LEADERLESS RESISTANCE, RADICAL ENVIRONMENTALISM, AND ASYMMETRICAL WARFARE

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation interrogates the concept of 'leaderless resistance.' Traditionally defined as a strategy that allows for and encourages individuals or small cells to carry out acts of violence or sabotage entirely independent of any hierarchy of leadership or network of support, leaderless resistance is most often implemented by weaker actors who are engaged in asymmetrical struggle. The central task here is to problematize the contention found in the counterterrorism literature that leaderless resistance functions primarily to provide clandestine groups immunity to detection, infiltration, and prosecution by state agencies. I argue over the course of a series of papers that leaderless resistance is both more than this and sometimes not this. Two groups inform this research: a) the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), which is responsible for a series of arson attacks against ski resorts, genetic research labs, SUV dealerships, and forestry headquarters, and b) the EnCana Bomber(s), who are responsible for a series of six bombings and three threat letters aimed at the pipeline infrastructure of EnCana corporation, the largest producer of natural gas in North America.

I articulate my arguments over the course of four chapters (chapters 2-5). In chapter two I argue that there are benefits *additional to* clandestinity that the ELF enjoys. By using leaderless resistance, the ELF eliminates all ideology extraneous to the specific cause of halting the degradation of nature. This elimination enables the ELF to mobilize a greater number of 'direct actions.' Chapter three tests a link in the communicative cycle through which leaderless resistance purports to operate, namely the interaction between above-ground spokespersons and the potential saboteurs that they hope to inspire. I find that these spokespersons' peculiar role in contexts of leaderless resistance hampers their

ability to spread their ideological message, and exacerbates the more general problems that counter-hegemonic groups experience in their interactions with mainstream media. Chapter four finds that leaderless resistance is itself at least partly a rhetorical construct, a meaning-conferring 'ideology of effervescence' that lifts the spirits of both movement progenitors who advocate the strategy as well as incipient lone wolves who consider responding to their exhortations. This chapter also articulates leaderless resistance as a forum for the expression of charismatic leadership. Chapter five incorporates leaderless resistance as one element in a larger discussion of ethical considerations as they come to bear on both the antiglobalization and radical environmental movement. Overall, these chapters combine to produce a more robust and multi-faceted vision of leaderless resistance than is currently on offer by terrorism scholarship.

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Preface

This dissertation follows the 'paper format' as specified by the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Alberta. As such, each body chapter contains its own theoretical, methodological, and bibliographical justifications, and each represents a contribution to scholarship in its own right. In this introductory chapter I will describe briefly the object under investigation (leaderless resistance) and how I proceed to investigate it. Those who are lifting this dissertation off the shelf or downloading it are encouraged either to skip ahead or to consult the versions of the subsequent body chapters as they appear in journal-article form. In particular, chapters two, three and five appear as (respectively):

> Joosse, Paul. 2007. "Leaderless Resistance and Ideological Inclusion: the Case of the Earth Liberation Front." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19.3: 351-368.
>
> Joosse, Paul. 2012 "Elves, Environmentalism, and 'Eco-Terror': Leaderless Resistance and Media Coverage of the Earth Liberation Front." *Crime, Media, Culture* 8.1: 75-93.
>
> Joosse, Paul 2014, forthcoming. "Anti-globalization and Radical Environmentalism: an exchange on Ethical Grounds" in *Ethics in Progress Quarterly*.

Those reading this introduction who go on to read the rest of the chapters will notice some repetition, in places where I have determined that this is necessary.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Several commentators have pointed to a trend that has seen the flattening of hierarchical relations in commercial and social life (Brafman and Beckstrom 2006; Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Friedman 2005, cf. Florida 2005). According to Brafman and Becktrom, everything from Wikipedia, to the post-'major-label' recording industry, to Alcoholics Anonymous, displays the contemporary "unstoppable power of leaderless organizations" (2006: 11-15, 36-41, 72-77). Far from a utopian era of conflict-free egalitarianism, however, this non-hierarchical preponderance also finds expression in what some have termed (with some controversy) the "new terrorism" (Arquilla, Ronfeldt, and Zanini 1999; Crenshaw 2009: 132-133; Giddens 2004: 7; Hoffman 2006: 39-40, 267-272; Laqueur 1999: 5; Morgan 2004: 38-39; Neumann 2009: 17-21, 56-68; Tucker 2001: 1-3), and for Hardt and Negri, this leveling of hierarchies portends a "'fearful new symmetry'" in which "'network forces of imperial order face network enemies on all sides'" (cited in Galloway and Thacker 2007: 15).

This flattening is not simply a result of the breakdown of objective hierarchical social structures, either of the state or its non-state adversaries. Rather, as Giddens (1991), drawing on Goffman, points out, it is also a function of the reflexive, mediated, and globalized modes through which modern subjectivities are constituted. Modern projects of identity construction involve a variety of modes of identification and a multitude of social spheres, resulting in plurality at the inter- and intra-personal levels (Laclau 1985). Giddens's version of the 'new terrorism' thesis is thus situated socio-

historically with reference to the new (his timeframes is the past forty years) impact of media and communication technologies which allow for voluntaristic affiliation to globalized political assemblages that are:

> like a kind of malign NGO . . . driven by a sense of mission and commitment . . . [that] allows for a fairly loose global organization to flourish. It's a network type organization…. [While] Al Qaeda has been very substantially weakened by the American attacks in Afghanistan, it's also strong still because the moral . . . sense of mission can keep cells functioning even when some aspects of the overall organization have been weakened…. So there is a lot of autonomy in local cells and these can sort of breed without really necessarily being in any strong sense directed from the centre (Giddens 2004: 7).

The ironic outcome of this form of organization, however, is that the individual's affiliative drive, which rests on the pretention of a *unity of purpose* with distanciated others, becomes the very mechanism through which idiosyncrasy, heterogeneity and multiplicity become recognizable. Here, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's 'thought image' of the rhizome[1] gains salience, particularly through its contrast with more traditional hierarchical or 'arborescent' modes of thought:

> in contrast to centered (even polycentric) systems with hierarchical modes of communication and preestablished paths, the rhizome is an acentered, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system without a General and without an

[1] Deleuze and Guattari's concepts resist systematic analysis by design. Columbat, for example, writes that "the very coherence of these [that is, Deleuze and Guattari's] concepts within the always moving schizoanalytic machinery makes them difficult to characterize. Each reader-operator who wants to work with these concepts must redefine them within his or her own field of study, while they already present themselves as being in constant metamorphosis" (1991: 11). I consider my application of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas to the study of leaderless resistance to be one instance of this style of appropriation. , For their part, Deleuze and Foucault encouraged a "tool box" approach to their work (Deleuze and Foucault 1977: 208).

> organizing memory or central automaton, defined solely by a circulation of states (1987: 21).

And further:

> The solution without a General is to be found in an acentered multiplicity possessing a finite number of states with signals to indicate corresponding speeds, from a war rhizome or guerilla logic point of view, without tracing, without any copying of a central order (1987:17).

Thus, while Deleuze and Guattari's work is a philosophical contribution that repudiates the violence inherent in prevailing traditions of metaphysics and psychoanalysis (1972; 1987), their work also finds relevance when applied to the dynamics of modern political struggle (Becker 2006; Brisman 2010; Robinson 2010; Weizman 2006). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, for example, they counterpose the 'state-form,' (which absorbs and assimilates difference, 'striating' 'territorialized' space within hierarchies [1987: 385-387]), with the 'war machine'—which they describe as a set of processes that constitute resistance to such totalizing enclosures (1987: 351-423). The war-machine is slippery and ephemeral, it multiplies difference, and it is defined by its fundamental *exteriority* to the logic of the state apparatus (1987: 351). [2]

Within this broad context, we find 'leaderless resistance'—a strategy most often adopted by weaker actors in asymmetrical struggle in which individuals or small cells are

[2] While in their earlier collaborative works Deleuze and Guattari were writing with some degree of optimism about how the state apparatus could be undermined by this rhizomatic resistance, by the 1990s, Deleuze had recognized that the state itself had adopted many of the features of its adversary, and was now adopting new forms of "ultrarapid forms of free-floating control" in the manner of "a self-deforming cast that will continuously change from one moment to the other, or like a sieve whose mesh will transmute from point to point" (1992: 11, 4).

encouraged to carry out acts of violence or sabotage entirely independent of any hierarchy of leadership or networks of support (Kaplan 1997: 80). The quotes from Deleuze and Guattari above anticipate progenitors of the idea in the radical right, such as Louis Beam 1983 [1992]:

> The concept of Leaderless Resistance is nothing less than a fundamental departure in theories of organization. The orthodox scheme of organization is diagrammatically represented by the pyramid, with the mass at the bottom and the leader at the top. This fundamental of organization is to be seen not only in armies, which are of course, the best illustration of the pyramid structure…. But the same structure is seen in corporations, ladies' garden clubs and in our political system itself…. An alternative to the pyramid type of organization is . . . [a] system of organization that is based upon the cell organization, but does not have any central control or direction.... Utilizing the Leaderless Resistance concept, all individuals and groups operate independently of each other, and never report to a central headquarters or single leader for direction or instruction, as would those who belong to a typical pyramid organization…. Organs of information distribution such as newspapers, leaflets, computers,[3] etc., which are widely available to all, keep each person informed of events, allowing for a planned response that will take many variations. No one need issue an order to anyone.

Meanwhile, counterterrorism researchers like Arquilla and Ronfeldt have theorized about 'netwars' in which:

[3] The reference to computers in this essay from 1983 is striking, and underscores Beam's pioneering work to use computer networks to disseminate his ideas (Michael 2012: 44).

> [t]he organizational structure is quite flat. There is no single central leader or commander; the network as a whole (but not necessarily each node) has little to no hierarchy. There may be multiple leaders. Decision making and operations are decentralized and depend on consultative consensus-building that allows for local initiative and autonomy. The design is both acephalous (headless) and polycephalous (Hydra-headed)—it has not precise heart or head, although not all nodes may be 'created equal' (1997: 280).

Flatness, autonomousness, and leaderlessness, thus arise as common themes for those who think about modern forms of contestation and asymmetrical warfare.

In this dissertation, I examine the concept of leaderless resistance, which exists most prominently in the terrorism literature. I evaluate and build on this literature by expanding it with a particularly sociological approach that conceives leaderless resistance as a dynamic, social, communicative process. The concept has proved to be instrumental for understanding aspects of modern terrorism. For example, the evolution of Al-Qaeda, from its pre-9/11 (hierarchical/aborescent) phase to its post-9/11 (rhizomatic) phase, has provided the most well-known (though not the best [Rollins, *et. al* 2011]) example of the emergence of this leaderless model of (dis)organization (Sageman 2008). Long after Osama Bin Laden (1957-2011) and Ayman al-Zawahiri (b. 1951) reputedly ceased to helm lines of financing or control between themselves and trained 'sleeper cells' around the world, they managed to remain relevant through their ability to promulgate a ready-made 'brand' (Zelinsky and Shubik 2009) or banner under which affiliate groups around the globe may be inspired to act (Sageman 2008). Indeed, even before September 11, Al-Qaeda strategist, Abu Musab al-Suri, correctly foresaw how debilitating US-led military

operations and counterterrorist network analyses eventually would be for al-Qaeda-proper (Lia 2008). In the words of his interpreter, Lawrence Wright: "[the] next stage of jihad will be characterized by terrorism created by individuals or small autonomous groups (what he terms 'leaderless resistance'[4]), which will wear down the enemy and prepare the ground for the far more ambitious aim…an outright struggle for territory" (Wright 2006b: 51). Thus, while the transition away from carefully-coordinated, highly-violent attacks and toward the scattered actions of self-radicalized, self-trained, individuals or small groups who usually operate with a diminished capacity for high-impact violence may look like a defeat to some, Suri envisions these latter-style attacks as presaging a more conventional military challenge (Lia 2008).

