The Contagion and Copycat Effect in Transnational Far-right Terrorism: An Analysis of Language Evidence

by Julia Kupper, Tanya Karoli Christensen, Dakota Wing, Marlon Hurt, Matthew Schumacher and Reid Meloy

Abstract

This article corroborates the continued threat of extreme right terrorism by exemplifying textually interconnected links across linguistic evidence composed prior to or during attacks in the United States, New Zealand, Germany, Norway and Sweden. A qualitative content analysis of targeted violence manifestos and live-streams, attack announcements on online platforms, and writings on equipment (e.g., firearms) used during the incidents reveals an emerging illicit genre set that is increasingly consolidated in form and function. The messages accentuate an intricate far-right online ecosystem that empowers copycats and escorts them on their pathway to violence. A definition for targeted violence live-streams is proposed and operational applications are discussed.

Keywords: Far-right terrorism, targeted violence, lone actors, manifestos, live-streams, forensic linguistics

Introduction

During the past decade, several lone-actor terrorists motivated by extreme right-wing ideologies attempted or conducted seemingly unconnected mass casualty events across the globe. The perpetrators—originating from North America, Europe and Oceania—often distributed manifestos just prior to their attacks, and in some instances broadcast their offenses via live-streams. As a common trait, the offenders perceived Western culture as superior, argued for a racially segregated society, and expressed a strong fear of being culturally eliminated through the so-called *Great Replacement* theory.[1] This menacing conspiracy narrative propagandized by the far-right alleges that white populations are being purposefully and deliberately replaced by a malevolent coalition (i.e., a hidden Jewish cabal and/or democratic elites) with non-white immigrants from the Middle East and Africa. Furthermore, it is claimed that social privileges traditionally associated with (the male) gender, (the white) skin color, (the Christian) religion and (hetero-)sexuality are intentionally diminished to engineer and provoke a *white genocide*, the extinction of the white race.[2] It is frequently paired with *accelerationism*, the belief appropriated by the extreme right that the breakdown of liberal democracies and the collapse of the modern progressive world can be accelerated by terrorist actions conducted by lone actors or small groups. One narrative that has been influential in accelerationist ideology and strategy is *The Turner Diaries*, a novel written and published by the white supremacist William Luther Pierce in 1978. Extremism researcher J.M. Berger has stated that the novel inspired over forty terrorist attacks and hate crimes, including the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, committed by Timothy McVeigh.[3] Moreover, the notion of accelerationism advocates that terrorizing political tension must be created in order to overhaul institutions and inspire a race war to establish a white-dominated future.[4] This justification of violence is closely connected to "the speed in which social media allows for the amplification and glorification of attacks," with successful assailants often being portrayed as heroes and saints on online platforms—such as the *chan cultures*—to mobilize supporters and inspire future incidents.[5] Subsequently, the online celebration of lone-actor terrorists has created a subculture of violent copycats—imitators who self-radicalize in cyberspace.[6]

Drawing inspiration from notorious role models is not a new phenomenon in international terrorism, with previous studies and articles having highlighted parallels in extreme ideologies, online radicalization and modus operandi.[7] However, this article examines the contagion and copycat effect in ten contemporary far-right terrorist attacks, investigating the intertextuality and interconnectivity of different types of lan-

guage evidence that was produced among these events. By analyzing the incidents through a genre lens, content patterns across manifestos and live-streams, announcements on digital platforms, and writings on equipment utilized during the attacks are highlighted. Our primary focus is on the communications produced by Anders Breivik, Brenton Tarrant, John Earnest, Patrick Crusius, Philip Manshaus, Stephan Balliet, Hugo Jackson and Payton Gendron. Furthermore, we discuss the historical context of two additional solo operators—Dylann Roof and Robert Bowers—to highlight the importance of shared language, motivation, means and opportunity across the assailants.

All of these attackers are linked by their lone-actor status, which suggests that certain parts of the terrorist cycle are undertaken alone, specifically logistical and tactical elements in preparing for such an attack.[8] This might include later-stage markers on the pathway to violence, such as research, planning, preparation, surveillance and implementation.[9] However, as this article demonstrates, the evolution and interrelatedness of a complex far-right ecosystem of online platforms and narratives influenced our sample of lone offenders. For instance, the *Great Replacement* conspiracy narrative is reflected in the selection of most of their targets, which facilitates the eliminationist doctrine and ideas of Renaud Camus, the developer of the contemporary theory.[10] Nonetheless, this protean meaning can take different forms; some of these perpetrators devolved in their ideology from targeting a particular group that they believed was conspiring to advance the *Great Replacement* to believing that the majority of (non-white) humans are "disgusting," and thus developing a misanthropic mindset.[11] As such, inspired by Brenton Tarrant's manifesto that was filled with elements of that conspiratorial ideology, John Earnest and Stephan Balliet originally planned to attack the Muslim community but later changed their targets to include Jewish individuals.[12]

Table 1: Perpetrators and operational details of their attacks (n = 10)

Name	Date	Location	Target	Manifesto	Q&A	Announcement on online platform	Live-stream	Writings on equipment
Anders Breivik	22 July 2011	Olso and Utøya, Norway	Labor party youth camp and government building	Yes	Yes	Via emails	YouTube (attempt)	No
Dylann Roof	17 June 2015	Charleston, South Carolina, U.S.	Baptist church (Black community)	Yes	No	Personal website	No	No
Robert Bowers	27 October 2018	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.	Synagogue (Jewish community)	No	No	Gab	No	No
Brenton Tarrant	15 March 2019	Christchurch, New Zealand	Mosques (Muslim community)	Yes	Yes	8chan	Facebook Live	Previous offenders, names of victims
John Earnest	27 April 2019	Poway, California, U.S.	Synagogue (Jewish community)	Yes	Yes	8chan	Facebook Live (attempt)	No
Patrick Crusius	3 August 2019	El Paso, Texas, U.S.	Supermarket (Hispanic community)	Yes	No	8chan	No	No
Philip Manshaus	10 August 2019	Bærum, Norway	Mosque (Muslim community)	No	No	Endchan	Facebook Live (attempt)	No
Stephan Balliet	9 October 2019	Halle, Germany	Synagogue (Jewish community)	Yes	Yes	Meguca	Twitch	No
Hugo Jackson	19 August 2021	Eslöv, Sweden	School (non-whites)	Yes	No	Discord	Twitch	Previous offenders, names of victims
Payton Gendron	14 May 2022	Buffalo, New York, U.S.	Supermarket (Black community)	Yes	Yes	Discord	Twitch	Previous offenders, names of victims

The Eslöv School Attack

On 19 August 2021, 15-year-old student Hugo Jackson entered his secondary school *Källebergsskolan* in Eslöv, a small town in the southern part of Sweden. He was clothed in black, wearing a bulletproof vest, a military green helmet with a GoPro camera and stickers of the Swedish flag on his body armor. Equipped with a double-edged knife and two non-functioning handgun replicas, he pulled up his skeleton mask and began playing a carefully crafted playlist, which included World War II and anti-Muslim propaganda music.[13] Before walking into the school to execute his targeted act of violence, the perpetrator started his 21-minute broadcast on Twitch, an online live-streaming platform. In a pre-attack note written in English for his international audience, Jackson laid out his plan:

> "I'll try to kill as many as possible in the cafeteria then i'm gonna go for the 7th graders because they won't be able to do shit, just a bunch of midgets running towards me basically. Then I'll just try to get as many as possible by knocking on offices, whoever comes in my way."[14]

After stabbing and seriously injuring a 45-year-old teacher and threatening fellow students and staff, Jackson had second thoughts and discontinued his rampage. When he was confronted by a responding law enforcement officer, he directed one of his forged pistols at him in an attempt to die by suicide-by-cop. However, the policeman fired a warning shot and Jackson eventually surrendered.

The Copycat Effect in Transnational Terrorism

When the investigating authorities entered Hugo Jackson's parental home post-incident, they noticed that the teenager's room was covered in Nazi symbols and writings, including drawings of a swastika, the SS symbol, "1488" and "Drittes Reich".[15] The following quote was scribbled on his bedroom wall: "Hi my name is Anon, and I think the holocaust never happened. Feminism is the cause of decline of the West which acts as a scapegoat for mass immigration and the root of all these problems is the Jew."[16] These words were originally uttered by the German lone-actor terrorist Stephan Balliet in the opening statement of his live-stream during an attempted mass shooting at a synagogue in Halle, Germany, in October 2019. Unable to breach the security doors, he subsequently killed two individuals nearby. Balliet broadcast 35 minutes of his attack and part of his escape on Twitch, the same platform Jackson would use nearly two years later. Furthermore, Jackson said the words "Ah, Scheiße"—the German equivalent of 'oh, shit'—twice in his live-stream, another direct reference to Balliet's recording, who used identical words when experiencing difficulties with his equipment.[17]

The police also discovered a handwritten letter on Jackson's desk, which stated "in memory of [Anders] Breivik (…) and Brenton Harrison Tarrant ♡ trying to make life and society better."[18] After seizing his electronics, the investigating authorities located photos and writings of Breivik, Tarrant, Balliet and Patrick Crusius on his computer. The names of these perpetrators form direct links between seemingly isolated terror incidents and document a transnational and digital network of right-wing extremists.[19] The attack was eventually classified as a "racially motivated serious violent crime", as the juvenile offender intended to carry out a terrorist attack inspired by the *Great Replacement* theory, despite being non-white himself.[20]

