts of vandalism and street fights with the Chicago police. In December 1969, the Weathermen held a “war council” in Michigan. Its leadership, calling itself the Weather Bureau, advocated bombings, armed resistance, and assassinations. In March 1970, an explosion occurred in a Greenwich Village townhouse in New York City that was being used as a bomb factory. Three Weathermen were killed, several others escaped through the New York subway system, and hundreds of members went underground to wage war.

By the mid-1970s, the Weathermen—renamed the Weather Underground Organization—had committed at least 40 bombings, including attacks on the following targets:

- The Pentagon
- Police stations
- National Guard facilities
- Reserve Officers’ Training Corps buildings
- The Harvard war research center in Cambridge, Massachusetts
- The Gulf Oil corporate headquarters in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Weather Underground also freed counterculture guru Timothy Leary from prison, published a manifesto called Prairie Fire, and distributed an underground periodical called Osawatomie. Their underground network of safe houses and rural safe collectives, which served to hide them and New Left fugitives from the law, was never effectively infiltrated by law enforcement agencies.

By the mid-1970s, members of the Weather Underground had begun to give up their armed struggle and return to aboveground activism, a process they called inversion. Those who remained underground (mostly the East Coast wing) committed acts of political violence into the 1980s, and others joined other terrorist organizations.
The Symbionese Liberation Army

A violent terrorist cell known as the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) gained notoriety for several high-profile incidents in the mid-1970s. The core members were led by Donald DeFreeze, who took the nom de guerre Cinque (after the leader of a nineteenth-century rebellion aboard the slave ship Amistad). Members trained in the Berkeley Hills of California near San Francisco, rented safe houses, and obtained weapons. In November 1973, the Oakland school superintendent was assassinated by being shot eight times; five of the bullets were cyanide tipped. In a communiqué, the SLA took credit for the attack, using a rhetorical phrase that became its slogan, “Death to the fascist insect that preys upon the people!”

In February 1974, newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst was kidnapped by the cell. She was kept bound and blindfolded in a closet for more than 50 days while under constant physical and psychological pressure, including physical abuse and intensive political indoctrination. She broke down under the pressure, and a tape recording was released in which she stated that she had joined the SLA. In April 1974, Hearst participated in a bank robbery in San Francisco. This was a classic case of Stockholm syndrome.

In May 1974, five of the SLA’s core members, including DeFreeze, were killed in a shootout in a house in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles. Patricia Hearst was a fugitive for approximately one year. She was hidden—probably by the Weather Underground—and traveled across the country with compatriots. By 1975, the SLA had a rebirth with new recruits and was responsible for several bank robberies and bombings in California. They referred to themselves as the New World Liberation Front. Hearst was captured in September 1975 in San Francisco, along with another underground fugitive. Most of the other members either were captured or disappeared into the underground.

Civil Strife: Ethnonationalist Terrorism on the Left

Ethnonational violence, which is distinguishable from racial supremacist violence, has been rare in the United States. This is primarily because activist environments have not historically supported nationalist terrorism. Exceptions to this
The following discussion evaluates ethnonational political violence committed by adherents of the Black Liberation and Puerto Rico independence movements. In both examples, the underlying ideological justifications for the violence were Marxist inspired.

The **Black Liberation Movement**

Racial tensions in the United States were extremely high during the 1960s. African Americans in the South directly confronted Southern racism through collective nonviolence and the burgeoning **Black Power** ideology. In the urban areas of the North and West, cities became centers of confrontation between African Americans, the police, and state National Guards. Many Black Power advocates in the North and West became increasingly militant as the summers became seasons of urban confrontation. During what became known in the 1960s as the “long, hot summers,” many cities were social and political powder kegs, and hundreds of riots occurred during the summers from 1964 to 1969. When President Lyndon Johnson and the U.S. Senate organized inquiries into the causes of these disorders, their findings were disturbing. Table 8.4 describes the quality of these findings, which indicate the severity of tensions in urban areas during the mid-1960s.

### Table 8.4  Racial Conflict in America: The “Long, Hot Summers” of the 1960s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Report</th>
<th>Activity Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of urban disturbances</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Casualties</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Killed</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
Within this racially charged environment grew cadres of African American revolutionaries dedicated to using political violence to overthrow what they perceived to be a racist and oppressive system. The most prominent example of African American nationalist terrorism is the Black Liberation Army (BLA), an underground movement whose membership included former members of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense and Vietnam veterans. BLA members were nationalists inspired in part by the 1966 film The Battle of Algiers, a semidocumentary of an urban terrorist uprising in the city of Algiers against the French during their colonial war in Algeria. There were at least two cells (or groups of cells) of the BLA—the East Coast and West Coast groups. The BLA is suspected to have committed a number of attacks in New York and California prior to and after these incidents. They are thought to have been responsible for numerous bombings, ambushes of police officers, and bank robberies to “liberate” money to support their cause. Their areas of operation were California and New York City, although some BLA members apparently received training in the South.

The symbolic leader of the BLA was JoAnne Chesimard, a former Black Panther who later changed her name to Assata Shakur. In May 1973, a gunfight broke out when she and two other BLA members were stopped on the New Jersey Turnpike by a New Jersey state trooper. The trooper was killed, as was one of the occupants of the automobile. Shakur was captured, tried, and eventually convicted in 1977. She was sentenced to life imprisonment but was freed in 1979 by members of the May 19 Communist Organization and spirited to Cuba. She remains there under the protection of the Cuban government.

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**Table 8.4** (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Report</th>
<th>Activity Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injured</td>
<td>1,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal sanctions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrests</td>
<td>10,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convictions</td>
<td>2,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs of damage (in millions of dollars)</td>
<td>$40.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Black Liberation Army (BLA)** An African American terrorist group active during the 1970s. The BLA tended to target police officers and banks.

**Black Panther Party for Self-Defense** An African American nationalist organization founded in 1966 in Oakland, California. The Black Panthers eventually became a national movement. It was not a terrorist movement, but some members eventually engaged in terrorist violence.

**Shakur, Assata** The symbolic leader of the Black Liberation Army (BLA) in the United States, formerly known as JoAnne Chesimard. A former Black Panther, she was described by admirers as the “heart and soul” of the BLA.
Most members of the BLA were eventually captured or killed. Those who were captured were sentenced to long prison terms. Unlike the Weather Underground’s network, the BLA network was successfully penetrated and infiltrated by the FBI, using informants. Those who escaped the FBI net re-formed to join other radical organizations.

**Puerto Rican Independentistas**

Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States, meaning that it is self-governed by a legislature and an executive (a governor) and has a nonvoting delegate to Congress. Opinion about the island’s political status is divided among a majority who wish for it to remain a commonwealth, a large number who favor statehood, and a minority who desire national independence. Those who desire independence are nationalists called independentistas. Most independentistas use democratic institutions to promote the cause of independence; they are activists but are not prone to violence. Many are intellectuals and professionals who are working to build pro-independence sentiment.

Some independentistas are revolutionaries, and a small number have resorted to violence. Puerto Rican nationalist violence on the mainland United States has a history dating to the immediate post–World War II era. For example, on November 1, 1950, two Puerto Rican nationalists attempted to assassinate President Harry Truman at Blair House (the presidential guesthouse) in Washington, D.C. Following the Cuban Revolution, violent Puerto Rican nationalists patterned themselves after Cuban nationalism and viewed the United States as an imperial and colonial power. Cuba did, in fact, provide support for violent independentista groups, especially during the 1980s.

The **Armed Forces for National Liberation** (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional, or FALN) was a very active terrorist organization that concentrated its activities on the U.S. mainland, primarily in Chicago and New York City. One important fact stands out about the FALN: It was the most prolific terrorist organization in U.S. history. The group became active in 1974, and from 1975 to 1983, approximately 130 bombings were linked to the FALN or another group known as the **Macheteros** (“Machete-Wielders”), with the vast majority being the responsibility of the FALN. Most attacks by the FALN were symbolically directed against buildings, although some of their attacks were deadly. The group was also responsible for armored car and bank robberies.

In 1977, FALN leader William Morales was captured by the police after being injured in an explosion at an FALN bomb factory in New York City. In 1979, Morales was freed from a hospital in New York by the May 19 Communist Organization, the same group that freed BLA leader Assata Shakur. He escaped to Mexico, where he remained hidden until 1983. In 1983, Morales was captured by Mexican authorities at an international telephone; he was also convicted in absentia of sedition by a federal district court in Chicago for participation in 25 bombings. In 1988, Mexico refused to extradite Morales to the United States, and he was allowed to move to Cuba, where he remains under the protection of Cuban authorities.