While al-Qaeda is not the best example of leaderless resistance in action (as I will discuss below), experts agree that certain elements of the radical environmental movement may be as close as we have to a paradigmatic case (Hoffman 2008: 38; Neumann 2009: 152). Two movements therefore occupy the research that follows: a) the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) is responsible for a series of arson attacks against ski resorts**,** genetic research labs, SUV dealerships, and forestry headquarters, causing well over $100M in damages, and b) the Peace Region Pipeline Bomber(s), who are responsible for a series of six bombings and three threat letters aimed at EnCana corporation, the largest producer of natural gas in North America.

[4] Suri's *Global Islamic Resistance Call* is full of theory that assumes 'leaderless resistance,' but it is bereft of the actual term itself, at least in Lia's translation. In this translation, Suri speaks of "individual terrorism Jihad" perpetrated by "small Resistance Units completely and totally separated from each other" (Lia 2008: 371, 373). Wright's use of the specific term is therefore striking, but it is unclear whether or not Suri had any knowledge of the work of Beam or other advocates of the leaderless resistance strategy on the far right. Wright himself was unable give clarity on the origination of his use of the term in his analysis of Suri's thought in communications with me (email correspondence with the author, October 14, 2012), though interchanges of tactics and ideology between the far right and militant Islam has precedent (Michael 2006).

Much work on leaderless resistance has focused on its use as an effective strategy for avoiding detection, infiltration, and prosecution by a powerful state (Beam 1992 [1983]; Bakker and de Graaf 2010; Brafman and Beckstrom 2006; Damphousse and Smith 2004; Dishman 2005; Garfinkel 2003; Kaplan 1997; Leader and Probst 2003; Neumann 2009; Pressman 2003; Sageman 2008; Stern 2003a; 2003b: 33-35). In this persepctive, clandestinity and intra-movement security cultures can be a function of what Crossley *et al* (following others) term the "secrecy-efficiency trade off":

> Assuming that secrecy can only be achieved in a network at the expense of efficiency, advocates of the trade-off idea argue that the desire for secrecy within networks involved in illegal activities often overrides the desire for efficiency and that this impacts upon network structure. Specifically, covert networks are said to be characterised by low density and (degree) decentralization (Crossley et al 2012: 635; see also Zwerman *et al* 2000: 89-93).

The ultimate end of this trajectory of decentalization and decreassing network density, then, is atomization: a move towards the formation of small independent cells and the encouragement of 'lone-wolf' attacks (Bates 2012; Chermak et al 2010; Gruenewald et al 2013; Pantucci 2011; Spaaij 2012; 2010). The theory of origination that accounts for leaderless resistance from the perspective of network analysis is therefore utilitarian—leaderless resistance is an operational, tactical manouvre, rationally chosen in the face of powerful state agencies. In the analyses that follow, however, I aim to follow others who push beyond this dialectic—that perenial game of cat and mouse that produces both ingenious strategies of concealment and expansive strategies of surveillance. I do this not because I think the counterterrorist aim to tease 'actionable intelligence' from the

operational links in network structure is unimportant or outmoded, but rather because, as Hsu and Low have pointed out, the operational aspects of such affiliation are only a part of the story, and are counterposed inspirational factors:

Figure 1, The Inspirational and Operational Aspects of Leaderless Resistance (from Hsu and Low, 2010: 16)

These inspirational factors contrast with operational ones in that they disseminate not through the secreted, closed channels of, say, 'dumb drop' emailing or couriered thumb drives, but rather through public 'open source' media such as fantasy novels (Michael 2010), news media (Joosse 2012a), and via charismatic affectation with inspirational leaders (Gerlach 2001: 294; Stern 2003a: 165). Following on this dichotomization between the operational and inspirational modes of affiliation, I seek to suggest three three things; namely that, 1) the inspirational factors of affiliation deserve substantial exploration, 2) that empirical examples of leaderless resistance enable such explorations, insofar as these examples approach the status of being wholly inspirational/non-operational forms of affiliation, and that, 3) while leaderless resistance seems to

circumscribe operational factors within the horizon of the individual (or small cell), the discipline of sociology, with its long history of exploring the collective dimensions of seemingly individualistic action and ideation (eg. Durkheim [1897] 2010; Halbwachs [1941] 1992; Anderson 2006), is well positioned to provide tools for an analysis of the 'other side' of leaderless resistance. In what follows, I will outline some these aspects through a review of the most influential literature on leaderless resistance.

Leaderless Resistance within the Discipline of Terrorism Studies

One might review leaderless resistance scholarship in two ways. First, one could trace a history of the *term* itself. Part of my strategy will indeed involve the analysis of the term's development and influence in the American radical right (chapter two), and its somewhat problematic appropriation by terrorism scholarship (chapter four). A strategy *strictly* defined and confined by etymological concerns, however, would enable one to do little more than retrace work that others already have done handily (Kaplan 1997). Second, one might dispense with the terminological requirement and perform a review of leaderless resistance-'style' social formations, both contemporary and historical. Because there surely have been innumerable anteceding iterations of leaderless resistance in the history of asymmetrical conflict,[5] however, an exhaustive performance of this second strategy is necessarily beyond the scope afforded by a dissertation, let alone an introductory chapter. Indeed, cases of leaderless resistance 'by any other name' can serve for theoretical parsing, and this dissertation is predicated on the possibility of such

[5] I outline my reasons for this presumption in detail in chapter four. For a recent example of the retroactive application of leaderless resistance to social history, see Crossely et al. 2012. For an analysis of the FLQ as an empirical example that very nearly approaches leaderless resistance, see Crelinsten, 1988. For a more general critique of the assertion that leaderless resistance is a new phenomenon, see Crenshaw (2009: 132-133).

service. Because of these considerations, I do not restrict myself to either of the two strategies mentioned above, and, in what follows, I combine them to describe the growing prominence of leaderless resistance examinations among scholars in recent years.

Originally, the popularity of "leaderless resistance" was a product of intra-movement strategic debates in the far right (Kaplan 1997).[6] This popularity is reflected in the work of the first academics who commented on the phenomenon, including Jessica Stern who remained cognizant of the primary status of leaderless resistance as a movement doctrine. Skeptical of the white racists she was analyzing, she viewed "leaderless resistance" with suspicion, maintaining that in actuality it is "not really leaderless" (Stern 2003a: 150, 144). When speaking more generally about oppositional movements that have had to abandon traditional hierarchical organization, Stern herself eschewed the terminology of "leaderless resistance" preferring "virtual networks" instead (2003a: 141; 144). Walter Laqueur similarly signaled leaderless resistance's doctrinal status by ensconcing it in 'scare quotes' in his analysis (1999: 110; see also Barkun 2000: 194; Perry 2000: 123-125; Whine 1999: 235-236). Laqueur's initial estimation of the strategy foreshadows the work of later analysts who would welcome the demise of leadership and organizational structure. For Laquer, while it "may work as long as the militias engage in sporadic violence, . . . it is hardly practical with a sustained campaign of terror" (1999: 110-111). Indeed, this account of leaderless resistance highlights the key difficulty presented by the switch to a solely-inspirational mode of organization.

Although occurring some years earlier than the aforementioned authors, Jeffrey Kaplan's article "'Leaderless Resistance'" (1997) serves as a bridge between what we

[6] Beam himself credits Col. Ulius Louis Amoss who produced an eponymous pamphlet while combating communist influence in Eastern Europe.

might call the 'doctrinal approach' and those who would later adopt the concept as an abstracted analytical model.[7] Even as he closed the piece with "a speculative consideration of Timothy McVeigh as a possible case study of the strategy of leaderless resistance,"[8] Kaplan ultimately stopped shy of making such a characterization (1997: 80). One difficulty Kaplan (1997) had encountered in his analysis was his uncertainty about McVeigh's familiarity with the explicit call of Louis Beam.[9] For Kaplan, a direct, provable inspirational link between the progenitor of the concept of 'leaderless resistance' and the movement denizen was necessary for determining whether a particular case qualifies as an example. Kaplan thus used the case of McVeigh not to operationalize the concept, but rather to display the intractable "problem of interpretation" that attends all such attempts at operationalization (1997: 90).

Garfinkel (2003) circumvented this problem, eschewing the requirement that an intra-movement progenitor needs to didactically exhort the strategy, defining leaderless resistance rather as an emergent form of social organization, something that can be a product of exogenous factors, apart from such intra-movement direction. Thus, within Garfinkel's analysis, leaderless resistance was merely an organizational description—applying to "groups that employ cells and that lack bidirectional vertical command links—that is, groups without leaders." In broadening leaderless resistance to include actions motivated by animal rights, environmental, and Islamist grievances, he also did away with Kaplan's requirement that leaderless resisters be anti-state in their ideological

[7] The quotation marks that surround Kaplan's title are in the original, conveying that he was examining what was at the time a movement idea, not an established social scientific concept in its own right.
[8] Burghardt (1995), writing in the immediate aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing, must be credited with being the first to note the similarities between the style of the attack and actions advocated by Beam's philosophy (see also Mitrovica [2004]).
[9] McVeigh seems to have been inspired mainly by William Pierce's novels, including *The Turner Diaries* (Michael 2009: 156), and perhaps *Hunter* (Kaplan 1997: 90).

orientation. In his definitional discussion of leaderless resistance, Garfinkel maintained:

> [c]auses that employ Leaderless Resistance do not have these links [money, training, command, supplies, and recruitment] because they are not organizations: they are ideologies. To survive, these ideologies require a constant stream of new actions to hold the interest of adherents, create the impression of visible progress towards a goal, and allow individuals to take part in actions vicariously before they have the initiative to engage in their own direct actions (2003).

Ideology and momentum thus were important factors in Garfinkel's analysis of the phenomenon. Writing at the same time as Garfinkel, Pressman took a similar tack, applying the leaderless resistance concept to the Washington D.C. area snipers of 2002 and the Earth Liberation Front, with the aim of understanding the likely developments that would affect al-Qaeda as its hierarchy was coming under intense pressure (2003). In the piece, Pressman outlines several common features of leaderless resistance and, contrary to Kaplan, asserts that "[l]eaderless resistance need not even be a conscious act" (2003: 422).

Rafaello Pantucci (2011) has elaborated a typology of lone wolves that simultaneously parses the phenomenon into more defined categories and highlights the distinction between operational and inspirational linkages. One type is the 'lone attacker' (2011: 29-32) who is simply a 'deployable agent' that a hierarchical organization uses in solitary fashion. (Umar Farouk Abumtallab is an example[10]). Another type are 'lone wolves' (19-29) who have some limited aspirational contact with members of terrorist

[10] Umar Farouk Abumtallab, popularly known as the 'underwear bomber' tried to detonate a device plastic explosives aboard a Northwest Airlines flight on Christmas Day, 2009. There is evidence that al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) organized his attack (Pantucci 2011: 31).

organizations. (Nidal Hasan, who emailed with the Yemen-based Anwar al-Awlaki is an example here).[11] 'Loners' (14-19) are a third type who profess ideological affiliation with a wider movement, but do so in order to cover their own idiosyncratic motivations that ultimately may be rooted in psychological problems or personal grievances.[12] Pantucci's work is important because it is one of the first to unite the emerging literatures on lone wolves and leaderless resistance, a unification that is achievable because of the central importance that he devotes to inspirational modes of affiliation (something that analyses of lone wolves, which tend to focus on intrapersonal qualities and attack styles, often neglect (Gill et al 2013; Gruenewald et al 2013; Hewitt 2003; Pantucci 2011; Spaaij 2012; 2010).