Background

Fact Patterns of the Other Attackers

On 22 July 2011, Anders Behring Breivik detonated a bomb outside the government quarter in Oslo, Norway, and proceeded to conduct a shooting rampage at a labor party summer camp on Utøya, Norway, killing 77 persons and injuring 319 others. Breivik's attack has been described as a historical change for the online far-right community; he circulated his propaganda to thousands of international extreme-right groups and individual actors in Europe and the United States in the hours leading up to his attack.[21] Moreover, he

had intended to live-stream one specific part of his act on an iPhone and planned to upload the footage to YouTube: the beheading of Gro Harlem Brundtland, Norway's former labor prime minister.[22] His writings have been discussed as the first "do-it-yourself-guide" for solo operators that went viral and received attention beyond far-right circles, giving specific instructions on how to conduct these types of terroristic attacks, with a focus on "if you want something done, then do it yourself."[23] Breivik incorporated several text elements from Ted Kaczynski, the so-called "Unabomber", who was among the first to spread his ideology to a large audience by getting his manifesto printed in various newspapers.[24] Breivik instituted a turning point because "he was sort of a proof of concept as to how much an individual actor could accomplish (…); he killed so many people at one time operating by himself, it really set a new bar for what one person can do."[25] Since then, he has inspired a number of similar acts of terror, some successful, many thwarted.[26]

On 17 June 2015, Dylann Storm Roof killed nine people and injured one, specifically targeting the Black community at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. At the time of his attack, the online far-right community on 4chan and other imageboards was still ambivalent on whether or not large-scale terrorist attacks would harm the attempts to 'mainstream' the movement, which conventionally deployed humorous and argumentative methods to gain new followers from the mainstream of society.[27] Subsequent to his act, an online hero cult developed around him, calling themselves the "bowl gang" because of Roof's distinct haircut.[28]

On 27 October 2018, Robert Gregory Bowers killed eleven and injured seven people at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; the most serious single act of anti-Semitic violence in the history of the United States. The mass shooting was a turning point in the media coverage and online debate in the above-mentioned imageboard communities, and cemented a shift into pro-violent attacks, although Bowers himself was not an active member of the *chan* community.[29] Instead, he favored the far-right Twitter clone *Gab*, which is where he published his final post with an announcement of the attack, a new modus operandi that would be copied by many: "HIAS likes to bring invaders in that kill our people. I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I'm going in."[30] The climate on these fringe forums had changed, with a weakened tactical opposition to acts of violence and an increased glorification of perpetrators.[31]

On 15 March 2019, Brenton Harrison Tarrant killed 51 and injured 40 individuals at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. Tarrant was fundamentally influenced by Breivik in terms of ideology and modus operandi, selecting multiple targets and a variety of weapons, including firearms and explosives.[32] Mimicking Breivik, Tarrant distributed his writings to newsrooms, the prime minister of New Zealand and other recipients. He has since been viewed as the "most influential and important far-right 'martyr' [on social media in the extreme-right sphere], even more so than Breivik who inspired him."[33] The primary cause for this is that Tarrant was the first to successfully live-stream a far-right terror attack to an international audience using *Facebook Live*, which became available in 2016, five years after Breivik's attempt to film his act.[34] Tarrant created a successful formula for subsequent attacks, becoming a catalyst for future incidents around the globe. Baele, Brace and Coan talk of the 'Tarrant effect' with reference to the glorification of his persona on 8chan, which they explain by his direct relationship to the forum and the novelty of his modus operandi, including his announcement of the attack on an imageboard.[35]

On 27 April 2019, John Timothy Earnest killed one and injured three individuals during a shooting rampage at a synagogue in Poway, California. Planning to imitate Tarrant's attack one month prior, he disseminated a manifesto and a link to his live-stream on 8chan. He allegedly failed to broadcast his operation, due to the privacy settings on his Facebook account; a GoPro camera was found in his vehicle after the arrest.[36] Weeks earlier, he had attempted to burn down a mosque in the nearby city of Escondido, California. On 3 August 2019, Patrick Wood Crusius killed 23 individuals and injured 23 during a mass shooting at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas. He also distributed his manifesto on 8chan, stating that he was inspired by Tarrant's writings.

A few days later, on 10 August 2019, Philip Manshaus attempted to storm a mosque in Bærum, Norway,

injuring two, after having killed his step-sister because of her Chinese origin. Aiming to copy Tarrant (and not Norway's native Breivik), he claimed to have been motivated by white supremacy, selected a mosque as a target and announced his violent actions on an imageboard. Manshaus reportedly watched the recording of Tarrant's live-stream but only decided to act after having read his manifesto eight days before he rushed to commit his own attack.[37] Although he did not author a declaration himself, he told investigators that he was directly inspired by Tarrant and frequently visited the *chan* forums where he was radicalized.[38] Manshaus' live-stream malfunctioned, as he was unable to connect his GoPro camera attached to a helmet to the internet; nonetheless, the recording of his thwarted act was later played as evidence during his trial.[39]

As we were in the final stages of authoring this article, another lone-actor terrorist, Payton Gendron, carried out a mass shooting at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York, on 14 May 2022, targeting the Black community. Claiming to be self-radicalized on 4chan within a relatively short time frame, he started "getting serious" in January 2022, three months prior to his act—which might be an example of the pathway of violence becoming a runway to violent action.[40] According to his online diary, he originally planned to carry out the attack on 15 March, the anniversary of Tarrant's act of violence.[41] Gendron claimed in his manifesto that his motivating force was the same fear-instilling conspiracy narrative, declaring that "I carried this attack out so I can influence others into defending themselves from the replacers, becoming infamous was the only way."[42] His operational approach was similar to previous assailants: he selected a public location with a "high percentage" of targets, wore tactical gear for protection, used a semi-automatic assault rifle for effectiveness and live-streamed the event on Twitch with a GoPro camera.[43]

Method

Intertextuality

This study investigates how a new, complex genre set of targeted violence manifestos and live-streams, attack announcements on digital platforms, and writings on equipment has been emerging globally. In order to identify how these varying text types are amalgamated, we firstly assessed their forms and functions through an intertextuality lens. Secondly, we conducted a qualitative content analysis to detect any potential links to previous perpetrators' writings and to establish if patterns in content could have emerged from a contagion or copycat effect. Briggs and Bauman argue that "genre is quintessentially intertextual";[44] intertextuality can be linked through all levels of language, such as lexical items, morphology, syntax, rhetorical structure and thematic content. Intertextuality relies on Bakhtin's observation that all language use is related to both past and future utterances. This allows for an understanding that a text can be "lifted from its originating context (...) and inserted into a new setting."[45]

The primary materials for most of the subjects had been identified during an earlier study authored by this article's first and last authors [46]; the remaining files were obtained via systematic open-source research and through law enforcement and extremism experts' contacts. Several documents were provided to us that have not been released to the public. As all of the data discussed in this article were sensitive in nature, the language evidence was only stored on the first author's laptop. Ethical and legal considerations were reviewed, and found that the majority of data utilized in the study were based upon archival analysis of open-source material. This obviated the need for an IRB review of this effort, as well as consideration of any informed consents.

Illicit Genres and Their Uptakes

When emerging from a targeted violence environment, communications such as manifestos and live-streams can be considered a "socially deviant" or "societally illicit" genre.[47] In contrast to conventional genres—such as editorials or job applications—illicit genres—such as threats of violence and hate speech—are more heterogeneous and have fewer structural elements. However, they can be recognized by their core functions, which are destructive and disruptive, as they tend to "upset society and commonly affect their targets negatively."[48] For instance, Bojsen-Møller et al. have identified that the primary function of threats is the

intimidation of an addressee, which is accomplished by informing the recipient of a future harmful act for which the threatener is responsible.[49] For some subcultures, such as the far-right online ecosystem, an otherwise illicit genre takes on a community-building function when it is embraced as a valid and useful type of expression.[50] This makes the preferred text types of the subculture especially prone to the consolidation of structural elements familiar from other, non-illicit genres. Responses to a genre, whether illicit or not, are called "uptakes".[51] The idea is that a text can be responded to—"taken up"—in myriad ways, and that these uptakes are crucial for the interpretation and the wider impact of the text.

Contagion and Copycat Effect

Meloy has advanced the idea that contagion and copycat should be separated.[52] 'Contagion' refers to an acute period—a hot zone—following a widely publicized mass attack, usually several weeks, and is the imitation of the act.[53] There is an increase in the frequency of targeted violence events before a return to base line.[54] The term 'copycat' refers to a chronic phenomenon, extending over months if not years, and involves the imitation of both the acts and the actors.[55] When aggregated, copycat events become a subcultural script—a prescription for problem-solving via a violent attack—that is most often emulated by young males in the construction of a new, dark identification or self-identity.[56] Subjects will attempt, however, to distinguish themselves from prior attackers through tactical innovations and increasing the number of casualties.

Definition and Functions of Targeted Violence Manifestos

Kupper and Meloy coined the term "targeted violence manifesto" in a recent study on spoken and written leakage, due to the lack of a distinct description of the word "manifesto" in a criminal context. They formulated the following definition:

> "A written or spoken communication intended to justify an act of violence against a specific target by articulating self-identified grievances, homicidal intentions, and/or extreme ideologies for committing an attack. Generally composed by a single author before the incident occurs, it sometimes expresses beliefs and ideas to violently promote political, religious, or social changes."[57]

In a subsequent article, Kupper added that manifestos "are often created for and accessible by a public audience in furtherance of inspiring like-minded members and opposing groups to commit similar attacks (i.e., copycats)."[58] Indeed, part of the terror orchestration is to share ideological motivations, operational strategies and tactical advice. The functions of targeted violence manifestos have been previously discussed by Kupper and Meloy; in this article, we extend their definition to include an additional core social function of these types of communications: to signal the author's membership in the intricate digital ecosystem of the global far-right.[59] The manifestos of contemporary extreme right-wing terrorists appear to be a cultural code to claim in-group membership to a force that takes their virtual frustration to the physical world by conducting mass attacks. Unlike, for example, traditional white supremacy movements that interact face to face during meetings, live concerts and other means of social bonding activities, these lone offenders communicate only via virtual forums, whilst seemingly acting on their own orders. Though they self-radicalize online, virtual (and physical) connections to others can play a critical role, such as exchanging ideas with like-minded people in these digital communities.[60] Solitary perpetrators typically decide when and where to attack on their own, which makes them autonomous in that respect. In fact, the majority of lone actors identify with larger movements that advocate "violence-justifying ideologies."[61] This can be at least partially attributed to "the advent of social media; now, fewer attackers feel a need or desire to affiliate with an actual group on the ground when they can be informed and inspired online, especially from the writings of previous attackers."[62]

Moreover, an important subfunction of manifestos is to control the narrative following the event, something that is particularly true of documents that are distributed online or sent directly to mainstream media

outlets prior to the terror attack. Notably, this same function was theorized as one performed by realized threats (but not by non-realized or 'empty' threats) by Hurt, a genre which is closely related to the manifestos analyzed here.[63] If the perpetrator fails to publicly declare his intentions and investigating authorities are unable to single out a clear motivating factor, such as in the case of the 2017 Las Vegas shooting by Stephen Paddock, those left behind may never find closure—and the mystery therein may perpetuate study and interest in the case.