In 1980, more than a dozen FALN members were convicted of terrorist-related crimes. Sentences were imposed for seditious conspiracy, possession of unregistered firearms, interstate transportation of a stolen vehicle, interference with interstate commerce by violence, and interstate transportation of firearms with intent to commit a crime. None of...
these charges were linked to homicides. FALN members’ sentences ranged from 15 to 90 years, and they considered themselves to be prisoners of war.

The Revolution Continues: Leftist Hard Cores

The left-wing revolutionary underground re-formed after the decline of groups such as the Weather Underground and the BLA. These new groups were made up of die-hard former members of the Weather Underground and BLA as well as former activists from other organizations, such as the radicalized SDS and the Black Panthers.

The May 19 Communist Organization

The May 19 Communist Organization (M19CO) derives its name from the birthdays of Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh and Malcolm X. The symbolism of this designation is obvious: It combines domestic and international examples of resistance against self-defined U.S. racism and imperialism. The group was composed of remnants of the Weather Underground, Black Panthers, the BLA, and the Republic of New Africa. M19CO cadres included the founders of the Republic of New Africa and the most violent members of the Weather Underground. Many of the organization’s members were people who had disappeared into the revolutionary underground for years.

M19CO was fairly active, engaging in bank and armored car robberies, bombings, and other politically motivated actions. Its more spectacular actions included participation in the October 1981 robbery of a Brink’s armored car in suburban Nyack, New York. During the robbery, one security guard was killed. After an automobile chase and shootout at a roadblock, during which two police officers died, four M19CO members were captured. One of them was Kathy Boudin, daughter of prominent attorney Leonard Boudin. She had been one of the survivors of the explosion at the Weatherman group’s Greenwich Village townhouse in 1970. Also captured was Donald Weems, a former BLA member.

M19CO adopted several different names when claiming responsibility for its attacks. These aliases included the Red Guerrilla Resistance, the Revolutionary Fighting Group, and the Armed Resistance Unit. After the Nyack incident, M19CO remained active and engaged in several bombings. The group was finally dissolved when its remaining members were arrested in May 1985.

Case in Point: The United Freedom Front

One case is unique in comparison with other New Left, nationalist, and hard-core groups. Formed in 1975, the United Freedom Front (UFF) was underground and active for approximately 10 years. It was a New Left terrorist organization that grew out of a program by former SDS members to educate prison inmates about the political nature of their incarceration.

The UFF is suspected to have committed at least 25 bombings and robberies in New York and New England. The attacks were primarily intended to exhibit anticorporate or antimilitary symbolism.

May 19 Communist Organization (M19CO) An American Marxist terrorist group that was active in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It was composed of remnants of the Republic of New Africa, the Black Liberation Army, the Weather Underground, and the Black Panthers. M19CO derived its name from the birthdays of Malcolm X and Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh.

United Freedom Front (UFF) A leftist terrorist group in the United States that was active from the mid-1970s through the mid-1980s.
UFF members displayed a great deal of discipline in their activities—for example, taking copious notes at regular meetings that they called “sets.” Members went underground in the American suburbs, immersing themselves in the middle class and adopting covers as nondescript residents. The UFF was broken up when its members were arrested in late 1984 and early 1985. Few leftist groups had remained both underground and active for as long as did the UFF.

**Single-Issue Violence on the Left**

The left has produced violent single-issue groups and individuals who focus on one particular issue to the exclusion of others. To them, their championed issue is the central point—arguably the political crux—for solving many of the world’s problems. For example, Ted Kaczynski, also known as the Unabomber, protested the danger of technology by sending and placing bombs that killed three people and injured 22 others during a 17-year campaign.

Typical of leftist single-issue extremism is the fringe environmental movement. Groups such as the **Animal Liberation Front (ALF)** and the **Earth Liberation Front (ELF)** have committed numerous acts of violence, such as arson and vandalism, which they refer to as *ecotage*. Their activity profiles are summarized as follows:

- The ALF favors direct action to protest animal abuse, with the objective of saving as many animals as possible. There is no hierarchy within the movement, and it has operated in small groups.
- The ELF was founded in England by activists who split from the environmentalist group Earth First! because of its decision to abandon criminal activities. It is potentially more radical than the ALF.

The ALF and ELF have coordinated their activities. Several joint claims have been made about property damage and other acts of vandalism, and it is likely that the two groups share the same personnel. For the most part, both the ALF and ELF have been nonviolent toward humans, but they have committed many incidents of property destruction.

ALF and ELF targets include laboratories, facilities where animals are kept, and sport utility vehicles (SUVs). Some of these incidents are vandalism sprees. For example, in 2003, a group of activists apparently affiliated with the ELF went on a firebombing and vandalism spree in the San Gabriel Valley east of Los Angeles. About 125 SUVs and other vehicles parked at homes and auto dealerships were burned or damaged. The initials ELF were also spray-painted. In the latter operation, a doctoral student attending the California Institute of Technology was found guilty of conspiracy and arson.

The FBI estimates that the ELF alone has engaged in 1,200 criminal acts and caused about $100 million in property damage since 1996. In 2001, an ELF firebomb destroyed the University of Washington’s Center for Urban Horticulture, which was rebuilt at a cost of $7 million. In one particularly destructive incident in August 2003, the group caused $50 million in damages to a condominium complex under construction in San Diego.
California. The ELF has also targeted suburban property developments, as occurred in 2008 when four luxury homes were burned in a suburb north of Seattle, Washington. In September 2009, members of the ELF toppled two radio towers near Seattle, Washington.

❖ **Right-Wing Terrorism in the United States**

The modern American right is characterized by several trends that developed from cultural and grassroots sources. Unlike the left, whose characteristics reflect the activism of the 1960s, the right is characterized more by self-defined *value systems*. These value systems have been perceived by many on the right to be under attack and hence in need of protection—often by resorting to activist defense. This tendency is rooted in newly emergent trends such as antigovernment and evangelical religious activism as well as in historical cultural trends such as racial supremacy. Some political controversies, such as illegal immigration, have rallied extremists who promote their own agendas by claiming that such issues justify their extreme beliefs.

**The Past as Prologue: The Historical Legacy of the Ku Klux Klan**

The *Ku Klux Klan (KKK)* is a racist movement that has no counterpart among international right-wing movements; it is a purely American phenomenon. Its name comes from the Greek word *kuklos*, or “circle.” The KKK is best described as an enduring movement that developed the following ideology:

- Racial supremacy
- Protestant Christian supremacy
- American cultural nationalism (also known as *nativism*)
- Violent assertion of Klan racial doctrine
- Ritualistic symbolism, greetings, and fraternal behavior

Klan terminology in many ways is an exercise in racist secret fraternal bonding. Table 8.5 samples the exotic language of the KKK.

**KKK terrorism has been characterized by different styles of violence in several historical periods. Not every Klansman has been a terrorist, nor has every Klan faction practiced terrorism. However, the threat of violence and racial confrontation has always been a part of the Klan movement. In order to understand the nature of Klan violence, it is instructive to survey the historical progression of the movement. There have been several manifestations of the KKK, which most experts divide into five eras.**

**The First-Era Klan**

The KKK was founded in 1866 in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War. Some sources date its origin to Christmas Eve 1865, whereas others cite the year 1866. According to most sources, the
KKK was first convened in Pulaski, Tennessee, by a group of Southerners who initially formed the group as a fraternal association. They originally simply wore outlandish outfits and played practical jokes but soon became a full civic organization. Their first *imperial wizard*, or national leader, was former Confederate general and slave-trader Nathan Bedford Forrest. Military-style rankings were established, and by 1868, the KKK was a secretive and politically violent underground organization. Its targets included African Americans, Northerners, and Southern collaborators. Northern victims were those who traveled south to help improve the conditions of the former slaves as well as profiteering *carpetbaggers*. Southern victims were collaborators derisively referred to as *scalawags*. The KKK was suppressed by the Union Army and the anti-Klan “Ku Klux laws” passed by Congress. Nathan Bedford Forrest ordered the KKK to be officially disbanded, and their robes and regalia were ceremoniously burned. It has been estimated that the Klan had about 400,000 members during its first incarnation.