In his book, *Lone Wolf Terror and the Rise of Leaderless Resistance* (2012), and in other work (2010), George Michael's analyses incorporate broader ecological considerations. Indeed, he examines how large, traditionally organized groups are less likely to find state sponsors in the unipolar post-Soviet era and how the increased coordination of counterterrorism efforts among states since 9/11 has meant that it is difficult for terrorist groups to amass on the scale that they once did (2012: 79-88). He further examines how new technology, in particular the internet, has led to a miniaturization/democratization in both operational and propagandistic capability, putting power over actions and ideas increasingly in the hands of individuals and smaller groups who command smaller pools of resources (2012: 89-100). Finally, he examines a series

[11] When one looks at their correspondence, however, it becomes clear that, prior to Hasan's attack on For Hood, al-Awlaki "barely gave Hasan the time of day" (Gartenstein-Ross, 2012). In fact, Gartenstein-Ross (2012) characterizes the communication as a case of "unrequited love" (for a reproduction of this correspondence, see Hasan and al-Awlaki [2008] 2012) at http://news.intelwire.com/2012/07/the-following-e-mails-between-maj.html).

[12] Here we might think of Unabomber Ted Kaczynski [Taylor 1998] and Anders Breivik, depending on one's perspective on the latter's psychology [Fahy 2012; Taylor 2012]). Jessica Stern also notes that "terrorists often use slogans of various kinds to mask their true motives" (2003:181).

of cases (the radical environmental movement [2012: 61-78], the extreme right in the US [29-59], and Islamist terrorism [119-154]) to illustrate the key role of cultural developments and inspirational figures who possess special skill sets that make leaderless mobilization feasible.

Marc Sageman (2008) is perhaps the most prominent analyst to have engaged in a systematic study that employs the leaderless resistance concept. In *Leaderless Jihad*, he characterized al-Qaeda's membership as having originated during three very different phases (Sageman 2008: 48-50). First were those who originally had gone to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets in the 1980s (bin Laden, al-Zawahiri and most of the al-Qaeda brass originated this way). The second wave consisted of those Salafi jihadists who were inspired by the perceived defeat of the USSR by the first wave and joined Bin Laden's nascent organization during the 1990s, receiving training and direction. Sageman consistently refers to members of these first two waves as the 'al-Qaeda organization' or as 'al-Qaeda Central.' The third wave, responsible for more recent attacks (the Madrid bombings of 2004, the London Bombings of 2005, and the attack at Fort Hood in November 2009 being prominent examples) is very different, and it emerged in the post 9/11 world:

> The present threat has evolved from a structured group of al-Qaeda masterminds, controlling vast resources and issuing commands, to a multitude of informal local groups trying to emulate their predecessors by conceiving and executing operations from the bottom up. These 'homegrown' wannabes form a scattered global network, a leaderless jihad (Sageman 2008: vii).

Sageman has welcomed this current development, describing the leaderless jihad as

inherently self-limiting. No longer is al-Qaeda able to select for itself the best and brightest for its ranks because "anyone can call himself an al-Qaeda warrior" (2008: 141), nor is the leadership able to give anything but the most vague directions (via mass media, for all, including authorities, to see) to those who would aspire to work under its banner. Consequently, Sageman finds that the actions of the third wave "do not add up to a coherent political strategy and there is little evidence of a grand coordinated international plan" (2008: 144).[13] Sageman thus plays down the threat of al-Qaeda in its current form, and he predicts that it will continue to lose traction as time passes. Other analysts, including Peter Bergen, have noted the irrelevance of al-Qaeda to recent developments in Middle East politics like the Arab Spring (2012b).

Ironically, according to Sageman, bullish counterterrorism efforts by Western governments may pose the biggest threat of disruption to this trajectory of demise: "too vigorous of an eradication campaign might be counterproductive," he writes, because these "efforts may be seen as unjust and therefore attract new recruits to the movement, just when it was dying out on its own" (2008: 146; see also Joosse 2007: 364). In other places he is even more forceful in his critique of counterterrorism policy, which, he maintains, "continues to be frozen by the horrors of 9/11…. [and is a] strategy [that] is not only useless against the leaderless jihad; it is precisely what will help the movement flourish" (Sageman 2008c: 42). While this perspective on Islamist terrorism has its critics (see below), it certainly has enjoyed purchase in the political realm (Borum 2011: 362). Consider President Obama's speech from May 23, 2013:

> Today, the core of al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan is on a path to defeat. Their remaining operatives spend more time thinking about their own safety than plotting against us. They did not direct the attacks in Benghazi or

[13] For a description of al-Qaeda's 'master plan,' circa 2006, see Wright, 2006b.

> Boston. They have not carried out a successful attack on our homeland since 9/11. Instead, what we've seen is the emergence of various al Qaeda affiliates.….
>
> [w]e face a real threat from radicalized individuals here in the United States. Whether it's a shooter at a Sikh Temple in Wisconsin; a plane flying into a building in Texas; or the extremists who killed 168 people at the Federal Building in Oklahoma City – America has confronted many forms of violent extremism in our time. Deranged or alienated individuals – often U.S. citizens or legal residents – can do enormous damage, particularly when inspired by larger notions of violent jihad. That pull towards extremism appears to have led to the shooting at Fort Hood, and the bombing of the Boston Marathon.
>
> Lethal yet less capable al Qaeda affiliates. Threats to diplomatic facilities and businesses abroad. Homegrown extremists. This is the future of terrorism. We must take these threats seriously, and do all that we can to confront them. But as we shape our response, we have to recognize that the scale of this threat closely resembles the types of attacks we faced before 9/11…. [I]f dealt with smartly and proportionally, these threats need not rise to the level that we saw on the eve of 9/11.
>
> Moreover, we must recognize that these threats don't arise in a vacuum. Most, though not all, of the terrorism we face is fueled by a common ideology – a belief by some extremists that Islam is in conflict with the United States and the West, and that violence against Western targets, including civilians, is justified in pursuit of a larger cause....
>
> Nevertheless, this ideology persists, and in an age in which ideas and images can travel the globe in an instant, our response to terrorism cannot depend on military or law enforcement alone. We need all elements of national power to win a battle of wills and ideas (Obama 2013).

It is not hard to fathom that the work of Sageman and others who have begun to explore leaderless resistance would cause consternation among those who are heavily committed to traditional counterterrorism strategies that were forged in the wake of the attacks of 9/11. Those who take the leaderless resistance thesis seriously are in some respects mounting a multiple-pronged assault on notions that have taken on an axiomatic status in the world of counterterrorism.

First, while it is undeniable that hierarchically-organized groups still pose a threat, the focus on leaderless resistance may be seen as minimizing, marginalizing, or

relativizing this threat because it casts a vision of terrorist involvement that is predicated on none of the activities that served as points of entry for traditional counterterrorist interdictions, whether these are in terms of the interruptive/investigative opportunities inherent in terrorist financing (the work of FINTRAC being an example), the exploitation of weak-points in terrorist organizational structures (targeting important network nodes or 'decapitation strikes' against leaders, for example), the deprivation from terrorist organizations of territorial bases deemed necessary for training and planning (al-Qaeda in Sudan, then Afghanistan), or the use of surveillance to listen to the networked 'chatter' associated with terrorist plots. The extent to which the leaderless resistance model accurately describes the state of affairs, then, also represents the extent to which many counterterrorism strategies lose their utility (Barnes 2012: 1654-1655, cited in Gruenewald et al 2013: 83). Second, when terrorist involvement is localized and cast within individualized decision making processes, then emic perspectives that stress understanding thought processes and ideology may gain relevance—and at times this tack has met with controversy in the field of terrorism studies (Richardson 2006: xii-xxii).[14]

Regarding the current organizational status of al-Qaeda, a disagreement has emerged, one that saw its most prominent elaboration in a back-and-forth argument between Marc Sageman and Bruce Hoffman in the pages of *Foreign Affairs* magazine (Hoffman 2008a; 2008b; Leggiere 2008; Sageman 2008b). Here, Hoffman accuses Sageman of assuming that the leaderless jihad model "represents the entire threat facing the United States today" and that "al Qaeda has ceased to exist as either an organizational or an operational entity and is therefore irrelevant to U.S. security concerns" (Hoffman

[14] In the political realm, analyses of 'root causes' may get dismissed as sympathy for terrorist grievances (MacKinnon 2013).

2008a: 134). Sageman responded by accusing Hoffman of mischaracterizing, overgeneralizing, and ignoring the subtleties of his argument (Sageman 2008b: 163-165).[15] Outside of these main antagonists, we find Peter Bergen recommending that victory be declared over Al-Qaeda because its "own myriad weaknesses . . . make the group's offensive capabilities rather puny" (2012b) while others, suspicious of the leaderless jihad thesis, continue to criticize discourses as dangerous when they distinguish between 'core' and 'peripheral' elements of Al-Qaeda, especially when they guide policy in the political realm (Jocelyn and Roggio 2013; Jocelyn 2013; May 2013).

The recently released *Letters from Abbotabad*, a selection from 6,000 documents captured during the raid of Bin Laden's compound, display a similar disunity of opinion among al Qaeda's brass—though this disagreement centred not on the extant nature of the al Qaeda network (a topic about which they obviously had intimate, first-hand knowledge), but rather on *the direction they should take* in terms of striving (or not) to resemble the leaderless jihad model. As the editorship for the release noted:

> The documents show that this relationship [with affiliates] is a contested one among senior leaders, and three different positions exist within al-Qa`ida on this subject. Adam Gadahn's letter to an unknown 'shaykh' represented those who want to remain faithful to the principles for which they believe al-Qa`ida stands, and urged senior leaders to declare their distance or dissociate themselves from

[15] Hoffman's resistance to the leaderless jihad model is understandable when one considers how heavily he stressed the organizational factors in his definition of terrorism in the edition of *Inside Terrorism* that appeared in 1998: "to qualify as terrorism, violence must be perpetrated by some organizational entity with at least some conspiratorial structure and identifiable chain of command beyond a single individual acting on his or her own" (1998: 42-43). In response to the Fort Hood shooting perpetrated by Nidal Hasan, Hoffman moderated his organizational requirement, however, stating that "'this new strategy of al-Qaeda is to empower and motivate individuals to commit acts of violence completely outside any terrorist chain of command'" (cited in Pantucci 2011: 7).

> groups whose leaders do not consult with al-Qa`ida yet have the chutzpa to act in its name. Others, represented by an anonymous letter, urge the opposite, believing that the inclusion of regional jihadi groups in the fold contributes to al-Qa`ida's growth and expansion. Bin Ladin represented a third position, as he wanted to maintain communication, through his own pen or that of his inner circle, with "brothers" everywhere, to urge restraint and provide advice, without granting them formal unity with al-Qa`ida (Lahoud *et al* 2012: 11-12).

The letters themselves reveal that in his last years Bin Laden vacillated between micromanaging some cells that he indeed had contact with and worrying about damage that had been done to the al-Qaeda 'brand' more broadly.

In one letter, we found him advising members of the Islamic Magreb in North Africa on the proper way to exchange funds (Bin Laden 2010d: 4) and that they should plant trees so as to evade surveillance from the air (Bin Laden 2010d: 7). In another letter, we find him evaluating those who wish to affiliate with al-Qaeda, in one instance asking for the resumé of Yemen-based American Anwar al-Awlaki (Bin Laden 2010a: 2) and in another rebuffing Somalia's al-Shabaab and refusing to grant it permission to work under the name of al-Qaeda (Bin Laden 2010c).[16] In a third letter we see contemplation even about replacing the name 'al-Qaeda' because bin Laden thought its brand had become tarnished among Muslims worldwide (Bin Laden undated: 1-2; Bin Laden 2010b). The signals are therefore mixed, and they present a complex picture that befits the complex phenomenon that al-Qaeda was/is. Thus, while evidence exists for the salience of some features of the leaderless resistance model, other aspects reveal that it is far from an ideal-typical case, displaying hierarchical features more reminiscent of a

[16] Al Shabaab would unite formally with al Qaeda after Bin Laden's death.