For this article, another crucial enhancement is added to the typical composition of targeted violence manifestos: they occasionally include self-interviews in a question-and-answer (Q&A) format. We believe that the main function of these interviews is a form of self-representation to display awareness of the mainstream society's conception of their fringe views, while offering an opportunity to counter that narrative with their self-prescribed triggers and motivations for the attack. The secondary function appears to be a mockery of the establishment, as the Q&As mirror the well-known interviewing format, with some representing hostile lines of questioning, as might be posed by interrogating law enforcement officers or journalists, but tailored to the attacker's own specific needs. Ostensibly, the idea that journalism can access any kind of information and report news objectively is mocked because—in their minds—everything is relative, and by posing their own questions, they frame the narrative. In addition, these self-interviews reveal the bi-directionality of communicating both to the out-group (i.e., targets and the rest of society) and the in-group (other far-right individuals and movements). It could also mirror the style of digital communication found on mainstream and fringe platforms, such as Twitter or the *chan* boards, where users engage in conversational dialogues and discussions. Another essential element is that this attractive Q&A format in the manifestos has been readily distributed by the mainstream media, often without fact-checking its content, which reinforces the ideas of these perpetrators even further.[64]

Definition and Functions of Targeted Violence Live-streams

Another crucial digital component of recent far-right attacks has been the online broadcasting of their real-world offenses, which was arguably inspired by "snuff" films that were available for many decades on the black market—videos for sale of killings—and later influenced by jihadist propaganda campaigns. It appears that the filming of violent acts with a GoPro camera originated from "leaderless jihadi" millennials in France; one of the earliest examples is Mohammed Merah, who went on a 10-day killing spree in France in 2012 while recording his attack with this type of equipment.[65] Four years later, Larossi Abballa utilized *Facebook Live* to address his audience during a lethal attack on two married French police officers in their home while taking their three-year-old son hostage.[66] Follman reported that a 4chan user had posted a message in 2018, inquiring if "(…) anyone ever livestreamed a mass shooting with a GoPro helmet?"[67] Brenton Tarrant answered this call the following year, showcasing the feasibility and lethality of his destructive events while creating a digital template for real-life actions and subsequent acts of far-right violence.

Live-streams in particular make attacks more accessible, as they are portrayed in the first-person shooter perspective and blur the lines between play and reality.[68] Moreover, they can be viewed and replayed by an immediate global audience, with the multimodal, visual aspect not limiting the audience to any particular language user in the same way as written manifestos.

We propose the following definition for *targeted violence live-streams*:

> "A real-time transmission of an attempted or executed act of violence over the internet, broadcast to a global audience by the perpetrator who plans to conduct the attack. It is the action component of what is frequently merely theoretical in a targeted violence manifesto."

Live-streaming attacks appears to be a more powerful tool for propaganda than manifestos: echoing the words of the written materials, they are more intimate and bring the operational plans to life. When the live-stream starts, it automatically produces indisputable evidence, not only linking the perpetrator to the act of violence but bridging the gap from the textual desire in the manifesto to actionable encouragement and en-

hanced self-confidence in the real world. The core functions of live-streams can be categorized into external and internal components, with the overarching framework consisting of creating an immediate contagion or a long-term copycat effect. In an attempt to inspire future terroristic acts, the perpetrator mimics combat video games, visualizing the idea of a mass shooter for the next imitator. By acting as a double-edged sword, live-streams target the in-group and out-group of the perpetrator simultaneously. On the one hand, their own community will use the recordings of these videos to preserve the memory of their "heroes" and glorify their actions, while seeing their biased attitudes confirmed and reinforced.[69] On the other hand, they act as psychological warfare for their enemies, causing fear and anxiety in the targeted communities.[70] Posselt has pointed out that hate crimes do not only affect the immediate victims but that the message is communicated "on several levels and to different addressees: to the attacked individual and bystanders, to the social group the individual belongs to and to sympathizers of the offender as well as to society at large."[71]

Furthermore, live-streams are a crucial instrument for disseminating the message of the terrorist without having to rely on the mass media to report on the attack, with recent recordings having spread like wildfire online. At the same time, this strategy creates a visual hook, which ensures that the incident—including its live-stream and manifesto—will go viral and spread horizontally online. Thus, the mainstream reporting is inevitable; notwithstanding, if the media broadcasts snippets or a screenshot of the perpetrators' live actions, their ideas are suddenly exposed to millions of potential copycats. As Macklin and Bjørgo have previously pointed out: "For Tarrant, livestream video was the more important communicative component of his terrorism. It was not a medium for his message. It was the message. The central point of the attack (…) was not just to kill Muslims, but to make a video of someone killing Muslims."[72]

Results

The Circle of Contagion and Copycat

In our sample of perpetrators (n = 10), interconnectivity is noticeable across five stages, corresponding to the pathway of intended violence [73]: during the self-radicalization process, offenders study targeted violence manifestos and live-streams from infamous role models, which inspire them to commit attacks. While planning and preparing for the act, these writings and recordings are utilized as a do-it-yourself guide, providing tips on targets, training and operational intelligence, such as surveillance. During the mobilization stage, the subjects proceed to compose manifestos themselves, which often reference notorious same-genre authors, copying structural components and citing or rephrasing textual elements from previous writings. While implementing the terrorist attack, the assailants announce their planned actions on a digital platform shortly prior to the act, again quoting or rewording the language from previous online postings. In the final phase, the perpetrators broadcast their acts of violence on mainstream online platforms, which often entails a visual display of weapons that reference the names of preceding attackers or victims of opposing attacks. These communication strategies are designed to create an operational manual to incite others to commit additional mass casualty events, while simultaneously demonstrating their inclusion within the far-right online ecosystem. Along with these stages or patterns of movement on the pathway to intended violence, we also see content patterns.

Content Patterns Across Targeted Violence Manifestos

1. Referencing Names of Notorious Same-Genre Authors

Across Brenton Tarrant's manifesto, remarks about Dylann Roof and Anders Breivik were detected two and three times, respectively. The perpetrator also included the names of other far-right inspired attackers that are not included in this study: "I support many of those that take a stand against ethnic and cultural genocide. Luca Traini, Anders Breivik, Dylan Roof, Anton Lundin Pettersson, Darren Osbourne etc."[74] In turn, John Earnest referenced Tarrant eleven and Robert Bowers five times in his writings, exhorting readers to "FIGHT BACK, REMEMBER ROBERT BOWERS, REMEMBER BRENTON TARRANT."[75] Patrick Crusius referenced Tarrant's pamphlet twice, opening his narrative with the words "In general, I

support the Christchurch shooter [Tarrant] and his manifesto."[76] Although Philip Manshaus did not author a statement, his online announcement of the attack referenced Tarrant twice, and Earnest and Crusius once. In addition, he attached a drawing that depicted the three as "chads" to his imageboard posting.[77] Stephan Balliet made one reference to Tarrant's name in his unpublished Q&A guide: "Is there anyone you want to thank? Yes, Brenton Tarrant." [78] Hugo Jackson alluded to Tarrant's name once throughout his manifesto. Payton Gendron referenced Tarrant's name six times throughout his writings, with Breivik, Roof, Earnest and Crusius each mentioned twice, and Bowers and Manshaus once. Copying his "idol" Tarrant, Gendron also included the same names of other extreme-right offenders, merely changing the order of their appearance: "I support many of those that take a stand against ethnic and cultural genocide. Brenton Tarrant, Patrick Crusius, John Earnest, Robert Bowers, Phillip Manshaus, Luca Traini, Anders Breivik, Dylann Roof, Anton Lundin Pettersson, Darren Osborne etc."[79] As these examples of intertextuality and interconnectivity illustrate, previous far-right attackers have a substantial effect on successive perpetrators; similar references have been detected in the writings of school shooters.[80]

2. Copying Structural Components and Citing, Rephrasing or Plagiarizing Textual Elements from Previous Manifestos

John Earnest and Hugo Jackson included direct quotes of Tarrant's manifesto in their scripts: "Tarrant was a catalyst for me personally. He showed me that it could be done. And that it needed to be done. "WHY WON'T SOMEBODY DO SOMETHING? WHY WON'T SOMEBODY DO SOMETHING? WHY DON'T I DO SOMETHING?"—the most powerful words in his entire manifesto" and "For the thousands of European lives" - Brenton tarrant."[81]

However, the most extensive form of copying was noted in Payton Gendron's manifesto: in terms of structure, the author duplicated the Q&A section from Tarrant and continued categorizing the content into different sections on "Blacks", "Jews" and "East Asians", which is homogeneous to Dylann Roof's statement.[82] Gendron also included his "goals"—which are similar to Stephan Balliet's "objectives"—and added neatly organized pictures of his weapons, also imitating Balliet's manifesto:

- Balliet: "1. Prove the viability of improvised weapons. 2. Increase the moral of other suppressed Whites by spreading the combat footage. 3. Kill as many anti-Whites as possible, jews preferred. Bonus: Don't die."[83]
- Gendron: "Kill as many blacks as possible, Avoid dying, Spread ideals."[84]