### The Second-Era Klan

After the Reconstruction era (after the departure of the Union Army from the South and the end of martial law), the KKK re-formed into new secret societies and fraternal groups. It wielded a great deal of political influence and successfully helped restore racial supremacy and segregation in the South. African Americans lost most political and social rights during this period, ushering in conditions of racial subjugation that did not end

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**Table 8.5 The Fraternal Klan**

From its inception in 1866, the Ku Klux Klan has used fraternity-like greetings, symbolism, and rituals. These behaviors promote secrecy and racial bonding within the organization. Examples of Klan language include the following greetings: *Ayak*? (Are you a Klansman?) and *Akia*! (A Klansman I am!). The language used for regional offices is also unique, as indicated in the following examples:

- Invisible Empire
- Realm
- Klavern

The following table summarizes the activity profiles of official Klan organizational designations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Klan Official</th>
<th>Duties</th>
<th>Scope of Authority</th>
<th>Symbolic Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperial wizard</strong></td>
<td>National leader</td>
<td>Invisible Empire</td>
<td>Blue stripes or robe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand dragon</strong></td>
<td>State leader</td>
<td>Realm</td>
<td>Green stripes or robe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exalted cyclops</strong></td>
<td>County leader</td>
<td>Klaverns within county</td>
<td>Orange stripes or robe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nighthawk</strong></td>
<td>Local security and administration</td>
<td>Klavern</td>
<td>Black robe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Klonsel</strong></td>
<td>General counsel</td>
<td>Invisible Empire</td>
<td>White robe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citizen</strong></td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Klan faction</td>
<td>White robe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
until the civil rights movement in the mid-twentieth century. The targets of Klan violence during this period were African Americans, immigrants, Catholics, and Jews.

**The Third-Era Klan**

During the early part of the twentieth century and continuing into the 1920s, the KKK became a broad-based national movement. In 1915, members gathered at Stone Mountain, Georgia, and formed a movement known as the Invisible Empire. The Klan was glorified in the novel *The Clansman* and in the 1915 film *Birth of a Nation*, which was shown in March 1915 at the White House during the administration of President Woodrow Wilson. During this period, the Invisible Empire had between 3 and 4 million members. In 1925 in Washington, D.C., 45,000 Klansmen and Klanswomen paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue. Also during this period, Klan-inspired violence was widespread. Thousands of people—mostly African Americans—were victimized by the KKK. Many acts of terrorism were ritualistic communal lynchings.

**The Fourth-Era Klan**

After a decline because of revelations about Third-Era violence and corruption, the Klan was reinvigorated in 1946—once again at Stone Mountain, Georgia. At this gathering, the Invisible Empire disbanded, and new independent Klans were organized at local and regional levels. There was no longer a single national Klan but rather autonomous Klan factions. During the civil rights movement, some Klan factions became extremely violent. The White Knights of Mississippi and the United Klans of America (mostly in Alabama) committed numerous acts of terrorism to try to halt progress toward racial equality in the American South. This era ended following several successful federal prosecutions on criminal civil rights charges, although the Klan itself endured.

**The Fifth-Era Klan**

Violence during the Fifth Era has been committed by lone wolves, rather than organized Klan activity. The modern era of the Ku Klux Klan is characterized by two trends.

**The Moderate Klan.** Some Klansmen and Klanswomen have tried to moderate their image by adopting more mainstream symbolism and rhetoric. Rather than advocating violence or paramilitary activity, they have projected an image of law-abiding activists working on behalf of white civil rights and good moral values. Those who promote this trend have eschewed the prominent display of Klan regalia and symbols. For example, former neo-Nazi and Klansman David Duke has repeatedly used mainstream political and media institutions to promote his cause of white civil rights. He is the founder of the National Association for the Advancement of White People and the European-American Unity and Rights Organization (EURO).

**The Purist Klan.** A traditional and “pure” Klan has emerged that hearkens back to the original traditions and ideology of the KKK. This group has held a number of aggressive and vitriolic rallies, many in public at county government buildings. Its rhetoric is unapologetically racist and

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**Christian Identity**

The American adaptation of Anglo-Israelism. A racial supremacist mystical belief that holds that Aryans are the chosen people of God, that the United States is the Aryan “promised land,” that nonwhites are soulless beasts, and that Jews are biologically descended from the devil.
confrontational. Some factions of the purist trend prohibit the display of Nazi swastikas or other non-Klan racist symbols at KKK gatherings.

KKK membership has ebbed and flowed in the Fifth Era, in part because of changes in the nation’s cultural and political environment but also because of competition from other racial supremacist movements such as racist skinhead and neo-Nazi groups. There was also fresh competition beginning in the late 1990s from the neo-Confederate movement.

Racial Mysticism: Neo-Nazi Terrorism

In the modern era, most non-Klan terrorism on the right wing has come from members of the neo-Nazi movement. The American version of Nazism has incorporated mystical beliefs into its underlying ideology of racial supremacy. This mysticism includes Christian Identity, Creativity, and racist strains of Ásatrú. Neo-Nazi terrorism is predicated on varying mixes of religious fanaticism, political violence, and racial supremacy. Proponents’ worldview is premised on the superiority of the Aryan race, the inferiority of non-Aryans, and the need to confront an evil global Jewish conspiracy. Another common theme is the belief that a racial holy war (RaHoWa) is inevitable. Chapter Perspective 8.3 discusses the Christian Identity creation myth.

**Creativity** A mystical belief practiced by the racial supremacist World Church of the Creator in the United States. Creativity is premised on a rejection of the white race’s reliance on Christianity, which is held to have been created by the Jews as a conspiracy to enslave whites. According to Creativity, the white race itself should be worshipped.

**Ásatrú** A mystical belief in the ancient Norse pantheon. Some Ásatrú believers are racial supremacists.

**racial holy war (RaHoWa)** A term given by racial supremacists to a future race war that they believe will inevitably occur in the United States.

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**CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 8.3: Race and the Bible: The Christian Identity Creation Myth**

Christian Identity is the Americanized strain of an eighteenth-century quasireligious doctrine called Anglo-Israelism that was developed by Richard Brothers. Believers hold that whites are descended from Adam and are the true Chosen People of God, that Jews are biologically descended from Satan, and that nonwhites are soulless beasts (also called the “Mud People”). Christian Identity adherents have developed two cultish creation stories that are loosely based on the Old Testament. The theories are called One-Seedline Christian Identity and Two-Seedline Christian Identity.

**One-Seedline Christian Identity** accepts that all humans, regardless of race, are descended from Adam. However, only Aryans (defined as northern Europeans) are the true elect of God. They are the “chosen people” whom God has favored and who are destined to rule over the rest of humanity. In the modern era, those who call themselves the Jews are actually descended from a minor Black Sea ethnic group and, therefore, have no claim to Israel.

**Two-Seedline Christian Identity** rejects the notion that all humans are descended from Adam. Instead, its focus is on the progeny of Eve. Two-Seedline adherents believe that Eve bore Abel as Adam’s son but bore Cain as the son of the Serpent (that is, the devil). Outside of the Garden of Eden lived nonwhite, soulless beasts, who are a separate species from humans. They are the modern nonwhite races of the world and are often referred to by Identity believers as Mud People. When Cain slew Abel, he was cast out of the Garden to live among the soulless beasts. Those who became the descendants of Cain are the modern Jews. They are, thus, biologically descended from the devil and are a demonic people worthy of extermination. There is an international conspiracy by the Jewish “devil race” to rule the world. The modern state of Israel and the Zionist Occupation Government in the United States are part of this conspiracy.
The new non-Klan groups came into their own during the 1980s, when Aryan Nations, White Aryan Resistance, and the National Alliance actively disseminated information about supremacist ideology. Members of the new supremacist groups created their own mythologies and conspiracy theories. For example, the novel *The Turner Diaries* is considered by many neo-Nazis to be a blueprint for the Aryan revolution in America. The book inspired the terrorist group The Order (discussed later) in its terrorist campaign as well as Oklahoma City bomber **Timothy McVeigh**. Also on the racist right, the “Fourteen Words” have become a rallying slogan. Originally coined by David Lane, a convicted member of the terrorist group The Order, the Fourteen Words are as follows: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children.” The Fourteen Words have been incorporated into the Aryan Nations’ “declaration of independence” for the white race, and the slogan is often represented by simply writing or tattooing **14**.