'hub-and-spoke' organizational style (Garfinkel 2003). Ultimately, the incomplete adoption of a leaderless model of organization would be Bin Laden's undoing—unwittingly, the courier of the aforementioned letters led counterterrorists to his whereabouts and bin Laden to his eventual comeuppance (Bergen 2012a: 95-107).

Any model will be precarious to the extent that it is wedded to and reliant on empirical confirmation from a single case, no matter how prominent that case may be. Ranstorp points to an "analytical overexposure on al-Qaeda-related topics" in the field of terrorism studies more generally, citing the post 9/11 numerical dominance of al Qaeda-related articles in the two core terrorism journals, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (2007: 23). Even *within* this dominance, however, Ranstorp notes that "few studies exist on the polymorphous nature of al-Qaeda that capture the way different layers are structured and connected to each other and the way the regional and local affiliations interact with core al-Qaeda elements" (2007: 23).

It almost does not need mentioning that the prominence of al-Qaeda also extends much further outwards beyond academia through its role as the main prosecutable element in the 'war on terror.' To the extent that a counterterrorist utilitarianism pervades terrorism studies, we can regard it as a "co-opted field . . . deeply enmeshed with the actual practices of counter-terrorism and the exercise of state power" (Jackson 2007: 246). The specific case of al-Qaeda may not therefore be conducive to explorations of the more subtle, inspirational dynamics of leaderless resistance if such explorations are unlikely to have tangible benefits for counterterrorist aims.

Thankfully, in the past decade myriad variations of the leaderless resistance thesis have been advanced and found utility in the exploration of a variety of different cases,

wresting the field away from disputes that may be endemic to the study of al-Qaeda. Aside from Islamist terrorism (Lia 2008; Sageman 2008; Pantucci 2012; Suri, cited in Wright 2006b), these include right-wing extremism (Gartenstein-Ross and Gruen 2010; Michael 2010; 2012: 29-59), anti-state American Militia groups (Pressman 2003; Kaplan 1997), the animal rights movement (Flükiger 2009; Garfinkel 2003; Michael 2010; 2012: 71-74), radical environmental groups (Becker 2006; Carson, LaFree, and Dugan 2012; Chalk 2001; Joosse 2007; 2012a; 2014a; Leader and Probst 2003; Michael 2012: 61-78), anti-abortionists who operate as the 'Army of God' (Levin and Pinkerson 2000; Stern 2003a: 150-151), the world of business (Brafman and Beckstrom 2006), online 'hacktivist' groups like Anonymous (Michael 2012: 94; Whipple 2008), and even the UK suffragettes (Crossley et.al. 2012).

Among these studies, some focus on the importance of aboveground inspirational or charismatic leaders (Gerlach 2001: 294; Stern 2003a: 165), those creative moral or political entrepreneurs who take the lead in trying to establish what Blumer called "collective enterprises to establish a new order of life" (1969: 8). Lia (2008) and Kaplan (1997) examine the key role that strategists can play in shaping the evolution of tactics towards decentralization in Islamist and Christian Identity movements, respectively. Brafman and Beckstrom find that 'catalysts' (that is, influential people who are capable of inspiring others, who can tolerate ambiguity, and who are comfortable with a 'hands-off' approach) are important for setting up the conditions of possibility for growth within decentralized networks (2006: 109-131). Michael (2010) discusses how authors like Edward Abbey and William Pierce were able to limn "blueprints and fantasies" in the form of seminal novels that would have tremendous influence in the radical

environmental movement and the extreme right respectively. Zelinsky and Shubik (2009) describe strategies for ameliorating the purveyors of terrorist "brands," including using "conventional brand marketing tactics in reverse to weaken the worth of the brand" and a targeting of "titular leadership to decrease the message-sending capabilities of the organization" (Zelinsky and Shubik 2009: 6.)[17]

At the level of the lone actor, we also find contributions that are beginning to sketch out the importance of open source intra-movement or cell-to-cell communicative channels. Flükiger (2009) and Ackerman (2003a; cf. Taylor 2003; Ackerman 2003b) perform threat assessments in order to determine the particular likelihood of violent escalation in contexts of leaderless resistance due to the lack of constraint on operatives who work outside of organizational strictures. Gill et al. analyzed 119 lone-actors and found that 59% of individuals produced letters or made public statements in order to explain their beliefs and that in 68% of cases individuals had read literature from a wider movement (2013: 5).

Moving beyond the print medium, Weimann (2012) finds that online platforms such as chat-rooms or social media like Facebook and Youtube have become increasingly important fora for radicalization, mobilization of individuals, and the diffusion of tactics among individuals. In a much-needed update to Kaplan's (1997) earlier work, Dobratz and Waldner (2012) use attitudinal research to assess the uptake of the leaderless resistance concept among participants in the modern white power movement in the US, finding that its popularity does not relate to respondents' preference for violent forms of contestation, though it does relate to their level of fear of infiltration by state agencies.

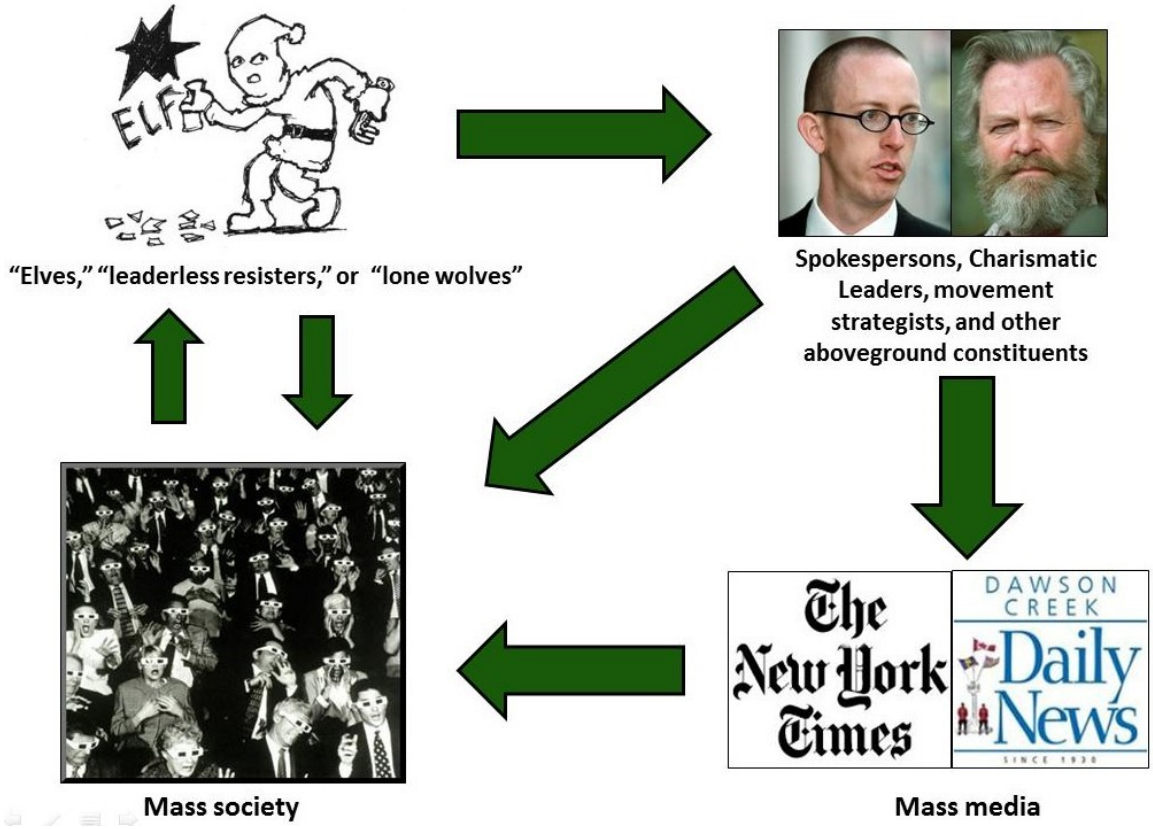
[17] For another use of the business model metaphor to describe 'freelance terrorism,' see Kushner 2003: 144-145 and Hewit 2004: 79, as cited in Spaaij 2007: 6).

Finally, at the most micro level, an increasing number of studies have focused on the nature of lone wolves themselves, compiling databases and seeking to determine if and how lone actors differ from organizationally-affiliated terrorists (Gill et al 2013; Gruenewald et al 2013; Hewitt 2003; Pantucci 2011; Spaaij 2007; 2012; 2010). Despite this voluminous research, however, the literature is still bereft of a coherent model which would tie together the various modes and channels of inspiration that are evident in cases of leaderless resistance.

Chapter by Chapter Outline

Based on the concepts outlined so far, I submit that an analyses of the inspirational dynamics of leaderless resistance would be well-served by a model that conceives of leaderless groups as a series of interlaced communicative/inspirational cycles, as per figure two, below. Each chapter (with the exception of chapter 5) presents an analysis of one of these cycles.

Figure 2. Leaderless Resistance as a Communicative Cycle



Within these cycles, we find underground elements (represented as "elves," "lone wolves" and "leaderless resisters") and inspirational figures (spokespersons, charismatic leaders, movement strategists—what theorists would call "moral" or "political entrepreneurs" (Becker 1963: 147-164; Tilly 2003: 30). The mainstream press also occupies mediating node in the communicative cycle. The pictorial elements of the figure above are populated with examples from the case studies that I examine in this dissertation; namely, Craig Rosebraugh, who was an ELF spokesperson, and Wiebo Ludwig (1941-2012), who was a charismatic figure in the context of the EnCana bombings, along with the *New York Times*, the subject of analysis in chapter three, and the *Dawson Creek Daily News*, an important public forum during the EnCana bombings.

Each of these actors engages in processes of coding and decoding (Hall [1973] 1980) and as such each is both a communicator and an audience. The growth of leaderless resistance as a movement will happen, however, to the extent that members of the general public are inspired and mobilized within the communicative system (the arrows in the figure above show the pathways through which this mobilization can occur).

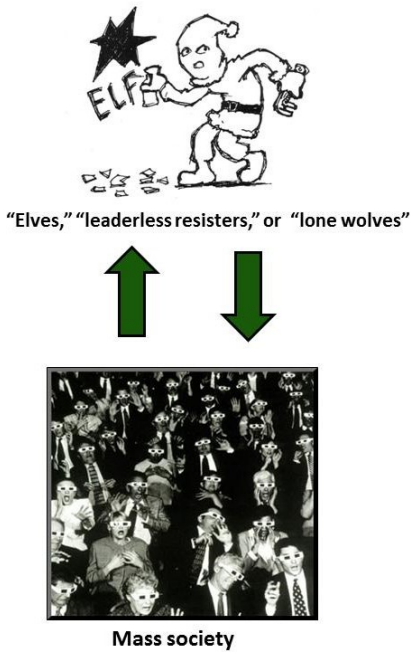
For the Earth Liberation Front, 'elves' conduct ideologically motivated attacks against (usually corporate) targets and spread their message, either to spokespersons or directly, via a banners or graffiti at the attack site. If the spokespersons receive a communiqué, they will bring it to the attention of the media. Very often, media contact spokespersons for comment even in the absence of a communiqué. Participants in the ELF operate with the theory that the message will reach the public, spread the political radical environmental message, and serve to recruit more elves from the general public. In this way, the ELF actors hope to 'ignite a revolution' (Best and Nocella 2006).

Similarly, in the case of the EnCana Pipeline Bomber(s), someone or some persons were conducting bombing attacks and alerting the media via communiqués and threat letters, while Wiebo Ludwig, an aboveground charismatic figure with credibility in the movement of landowners against gas extraction companies, engaged in public messaging that attempted to confer legitimacy to and elicit sympathy for the grievances expressed in the bomber's communications.