The closing part of Gendron's manifesto returned to the anatomy of Tarrant's screen, duplicating his "messages to various groups", "general thoughts" and "who is truly to blame?" sections.[85] In terms of lexical borrowing, Gendron copied entire pages from Tarrant's manifesto, with the Anti-Defamation League stating that a comparative text analysis found that 23% of Gendron's writings matched Tarrant's declaration word for word.[86] Occasionally, Gendron revised certain passages to adjust the content to his mission, for instance exchanging "Muslim" with "Black" and "New Zealand" with "United States", as seen here in their respective Q&A sections:

- Tarrant: "Did/do you personally hate muslims? A muslim man or woman living in their homelands?" and "By living in New Zealand, weren't you an immigrant yourself?"[87]
- Gendron: "Did, or do you personally hate blacks? A black man or woman living in their homelands?" and "By living in the United States, weren't you an immigrant yourself?"[88]

3. Including Self-Interviews in a Q&A Format

One of the earliest instances of a self-interview was detected in Pekka-Eric Auvinen's writings in 2007, when the perpetrator of the Jokela school shooting in Finland raised several questions in his script: "What do I hate / What I don't like?", "What do I love / what do I like?" and "How Did Natural Selection Turn Into Idiocratic

Selection?"[89] All interrogatives were accompanied by lengthy answers in his manifesto. In 2011, Anders Breivik created a 64-page self-interview, primarily using the first-person plural pronoun 'we' to appear to be part of a group;[90] it has been reported that he derived the structure for his "mock interview" primarily from celebrity profiles he had studied.[91] Breivik himself stated that "[t]he following interview (...) might be considered irrelevant to many people. However, I decided to add it as I personally would enjoy reading a similar interview with another resistance fighter."[92] Four years later, Christopher Sean Harper-Mercer, the Umpqua Community College shooter from Oregon, included a "frequently asked questions" section in his manifesto, which included the following interrogative and response: "How come you've not had a girlfriend, are you gay? No I'm not gay, girls just didn't want me. As I said before they went for the thug blacks."[93]

In our sample, Brenton Tarrant, John Earnest, Stephan Balliet and Payton Gendron duplicated this format and interviewed themselves in their manifestos, fluctuating between why and yes/no questions. Interrogatives ranged from background information on the authors to motivations and triggers for the attack, rounded off with details on their belief systems and mental health. Balliet's Q&A was not publicly disclosed, as he decided against leaking it with his manifesto. According to investigation files from the *Bundeskriminalamt*, Germany's federal criminal police, the assailant stated that the self-interview would have justified his violent act, which, in his opinion, did not require any justification.[94]

A textual comparison of mock interviews authored by Breivik, Tarrant, Earnest, Balliet and Gendron (n = 5) revealed that several interrogative sentences contained identical or similar strings of words across at least one other self-interview, with occasional lexical overlap across all Q&As. Breivik's self-interview contained a total of 73 questions, with Tarrant posing 87 interrogatives to himself. Though Tarrant did not copy any of Breivik's questions directly, six of them are similar in content, such as: "Why do you think it has come to this? What tipped the scales for you?" (Breivik) vs. "Why did you carry out the attack?" (Tarrant).[95] John Earnest's interview contained 20 interrogatives, including two identical ones to Tarrant's pamphlet: "Are you a conservative?" and "Are you a Trump supporter?"[96] Thirteen of Earnest's questions appeared similar to Tarrant's Q&A, and five were original in content. Balliet's self-interview consisted of 23 questions, with a couple of them being identical to Tarrant's: "Who are you?" and "Are you a Racist?"[97] Six of Balliet's interrogatives seem to be unique, whilst the remaining 74% corresponded to previously raised questions by Breivik, Tarrant and Earnest. For instance:

- Breivik: "You know that a large majority of people will end up viewing you as a complete nut right, despite your own and others efforts to justify violence?"[98]
- Earnest: "Are you insane/crazy?"[99]
- Balliet: "Do you think you are crazy?"[100]

Payton Gendron's writings incorporated 67 questions, with 49 of them being an identical match to Tarrant's manifesto (73%), and a further 17 only containing minor edits, such as the addition or deletion of one word. There was one original interrogative in Gendron's statement: "Do you actually believe this garbage?" and one question that was homogenous to Balliet's writings: "Are you a white supremacist?"[101] Below is one example of similar utterances that were observed across all five manifestos:

- Breivik: "But doesn't it worry you that 95% of all Europeans will openly detest you and call you a murderer and a terrorist?"[102]
- Tarrant: "Do you consider it a terrorist attack?"[103]
- Earnest: "Are you a terrorist?"[104]
- Balliet: "Are you a Lone wolf?"[105]
- Gendron: "Do you consider the attack an act of terrorism?"[106]

This analysis illustrates the intertextual links between several manifestos, whose authors copied or para-

phrased questions from foregoing same-genre Q&As. Thus, it can be deduced that Breivik's writings were utilized as a template by Tarrant, whose document was later used by Earnest, whose adaptation in turn was copied by Balliet and subsequently by Gendron. This chain reaction suggests that the authors successfully reached their intended audiences, ultimately inspiring sympathizers, i.e., copycats, to author corresponding communications and conduct similar acts of violence. However, a second consequence, equally important to the communication strategy of a terrorist, is that this type of Q&A format appears to be an effective tool for influencing the media narrative by giving its author "a 'voice' he would be deprived of if he was either killed or apprehended during the commission of his attack."[107]

Content Patterns Across Attack Announcements on Digital Platforms

Minutes prior to their targeted acts, several perpetrators in our sample leaked short messages to announce their violent attacks on imageboards, which appear to have become an assembly point for geographically dispersed extremists. Though the online postings were distributed on various platforms, the audiences of these forums appear to be mostly homogenous, i.e., frequented by the same people.[108] From mid-March to early August 2019, Brenton Tarrant, John Earnest and Patrick Crusius uploaded their communications, including links to their manifestos and live-streams, to the fringe forum *8chan*. Crusius' attack took place on 3 August 2019 and caused the website to be taken offline by its internet provider. Due to this, Philip Manshaus posted his notice on the derivative *Endchan* on 10 August 2019, while Stephan Balliet published his message on the imageboard *Meguca* on 9 October 2019. According to transcripts of Balliet's court proceedings, it was a "coincidence" that he uploaded his files to this specific platform, which appears unlikely as every other aspect of his attack was meticulously planned.[109] Hugo Jackson sent his original announcement to two friends on the instant messaging social platform *Discord* and asked them to disseminate his manifesto and live-stream.[110] Although Payton Gendron's published Discord logs indicate that he drafted posts for 4chan and 8chan, he only circulated his materials on Discord itself.

Within our small sample (n = 7), we recognized several common themes across the attack announcements on online platforms:

- ***86% (6 out of 7) encouraged users to raise awareness about their attacks by disseminating copies of their manifestos and recordings of their live-streams, while motivating them to create memes.***

This promotes an immediate response and reaction by the intended audience, in other words: uptakes.[111] Similar language was detected in the content of Tarrant, Crusius, Jackson and Gendron's announcements:

- Tarrant: "please do your part by spreading my message, making memes and shitposting as you usually do"[112]
- Crusius: "Do your part and spread this brothers! Of course, only spread it if the attack is successful"[113]
- Jackson: "Anyway I want you guys to make edits/shitpost about this thing. And I might also fail but still meme if I do"[114]
- Gendron: "Record everything you can and continue making memes like you already do"[115]

As pointed out in a previous study, the "idea is that a copycat attacker can copy the format and add individual content and ideas (…). The aim is to establish terrorism as a cultural artifact, through meme-like charging. Through music, images, videos, [and] obscure references, the online meme aesthetic is adapted to the real world."[116] It is noteworthy that several of the perpetrators mention memes as a way of communicating to a wider audience. Askanius has described how the extreme right in Sweden produces manuals for meme production with the stated purpose of gaining more followers.[117] The attackers in our sample utilize online platforms as a dual mediator; firstly, to promote and share the offenders' ideologies with in-group members by making post-attack requests and commands. Secondly, by encouraging the distribution of current

and future texts (e.g., manifestos and memes) to be spread beyond the forum and reach out-groups, such as the mainstream society and media. The goal is again two-fold: by reaching a wider audience, the assailants hope to attract more followers, i.e., to widen the in-group, but also to spread fear in possible future victims, i.e., to terrorize members of the out-group.

- ***86% (6 out of 7) of perpetrators alluded to live-streaming their attacks and provided links to streaming platforms where the recording was to be broadcast, along with their manifestos and other files.***

This illustrates a deliberate cross-media presence, designed to ensure a widespread uptake by followers and mainstream society alike, as the offenders move between different modes connected to their attacks: mobilization—i.e., authoring the manifesto—and implementation—i.e., live-streaming the act.