Although most violence emanating from these beliefs has been expressed as lone-wolf terrorism and hate crimes, several groups have embarked on violent sprees. For example, a neo-Nazi terrorist cell known as **The Order** was active in 1983 and 1984 and was responsible for robberies and murder, primarily in the Pacific Northwest. A neo-Nazi group calling itself the **Aryan Republican Army (ARA)** operated in the midwestern United States from 1994 to 1996. Inspired by the example of the Irish Republican Army, the ARA robbed 22 banks in seven states before its members were captured. Their purpose had been to finance racial supremacist causes and to hasten the overthrow of the “Zionist Occupation Government.”

**Patriot Threats**

The Patriot movement came to prominence during the early 1990s. The movement considers itself to represent the true heirs of the ideals of the framers of the U.S. Constitution. It hearkens back to what it defines as the “true” American ideals: individualism, an armed citizenry, and minimum interference from government. For many Patriots, government in general is not to be trusted, the federal government in particular is to be distrusted, and the United Nations is a dangerous and evil institution. To them, American government no longer reflects the will of the people; it has become dangerously intrusive and violently oppressive. The Patriot movement is not ideologically monolithic, and numerous tendencies have developed, such as the Common Law Courts and Constitutionals.

Two events from the 1990s served to invigorate paranoid political activism on the Patriot right, giving rise to new conspiracy theories. These events were the tragedies at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, and Waco, Texas.

- **Ruby Ridge**. In August 1992 at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, racial supremacist Randy Weaver and his family, with compatriot Kevin Harris, were besieged by federal agents in
response to Weaver’s failure to reply to an illegal weapons charge. Weaver’s teenage son Sammy and U.S. Deputy Marshal William Degan were killed during a shootout that occurred when Sammy, Randy, and Harris were confronted as they walked along a path. Weaver’s wife Vicky was later fatally shot by an FBI sniper as she held her baby in the doorway of the Weaver home. The sniper had previously fired shots at Randy Weaver and Harris. Members of the Patriot movement and other right-wing extremists cite this incident as evidence of a broad government conspiracy to deprive freedom-loving “true” Americans of their right to bear arms and other liberties. Randy Weaver’s story has inspired Patriots and other members of the extreme right.

- Waco. In early 1993 at Waco, Texas, federal agents besieged the Branch Davidian cult’s compound after a failed attempt in February to serve a search warrant for illegal firearms had ended in the deaths of four federal agents and several cult members. On April 19, 1993, during an assault led by the FBI, about 80 Branch Davidians—including more than 20 children—died in a blaze that leveled the compound. Patriots and other rightists consider this tragedy, like the Ruby Ridge incident, to be evidence of government power run amok.

In 1992, former KKK member Louis Beam began to publicly advocate leaderless resistance against the U.S. government. Fundamentally a cell-based strategy, leaderless resistance requires the formation of phantom cells to wage war against enemy interests and the government. Dedicated neo-Nazis and Patriots believe that the creation of phantom cells and leaderless resistance will prevent infiltration from federal agencies. The chief threat of violence came from the armed militias, which peaked in membership immediately prior to and after the Oklahoma City bombing. After the Oklahoma City bombing, federal authorities broke up at least 25 Patriot terrorist conspiracies. Chapter Perspective 8.4 discusses Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City bombing.

leaderless resistance A cell-based strategy of the Patriot and neo-Nazi movements in the United States, requiring the formation of “phantom cells” to wage war against the government and enemy interests. Dedicated Patriots and neo-Nazis believe that this strategy will prevent infiltration from federal agencies.

militias Organized groups of armed citizens who commonly exhibit antigovernment tendencies and subscribe to conspiracy theories. The armed manifestation of the Patriot movement.

CHAPTER PERSPECTIVE 8.4: The Oklahoma City Bombing

On April 19, 1995, Timothy McVeigh drove a rented Ryder truck to the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. He deliberately chose April 19 as a symbolic date for the attack; it was the 220th anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord and the second anniversary of the law enforcement disaster in Waco, Texas.

McVeigh was a hard-core devotee of the Patriot movement and a believer in New World Order conspiracy theories. He was almost certainly a racial supremacist, having tried to solicit advice from the neo-Nazi National Alliance and the racial separatist Elohim City group about going underground after the bombing. McVeigh had also visited the Branch Davidian site at Waco, Texas, where about 75 members of the Branch Davidian cult died in a fire that was ignited during a paramilitary raid by federal law enforcement officers.

(Continued)
McVeigh had converted the Ryder truck into a powerful mobile ammonium nitrate and fuel oil (ANFO)–based bomb. He used “more than 5,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate fertilizer mixed with about 1,200 pounds of liquid nitromethane, [and] 350 pounds of Tovex.” When he detonated the truck bomb at 9:02 a.m., it destroyed most of the federal building and killed 168 people, including 19 children. More than 500 others were injured.

McVeigh’s attack was, in large part, a symbolic act of war against the federal government. He had given careful consideration to achieving a high casualty rate, just as “American bombing raids were designed to take lives, not just destroy buildings.”

The deaths of the 19 children were justified in his mind as the unfortunate “collateral damage” against innocent victims common to modern warfare. Timothy McVeigh was tried and convicted, and he was executed in a federal facility in Terre Haute, Indiana, on June 11, 2001. His execution was the first federal execution since 1963.

Notes


‡Ibid., 164.

§Ibid., 224.

‖Ibid., 234.

Although the Patriot movement attracted a significant number of adherents during the 1990s and although militias at one point recruited tens of thousands of members, no underground similar to that of the radical left was formed. Relatively few terrorist movements or groups emanated from the Patriot movement, largely because many members were “weekend warriors” who did little more than train and also because law enforcement agencies successfully thwarted a number of true Patriot-initiated plots. Thus, despite many implicit and explicit threats of armed violence from Patriots, terrorist conspiracies were rarely carried to completion.

The number of militias declined during the period between the April 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and the American homeland attacks of September 11, 2001. By 2000, the number of Patriot organizations was only one-fourth of the 1996 peak, and this general decline continued after September 11. This occurred for several reasons: First, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing caused many less-committed members to drift away. Second, the dire predictions of apocalyptic chaos for the new millennium that were embedded in the Patriots’ conspiracy theories did not materialize, especially the predicted advent of the New World Order. Third, the September 11, 2001, attacks shifted attention from domestic issues to international threats. Experts noted, however, that the most militant and committed Patriot adherents remained within the movement and that these dedicated members constituted a core of potentially violent true believers. This became evident after the 2008 presidential elections, when the number of Patriot organizations and identified militia groups increased markedly. The following trend occurred:

- 1996: 858 Patriot organizations, 370 armed militias
- 2001: 158 Patriot organizations, 73 armed militias
2006: 147 Patriot organizations, 52 armed militias
2008: 149 Patriot organizations, 42 armed militias
2009: 512 Patriot organizations, 127 armed militias
2010: 824 Patriot organizations, 330 armed militias
2012: 1,360 Patriot organizations, 321 armed militias
2013: 1,096 Patriot organizations, 240 armed militias.
2014: 874 Patriot organizations, about 200 armed militias

❖ Case in Point: Moralist Terrorism

Moralist terrorism refers to acts of political violence motivated by a moralistic worldview. Most moralist terrorism in the United States is motivated by an underlying religious doctrine, and this is usually a fringe interpretation of Christianity. Abortion clinics and gay establishments have been targets of moralist violence.

Examples of moralist terrorism and threats against abortion providers include the following incidents:

- June and December 1984: An abortion clinic was bombed twice in Pensacola, Florida.
- March 1993: A physician was shot and killed outside an abortion clinic in Pensacola.
- July 1994: A physician and his bodyguard were killed outside an abortion clinic in Pensacola.
- October 1997: A physician was wounded by shrapnel in Rochester, New York.
- January 1998: A bomb was detonated at an abortion clinic in Montgomery, Alabama, killing a police officer and severely wounding a nurse. Eric Robert Rudolph was convicted for the attack.
- October 1998: A physician was killed in Amherst, New York.
- 1998–2000: Scores of letters with notes claiming to be infected with anthrax bacteria were sent to abortion clinics in at least 16 states.
- Post–September 11, 2001: During an actual anthrax attack in the period following the September 11 attacks, scores of letters were sent to abortion clinics in a number of states claiming to be infected with anthrax.
- May 2009: A physician was shot and killed inside his church in Wichita, Kansas, during religious services by an anti-abortion extremist, who confessed to the murder.
- 2011–2016: Several cases of arson and at least one bombing occurred at abortion clinics nationwide. Most cases were unsolved.
- November 2015: An anti-abortion gunman killed three people, including a police officer, at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The assailant declared during a court appearance that he was “a warrior for the babies.”
Examples of violent moralist movements include the **Army of God** and the **Phineas Priesthood**. They are both shadowy movements that apparently have little or no organizational structure, operate as lone wolves or cells, and answer to the “higher power” of their interpretations of God’s will. They seem to be belief systems in which like-minded activists engage in similar behavior. The Phineas Priesthood is apparently a “calling” (divine revelation) for Christian Identity fundamentalists, and the Army of God membership is perhaps derived from fringe evangelical Christian fundamentalists. These profiles are speculative, and it is possible that they are simply manifestations of terrorist contagion (copycatting). There has also been speculation that both movements are linked. Nevertheless, it is instructive to review their activity profiles.