For chapters two, three, and four, I decided to break the above cycle into three segments and study each segment on its own. Chapter two examines the first relation (Figure three, below), between the elves and the general public itself. This research involved mapping the various tributaries of radical environmentalism in North America

and studying ELF communiques and the backgrounds/statements of captured ELF adherents.

Figure 3. Elves to the Masses

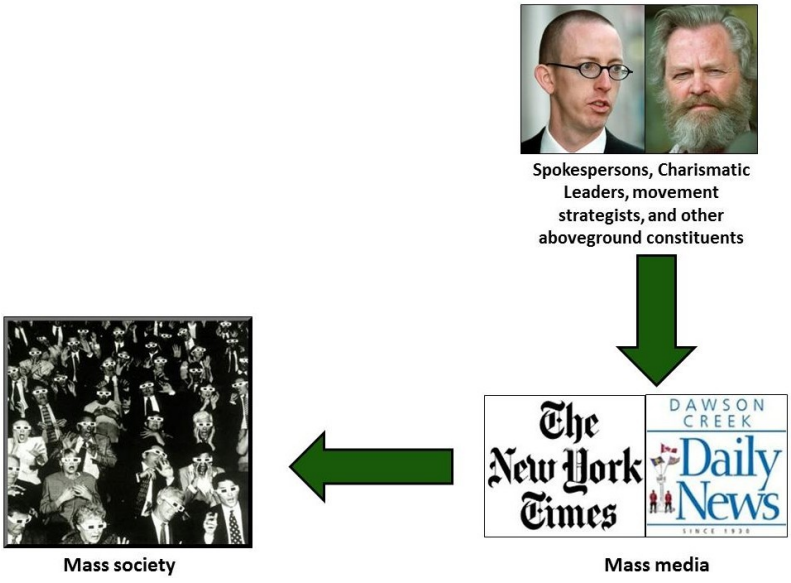


I found that ELF messaging works polysemically to 'capture' and mobilize from vastly different constituencies. This chapter outlines how 'ELF' as a symbol serves almost as an empty signifier into which people from many different environmentalisms can project meaning. This chapter appeared in article form as "Leaderless Resistance and Ideological Inclusion: the Case of the Earth Liberation Front" in *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19(3):351-368, 2007.

Chapter three examines the second part of the communicative cycle (see Figure four, below). This project involved an assessment of the success or lack thereof of the spokespersons themselves—the ones engaged in the above ground activity of the movement—in their attempts to frame the activities of the ELF in line with movement ideology. For this project, I analyzed the career of the ELF in *New York Times* articles

(N=62). I chose the *New York Times* not only because of its prominent role in setting tone for other media outlets, but also because Long Island was experiencing a rash of ELF attacks at the time and because the New York media market was particularly targeted by Craig Rosebraugh and Leslie James Pickering during their tenure as spokespersons for the group (Rosebraugh 2004).

Figure 4. The Role of the Spokespersons

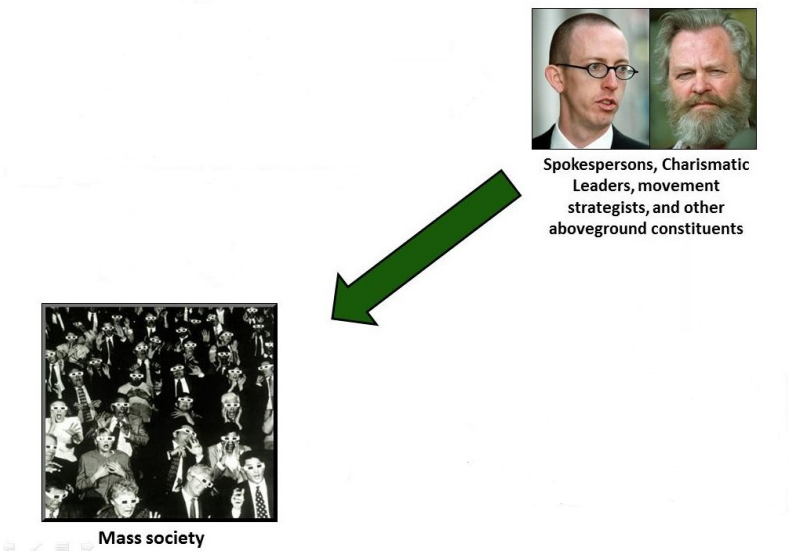


This chapter appeared in article form as, "Elves, Environmentalism, and 'Eco-terror': Leaderless resistance and Media Coverage of the Earth Liberation Front" in *Crime, Media, Culture* 8(1): 75-93, 2012.

Chapter four performs a much more critical appraisal of the leaderless resistance concept, as discussed above. Using interviews and experiences gathered during field visits to Tomslake, British Columbia, I investigate the rhetorical dynamics surrounding a series of bombing attacks against EnCana corporation. It is a micro-level analysis that

incorporates my previously-held interests in symbolic interactionism and charisma studies (Joosse 2006; 2012b; 2014b) to analyze how above-ground inspirational leaders (in this case Wiebo Ludwig) can accrue charismatic status in contexts of leaderless resistance. Of primary focus in this chapter, then, is the leader's ability to gain status through what James C. Scott refers to as "public declarations of the hidden transcript" (Scott 1990: 221), as per the figure five, below.

Figure 5, Charisma and the Hidden Transcript



Finally, rather than putting forth leaderless resistance as the object of analysis *per se*, chapter five conducts an analysis that incorporates leaderless resistance as one element in a larger discussion of ethical considerations as they come to bear on both the antiglobalization and radical environmental movements generally. This comparison represents an evolution in my thinking about the ELF from my earlier work (Joosse 2007 and chapter two, below). While in this earlier work I represent the ELF as almost bereft of ideological coherence, since the time of that writing new information has convinced me that, while the ELF remains an incredibly complex, diverse, and ultimately

'ungraspable' phenomenon, enough members have nevertheless shown sufficient affinity with the antiglobalization movement to warrant such a comparison. This piece serves as a capstone to the previous analyses by considering the issue of the legitimate use of leaderless-style political violence that would be a central consideration for any of the actors in the preceding diagrams, whose communicative channels are imbued with strategic and ethical dimensions.

The basis for the comparison between the antiglobalization movement and radical environmentalism rests in an argument for the historical merger of the categories. Returning to the American context, I explore how, despite its libertarian conservative origins, the ideology of Earth First! gradually changed after an influx of new members with anti-state, anarchist sympathies. I find that one major consequence of this development has been a schism that produced the ELF, and that that it now makes sense to see many ELF actors as being analogous with particular streams of the much larger antiglobalization movement. This chapter is forthcoming (2014) as "Antiglobalization and Radical Environmentalism: An Exchange on Ethical Grounds" in *Ethics and Progress Quarterly*.

A Brief Note on Data Collection

The methodology that I use for this study is qualitative, and it fits under the umbrella term, *interpretive inquiry*. As Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman point out, "few agreed-upon canons for qualitative data analysis [exist], in the sense of shared ground rules for drawing conclusions and verifying their sturdiness" (1984: 16). Interpretive inquiries tend to be eclectic in terms of the methodologies they employ and

the phenomena they explore, and as defined by Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln, this form of exploration "crosscuts disciplines, fields and subject matter" (1994:1). For this reason, the researcher needs to be someone who tries to apply the best method to a particular aspect of the phenomenon of interest, even if the use of this method was not an intention of the original plans for the study. Thus, in Denzin and Lincoln's description, the interpretive inquirer is a *bricoleur*—someone who is practical and focused on the problem at hand, producing a bricolage that is a "pieced together, close-knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994: 2).

Michael Patton views qualitative methods as consisting of three different forms of data collection: 1) in-depth, open-ended interviews, 2) direct observations, and 3) analysis of written documents (1990: 10). This project incorporates all three of these methods and calls for the collection of diverse forms of data, including interviews (anonymous and non-anonymous), movement documents and communiqués, memoirs of movement actors, court documents, systematically collected media accounts, court files, photographs, and videos.

Because of the clandestinity of the groups that I have studied, there have been varying levels of access to data. Chapter two relies primarily on secondary data—that is the work of ethnographers in the field of radical environmentalism (the work of Bron Taylor, Rik Scarce, Martha Lee, as examples), but also from the biographies and autobiographies of movement participants (Dave Foreman, Judi Bari, Christopher Manes, Craig Rosebrough, Leslie Pickering, and Andrew Nikiforuk's work on Wiebo Ludwig). In addition, some material is anonymous—information that arrives in the form of

communiqués from those who have carried out attacks and claimed them on behalf of the ELF. I consider this initial extensive reading work to have been important for understanding the radical environmental milieu, and any research project must begin in this way.

My thinking was also informed by my own lived experience. Prior to and during this time, I was taking an active interest in the radical environmental community in Alberta. I spent time training with Greenpeace, learning rappelling skills, learning how to set up roadblocks, receiving training on interacting with media, and generally getting a sense of the ideological temperature of activist circles in Alberta. I was not particularly good at rappelling, however, nor was I particularly courageous in this regard, so I watched from the sidelines with fascination as Greenpeace later conducted an elaborate direct-action media campaign against oil sands operations in my province. I also attended workshops with Derrick Jensen and his Deep Green Resistance movement, where he and others advocated and role-played some very extreme measures.

There was much discussion about security practices at these meetings, so much so that one could characterize these movement participants as developing their own 'security cultures' (see appendix G for contemporary and historical evidence of this). This realization, in turn, led to my interest in organizational strategies and to my insight that fruitful points of connection existed between the radical environmental milieu and other oppositional subcultures in the radical right and elsewhere. A second round of reading—this time primarily into the radical right, mining sources from the work of Jeffrey Kaplan—enabled me to substantiate in greater detail these connections. Reading all of this material was essential for sensitizing me for the later work I would do in the

dissertation, in that it contributed to my ability to develop themes that were helpful for interpreting the data and for producing novel theoretical insights.

Chapters two and five are products of these initial explorations. At this early stage, however, I was still looking for confirmation that I was not forcing my own ideas onto the material. I sent my first article around to various researchers who had far greater experience that me, and I was encouraged by their responses, which suggested that I was on the right track. Special thanks are due to Marc Sageman, Bron Taylor, Rik Scarce, in this regard.

Chapter three involved a much more focused strategy of looking at newspaper sources. I describe my reason for choosing to study the *New York Times* in chapter three below, but—stated succinctly—it is two-fold. First, the *New York Times* is influential and respected. It has a wide readership. Moreover, it 'sets the tone' of news coverage for other media outlets around the world. It is therefore a good (or at least as good as any) source for generalizing about the media climate in the United States. Second, because the chapter intended to analyze the media efficacy of ELF spokespersons in particular, I decided to follow up on one of their central stated aims, which was to target the New York media market specifically—despite the fact that they were themselves located in the Pacific Northwest of the US. I retrieved sixty-six news articles from this source, and I read, coded, reread, and recoded several times until I felt that I had reached a point where well-formed and coherent themes had emerged. Realizing the hermeneutic nature of this process, I did not have pretentions toward reaching a 'saturation' point, either through the collection of sufficiently voluminous data, or through sufficiently rigorous/repetitious analysis. The themes that emerged became the basis for a series of presentations, one at a

conference for specialists in religion and culture, one for specialists in the radical environmental milieu, and one for sociologists, at which I received extensive feedback. Much of this feedback was from Americans, who could speak quite well to the 'position' of radical environmentalism in the US media landscape and, as a partial outsider to this culture, I was glad to have heard it. This research eventually led to my second publication on the group (Joosse 2012).