- Tarrant: "I will carry out and attack against the invaders, and will even live stream the attack via facebook. The facebook link is below, by the time you read this I should be going live. https://www.facebook.com/brenton.tarrant.9"[118]
- Earnest: "Livestream link is below as well as my open letter. Livestream will begin shortly. https://www.facebook.com/john.earnest.96780"[119]
- Manshaus: "stream: stupid shit won't work https://www.facebook.com/philip.manshaus"[120]
- Balliet: "I prefer live testing: https://www.twitch.tv/spilljuice"[121]
- Jackson: "And in about some hours or minutes when this shit releases I will be going live. So Bounce into my stream, sit back and enjoy. (…) https://www.twitch.tv/spectatorsolvent - My twitch where the action will be happening."[122]
- Gendron: "I'm going to be carrying out an attack against the replacers, and even livestream it via twitch and discord. (…) Below are my twitch and discord links. https://discord.gg/Z3ATN29ENq https://www.twitch.tv/jimboboiii. Below are copies of my discord transcript and le manifesto, read it if you want."[123]

The effects are comparable to the first point, as intended and unintended audiences will take up the writings and recordings of the targeted attacks, creating planned and unpredicted responses from different readers and viewers.[124]

- ***71% (5 out of 7) of authors commented on the potential outcome of the attack (i.e., death) and/or included references to God, heaven or hell.***

- Tarrant: "If I don't survive the attack, goodbye, godbless and I will see you all in Valhalla!"[125]
- Earnest: "May the LORD Christ be with you all."[126]
- Crusius: "I'm probably going to die today"[127]
- Manshaus: "valhall venter"[128]
- Jackson: "See you all in hell one day."[129]

The far-right has adopted various imagery from the popular Viking culture to create specific narratives around the alleged 'pure' white race to highlight the connection to the old whiteness of the North. The term Valhalla, for example, means 'the great hall of the fallen' and originates in Norse mythology, symbolizing the resting place for heroes who died in combat. Breivik raised the questions "What happened to those Vikings, anyway? Did they drink too much mead in Valhalla?" in his manifesto, while Balliet stated "Repeat until all jews are dead or you prove the existence of Waifus in Valhalla, whatever comes first."[130] A "waifu" is a term from anime culture referring to an attractive female or (dream) wife. Tarrant, subsequently copied in Gendron's manifesto, also made an explicit reference to Valhalla in his pamphlet: "Goodbye, god bless you

all and I will see you in Valhalla," identical wording to his imageboard post.[131] These examples demonstrate the common themes across online platform posts and targeted violence manifestos, as "Valhalla" appears to speak to the in-group audience of dying in martyrdom for a cause, in this case saving the white race. Am & Weimann point out that "dying as the result of a successful terrorist attack is not a key requirement to becoming a martyr for the Far-Right movement—carrying out the attack and being jailed for it is sufficient."[132] But the willingness to fight and die for the cause is critical to the motivation of these attackers and their claims of infamy. The fact that these attacks are waged against unarmed civilians, however, is ignored.

- ***71% (5 out of 7) thanked their followers and/or other users of the forum for their support, entertainment and information.***

This directly addresses the intended audiences of the platforms and seems designed to cause an immediate reaction. Similar text elements were detected in Tarrant, Manshaus, Jackson and Gendron's posts:

- Tarrant: "Well lads, it's time (…) It's been a long ride and despite all your rampant faggotry, fecklessness and degeneracy, you are all top blokes and the best bunch of cobbers a man could ask for"[133]
- Earnest: "It's been real dudes. From the bottom of my heart thank you for everything. Keep up the infographic redpill threads. I've only been lurking for a year and a half, yet what I've learned here is priceless. It's been an honor"[134]
- Manshaus: "well cobbers it's time (…) it's been fun"[135]
- Jackson: "Well lads, I guess this is it. You are all just top notch people that have been following me."[136]
- Gendron: "Well lads (…) It's been a long ride to get here, I'd like to take this time to thank you guys for the laughs and the shitposts of top-tier quality. (…) Thanks guys G\"[137]

Earnest's red pill theme stems from the incel subculture but originated in the film *The Matrix* where the protagonist is given the choice between consuming a red or a blue pill, with the red pill symbolizing learning the ultimate truth. Within the extremist environment, the red pill truth is connected to "political awakening, rejecting scientific knowledge and democratic processes in favour of a white supremacy worldview."[138] Tarrant also referenced this idea in his manifesto.

- ***43% (3 out of 7) of perpetrators encouraged others to commit future attacks.***

Thus, they directly engaged with their immediate and intended audiences:

- Crusius: "Keep up the good fight."[139]
- Manshaus: "i was elected by saint tarrant after all (…) if you're reading this you have been elected by me"[140]
- Jackson: "You! Are the chosen one. and one that will maybe see this life. (…) I'm rootin for ya lads"[141]

Reaching out to their primary audience in this way is a necessary step to incite further violence, a purpose which forms part of a larger strategy of fomenting sufficient copycat attacks to destabilize society. It can be argued that the theme of "selecting" subsequent offenders could have been derived from Tarrant's manifesto, which stated that: "But I have only had brief contact with Knight Justiciar Breivik, receiving a blessing for my mission after contacting his brother knights."[142] This in turn referenced a section in Breivik's writings on the Knights Templar and a ritual to become a "Justiciar Knight"—Breivik's reinvention of a holy knighthood—which he referred to throughout his script.[143] In addition, Earnest stated in his document that "Brenton Tarrant inspired me. I hope to inspire many more."[144]

- ***43% (3 out of 7) highlight their mobilization and repositioning from online chatter to real-world action.***
  - Tarrant: "Well lads, it's time to stop shitposting and time to make a real life effort post. I will carry out and attack against the invaders"[145]
  - Manshaus: "you gotta bump the race war thread irl [in real life]"[146]
  - Gendron: "Well lads I guess it's time to stop shitposting and time to post a real life shitpost. I'm going to be carrying out an attack against the replacers (…) Now it's time for some action"[147]

These communications are the essential components for encouraging real-life attacks from the digital sphere, directed at the immediate and intended audiences (in-groups). As Heine and Magazzini have stated, the "logic of these groups is that you only count for something when you act."[148] Tarrant's strategy proved successful, as the words of his announcement were taken up in Gendron's message, with the latter repeating the wording—and subsequently the actions. While Jackson was unsuccessful in carrying out a mass attack, the inspiration from Tarrant's post is clear in the direct quote he left on his computer keyboard in the form of a handwritten letter: "Well lads, I think it's time to stop shit-posting and make a real life effort post."[149]

Content Patterns Across Targeted Violence Live-Streams

Citing or Copying Textual Elements from Previous Live-Streams or Manifestos

As alluded to in the introduction, the case of Hugo Jackson clearly shows how the genres of extreme right terrorists are taking form in the uptake of previous perpetrators' writings. Firstly, he transcribed the opening lines of Balliet's live-stream on his bedroom wall.[150] Secondly, he said "Ah, Scheiße" twice in his live-stream, a direct reference to Balliet's broadcast.[151] Thirdly, Jackson declared "Subscribe to PewDiePie" in his live-stream, directly referring to Tarrant, who proclaimed "Remember lads, subscribe to PewDiePie" as he was exiting his vehicle during his broadcast shortly before entering the first mosque and committing his mass attack.[152] PewDiePie is the moniker of Swedish online gaming personality Felix Arvid Ulf Kjellberg, one of the most popular YouTubers in the world. Kjellberg has been criticized for amplifying anti-Semitic and racist views in his recommendations of other YouTube channels. This may be the reason Earnest wrote in his document, "I had the help of a man named Felix Arvid Ulf Kjellberg. He was kind enough to plan and fund this whole operation—the sly bastard. Apparently, Pewdiepie hates Jews as much as Pajeets. Who would've known?"[153]

Referencing Names of Notorious Same-Genre Authors or Victims of Opposing Attacks on Equipment used During Attacks

Tarrant wrote the names of several far-right perpetrators on the firearms and magazines he used during his acts of violence, for instance Pavlo Lapshyn, Anton Lundin Pettersson, Alexandre Bissonnette, Darren Osborne and Luca Traini.[154] These names are connected to attacks that were conducted across Europe and North America between 2013 and 2018. Jackson penciled "Stephan Balliet" and "Anton Lundin Pettersson" on the mask he wore during his incident, among some other unintelligible writings.[155] In addition, the phrase "Kebab Remover" was visible on Jackson's mask and on a non-functioning air gun, which is a direct reference to a term utilized by Tarrant in his manifesto: "More recently I have been working part time as a kebab removalist."[156] Gendron wrote Tarrant, Roof, Bowers, Earnest, Breivik and Manshaus' names on the firearms employed during his shooting, and had added the number "2083", the title of Breivik's manifesto.

Furthermore, several perpetrators hailed white victims of other terrorist attacks. Tarrant had marked his rifle with "For Madrid", a reference to the 2004 Madrid train bombings in Spain, which were directed by Al-Qaeda and resulted in 193 fatalities and many more wounded. Tarrant, Jackson and Gendron wrote the name "Ebba Akerlund" on their guns, a reference to a little girl who became a victim during the jihadism-inspired truck attack in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2017. Her name is frequently referenced in the far-right milieu to "seek revenge" for the murder of a white, deaf girl who did not hear the oncoming destructive vehicle.

Gendron included the names of victims who were killed by Black perpetrators, such as Wilhelm Hospel, Tamara Durand, Leanna Owen, James Coolidge and Virginia Sorenson. These individuals lost their lives during the Waukesha Christmas Parade attack in November 2021. Moreover, Gendron's gun included the name Jason Rivera, the New York Police Department officer who died in a shooting in Harlem, New York, in January 2022.

These types of writings appear to have several meanings: they are a glorification of those who attacked in the past, or whose names the perpetrator wants to preserve. Wing identified similar patterns of labeling weapons with personal names when assessing the writings of school shooters, suggesting that it infuses a feature of animacy for an inanimate object, thus enhancing an emotional connection with the weapon(s).[157] It could also be a form of encouragement for the offenders to bring their violent plans to life, following in the footsteps of previous, successful assailants. Lastly, it might be a reminder for the victims that the past influences the present, spreading fear among their communities.

Discussion

Are we taking this global epidemic seriously? Our textual samples demonstrate the interconnectivity of recent far-right attacks and highlight the importance of digital ties formed in the complex extreme-right digital ecosystem, which weave through the stages of radicalization, mobilization and implementation. We see the emergence of a complex genre set of interrelated text types—manifestos, Q&As, online announcements and live-streams—that is becoming increasingly consolidated as a way of spreading a particular subversive and hateful worldview.[158] The objective of these communications is continually bidirectional: they address and encourage a transnational assemblage of online followers by saluting previous attackers and inciting further violence, and simultaneously disseminate hatred of already-marginalized groups, based on their religion, race or ethnicity.