### The Army of God

The Army of God is a cell-based and lone-wolf movement that opposes abortion and homosexuality. Its ideology is apparently a fringe interpretation of fundamentalist Protestantism, although it has also exhibited racial supremacist tendencies. The methodology of the Army of God has included the use of violence and intimidation, primarily in attacks against abortion providers and gay and lesbian targets. The Army of God posted a website with biblical references and grisly pictures of abortions, and the manifesto disseminated by the group included instructions for manufacturing bombs. The website also pays homage to those the movement considers political prisoners and martyrs in their cause.

The Army of God first appeared in 1982 when an Illinois abortion provider and his wife were kidnapped by members of the group. It has since claimed responsibility for a number of attacks, primarily against abortion providers.

- February 1984: A clinic in Norfolk, Virginia, where abortions were performed was firebombed.
- February 1984: A clinic in Prince George’s County, Maryland, where abortions were performed was firebombed.
- July 1994: Paul Hill, an antiabortion activist, shot and killed a physician and his bodyguard, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, in Pensacola, Florida. Hill was executed by lethal injection in September 2003. He was the first person to be executed for anti-abortion violence.
- January 1997: A clinic in Atlanta, Georgia, where abortions were performed was bombed.
- February 1997: A nightclub in Atlanta was bombed. Its patrons were largely gays and lesbians.
- January 1998: An abortion clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, was bombed, killing a police officer and severely wounding a nurse.
One apparent affiliate of the Army of God—Eric Robert Rudolph—became a fugitive after he was named a suspect in the Birmingham bombing and the Atlanta bombings. Rudolph was also wanted for questioning for possible involvement in the July 1996 bombing at Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta during the Summer Olympic Games and was linked to a militia group in North Carolina. He was captured in May 2003 in the mountains of North Carolina. In April 2005, Rudolph pleaded guilty to the Birmingham and Atlanta bombings as well as the Centennial Olympic Park attack. He was also convicted for two other clinic bombings and the bombing of a gay bar.

Regarding the November 2015 attack on a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, Colorado, the following comment was posted on the Army of God Website:

**Planned Parenthood Colorado Springs**

Robert Lewis Dear aside, Planned Parenthood murders helpless preborn children. These murderous pigs at Planned Parenthood are babykillers and they reap what they sow. In this case, Planned Parenthood selling of aborted baby parts came back to bite them.

**Anyone who supports abortion has the blood of babies on their hands.**

**The Phineas Priesthood**

Phineas Priests were first described in the 1990 book *Vigilantes of Christendom: The History of the Phineas Priesthood.* The book is a fundamentalist interpretation of Christian Identity. In the book, the alleged history of the Phineas Priesthood is traced from biblical times to the modern era. The name is taken from the Bible at chapter 25, verse 6 of the Book of Numbers, which tells the story of a Hebrew man named Phineas who killed an Israelite man and his Midianite wife in the temple. According to the Book of Numbers, this act stayed the plague from the people of Israel.

Phineas Priests believe that they are called by God to purify their race and Christianity. They are opposed to abortion, homosexuality, interracial mixing, and whites who “degrade” white racial supremacy. Members also believe that acts of violence—called **Phineas actions**—will hasten the ascendancy of the Aryan race. The Phineas Priesthood is a calling for men only, so no women can become Phineas Priests. The calling also requires an absolute and fundamentalist commitment to Christian Identity mysticism. Beginning in the 1990s, acts of political and racial violence have been inspired by this doctrine. Early incidents include the following:

- In 1991, Walter Eliyah Thody was arrested in Oklahoma after a shootout and chase. Thody claimed to be a Phineas Priest and stated that fellow believers would also commit acts of violence against Jews and others.
- In 1993, Timothy McVeigh apparently “made offhand references to the Phineas Priesthood” to his sister.
- From 1994 to 1996, the Aryan Republican Army robbed 22 banks throughout the Midwest. Members of the ARA had been influenced by *Vigilantes of Christendom* and the concept of the Phineas Priesthood.
In October 1996, three Phineas Priests were charged with bank robberies and bombings in Washington State. They had left political diatribes in notes at the scenes of two of their robberies. The notes included their symbol, 25:6, which denotes chapter 25, verse 6 of the Book of Numbers.

Typical of more recent incidents is the 2014 lone-wolf attack by Larry Steven McQuilliams in Austin, Texas. On November 28, 2014, McQuilliams fired at a Mexican consulate and tried to set it on fire. He also fired more than 100 shots at a federal building and at a police station. McQuilliams was shot and killed by an Austin police officer. A copy of *Vigilantes of Christendom: The History of the Phineas Priesthood* was found in his residence.

Because the Phineas Priesthood has been a lone-wolf and cell-based phenomenon, it is impossible to estimate its size or even whether it has ever been much more than an example of the contagion effect. Nevertheless, the fact is that a few true believers have considered themselves to be members of the Phineas Priesthood, and the concept of Phineas actions was taken up by some adherents of the moralist and racial supremacist right.

## The New Terrorism in the United States

International terrorism has been relatively rare in the United States, and the number of international terrorist incidents is much lower than in other countries. During most of the postwar era (prior to the 1990s), international incidents in the United States were spillovers from conflicts in other Western countries and were directed against foreign interests with a domestic presence in the United States. Most of these spillovers ended after a single incident or a few attacks. Some terrorist spillovers were ongoing campaigns. Like the short-term incidents, these campaigns were directed primarily against non-American interests. Examples include the anti-Castroite group **Omega 7** and American suppliers of the Provisional Irish Republican Army. The terrorist environment changed during the 1990s, when American interests began to be directly attacked domestically by international terrorists. A new threat emerged from religious radicals who considered the United States a primary target in their global jihad.

### Jihad in America

The American people and government became acutely aware of the destructive potential of international terrorism from a pattern that emerged during the 1990s and culminated on September 11, 2001. The following incidents were precursors to the modern security environment:

- February 1993: In the first terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, a large vehicular bomb exploded in a basement parking garage. This was a failed attempt to topple one tower into the other. Six people were killed, and more than 1,000 were injured. The mastermind behind the attack was the dedicated international terrorist Ramzi Yousef. His motives were to support the Palestinian people, to punish the...
United States for its support of Israel, and to promote an Islamic jihad. Several men, all jihadis, were convicted of the attack.

- October 1995: Ten men were convicted in a New York federal court of plotting further terrorist attacks. They had allegedly conspired to attack New York City landmarks, such as tunnels, the United Nations headquarters, and the George Washington Bridge.

These incidents heralded the emergence of a threat to homeland security that had not existed since World War II. The practitioners of the New Terrorism apparently concluded that assaults on the American homeland were desirable and feasible. The key preparatory factors for making these attacks feasible were the following:

- The attacks were carried out by operatives who entered the country for the sole purpose of carrying out the attacks.
- The terrorists had received support from cells or individuals inside the United States. Members of the support group had facilitated the terrorists’ ability to perform their tasks with dedication and efficiency.

The support apparatus profile in the United States for these attacks was not entirely unknown; militants had been known to be in the United States since the late 1980s and 1990s. For example, aboveground organizations were established to funnel funds to the Middle East on behalf of Hamas, Hezbollah, and other movements. These organizations—and other social associations—were deliberately established in many major American cities. The fact is that since at least the late 1980s, anti-American jihadi sentiment has existed within the United States among some fundamentalist communities. Significantly, jihad has been overtly advocated by a number of fundamentalist leaders who have taken up residence in the United States.