I was still unsatisfied with my work, however. I wanted to get in the middle of a real living situation. I missed the ethnographic work that I did for my Masters, and I felt that I could never truly capture the subtle, micro-level, inspirational, rhetorical, dimensions of radical environmental direct action. I was hungry for experience. It felt like an odd blessing, then, when bombs started going off close to home. Indeed some of my colleagues and even my supervisor jokingly accused me of 'creating my own adventure,' so to speak. Between October 12, 2008 and July 4, 2009, the northeast region of British Columbia saw six bombing attacks against EnCana, and I decided that I needed to go up there, talk to people, and seek to understand the situation as best I could. I thought (and later found) that this endeavour would add a valuable comparative dimension to my research.

In particular, I sought to understand the intricacies of ambivalence that ordinary residents experience regarding industry, social movement formation, and radical tactics of resistance. I never conceived of this research as a 'who dunnit' investigation into the bombings (despite the suspicions that some participants had as to this possibility, especially in light of the rewards that were eventually offered for this information).

Because this research would involve human beings, I took special care to assess the possibility that harm might come to participants through their participation in the study. In general, a researcher should use such assessments to take measures that will ensure that such harm does not occur. Most basic among these measures involves the informed consent of participants. Informed consent allows participants to determine for themselves whether participation in a study is likely to be psychologically, emotionally, or otherwise injurious. I read to all my participants an introductory letter to the project and all signed a consent form before participating in interviews with me. At certain times during some of my interviews, participants felt inclined to speak about certain subjects while requesting that the content of these discussions not appear in my publishable work. I honoured all of these requests. Another harm-preventative strategy is to keep the participants anonymous to readers of the study through the use of pseudonyms and by omitting any information that could identify the participants to others. I took such measures. I am thankful to say that so far my research has not resulted in any such harmful consequences to participants, and while I have found it rewarding to interact with people, they have generally expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to share their experiences with me.

The interviews themselves were semi-structured to begin with, but invariably they broke out into free-flowing discussions as I established rapport with my participants. I used my extensive research experience with human participants from my Master's work as a model for getting people to relate their own experiences and understandings of their position vis-à-vis the contested situation of resource extraction in their living spaces. I prepared for this work by researching the history of the community (Mary Drysdale's

[2002] work was particularly helpful in this regard) and with camping and even staying sometimes with residents of the area in order to get an understanding of their lives. All told, I stayed with three different families.

My research timeline and strategy was as follows:

1. In my first trip to the area of Tomslake BC, I attempted to gather subjects by hanging up posters in public places. I also created a hand-out version of the poster to deliver to people. These items contained my contact information, and as such they allowed potential subjects to contact me of their own volition. I stayed in town for a few days to get a feel for the place, and only conducted interviews when I was contacted during this time.
2. I then went home and received contacts from potential participants and repeated trips up to the area, both to advertise my project and to conduct interviews.
3. During this back-and-forth process, I established rapport with several Tomslake residents and was invited to attend some town hall meetings (see chapter four for a description of these).
4. After several repetitions of this process, I decided to seek additional ethics approval to a) approach people directly to ask for interviews, and b) interview certain individuals and refer to them by name in my work. I did this principally because I wanted to talk with Wiebo Ludwig, and represent him by name, because he seemed to be singularly important for what was going on in Tomslake during 2009-2011. I visited Wiebo

Ludwig's farm on four occasions and interviewed him. Wiebo has since died, but I have maintained contact with the family, visiting them a couple times, and hope to continue with this in the future.

5. I took this interview data, transcribed it, and read the transcriptions, but frequently would also re-listen to the interviews, so that I could remain sensitive to their tone and expression. I coded these interviews, and they served to generate and confirm many of the ideas that I present in chapter four.
6. Throughout this process, insights about the media's relationship to radical environmentalism have flowed from my experience being interviewed for many popular press articles on these subjects, and from the experience of publishing in the popular press myself.

Of great help throughout my research has been the Stephen A. Kent Collection on Alternative Religions, housed at the University of Alberta. This has been an invaluable source of information on radical environmentalism, Wiebo Ludwig, the American radical right, Islamist terrorism, and—of course—information on the cultic milieu most generally.

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Chapter Two

Leaderless Resistance and Ideological Inclusion: the Case of the Earth Liberation Front[18]

ABSTRACT:

Leaderless resistance is a strategy of opposition that allows for and encourages individuals or small cells to engage in acts of violence entirely independent of any hierarchy of leadership or network of support. This article examines the development of the leaderless resistance strategy by the radical right and more recently by the radical environmental movement. While both movements use leaderless resistance to avoid detection, infiltration, and prosecution by the state, environmental groups like the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) benefit additionally because of the ideological inclusiveness that leaderless resistance fosters. Historically, ideological cleavages have rendered radical environmental groups such as Earth First! less effective than they would have been otherwise. Using leaderless resistance, however, the ELF eliminates all ideology extraneous to the specific cause of halting the degradation of nature. This elimination enables the ELF to mobilize a greater number of 'direct actions.'

It has been nearly two decades since the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, an act that some have described as being an example of 'leaderless resistance.'[19] Leaderless resistance is a strategy of opposition that allows for and encourages individuals or small cells to engage in acts of violence entirely independent of any hierarchy of leadership or network of support. Although Louis Beam, a Klansman with strong connections to the Aryan Nations, developed and popularized the concept of leaderless resistance in the hopes of mobilizing many acts of violence from the far-

[18] I would like to thank Robert Brink, Maryam Razavy, Susan Raine and three anonymous reviewers of *Terrorism and Political Violence* for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this article. I would like especially to thank Dr. Stephen A. Kent for his invaluable guidance throughout my writing, and for granting me access to the Kent Collection on Alternative Religions, housed at the University of Alberta.

[19] Tom Burghardt, 'Leaderless Resistance and the Oklahoma City Bombing.' (San Francisco; Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights 1995); Jeffrey Kaplan, 'Leaderless Resistance', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9/3 (Autumn 1997) pp.90-93; Andrew Mitrovica, 'Droege Is Gone, But The Hate Lives On', *The Walrus* (online version 2004), accessed at http://www.walrusmagazine.com/article.pl?sid=05/04/22/1928218, retrieved on April 22, 2005.

right,[20] such acts have been relatively rare. The notion of leaderless resistance may have inspired the bombings carried out by Timothy McVeigh and Eric Rudolph,[21] but it has thus far failed to take hold widely among adherents of the racist far right in the way that Beam envisioned.[22]

Another social movement, however, has been employing the strategy of leaderless resistance with a much higher degree of success. The radical environmental movement – the Earth Liberation Front (ELF)[23] in particular – offers a contemporary example of leaderless resistance in action.[24] Although the ELF's acts are less severe than those of Timothy McVeigh or Eric Rudolph,[25] they are far more numerous. James Jarboe, the FBI's top domestic terrorism officer, linked the ELF to 600 criminal acts committed between 1996 and 2002, totaling $43 million in damages.[26] Most destructive of these was the arson of a Vail, Colorado ski resort resulting in $12 million in damages. The ELF communiqué claiming responsibility for the Vail fire was written 'on behalf of the lynx,' an endangered species threatened by Vail Inc.'s expansion plans, and further warned that '[w]e will be back if this greedy corporation continues to trespass into wild

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[20] Louis Beam, 'Leaderless Resistance', *The Seditionist* 12 (February 1992) accessed at http://www.solargeneral.com/library/leaderlessresistance.htm, retrieved on April 22, 2005.; Louis Beam, 'Leaderless Resistance', *Inter-Klan Newsletter & Survival Alert*. (May 1983) pages not numbered.
[21] Mitrovica (note 2).
[22] Beam (note 3).
[23] Throughout the article I refer to "the ELF," but by this phrase, I do not intend to convey a sense that the ELF is characterized by significant levels of organizational unity or social cohesion. As this article will illustrate, rather than a "group" or an "organization," the ELF should only be seen as a collectivity in the most limited and virtual sense. Likewise, the concept of "membership" implies merely that one (or one's cell) has performed actions "under the ELF banner" (Retrieved from <www.earthliberationfront.com> on April 1, 2005). Any conceptions of membership that are more robust than this would be misapplied in the case of the ELF.
[24] Simson L. Garfinkel, 'Leaderless Resistance Today', *First Monday* 8/3 (March 2003) e-text, pages not numbered; Stefan H. Leader and Peter Probst, 'The Earth Liberation Front and Environmental Terrorism', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15/4 (2003) p. 37-58; Jeremy Pressman, 'Leaderless Resistance: The Next Threat?', *Current History* 102, no. 668 (December, 2003) p. 422-425.
[25] Actions of radical environmentalists are less severe in that they aim not to kill human beings but rather to cause fear and to destroy property.
[26] Leader and Probst (note 7) p. 38.

and unroaded areas.'[27] Attacks at many U.S. locations have indeed continued since, including the August, 2003 burning down of a 206-unit apartment complex that had been under construction in San Diego, causing roughly $50 million in damages.[28] More recently, four attacks occurred in November and December of 2005, three in the USA and one in Greece, together causing an estimated $567, 600 in damages[29], and the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism catalogued 50 ELF attacks between 2001 and 2011.[30] As a consequence of this frequent and escalating leaderless resistance, John Lewis, an FBI deputy assistant director and top official in charge of domestic terrorism, labeled eco-terrorism, along with animal liberation terrorism,[31] as "the No. 1 domestic terrorism threat" in 2005.[32]

Thus far, academic literature pertaining to leaderless resistance has focused on its use as an effective strategy for avoiding detection, infiltration, and prosecution by a powerful state.[33] In this article, I argue that the strategy of leaderless resistance has another benefit—one most easily enjoyed by social movements that display a high degree of *ideological diversity*. The radical environmental movement, itself an incredibly

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[27] ELF qtd. in Craig Rosebraugh, *Burning Rage of a Dying Planet: Speaking for the Earth Liberation Front* (New York, NY; Lantern Books 2004) p. 60.
[28] Gary A. Ackerman, 'Beyond Arson? A Threat Assessment of the Earth Liberation Front', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15/4 (2003) p. 143.
[29] 'Ecological Resistance from Around the World.' *Green Anarchy* 22 (Spring, 2006) p. 30.
[30] *Integrated United States Security Database (IUSSD): Data on the Terrorist Attacks in the United States Homeland, 1970 to 2011* December 2012 p. 26.
[31] The FBI has consistently conflated the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) with the ELF. Although the ELF and ALF did release a communiqué claiming solidarity of action in 1993, it would be more precise to regard the two movements as separate for a number of reasons. The ALF is much older than the ELF, having formed in 1979, and most communiqués from the ELF in the US do not specifically give credit for their actions to the ALF (for many examples of these communiqués, see Rosebraugh, Craig [note 10]). Also, as we shall see below, there are points of contention between animal liberationists and radical environmentalists that call into question the feasibility of a long-lasting alliance between the two movements (see p. 17)
[32] Lewis qtd. in Schuster, Henry. "Domestic Terror: Who's the Most Dangerous? Eco-terrorists are now above ultra-right extremists on the FBI charts." August 24, 2005 (available at <http://www.cnn.com/2005/US/08/24/schuster.column/index.html>)
[33] Garfinkel (note 7); Kaplan (note 2); Leader and Probst (note 7) p. 39.

diverse social movement,[34] thus provides an ideal case study for examining this hitherto unexplored benefit of leaderless resistance.

My central argument is that leaderless resistance allows the ELF to avoid ideological cleavages by eliminating all ideology extraneous to the very specific cause of halting the degradation of nature. In effect, the ELF's use of leaderless resistance creates an 'overlapping consensus'[35] among those with vastly different ideological orientations, mobilizing a mass of adherents that would have never been able to find unanimity of purpose in an organization characterized by a traditional, hierarchical, authority structure. In short, in using leaderless resistance, the ELF allows its adherents to 'believe what they will,' while still mobilizing them to commit 'direct actions' for a specific cause.