Operational Implications

Interconnectivity in the short term is a cognitive-affective viral contagion: self-propagating, mutating and defeating the "immune" resistance to violence as it is read and rewritten. It might kill its host, i.e., the perpetrator, but the virus ensures that it is transmitted and spread more widely, infecting both the individual and society. The virus actively changes the individual host's thinking and motivation in the process of reading to copying and writing a new manifesto. Comparable to a written motivational interview, the author changes himself while showing us how his beliefs are formed, gestated and grown. He then leads himself down the pathway to violence, spreading the viral contagion to the next victim via both the attack itself and the self-replicating cognition. Moreover, the affected community actively spreads the cognitive contagion widely via repetitive media, leading in theory both to the real division and hatred to manifest in our society, and providing the contagion which motivates the next attack. Fundamentally, this metaphor is in line with Dawkins' original conception of a 'meme' as a "unit of cultural transmission" which, if it catches on, "can be said to propagate itself, spreading from brain to brain."[159]

Operationally, it can be assumed that there is an absence of outside interventions—for instance through threat assessment and management: the host consumes the viral contagion in a friendly environment, in this case the online ecosystem, where there is minimal social resistance to overcome its spread. Subsequently, the viral content moves from perpetrator to perpetrator to replicate an attack and more viral contagion via their own manifestos, arguably creating a new patient zero with every act of violence. Similar to a virus, it retains old patterns (e.g., Breivik's or Tarrant's writings) while adapting and adding newer and better content. The world watches the results, the success of a new viral contagion is obvious, and the attack, political and mediatic responses in themselves spread the infection to a wide array of possible new hosts. Seemingly, the real-world social factors for group belonging and social manipulation in an analog terror group have been replaced by social media and the viral manifestos in the digital groups, i.e., the leaderless cells. The menacing novelty is that the assailants' competition with one another serves to improve both lethality of the viral

contagion and its transmissibility. Our societal immune system attempts to defend against viral hate by condemning, emoting, mourning and spreading outrage, hate and fear while metastasizing the contamination further. We accomplish the terrorists' aims of viral contagion and amplify them as we try to combat them.

Over the longer course, we see copycats emerge who imitate the previous attacker; and when these copycats are aggregated over time, as in this decade of cases, what constellates is a subcultural script that provides rules of behavior and engagement for those who are willing to carry the fight to the "enemy." The enemy in these cases are typically non-white, non-Christian, non-traditional hierarchical, non-cisgender subjects within the out-group who pose an imminent existential threat. Follman has investigated and documented the copycat phenomenon in relation to the Columbine massacre in 1999, and identified >100 cases of individuals over the past twenty years, who carried out or were thwarted in their attacks, which specifically imitated the behaviors of the attackers, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold.[160] Meloy and Mohandie wrote about this prior to the advent of social media in their work on aggression immersion, and referred to this as both theme consistency and scene specificity through the repetitive viewing of "screen violence"—at that time limited to television and movies.[161]

At a deeper psychological level, both contagion and copycat effects are behavioral markers for identification with the aggression or with the aggressor, respectively. The terms originated in the works of Sándor Ferenczi and Anna Freud and have been reformulated in the context of threat assessment by Meloy et al.[162] It is a largely unconscious identification, with elements of conscious imitation, that suggests both a desire to be like the attacker who has preceded oneself, but also to master the previous attacker with a more innovative strategy or a higher body count, a pathologically narcissistic endeavor with incalculable destructive outcomes. Identification as a proximal warning behavior for targeted violence has been shown to strongly correlate with and in some cases to predict such attacks.[163]

Strategic Prevention and Tactical Reaction

Motivated by violence-justifying ideologies and personal grievances, these subjects have declared war on democracy and pose a real threat to communities around the world. Critical to identifying and mitigating these threats is to understand this very specific kind of violence, which can be accomplished by taking these mass murderers at their word. This group of lone-actor terrorists tell us who they are, whom they hate and why they will kill. We have the necessary intelligence and can model innovative programs to develop the algorithms that will detect these online signals amidst the cyberspace noise, and the multidisciplinary threat assessment teams to then conduct on-the-ground investigations to mitigate such risks. But do we have the political will to advance and fund such work for decades, and legislate for oversight at tech companies? This transnational movement thinks not. However, in a bold move to hold social media companies—such as Facebook and YouTube—accountable for their content, Australia passed a legislation one month after Brenton Tarrant's attack in New Zealand in 2019. It involves significant fines of up to 10% of their annual profits and jail time for their executives if they fail to swiftly remove "abhorrent violent material", including footage of terroristic acts.[164]

Future Research

We acknowledge that the corpus of language evidence is very limited in this study. Future research could involve a textual comparison to far-right online postings from mainstream platforms and fringe forums, as well as visual (e.g., images and memes) or auditory (e.g., music) elements through a semiotics study. It would also be of interest to investigate the eyeball-to-violence ratio in the context of targeted violence manifestos and live-streams that inspire and influence real-world actions: "the ratio between the number of people who have seen terrorist images or manifestos, and the number of those individuals who have subsequently gone on to use terrorist violence."[165] Such work could help contribute to understanding whether or not we have entered the fifth wave of global terrorism.[166]

About the Authors:

Julia Kupper *is a forensic linguist and independent researcher based in California, United States. As a consultant, she collaborates with law enforcement agencies and threat assessment teams throughout Los Angeles. As a scholar, she studies targeted violence communications to enhance the mitigation of different types of violent threats.*

Tanya Karoli Christensen, *PhD, is professor of Danish language at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, with a specialty in forensic linguistics. She recently led a 3-year research project on the language and genre of threats, delivering a digital, linguistically annotated corpus of threatening messages. She consults regularly on linguistic evidence for police and attorneys and offers training for the Danish police.*

Dakota Wing *is a PhD candidate in linguistics and applied linguistics at York University, Toronto, Canada. He regularly consults as a forensic linguist and co-maintains ForensicLing.com. His research focuses on police discourse and linguistic ideologies guiding the admissibility of language evidence in court. He has applied discourse analysis methodologies to the writings of school shooters, extremist propaganda and online radicalized communities.*

Marlon Hurt, *PhD, is an adjunct professor of linguistics at Hofstra University's Master of Arts in Linguistics: Forensic Linguistics program (New York, United States). He also works as an analyst on active legal cases with the Institute for Forensic Linguistics, Threat Assessment and Strategic Analysis under the direction of Dr. Robert Leonard.*

Matthew Schumacher, *PhD, is a national security psychologist with expertise in conducting intelligence, irregular warfare, counterterrorism and anti-hate operations. Formerly a lieutenant commander in the US Navy, he has 15 years of experience in Los Angeles, Iraq, Afghanistan and Africa in support of MARSOC, NSW, USSOCOM, FBI, DIA and law enforcement agencies. As a psychiatry professor in the military, he led crisis and emergency response teams, taught emergency and deployment psychology, and completed a post-doctoral training in advanced operational psychology at DIA/DEVGRU.*

Reid Meloy, *PhD, is a forensic psychologist and voluntary clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of California, San Diego. He has been a consultant to the FBI Behavioral Analysis Unit, Quantico, for the past two decades. He is coeditor of the International Handbook of Threat Assessment, 2nd edition (Oxford University Press, 2021), which recently won the Manfred Guttmacher Award from the American Psychiatric Association.*

Notes

[1] Arie Perliger, *American Zealots: Inside right-wing domestic terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020); Karolin Schwarz, *Hasskrieger* (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 2020).

[2] Christian Fuchs and Paul Middelhoff, *Das Netzwerk der neuen Rechten: wer sie lenkt, wer sie finanziert und wie sie die Gesellschaft verändern* (Reinbek: Rowohlt Polaris, 2020).

[3] Alexander Alter, "How 'The Turner Diaries' Incites White Supremacists," *The New York Times*, 12 January 2021; URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/12/books/turner-diaries-white-supremacists.html.

[4] Zack Beauchamp (a), "Accelerationism: The obscure idea inspiring white supremacist killers around the world," *Vox*, 18 November 2019; URL: https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/2019/11/11/20882005/accelerationism-white-supremacy-christchurch.

[5] The Soufan Center, "White Supremacy Extremism: The transnational rise of the violent white supremacist movement," The Soufan Center, September 2019; URL: https://thesoufancenter.org/research/white-supremacy-extremism-the-transnational-rise-of-the-violent-white-supremacist-movement/. For an overview of the history of the "chans", see Stephane J. Baele, Lewys Brace and Travis G. Coan, "Variation on a Theme? Comparing 4chan, 8kun, and other chans' far-right "/pol" boards," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2021, pp. 65–80; URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26984798.

[6] Beauchamp (a), op. cit.

[7] See, for instance: Mona Kanwal Sheik and Dino Krause, "Transnational Jihadism: A conflict to be resolved, a movement to implode or an ideology to be countered?" *Perspectives on Terrorism*, vol. 16, no. 1, February 2022; URL: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/binaries/content/assets/customsites/perspectives-on-terrorism/2022/issue-1/introduction.pdf; Graham Macklin and Tore Bjørgo, "Breivik's Long Shadow? The impact of the July 22, 2011 attacks on the *modus operandi* of extreme-right lone actor terrorists," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, vol. 15, no. 3, June 2021; URL: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/binaries/content/assets/customsites/perspectives-on-terrorism/2021/issue-3/macklin-and-bjorgo.pdf; Ari Ben Am and Gabriel Weimann, "Fabricated Martyrs: The warrior-saint icons of far-right terrorism," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, vol. 14, no. 5, June 2021; URL: https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/binaries/content/assets/customsites/perspectives-on-terrorism/2020/issue-5/benam-and-weimann.pdf; Tore Bjørgo and Jacob Aasland Ravndal, "Extreme-Right Violence and Terrorism: Concepts, patterns, and responses," *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism Policy Brief*, September 2019; URL: https://icct.nl/app/uploads/2019/09/Extreme-Right-Violence-and-Terrorism-Concepts-Patterns-and-Responses-4.pdf; Graham Macklin, "The Christchurch Attacks: Livestream terror in the viral video age," *CTC Sentinel*, vol. 12, no. 6, July 2019; URL: https://ctc.usma.edu/christchurch-attacks-livestream-terror-viral-video-age/; Perliger, op. cit.; Beauchamp, op. cit.