**September 11, 2001**

The worst incident of modern international terrorism occurred in the United States on the morning of September 11, 2001. It was carried out by 19 al-Qaeda terrorists who were on a suicidal “martyrdom mission.” They committed the attacks to strike at symbols of American (and Western) interests in response to what they perceived to be a continuing process of domination and exploitation of Muslim countries. They were religious terrorists fighting in the
name of a holy cause against perceived evil emanating from the West. Their sentiments had been born in the religious, political, and ethnonational ferment that has characterized the politics of the Middle East for much of the modern era.

The symbolism of a damaging attack on homeland targets was momentous because it showed that the American superpower was vulnerable to attack by small groups of determined revolutionaries. The Twin Towers had dominated the New York skyline since the completion of the World Trade Center in 1972. They were a symbol of global trade and prosperity and the pride of the largest city in the United States. The Pentagon, of course, is a unique building that symbolizes American military power, and its location across the river from the nation’s capital showed the vulnerability of the seat of government to attack.

The Anthrax Crisis: A Post-9/11 Anomaly

After the September 11 attacks, the activity profile of international terrorism in the United States shifted to cell-based religious terrorist spillovers originating in the Middle East. The threat from the New Terrorism in the United States included the very real possibility of a terrorist campaign using high-yield weapons to maximize civilian casualties.

The potential scale of violence was demonstrated by an anthrax attack immediately after the September 11 attacks when, for the first time in its history, the threat of chemical, biological, and radiological terrorism became a reality in the United States. During October through December 2001, more than 20 people were infected by anthrax-laced letters; five victims died. The attack made use of the U.S. postal system when letters addressed to news organizations and two members of the U.S. Senate were mailed from Princeton, New Jersey. Some of the letters contained references to radical Islam, causing a presumption by authorities and the public that the anthrax incident was part of an ongoing attack against the American homeland.

The crisis led to an extensive manhunt by the FBI, which conducted more than 10,000 interviews on six continents, including intensive investigations of more than 400 people. One person under careful investigation was Dr. Bruce Ivins, a microbiologist and army biodefense scientist. Ivins worked for decades on the army’s anthrax vaccination program at the army biodefense laboratory in Maryland. The FBI’s investigation involved detailed scrutiny of his behavioral habits, e-mail, his trash, and computer downloads. The FBI’s scrutiny included attaching a global positioning satellite device to his automobile. Ivins committed suicide in July 2008 after he learned federal authorities were possibly moving forward with a criminal indictment against him. In February 2010, the FBI released an extensive report that closed its investigation of Ivins. However, debate continued about whether Ivins was responsible for the mailings. In January 2011, the National Academy of Sciences questioned the veracity of the FBI’s evidence. In March 2011, a panel of psychiatrists developed a psychological profile of Ivins and concluded that the case against him was persuasive. Nevertheless, prominent scientists and investigative journalists continued to raise serious questions about the FBI’s testing procedures and the accuracy of the FBI investigation.
Case in Point: The Threat from Homegrown Jihadists

A significant threat to homeland security in the United States and Europe arose from an unanticipated source: homegrown sympathizers of the international jihadist movement. Domestic security became increasingly challenged in the aftermath of high-casualty terrorist incidents carried out by extremists residing in Western democracies. Such incidents were particularly problematic because many of the perpetrators were seamlessly woven into the fabric of mainstream society.

The Fort Hood Incident

On November 5, 2009, a gunman opened fire in the sprawling military base at Fort Hood, Texas, killing 13 people and wounding 29. The attack occurred inside a Fort Hood medical center, and the victims were four officers, eight enlisted soldiers, and one civilian. The shooter was army major Nidal Malik Hasan, a psychiatrist at the base who treated returning veterans for combat stress.

Hasan is an interesting profile in how someone born and raised in the West can eventually adopt an ideology that advocates violent resistance to Western governments and policies. He was born in Virginia to Palestinian parents. He received an undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech University and eventually graduated from medical school with a specialization in psychiatry. Hasan was a devout Muslim who eventually became outspoken about his opposition to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He also had a history of expressing himself provocatively. For example, at a public health seminar he presented a PowerPoint presentation titled “Why the War on Terrorism Is a War on Islam.” At another presentation to medical colleagues, Hasan detailed the torments awaiting non-Muslims in hell. On other occasions, he proselytized his patients on behalf of Islam, argued that he believed Islamic law (shari’ah) is superior to the U.S. Constitution, and publicly identified himself as a Muslim first and an army officer second.
During his trial in 2013, Hasan represented himself and refused to cross-examine witnesses called by the prosecution, thus essentially refusing to mount a defense on his own behalf. He was found guilty as charged.

After the Fort Hood attack, investigators uncovered connections between Hasan and an openly radical cleric named Anwar al-Awlaki. Like Hasan, al-Awlaki grew up in the United States, having been born in New Mexico. He eventually became a dedicated jihadi who specialized in recruiting English-speaking Muslims and Muslims who had been raised in the West, the rationale being that such recruits would be able to blend in more easily. Al-Awlaki also became known as a propagandist who maintained a website with his writings about how to wage jihad. He was believed to operate from Yemen.

The cases of Major Hasan and Anwar al-Awlaki are two examples of an increasing pattern of homegrown jihadists in Western countries. In the United States, for example, federal prosecutors in December 2009 charged David Coleman with conspiring to assist the Pakistani terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba with planning the November 2008 assault in Mumbai as well as another planned attack in Denmark. There are also cases of Americans leaving the country to join radical jihadi groups, including Somali Americans recruited to fight with al-Qaeda-affiliated groups in Somalia, and five Americans arrested by Pakistani authorities who proudly proclaimed their dedication to waging holy war.

**The Boston Marathon Bombing**

On April 15, 2013, two bombs were detonated at the crowded finish line of the Boston Marathon. Three people were killed, and more than 260 were wounded, many severely. The devices were constructed from pressure cookers and were detonated 13 seconds apart within approximately 210 yards of each other. They were packed with nails, ball bearings, and possibly other metal shards. Emergency response occurred swiftly, in part because medical personnel and emergency vehicles were already on hand to assist runners at the finish line. Law enforcement officers were also present as members of the race’s security detail.

Two brothers, Dzokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev, were responsible for the attack. The Tsarnaevs were young immigrants from Chechnya who had resided in the United States since about 2002. Tamerlan, the elder brother, became radicalized during a visit to Chechnya when he became a committed Islamist. His and Dzokhar’s underlying motive for the attack was to condemn the United States’ interventions in the Middle East. It was reported that they downloaded instructions on how to construct pressure-cooker bombs from the online al-Qaeda magazine *Inspire*.

FBI analysis of video and photographic evidence from the scene of the attack eventually focused on images of two men whose behavior and demeanor differed from that of others in the crowd. Images of the men, one wearing a black baseball cap (Tamerlan) and the other wearing a white cap backward (Dzokhar), were disseminated to law enforcement officials, the media, and the public. During the manhunt, the Tsarnaevs shot and killed a Massachusetts Institute of Technology police officer. They also carjacked a vehicle and forced its occupant to withdraw money from an ATM. The victim escaped when the pair stopped at a gas station, ran to another station, and notified the authorities. The victim left his cell phone in the car, which was used by the authorities to track the Tsarnaevs. They were later observed driving a stolen sport utility vehicle and were confronted by the police. An intense gunfight ensued, and Tamerlan Tsarnaev was killed.
when he was run over by the SUV driven by his brother. Dzhokhar Tsarnaev temporarily evaded the police, but he was eventually captured after an intense door-to-door manhunt while hiding in a boat parked in a backyard.

The question of motivation for the Boston Marathon attack is an instructive case study. Young immigrant men from a war-torn country became disaffected and radicalized even though they relocated to a society largely removed from the turmoil in their homeland. This disaffection is not uncommon among some migrants to the West and demonstrates a view of the world that transcends nationality; it represents the adoption of a globalized radical worldview. For disaffected individuals who may be marginalized in their new country of residence, radical ideologies provide a common connection to an international movement.

**The San Bernardino Attack**

On December 2, 2015, 14 people were killed and 21 injured when two armed assailants—a married couple—attacked the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California. The state-run center assisted people with developmental disabilities. The assailants were Syed Rizwan Farook, who had worked at the regional center for five years, and his wife Tashfeen Malik. Farook was born and raised in the United States, and his wife Malik was born in Pakistan. Farook previously traveled abroad to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, where he participated in the Muslim hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca. He returned to the United States in July 2014 with Malik, whom he subsequently married.