The Development of a Concept: Leaderless Resistance in America's Radical Right

Motivating Louis Beam's attempts to popularize leaderless resistance was his realization that the American radical right was reaching a low point in terms of its popularity and strength. He wrote *Leaderless Resistance* '[i]n the hope that, somehow, America can still produce the brave sons and daughters necessary to fight off ever

[34] For an excellent description and analysis of the ideological diversity within the radical environmental movement, see Bron Taylor's articles, especially, 'Diggers, Wolves, Ents, Elves and Expanding Universes: Global Bricolage and the Question of Violence within the Subcultures of Radical Environmentalism,' in *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization.* Jeffrey Kaplan and Heléne Lööw (eds), (Walnut Creek; AltaMira Press, 2002) p. 26-74; Bron Taylor, 'Earth and Nature-Based Spirituality (Part I): From Deep Ecology to Radical Environmentalism', *Religion* 31 (2001) p. 175-193; Bron Taylor, 'Earth and Nature-Based Spirituality (Part II): From Earth First! and Bioregionalism to Scientific Paganism and the New Age', *Religion* 31 (2001) p. 225-245; also, for a good description of the controversies surrounding Earth First!'s appropriation of elements of Native American spirituality, see Bron Taylor, 'Earthen Spirituality or Cultural Genocide?: Radical Environmentalism's Appropriation of Native American Spirituality', *Religion* 27 (1997) p. 183-215.

[35] Although John Rawls, in his work *Political Liberalism*, (New York, NY; Columbia University Press 1993 p.15) used the term 'overlapping consensus' to describe an agreement about political justice between citizens who hold different religious and philosophical views, I seek to avoid this association and intend for it to have an independent meaning within the context of this article.

increasing persecution and oppression.'[36] Because the essay is still salient for understanding leaderless resistance today, I repeat a significant portion below. Beam writes:

> The concept of Leaderless Resistance is nothing less than a fundamental departure in theories of organization. The orthodox scheme of organization is diagrammatically represented by the pyramid, with the mass at the bottom and the leader at the top. . . .
>
> This scheme of organization, the pyramid, is however, not only useless, but extremely dangerous for the participants when it is utilized in a resistance movement against state tyranny. Especially is this so in technologically advanced societies where electronic surveillance can often penetrate the structure revealing its chain of command. Experience has revealed over and over again that anti-state, political organizations utilizing this method of command and control are easy prey for government infiltration, entrapment, and destruction of the personnel involved. . . .
>
> In the pyramid type of organization, an infiltrator can destroy anything which is beneath his level of infiltration and often those above him as well. If the traitor has infiltrated at the top, then the entire organization from the top down is compromised and may be traduced at will. . . .
>
> This understood, the question arises 'What method is left for those resisting state tyranny?' . . . A system of organization that is based upon

[36] Beam (note 3) p. 12.

> the cell organization, but does not have any central control or direction. . . . Utilizing the Leaderless Resistance concept, all individuals and groups operate independently of each other, and never report to a central headquarters or single leader for direction or instruction, as would those who belong to a typical pyramid organization.[37]

Thus, according to Beam's original conception, leaderless resistance is only truly in effect when there is a *complete* absence of 'top-down' authority structures. Garfinkel later underscored this requirement by maintaining that 'hub and spoke' organizations, in which partially independent cells receive commands from above, do not qualify as true leaderless resistance.[38]

Odinist David Lane also contributed to the development of the concept of leaderless resistance.[39] In his article *Wotan is Coming*, Lane describes his movement's need for an aboveground political arm—the function of which is to disseminate propaganda—as well as an underground militant arm that he called Wotan (for 'will of the Aryan nation').[40] Lane advised that Wotan should 'draw recruits from those educated by the political arm,' thus ensuring that adherents are in line ideologically with the rest of the movement.[41] He also stressed, however, that:

> [w]hen a Wotan 'goes active' he severs all apparent or provable ties with the political arm. If he has been so foolish as to obtain 'membership' in

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[37] Ibid. p. 12-13.
[38] Garfinkel (note 7).
[39] Kaplan (note 2) pp. 89-90.
[40] David Lane, 'Wotan is Coming', (April 1993) e-text, no page numbers. Reprint retrieved from <http://www1.ca.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/people/l/lane.david/ftp.py?people/l/lane.david//wotan-is-coming> on April 22, 2005.
[41] Ibid.

such an organization, all records of such association must be destroyed or resignation submitted.[42]

The benefits of this severance would be obvious to members of Lane's movement, who know well the dangers associated with the FBI's scrutiny.

Both Beam and Lane were ideologues with heavy personal commitments to particular streams of the racist far right, and it only makes sense that they would seek and endorse organizational strategies that would ensure the preservation and advancement of their respective ideologies *in toto*. Beam, for one, has no doubt that ideological purity is maintainable in non-hierarchical organizational structures stating, 'it is certainly true that in any movement, all persons involved have the same general outlook, are acquainted with the same philosophy, and generally react to given situations in similar ways.'[43] Such a generalization should raise the eyebrows of any student of social movements, and here the intellectually sophisticated Beam is uncharacteristically simplistic. Likewise, Lane's recommendation of a severance from Wotan 'of all apparent or provable ties with the political arm' creates an organizational system that gives free reign to the centrifugal forces of ideological deviation that threaten all ideological groups, a fact that he either never realizes or chooses not to mention. As I will show below, this conduciveness of leaderless resistance to ideological diversity, which threatens to subvert the intentions of ideologues like Beam and Lane, has proven to be beneficial to radical environmentalist movements like the ELF, whose sole aim is to mobilize many actions, the ideological justifications for which may be manifold.

[42] Ibid.
[43] Beam (note 3).

Leaderless Resistance in the ELF

The ELF first began operating in the United Kingdom in 1992; started by a group of Earth First!ers who were frustrated by their organization's desire to abandon illegal tactics.[44] By 1997, actions were occurring in the United States, and the perpetrators began delivering communiqués claiming responsibility to environmental activists Leslie James Pickering and Craig Rosebraugh, first through their mailbox and telephone, and then through email.[45] Rosebraugh and Pickering would then act as publicists for the perpetrators, conducting media interviews that would publicize the communiqués. Websites also play a major role in the ELF's exhortations of actions, by disseminating guidelines for action,[46] by reporting the various direct actions that ELFers commit, and by providing instructions about how to commit direct actions successfully.[47]

The ELF's deliberate employment of the leaderless resistance strategy is evident from statements made on its website:

> Because the ELF structure is non-hierarchical, there is no centralized organization or leadership. There is also no 'membership' in the Earth Liberation Front. In the past . . . individuals have committed arson and other illegal acts under the ELF name. Individuals who choose to do actions under the banner of E.L.F. do so only driven by their personal

[44] Bron Taylor, 'Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front', in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature* Bron Taylor and Jeffrey Kaplan (eds), (London and New York; Thoemmes Continuum 2005) p. 521.
[45] Rosebraugh (note 10) p. 20.
[46] The ELF's three main guidelines, posted until recently on its website, are: a)To inflict economic damage on those profiting from the destruction and exploitation of the natural environment. b) To reveal and educate the public on the atrocities committed against the earth and all species that populate it. c) To take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human or nonhuman (Sandy Liddy Bourne and Matthew McNabb, *Animal & Ecological Terrorism in America* [Washington D.C.; American Legislative Exchange Council 2003] p. 10; Leader and Probst [note 7] p. 40).
[47] One feature on the ELF website for a time was the thirty-seven page instruction manual *Setting Fires with Electrical Timers: An Earth Liberation Front Guide* (see note 66 and appendix G).

> conscience. These have been individual choices, and are not endorsed, encouraged, or approved of by the management and participants of this web site.[48]

There appears to be no intra-movement communication between ELF cells, and demonstrations or events at which ELF adherents could congregate are markedly absent.[49]

Thus, the ELF does not recruit members to a pre-existing organization, but rather encourages people to start their own micro-organizations to further ELF's ends. In an introductory video to the ELF, publicist Craig Rosebraugh advises, 'There's no realistic chance of becoming active in an already existing cell. . . . Take initiative; form your own cell.'[50] Similar to Beam, Rosebraugh advocates the leaderless resistance strategy because, unlike pyramidal or hub-and-spoke organizational structures, 'if one cell is infiltrated or captured by authorities, the members cannot provide any information that might lead to the capture of other cells.'[51] Earth First! leader Judi Bari's praise of the development of the ELF in the UK is also reminiscent of David Lane's recommendation of a separation between public and clandestine 'arms' of his movement. Writes Bari:

> England Earth First! has been taking some necessary steps to separate above ground and clandestine activities. Earth First!, the public group, has a nonviolence code and does civil disobedience blockades.
>
> Monkeywrenching is done by [the] Earth Liberation Front (ELF).

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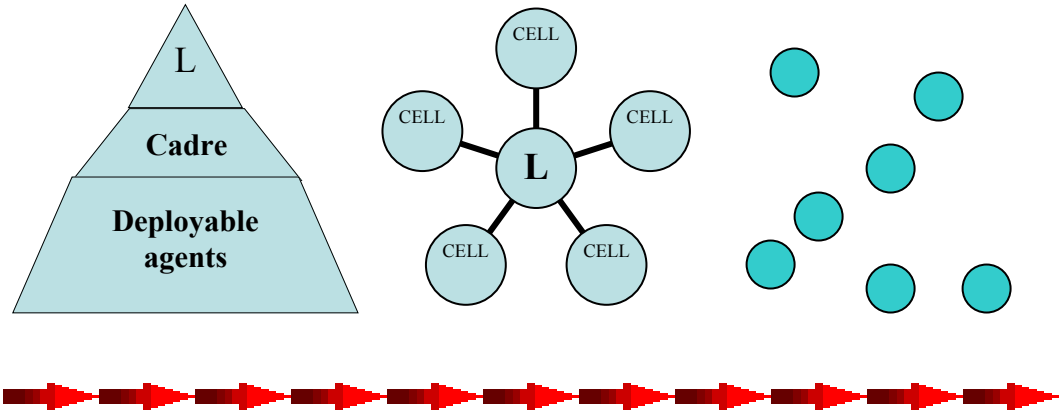
[48] Retrieved from <www.earthliberationfront.com> on April 1, 2005.
[49] Garfinkel (note 7).
[50] Rosebraugh is quoted in Bruce Barcott, 'From Tree-Hugger to Terrorist: How Critter became part of a shadowy, increasingly violent radical environmental movement', *New York Times Magazine* (April 7, 2002) pp. 56-59 and 81.
[51] Rosebraugh (note 10) p. 182.

> Although Earth First!ers may sympathize with the activities of elf, they do not engage in them.
>
> If we are serious about our movement in the U.S., we will do the same. Despite the romantic notions of some over-imaginative Ed Abbey fans, Earth First! is in reality an above ground group. We have above ground publications, public events, and a yearly national Rendezvous with open attendance.
>
> Civil disobedience and sabotage are both powerful tactics in our movement. For the survival of both, its time to leave the night work to the elves in the woods. [52]

It is interesting that Bari does not advocate the abandonment of all sabotage *per se*. Rather, she advocates leaving it to the 'elves' for strategic reasons. Thus, the ELF appears to exemplify the strategy of leaderless resistance outlined by far-right thinkers such as Louis Beam and David Lane, but under the auspices of an entirely different ideological framework.

[52] Judi Bari, 'Monkeywrenching' in *Timber Wars* (Monroe Main; Common Courage Press 1994) p. 285.

Figure 6. Leaderless Resistance as Opposed to Other Organizational Forms



(Arrows indicate the leader's (L) decreased organizational prominence and level of control)

a) "Pyramidal"/Hierarchical organization: As described by Beam, this type of organization is very vulnerable to infiltration by government agencies.	**b) Hub-and spoke organization:** Cells communicate with a leader (L), but are semi-autonomous and may use their own discretion to determine when to act and what targets to choose.	**c) Leaderless Resistance**: Without a leader whatsoever, small, clandestine cells are completely autonomous, and have no lines of communication or command among them.