[8] Paul Gill, *Lone-Actor Terrorists: A behavioural analysis* (London: Routledge, 2015); Ramon Spaaij, *Understanding Lone Wolf Terrorism: Global patterns, motivations and prevention* (Springer Science & Business Media, 2011); Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team, "Counterterrorism Guide," *Office of the Director of National Intelligence*; URL: https://www.dni.gov/nctc/jcat/index.html.

[9] Frederick S. Calhoun and Stephen Weston, *Contemporary Threat Management: A practical guide for identifying, assessing, and managing individuals of violent intent* (San Diego: Specialized Training Services, 2003); URL: https://www.specializedtraining.com/showproduct.aspx?ProductID=74&SEName=contemporary-threat-management.

[10] Gillian Brockell, "The Father of 'Great Replacement': An ex-socialist French writer," *The Washington Post*, 17 May 2022; URL: https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2022/05/17/renaud-camus-great-replacement-history/.

[11] For an overview on the shift from anger to contempt to disgust as predictors in political violence, see the warning behavior "changes in thinking and emotion," in J. Reid Meloy, *TRAP-18 User's Manual Version 1.0* (Multi Health Systems, 2017); URL: https://gifrinc.com/trap-18-manual/; David Matsumoto, Mark G. Frank and Hyisung C. Hwang, "The Role of Intergroup Emotions in Political Violence," *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, vol. 24, pp. 369–373; URL: https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721415595023.

[12] Stephan Balliet (a), *Your Fe&A Guide* (2019), p. 4; John Earnest (a), *An Open Letter* (2019), p. 5.

[13] Lunds Tingsrätt, *Förundersökningsprotokoll* (October 2021) [Lund district court, preliminary investigation report].

[14] Ibid, p. 76.

[15] "SS" is an abbreviation for 'Schutzstaffel', the elite paramilitary organization that enforced racial policies of Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler. "1488" is a numeric hate symbol that is a combination of two popular white supremacist symbols: '14' is short for the "14 words" slogan we must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children. '88' stands for Heil Hitler, as 'H' is the 8th letter of the alphabet.

[16] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit., p. 159.

[17] Ibid, p. 592.

[18] Ibid, p. 163.

[19] For an overview on the history of lone-actor right-wing terrorism in online spaces, see Cathrine Thorleifsson and Joey Düker, "Lone Actors in Digital Environments," *European Commission*, October 2021; URL: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/system/files/2021-10/ran_paper_lone_actors_in_digital_environments_en.pdf; Lisa Kaati, Katie Cohen and Björn Pelzer, "Heroes and Scapegoats: Right-wing extremism in digital environments," *European Commission,* July 2021; URL: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/49e2ecf2-eae9-11eb-93a8-01aa75ed71a1/language-en.

[20] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[21] Perliger, op. cit.; Schwarz, op. cit.; Thorleifsson and Düker, op. cit.

[22] Macklin and Bjørgo, op. cit.

[23] Matthew Feldman, "Viewpoint: Killer Breivik's links with far right," *BBC*, 27 August 2012; URL: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-19366000; Anders Breivik, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence* (2011), p. 1471.

[24] Schwarz, op. cit.

[25] Weiyi Cai and Simone Landon, "Attacks by White Extremists Are Growing. So are their connections." *The New York Times*, 3 April 2019; URL: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/03/world/white-extremist-terrorism-christchurch.html.

[26] See, for instance, Aleksandra M. Dmitrieva and J. Reid Meloy, "Troubled Water: Domestic terrorism threat in the U.S. coast

guard and the TRAP-18," *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 2021; URL: https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000170; Mack Lamoureux, "Swedish Police Say They Thwarted Neo-Nazi Bombing and Mass Murder Plot," *Vice*, 31 May 2022; URL: https://www-vice-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.vice.com/amp/en/article/y3va9g/sweden-neo-nazi-mass-murder-plot-arrest.

[27] Beauchamp (a), op. cit.; Miro Dittrich, personal communication, 17 August 2021.

[28] Zack Beauchamp (b), "An Online Subculture Celebrating the Charleston Church Shooter Appears to be Inspiring Copycat Plots," *Vox*, 7 February 2019; URL: https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/2/7/18215634/dylann-roof-charleston-church-shooter-bowl-gang.

[29] Dittrich, op. cit.

[30] Baele et al., op. cit.; Robert Bowers, Gab post, 27 October 2018.

[31] Dittrich, op. cit.

[32] Macklin and Bjørgo, op. cit.

[33] Am and Weimann, op. cit., p. 143.

[34] Macklin and Bjørgo, op. cit.

[35] Baele et al., op. cit.

[36] Blyth Crawford and Florence Keen, "The Hanau Terrorist Attack: How race hate and conspiracy theories are fueling global far-right violence," *CTC Sentinel*, vol. 13, no. 3, March 2020; URL: https://ctc.usma.edu/hanau-terrorist-attack-race-hate-conspiracy-theories-fueling-global-far-right-violence/.

[37] Macklin and Bjørgo, op. cit.

[38] Thorleifsson and Düker, op. cit.

[39] Macklin and Bjørgo, op. cit.

[40] Payton Gendron (a), *Yeah* (2022), p. 5; J. Reid Meloy and Jeffrey W. Pollard, "Lone-Actor Terrorism and Impulsivity," *Journal of Forensic Science*, vol. 62, no. 6, November 2017; URL: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28397251/.

[41] Payton Gendron (b), Discord logs, 1 March 2022.

[42] Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 5.

[43] Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 5.

[44] Charles L. Briggs and Richard Bauman, "Genre, Intertextuality, and Social Power," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, vol. 2, no. 2, December 1992, p. 147; URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/43102167.

[45] Adam Hodges, "Intertextuality in Discourse," in *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, edited by Deborah Tannen, Heidi E. Hamilton and Deborah Schiffrin, vol. 1. (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2015).

[46] Julia Kupper and J. Reid Meloy, "TRAP-18 Indicators Validated Through the Forensic Linguistic Analysis of Targeted Violence Manifestos," *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, vol. 8, no. 4, September 2021, p. 179; URL: https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000165.

[47] Tammy Gales, "Ideologies in Violence: A corpus and discourse analytic approach to stance in threatening communications," *The International Journal of Speech, Language and the Law*, February 2011, pp. 299–302; URL: https://doi.org/10.1558/ijsll.v17i2.299; Marie Bojsen-Møller, Sune Auken, Amy J. Devitt and Tanya Karoli Christensen, "Illicit Genres: The case of threatening communications," *Sakprosa*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2020; URL: https://doi.org/10.5617/sakprosa.7416.

[48] Bojsen-Møller et al., op. cit., p. 3.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Tim Grant, *Illicit Genres,* conference (Copenhagen, 2018).

[51] Anne Freadman, "Anyone for Tennis?" in *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, edited by Aviva Freedman and Peter Medway, pp. 43–66 (London: Taylor & Francis 1994); URL: https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9780203393277-12/anyone-tennis-aviva-freedman-peter-medway?context=ubx&refId=c3d783f4-9a73-4159-af5a-6210834a68c8; Anne Freadman, "Uptake," in *The Rhetoric and Ideology of Genre, Strategies for Stability and Change*, edited by Richard M. Coe, Lorelei Lingard and Tatiana Teslenko (Cresskill: Hampton Press, 2002); URL: https://library.villanova.edu/Find/Record/575225/TOC.

[52] J. Reid Meloy, personal communication, 27 May 2022.

[53] Sherry Towers, Andres Gomez-Lievano, Maryam Khan, Anuj Mubayi and Carlos Castillo-Chavez, "Contagion in Mass Killings and School Shootings," *PLOS ONE*, July 2015; URL: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0117259.

[54] J. Reid Meloy, Jens Hoffmann and Bram van der Meer, "The Adult Mass murderer in Europe and North America: The paranoid spectrum from distrust to delusion," *Association of Threat Assessment Professionals 2017*; URL: https://secureservercdn.net/72.167.243.77/66f.213.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ATAP2017.pdf.

[55] Mark Follman (a), *Trigger Points: Inside the mission to stop mass shootings in America* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2022); URL: https://www.harpercollins.com/products/trigger-points-mark-follman?variant=39402950131746.

[56] Meloy, op. cit.; Meloy, Hoffmann and van der Meer, op. cit.; Towers et al., op. cit.; Follman, op. cit.

[57] Kupper and Meloy, op. cit., p. 179.

[58] Julia Kupper, "Preventing Attacks Using Targeted Violence Manifestos," *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 5 May 2022; URL: https://leb.fbi.gov/articles/featured-articles/preventing-attacks-using-targeted-violence-manifestos?utm_campaign=e-mail-Immediate&utm_content=%5B1406333%5D-%2Farticles%2Ffeatured-articles%2Fpreventing-attacks-using-targeted-violence-manifestos.

[59] Kupper and Meloy, op. cit., p. 186.

[60] Bart Schuurman, Lasse Lindekilde, Stefan Malthaner, Francis O'Connor, Paul Gill and Noémie Bouhana, "End of the Lone Wolf: The typology that should not have been," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol. 48, no. 8, 2019, pp. 771–778; URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/1057610X.2017.1419554.

[61] David Webber, Arie Kruglanski, Erica Molinario and Katarzyna Jasko, "Ideologies that Justify Political Violence," *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 34, August 2020, pp. 107–111; URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2020.01.004.

[62] Dmitrieva and Meloy, op. cit., p. 13.

[63] Marlon Hurt, "Pledging to Harm: A linguistic analysis of violent intent in threatening language," *Doctoral dissertation,* Aston University, 2021; URL: https://research.aston.ac.uk/en/studentTheses/pledging-to-harm-a-linguistic-analysis-of-violent-intent-in-threa.