On the day of the attack, Farook attended a holiday party at the regional center. He left the gathering and went to his home to prepare with Malik for their assault. They left their six-month-old child with Farook's mother, advising her that they were on their way to a medical appointment. Farook and Malik then dressed in paramilitary tactical gear and armed themselves. They returned to the regional center carrying semiautomatic assault rifles and pistols while wearing masks and opened fire on celebrants at the holiday party, killing and wounding at least 35 people. They left the facility and returned home, where the police had posted a stakeout after a tip about the vehicle they were driving. Law enforcement officers identified their vehicle and gave chase when Farook and Malik took to the road. During the chase, Farook and Malik shot at police officers and tossed an inert pipe out of their vehicle, apparently as an attempted ruse that it was a pipe bomb. Both assailants were shot and killed when they halted the vehicle and engaged in an intensive firefight with more than 20 officers.

The incident required extensive prior planning by the couple. Aside from the weapons and tactical gear in their possession during the assault and chase, a search of their home by law enforcement officers uncovered 12 functional pipe bombs, thousands of rounds of ammunition, and material for constructing more bombs. The couple had also placed an improvised explosive device (IED) at the scene of the assault. The IED consisted of three pipe bombs with a remote control detonator that would have been activated by a toy car controller. A law enforcement official reported that an unsuccessful attempt had been made to convert at least one of the semiautomatic assault rifles to fully automatic. Farook and Malik attempted to destroy computer hard drives and other electronic equipment in their home prior to the incident.

The incident also confirmed the reality of a domestic threat environment in the United States that for years had existed in Europe: mass-casualty violence emanating
from homegrown terrorists inspired by international terrorist movements. During the attack, Malik posted a message on Facebook, under an alias, pledging allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of ISIL. Two days later, a pro-ISIL broadcast declared that the couple were supporters of the movement.

**Lone-Wolf Terrorism in the United States**

As reported from cases presented in this chapter, many incidents of terrorist violence have been committed by individual extremists who act alone without clearly identifiable associations with terrorist organizations or networks. Such individuals certainly profess an intellectual or ideological identification with extremist causes, but they are lone operators who act on their own initiative or are sent on lone missions by extremist organizations. This phenomenon—the lone-wolf model—occurs with regularity in the United States, Europe, Israel, and elsewhere. The United States, in particular, has a high incidence of lone-wolf terrorism, with an estimated 40 percent of incidents occurring in the United States during the past four decades.10

It is a very difficult model to combat because, conceptually, terrorist cells can be as small as a single individual who is unknown to law enforcement or intelligence services. Historically, most lone-wolf attacks in the United States have been racially motivated, antigovernment, or religion-related attacks. Religion-related attacks tend to be motivated by either moralist or jihadist beliefs. Plausible threat scenarios concerning radicalization from international extremists also pose an increasing risk because of the prevalence of individual access to the Internet, social networking media, and other digital technologies.

**Racial and Anti-Government Lone Wolves**

In the modern era, most violence emanating from racial supremacist sentiment in the United States has been conducted as lone-wolf terrorism and hate crimes by perpetrators professing overtly racist or anti-Semitic motivations. In comparison, antigovernment lone wolves tend to attack individual officials or government offices because they symbolize their dissatisfaction with government policies. Some lone wolves combine antigovernment sentiment with racial supremacy or anti-Semitism. For example, on April 4, 2009, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Richard Poplawski opened fire on police officers inside his mother’s home with a shotgun, .357 Magnum handgun, and an AK-47 assault rifle, killing three and wounding three others. Poplawski had lain in wait for the officers after summoning them to the house, ambushing them when they appeared. He was motivated by antigovernment and anti-Zionist sentiment.

The following cases further illustrate the type of violence emanating from racial and antigovernment lone wolves.

**Richard Baumhammers**

A typical example of neo-Nazi lone-wolf violence is the case of Richard Baumhammers. Baumhammers was a racist immigration attorney influenced by neo-Nazi ideology who murdered five people and wounded one more on April 28, 2000, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He methodically shot his victims during a 20-mile trek. The
victims were a Jewish woman, two Indian men, two Asian men, and an African American man. The sequence of Baumhammers's assault occurred as follows:

- Baumhammers went to his Jewish neighbor’s house and fatally shot her. He then set a fire inside her home.
- He next shot two Indian men at an Indian grocery store. One man was killed, and the other was paralyzed by a .357 slug that hit his upper spine.
- Baumhammers shot at a synagogue, painted two swastikas on the building, and wrote the word Jew on one of the front doors.
- He then drove to a second synagogue, where he fired shots at it.
- Baumhammers shot two young Asian men at a Chinese restaurant, killing them both.
- Finally, Baumhammers went to a karate school, pointed his revolver at a white man inside the school, and then shot to death an African American man who was a student at the school.

Richard Baumhammers was convicted in May 2001 and received the death penalty.

*James Wenneker von Brunn*

On June 10, 2009, a gunman opened fire inside the entrance to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. An African American security guard who opened the door for him was shot with a .22 caliber rifle and later died of his wounds. Other security guards returned fire, wounding the assailant. The attacker was James Wenneker von Brunn, a known racial supremacist and Holocaust denier—he believed that the Nazi-led genocide during World War II never occurred. Von Brunn was a known extremist and had an arrest record from an incident in 1981 when he entered a federal building armed with weapons and attempted to place the Federal Reserve Board under “citizen’s arrest.”

The police later found a notebook containing a list of other sites in Washington, D.C., and the following entry:

> You want my weapons—this is how you’ll get them. The Holocaust is a lie. Obama was created by Jews. Obama does what his Jew owners tell him to do. Jews captured America’s money. Jews control the mass media. The 1st Amendment is abrogated—henceforth. 

Von Brunn died in January 2010 before he could be brought to trial on charges of murder and firearms violations.

*Frazier Glenn Cross*

On April 13, 2014, Frazier Glenn Cross shot to death a 14-year-old Eagle Scout and the boy’s grandfather in the parking lot of a Jewish community center in the suburban community of Overland Park, Kansas, near Kansas City. He then went to a nearby Jewish retirement home and killed another victim. It was reported that Cross shouted, “Heil
Hitler!” several times as the police took him into custody. The 73-year-old Cross had a
long history of activity in the American racial supremacist movement, including leadership
in a group originally affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan that eventually reformed as the
White Patriot Party, a Christian Identity organization.

Cross was sentenced to death in November 2014. He shouted, “Heil Hitler!” several
times as the judge read his sentence.

**Dylann Roof**

On June 17, 2015, Dylann Storm Roof shot twelve people attending a Bible study meet-
ing at the Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.
All victims were African Americans, and nine died during the assault. Roof was an
avowed racial supremacist who carried out the attack after being welcomed by the Bible
study participants and sitting with them for approximately one hour. He confessed to the
crimes and stated he sought to set an example by his actions, which he intended to be a
“spark” to ignite a race war.

Prior to the shootings, Dylann Roof posted a website titled *The Last Rhodesian* that
was a discourse on what he considered to be the plight of the white race at the hands
of nonwhites and Jews. Using racist expletives and perspectives, he concluded sev-
ter times that the white race is naturally superior and must reestablish its hegemony
over nonwhite races and Jews. Several photographs were posted on the website of
Roof posing with the Confederate, Rhodesian, and apartheid-era South African flags
as symbols of racial supremacy. He is also shown posing as he burned and spat on the
American flag.

Roof was charged with nine counts of murder and three counts of attempted murder
as well as possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony.

**Jihadist Lone Wolves**

The United States and Europe experience terrorist violence from individu-
als and small cells who are motivated
by international jihadist ideologies. Jihadi
st movements such as ISIL and
al-Qaeda have specifically encour-
gaged lone-wolf and small-cell attacks
on Western nations. Messages broad-
cast by these groups on the Internet
and other technologies are easily
received by potential sympathizers.
For example, on June 1, 2009, Carlos
Bledsoe conducted a drive-by shoot-
ing at an army recruiting center in Little
Rock, Arkansas, killing one soldier and
wounding another. Bledsoe was a convert to Islam who was radicalized in a Yemeni
prison where he attempted to join al-Qaeda. He was also inspired by U.S.-born
jihadist cleric Anwar al-Awlaki. He returned to the United States and carried out his lone-wolf attack.

The following cases further illustrate the type of violence emanating from jihadist lone wolves who apparently received inspiration and, in some cases, training from jihadist movements.

The “Shoe Bomber”

An instructive example of a single-member Islamist cell is the case of Richard C. Reid, a British resident who converted to Islam in prison in the UK and who became known as the “shoe bomber.” Reid was detected by an alert flight attendant and overpowered by passengers on December 22, 2001, when he attempted to ignite plastic explosives in his shoe on American Airlines Flight 63, a Boeing 767 carrying 198 passengers and crew from Paris to Miami. In Reid’s case, he was a self-professed follower of al-Qaeda and may have been trained by the organization in Afghanistan. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in a super-maximum-security prison after pleading guilty before a federal court in Boston.

The “Underwear Bomber”

On December 25, 2009, Nigerian national Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab ignited explosive chemicals aboard Northwest Airlines Flight 253 with approximately 290 people aboard as it approached Detroit, Michigan, in the United States. According to a federal criminal complaint and FBI affidavit, Abdulmutallab attempted to detonate an improvised explosive containing PETN (pentaerythritol tetranitrate), which had been attached to his leg. He used a syringe to detonate the PETN, but fortunately, the device merely caught fire and did not fully detonate. Passengers reported that immediately prior to the incident, Abdulmutallab had been in the restroom for approximately 20 minutes. He pulled a blanket over himself, and passengers heard cracking sounds comparable to firecrackers, sensed an odor, and observed Abdulmutallab’s pants leg and the airplane wall on fire. Abdulmutallab was subdued by passengers and members of the crew, who also extinguished the fire. He was calm throughout the incident and replied, “Explosive device,” when asked by a flight attendant what he had in his pocket.

Abdulmutallab had recently associated with religious militants in Yemen and visited there from August to December 2009. He said to officials that he had been trained in Yemen to make explosives; he also claimed that Yemenis had given him the chemicals used on Flight 253. His name had been listed in a U.S. terrorism database during November 2009 after his father reported to the U.S. embassy in Nigeria that his son had been radicalized and was associating with religious extremists. However, Abdulmutallab was not placed on an airlines watch list for flights entering the United States because American authorities concluded they had insufficient information to do so. In fact, Abdulmutallab possessed a two-year tourist visa, which he received from the U.S. embassy in London in June 2008, and he had traveled to the United States on at least two occasions. In October 2011, Abdulmutallab pleaded guilty to eight counts of terrorism-related criminal charges.
Global Perspective: Lone-Wolf Terror in Norway

Extreme right-wing activism in Europe usually involves the formation of nationalist political parties, grassroots populist movements, and skinhead subcultures. Occasional outbreaks of violence are directed against immigrant populations and ideological opponents. This chapter’s Global Perspective discusses right-wing extremist Anders Breivik’s lone-wolf spree shooting in the vicinity of Oslo, Norway.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: Lone-Wolf Terror in Norway

On July 22, 2011, Anders Breivik, a self-professed right-wing ideologue, detonated a car bomb in the government district of Oslo and methodically shot to death nearly 80 people at a Norwegian Labor Party youth summer camp on the island of Utøya. His victims were government workers, bystanders, and teenage residents of the camp. The sequence of Breivik’s assault occurred as follows:

- Breivik detonated a car bomb in Oslo’s government district using ammonium nitrate and fuel oil (ANFO) explosives. The blast killed eight people and wounded at least a dozen more.
- He next drove nearly two hours to a youth summer camp on the island of Utøya. The camp was sponsored by the youth organization of the ruling Norwegian Labor Party, and hundreds of youths were in attendance. Breivik was disguised as a policeman.
- When Breivik arrived on the island, he announced that he was a police officer who was following up on the bombing in Oslo. As people gathered around him, he drew his weapons and began shooting.
- Using a carbine and semiautomatic handgun, Breivik methodically shot scores of attendees on Utøya, most of them teenagers. The attack lasted for approximately 90 minutes and ended when police landed on the island and accepted Breivik’s surrender.

In August 2012, Breivik was convicted of murdering 77 people and received Norway’s maximum sentence of 21 years imprisonment. Under Norwegian law, his incarceration may be extended indefinitely if he is deemed to be a risk to society.

The Breivik case illustrates how the lone-wolf scenario involves an individual who believes in a certain ideology but who is not acting on behalf of an organized group.

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced domestic terrorism in the United States, discussing threats from local and international sources. The purpose of this discussion was to identify and define several sources of domestic terrorism, to differentiate terrorism emanating from foreign and domestic sources, and to provide cases in point for these concepts.
Discussion Box

Domestic Terrorism in the American Context

This chapter’s Discussion Box is intended to stimulate critical debate about the idiosyncratic nature of domestic terrorism in the United States.

The subject of domestic terrorism in the United States is arguably a study in idiosyncratic political violence. Indigenous terrorist groups reflected the American political and social environments during historical periods when extremists chose to engage in political violence.

In the modern era, left-wing and right-wing political violence grew from very different circumstances. Leftist violence evolved from a uniquely American social environment that produced the civil rights, Black Power, and New Left movements. Rightist violence grew out of a combination of historical racial and nativist animosity combined with modern applications of religious and antigovernment ideologies.

In the early years of the new millennium, threats continued to emanate from right-wing antigovernment and racial supremacist extremists. Potential violence from leftist extremists remained low in comparison with the right. The September 11, 2001, attacks created a new security environment with an international dimension. The question of terrorism originating from domestic sources inspired by international events and ideologies became very plausible.

Discussion Questions

1. Assume that a nascent anarchist movement continues in its opposition to globalism. How should the modern leftist movement be described? What is the potential for violence originating from modern extremists on the left?

2. Keeping in mind the many conspiratorial and mystical beliefs of the American right, what is the potential for violence from adherents of these theories to the modern American environment?

3. As a matter of policy, how closely should hate and antigovernment groups be monitored? What restrictions should be imposed on their activities? Why?

4. Is the American activity profile truly an idiosyncratic profile, or can it be compared with other nations’ environments? If so, how? If not, why not?

5. What are the factors that may give rise to a resurgence of a rightist movement on the scale of the 1990s Patriot movement? What trends indicate that it will occur? What trends indicate that it will not occur?
Key Terms and Concepts

The following topics were discussed in this chapter and can be found in the glossary:

- Animal Liberation Front (ALF)
- Armed Forces for National Liberation (Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional, or FALN)
- Army of God
- Aryan Republican Army (ARA)
- Ásatrú
- Black Liberation Army (BLA)
- Black Panther Party for Self-Defense
- Black Power
- Christian Identity
- Creativity
- Days of Rage
- DeFreeze, Donald
- Earth Liberation Front (ELF)
- hate crimes
- Ku Klux Klan (KKK)
- kuklos
- leaderless resistance
- Macheteros
- May 19 Communist Organization (M19CO)
- McVeigh, Timothy
- militias
- nativism
- New Left
- New World Liberation Front
- Omega 7
- Order, The
- Phineas actions
- Phineas Priesthood
- racial holy war (RaHoWa)
- Shakur, Assata
- single-issue terrorism
- Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA)
- United Freedom Front (UFF)
- Weather Bureau
- Weather Underground Organization
- Weathermen

On Your Own

The open-access Student Study Site at http://study.sagepub.com/martinhs2e has a variety of useful study aids, including eFlashcards, video and web resources, and journal articles. The websites, exercises, and recommended readings listed below are easily accessed on this site as well.

Recommended Websites

The following websites provide information about domestic extremism and terrorism in the United States. Also included are links to dissident organizations and movements.

Anarchist Cookbook: www.anarchistcookbook.com
Animal Liberation Front: www.animalliberationfront.com
Anti-Defamation League: www.adl.org
Army of God: www.armyofgod.com
Christian Exodus: christianexodus.org
Council of Conservative Citizens: www.cofcc.org
Earth First! Journal: www.earthfirst-journal.org
Earth Liberation Front: www.earth-liberation-front.com
Hate Directory: hatedirectory.com
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA: www.revcom.us
Southern Poverty Law Center: www.splcenter.org

Web Exercise

Using this chapter’s recommended websites, conduct an online investigation of terrorism in the United States.

1. How would you describe the typologies of groups that predominate in the United States?
2. Conduct a Web search of American monitoring organizations, read their mission statements, and assess their services. Which organizations do you think provide the most useful data? Why?
3. If you were an American dissident extremist (leftist or rightist), how would you design your website?

To conduct an online search on terrorism in the United States, activate the search engine on your Web browser and enter the following keywords:

“American jihad”
“Domestic terrorism”

Recommended Readings

The following publications discuss the nature of terrorism in the United States and the root causes of political violence in American society.