[64] Patrick Kingsley, "New Zealand Massacre Highlights Global Reach of White Extremism," *The New York Times*, 15 March 2019; URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/15/world/asia/christchurch-mass-shooting-extremism.html.

[65] Jason Burke, "The Age of Selfie Jihad: How evolving media technology is changing terrorism," *Combating Terrorism Center*, vol. 9, no. 11, November/December 2016; URL: https://ctc.westpoint.edu/the-age-of-selfie-jihad-how-evolving-media-technology-is-changing-terrorism/; Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad: Terror networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

[66] Burke, op. cit.; Counter Extremism Project, "Larossi Abballa," URL: https://www.counterextremism.com/extremists/larossi-abballa.

[67] Mark Follman (b), "The Powerful Impact of Digital Media on Mass Shootings," *Literary Hub*, 8 April 2022; URL: https://lithub.com/the-powerful-impact-of-digital-media-on-mass-shootings/.

[68] Ben Lee, "Only Playing: Extreme-right gamification," *Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats*, 24 August 2021; URL: https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/only-playing-extreme-right-gamification/.

[69] Am and Weimann, op. cit.

[70] Schwarz, op. cit.

[71] Gerald Posselt, "Can Hatred Speak? On the linguistic dimensions of hate crime," *Linguistik Online*, vol. 82, no. 3, April 2017; URL: https://doi.org/10.13092/lo.82.3712.

[72] Macklin and Bjørgo, op. cit., p. 20.

[73] Robert A. Fein and Bryan Vossekuil, *Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment Investigations: A guide for state and local law enforcement officials* (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, 1998); URL: https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/179981.pdf; Calhoun and Weston, op. cit.

[74] Brenton Tarrant (a), *The Great Replacement* (2019), p. 18; Luca Traini committed a drive-by shooting attack on six African migrants, who were all injured, in the city of Macerata, Italy on 3 February 2018. Anton Lundin Pettersson carried out a Swedish school attack motivated by racist sentiments, killing 3 and injuring 1, on 22 October 2015. Darren Osborne drove a van into pedestrians close to a Muslim welfare house in Finsbury Park, London, United Kingdom, on 19 June 2017. He killed 1 and injured 10.

[75] Earnest (a), op. cit., p. 5.

[76] Patrick Crusius (a), *The Inconvenient Truth* (2019), p. 1.

[77] 'Chad' is an incel (involuntary celibate) term that refers to sexually active alpha males.

[78] Balliet (a), op. cit., p. 4.

[79] Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 9.

[80] Dakota Wing, "The Progression of Interpersonal Stances in the Writings of School Shooters," *Master of Arts thesis*, Hofstra University, 2017; URL: https://www.proquest.com/openview/bcc29d777c8ebe9e9beb04a9eb86c942/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750.

[81] Earnest (a), op. cit., p. 6.; Hugo Jackson, *Innehållet i manifest* (2021), p. 1.

[82] Gendron (a), op. cit.; Dylann Roof, *The last Rhodesian* (2015).

[83] Stephan Balliet (b), *A Short Pre-Action Report*, p. 9.

[84] Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 57.

[85] Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 157–159.

[86] Anti-Defamation League, "Striking similarities between Gendron and Tarrant manifestos," *ADL*, 24 May 2022; URL: https://www.adl.org/resources/blog/striking-similarities-between-gendron-and-tarrant-manifestos.

[87] Tarrant (a), op. cit., p. 12, 16.

[88] Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 6, 8.

[89] Pekka-Eric Auvinen, *Natural selector's manifesto*, 2007, p. 1.

[90] Emily Powell, "'I Figured That an Under-prepared Attack and a Meh Manifesto is Better than no Attack and no Manifesto': The sharing of agency with past and future mass shooters in pre-crime texts," conference paper (Birmingham: International Association of Forensic Linguists, Aston University, 2021).

[91] Macklin and Bjørgo, op. cit.

[92] Breivik, op. cit., p. 1349.

[93] Christopher Sean Harper-Mercer, *My Story* (2015), p. 4.

[94] Bundeskriminalamt, *Beschuldigtenvernehmung* (November 2019), p. 1–2 [interrogation of accused].

[95] Breivik, op. cit., p. 1358, 1379; Tarrant (a), op. cit., p. 5.

[96] Tarrant (a), op. cit., p. 15, 16; Earnest (a), op. cit., p. 7.

[97] Tarrant (a), op. cit., p. 1, 14; Balliet (a), op. cit., p. 1, 3.

[98] Breivik, op. cit., p. 1383.

[99] Earnest (a), op. cit., p. 8.

[100] Balliet (a), op. cit., p. 5.

[101] Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 7, 11; Balliet (a), op. cit., p. 2.

[102] Breivik, op. cit., p. 1383.

[103] Tarrant (a), op. cit., p. 12.

[104] Earnest (a), op. cit., p. 7.

[105] Balliet (a), op. cit., p. 4.

[106] Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 6.

[108] Schwarz, op. cit.

[109] Oberlandesgericht Naumburg, "Bestens vernetzter Einzeltäter? 3. Verhandlungstag," *Zentrum Demokratischer Widerspruch e.V.*, July 2020; URL: https://democ.de/halle/3-prozesstag/#transcript.

[110] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[111] Freadman, op. cit.

[112] Brenton Tarrant (b), 8chan imageboard post, 15 March 2019.

[113] Patrick Crusius (b), 8chan imageboard post, 3 August 2019.

[114] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[115] Gendron (b), op. cit.

[116] Frederic Heine and Tina Magazzini, "Radicalisation and Resilience Case Study: Germany," *European University Institute*, September 2020; URL: http://grease.eui.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2020/10/WP4-Report_Germany-1.pdf.

[117] Tina Askanius, "On Frogs, Monkeys, and Execution Memes: Exploring the humor-hate nexus at the intersection of neo-Nazi and alt-right movements in Sweden," *Sage Journals Television & New Media*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2021, pp. 147–165; URL: https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476420982234.

[118] Tarrant (b), op. cit.

[119] John Earnest (b), 8chan imageboard post, 27 April 2019.

[120] Philip Manshaus, Endchan imageboard post, 10 August 2019.

[121] Stephan Balliet (c), Meguca imageboard post, 9 October 2019.

[122] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[123] Gendron (b), op. cit.

[124] Freadman, op. cit.

[125] Tarrant (b), op. cit.

[126] Earnest (b), op. cit.

[127] Crusius (b), op. cit.

[128] Manshaus, op. cit.

[129] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[130] Breivik, op. cit., p. 345; Balliet (b), op. cit., p. 10.

[131] Tarrant (a), op. cit., p. 73; Gendron (a), op. cit., p. 180.

[132] Am and Weimann, op. cit., p. 143.

[133] Tarrant (b), op. cit.

[134] Earnest (b), op. cit.

[135] Manshaus, op. cit.

[136] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[137] Gendron (b), op. cit.

[138] Thorleifsson and Düker, op. cit., p. 11.

[139] Crusius (b), op. cit.

[140] Manshaus, op. cit.

[141] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[142] Tarrant (a), op. cit., p. 18.

[143] Breivik, op. cit.

[144] Earnest (a), op. cit., p. 7.

[145] Tarrant (b), op. cit.

[146] Manshaus, op. cit.

[147] Gendron (b), op. cit.

[148] Heine and Magazzini, op. cit., p. 16.

[149] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[150] See text reference in introduction; Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[151] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.; Stephan Balliet (d), live-stream, 9 October 2019.

[152] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.; Brenton Tarrant ©, live-stream, 15 March 2019.

[153] Earnest (a), op. cit., p. 5.

[154] Pavlo Lapshyn committed several crimes against Muslims throughout 2013, including a fatal stabbing of one individual and three attempted bombings of mosques in the West Midlands, United Kingdom. Alexandre Bissonnette attacked an Islamic cultural center in Quebec City, Canada, killing 6 persons and injuring 5 others on 29 January 2017.

[155] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.

[156] Lunds Tingsrätt, op. cit.; Tarrant (a), op. cit., p. 5.

[157] Wing, op. cit.

[158] Amy J. Devitt, "Intertextuality in Tax Accounting: Generic, referential, and functional," in *Textual Dynamics of the Professions: Historical and contemporary studies of writing in professional communities*, edited by Charles Bazerman and James Paradis (London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991); URL: https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/textual_dynamics/textual_dynamics.pdf.

[159] Richard Dawkins, *The selfish gene* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 192.

[160] Follman, op. cit.

[161] J. Reid Meloy, Anthony G. Hempel, Kris Mohandie, Andrew A. Shiva and Thomas B. Gray, "Offender and offense characteristics of a nonrandom sample of adolescent mass murderers," *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, vol. 40, no. 6, 2001, pp. 719–728; URL: https://doi.org/10.1097/00004583-200106000-00018.

[162] Sándor Ferenczi, *Final Contributions to the Problems and Methods of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Basic Books, 1930); Anna Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense* (New York: International Universities Press, 1936/1966); J. Reid Meloy, Kris Mohandie, James L. Knoll and Jens Hoffmann, "The Concept of Identification in Threat Assessment," *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, vol. 33, no. 2, 2015, pp. 213–237; URL: https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2166.

[163] J. Reid Meloy, Alasdair Goodwill, Caitlin Clemmow and Paul Gill, "Time Sequencing the TRAP-18 Indicators," *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2021, pp. 1–19; URL: https://doi.org/10.1037/tam0000157.

[164] David Cave, "Australia Passes Law to Punish Social Media Companies for Violent Posts," *The New York Times*, 3 April 2019; URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/03/world/australia/social-media-law.html.

[165] Jonathan Hall, "Online Counter-Terrorism: Presentation to Commission for Countering Extremism," *Terrorism Legislation Reviewer*, 25 May 2022; URL: https://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/220523-CCE-Online-Counter-Terrorism.pdf.

[166] David C. Rapoport, *Waves of Global Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2022).