Figure 6 above illustrates how the leaderless resistance strategy differs from other forms of terrorist organization. The categories are ideal-typical; and any exemplars would therefore only be approximate. What is more, some groups clearly change their orientation towards leadership and thus may shift categories over time. A prime example of this would be al-Qaeda, which, at the time of September 11, 2001, was fairly pyramidal in its organizational structure. Since then, however, it has undergone a rhizomatic leveling such that it would now be best placed in either the hub-and-spoke[53] or leaderless resistance categories.[54]

[53] Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks* (Philadelphia; University of Pennsylvania Press 2004) p. 140-141.
[54] George Michael, *Lone Wolf Terror and the Rise of Leaderless Resistance* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press 2012), Marc Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad*. (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press 2008).

Radical Environmentalism as a Call to Action

It is clear that the core motivation for radical environmental movements like the ELF, is a *call to action*—'direct actions' specifically. Radical environmentalists gauge the success of their movement not in terms of the number of adherents it is able to attract, or whether it manages to develop a cogent philosophy or 'worldview,' or even whether it is able to successfully lobby governments to pass environmentally friendly laws. Rather, because the radical environmentalist goal is *immediate* change, its standard of success is gauged by the number of 'direct actions' it can mobilize, and the efficacy of these actions in putting a halt to the ongoing degradation of the wilderness.

Historically, this call to action was a consequence of frustration with the ineffectiveness of the traditional forms of environmental protest that organizations such as the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club were employing. By 1977, future Earth First! co-founder Dave Foreman had risen to become the Wilderness Society's chief congressional lobbyist, but his experiences in Washington soon served to disillusion him and he resigned his post.[55] He had come to see many environmental groups as 'becoming indistinguishable from the corporations they were supposedly fighting'[56] and he regarded the lobbyists alongside whom he had been working as 'less part of a cause than members of a profession.'[57] Thus, in 1980, he and five friends went hiking in Mexico's Pinacate Desert where they formed Earth First! The group's slogan, 'No compromise in defense of mother earth!' meant to signal that within this organization there would be none of the 'give and take' strategy of the Washington environmental lobby. The group Foreman

[55] Taylor (note 26) p. 518.
[56] Murray Bookchin, and Dave Foreman, *Defending the Earth: A Dialogue Between Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman* Steve Chase (ed.) (Boston: South End Press 1991) p. 38.
[57] Dave Foreman, *Confessions of an Eco-Warrior* (New York; Harmony 1991) pp. 14-15.

envisioned would be committed to direct action–both in the form civil disobedience and monkeywrenching[58]–seeing it as the only viable option for staving off an ecological catastrophe.

Dave Foreman made clear his intention that Earth First! would give precedent to actions as opposed to ideas in his 1982 article *Earth First!*, saying, '[a]ction is key. Action is more important than philosophical hairsplitting or endless refining of dogma (for which radicals are so well known). Let our actions set the finer points of our philosophy.'[59] To this day, Earth First! still holds to the ideal of allowing many divergent viewpoints as long as these different stances translate into direct actions:

> While there is broad diversity within Earth First! from animal rights vegans to wilderness hunting guides, from monkeywrenchers to careful followers of Gandhi, from whiskey-drinking backwoods riffraff to thoughtful philosophers, from misanthropes to humanists there is agreement on one thing, the need for action![60]

Thus, *inclusion* and *action* are two ideals to which Earth First! strives. The history of Earth First! demonstrates, however, that at times these two ideals can be less than complimentary.

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[58] Dave Foreman defined monkeywrenching as 'nonviolent resistance to the destruction of natural diversity and wilderness. It is never directed against human beings or other forms of life. It is aimed at inanimate machines and tools that are destroying life. Care is always taken to minimize any possible threat to people, including to the monkeywrenchers themselves' (quoted at <http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/81/rq-81-earthfirst.html> retrieved April 10, 2005).

[59] Dave Foreman, 'Earth First!', in *Earth Ethics: Introductory Readings on Animal Rights and Environmental Ethics* James P. Sterba (ed), (New Jersey; Prentice Hall 2000 [originally published in 1982]) p. 349.

[60] Accessed at <http://www.earthfirst.org/about.htm>, retrieved on April 11, 2005.

Factions rather than Actions

Keeping in mind the thesis of this article, namely that the radical environmental movement enjoys an increased ability to mobilize actions because of the ideological inclusiveness that leaderless resistance fosters, we would do well to recognize some of the difficulties that the movement suffered before certain parts of it evolved to shed its leaders. As Earth First! grew, ideological cleavages would indeed compromise its ability to keep actions – not ideas – in the forefront of the movement. A seemingly constant source of internal ideological discord within Earth First! was its eponymous journal. In its early years, *Earth First!'*s small format meant that there was room for the works of members of Earth First!'s governing body, 'the Circle of Darkness,' and little else. Thus, initially there was a certain level of ideological purity within the journal. The waters began to muddy, however, between December of 1981 and February of 1982, as the number of letters to the editor that the journal published went from 'four to thirty one per issue. In its new format, the paper disseminated not only the leadership's beliefs but also the often divergent beliefs of the membership.'[61] This tolerance for the expression of divergent beliefs and values is a source of pride for Earth First!, but as the group grew in size, these newly-influential members 'exerted a centrifugal force on the group's structure.'[62] The *Earth First!* journal thus became the forum for many ideological debates very early in the organization's development.

Often these disputes would become strikingly apparent when representatives from various Earth First! chapters congregated at national conferences. These meetings had a tendency to devolve into hostile and unproductive debate among various factions.

[61] Martha F. Lee, *Earth First!: Environmental Apocalypse* (Syracuse, NY; Syracuse University Press 1995) p. 59.
[62] Ibid. p. 59.

Attempts to make sure that each participant had a chance to voice his or her own opinion also took away from the meetings' constructiveness. Illustrative of this is Bari's recollection of a meeting at which Earth First!er Karen Wood proposed to change the structure of *Earth First!*'s editorial board. The meeting style was clearly far from productive. Bari recalled that after Karen Wood's proposal:

> [t]he facilitator said, 'Okay, that's one proposal, now lets have another.' And she recognized another person with another proposal, then another, then another. If someone tried to just make a comment, the facilitator said, 'Let's turn that into a proposal,' until finally there were 23 proposals simultaneously on the floor, and the entire group was thoroughly confused.[63]

Ethnographer Jonathan Purkis also has commented on Earth First! meetings he visited in Manchester, UK. He noticed that much of the meetings' inefficiency derived from the anti-authoritarianism that made potential leaders within the movement unwilling to step forward, give direction, and set rules. In his experiences, he noted that:

> [t]he meeting would start rather haphazardly. . . . Someone, usually one of the core group, would spread the mail which the group had received out on the floor, and start the meeting with a remark such as: 'these are the things we should discuss/do something about.' . . . the lack of group minutes to refer to from one meeting to another certainly reduced the effectiveness of how meetings were carried out. The informality of these meetings was striking, sometimes including interruptions such as telephone calls to (or from) other 'northern' groups and off-the-point remarks, which often

[63] Judi Bari, 'Showdown at the Earth First! Corral' in *Timber Wars* (note 34) p. 207-208.

> went unchecked. . . . One of the core group—Owen (pseudonym)—had joked that group discussions were made on the basis of 'a great deal of aimless discussion and banter' . . . [64]

It is clear that this egalitarian meeting style, combined with the ideological diversity of Earth First!'s adherents, at times severely compromised Earth First!'s ability even to *delineate* its goals—let alone to work towards them.

Eventually, Earth First! split into two main factions. One faction, led by Judi Bari, Mike Roselle and Darryl Cherney, focused on social justice issues and renounced treespiking and other forms of monkeywrenching, in part because the practices were potentially dangerous for loggers. The other faction, led by Foreman and Christopher Manes, remained focused on protecting biodiversity and supported the use of all forms of direct action. In Bron Taylor's analysis, the Foreman/Manes faction are given the nickname 'Wilders' because they believed 'that tying environmental protection to other issues, such as social justice, anti-imperialism, or workers rights, alienates many potential wilderness sympathizers.'[65] The other faction viewed Foreman's focus as being far too narrow ideologically, and believed in a more holistic (Taylor terms them 'the Holies') approach to environmentalism.[66] A detailed account of this process of factionalization is beyond the scope of this article, but ultimately Taylor contended that the reason for the schism can be 'traced to small but significant differences in beliefs about human nature

[64] Jonathan Purkis, 'Leaderless cultures: the problem of authority in a radical environmental group', in *Leadership and Social Movements*, Colin Barker, Alan Johnson, and Michael Lavalette (eds.), (Manchester and New York; Manchester University Press 2001) pp. 160-177.
[65] Bron Taylor, 'Earth First!'s Religious Radicalism' in, *Ecological Prospects: Scientific, Religious, and Aesthetic Perspectives*, Christopher Key Chapple (ed.), (Albany; State University of New York Press 1994) p. 199.
[66] Ibid. p. 199.

and eschatology.'[67] As this factionalization progressed, more energy was diverted towards debates about ideology and away from performing the direct actions that Foreman had envisioned as being Earth First!'s *forte*. He lamented, '[d]isagreements over matters of philosophy and style . . . threaten to compromise the basic tenets of Earth First!, or make [it] impotent.'[68]

Foreman eventually left Earth First! altogether and started *Wild Earth*; a journal more in line with his specific ideological orientation.[69] The *Earth First!* journal continued, but still caused discord within the organization, airing a multitude of ideological disputes, which lead to further instability in the movement and journal. One Earth First!er lamented,

> '[n]ow, Dave [Foreman] & crew are gone; and the new Earth First! marches on with its shining vision. . . . We have advanced so far that we have reached the point where Dave Foreman stood nearly ten years ago: We realize that not everything fits in one journal.'[70]

Thus, ideological cleavages were a constant problem for Earth First!, the first major radical environmental group in the United States. These cleavages diverted the movement's focus away from its initial goal of planning and instigating actions that would protect the wilderness from degradation. Despite this, Earth First! remains a potent—though less radical—force in the wider environmental movement milieu, and continues to have its own successes and failures in relation to its current goals.

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[67] Ibid. p. 200.
[68] Foreman quoted in Lee (note 44) pp. 106-107.
[69] *Wild Earth* ceased publication in 2004.
[70] 'Matthew', letter to the editor, *Earth First!* 13/6 (1993) p. 3.

Benefits of Leaderless Resistance for the ELF

Bron Taylor gives the most authoritative account of the emergence of the ELF in his *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, citing various Earth First! sources which claim that ELF began as a radical offshoot of Earth First! in England.[71] Taylor thus includes both Earth First! and the ELF under the same encyclopedic heading, signaling—what was in the beginning at least—a fundamental *indistinctness* between the movements. Clearly, today the ELF has outgrown this association with Earth First!, partly through its use of leaderless resistance, a strategy of recruitment that is well-suited to reaching beyond traditional ideological boundaries. The divergence of the two movements has meant that, while Earth First! Has continued to moderate, looking less and less distinct from other formerly radical groups like Greenpeace, the ELF has produced ever-more extreme actions which have captured headlines around the world.

Both Ackerman and Taylor[72] argue that 'prolific intra-movement debate'[73] decreases the likelihood that members within a movement will begin to commit violent acts because debate tends to have a moderating effect on the extreme members and/or elements of organizations. Thus, for movements predicated on endorsing violent actions, the best strategy would be to limit opportunities for debate while being inclusive of a wide range of ideological positions. Below are some of the specific ways that leaderless resistance has enabled the ELF to be more ideologically inclusive.

First, the ELF moniker itself increases the range of ideological positions to which adherents can remain sympathetic, by enabling adherents to *interpret* the name in a way

[71] Taylor, Bron (note 26) p. 521.
[72] Bron Taylor, 'Religion, Violence and Environmentalism: From Earth First! to the Unabomber, to Earth Liberation Front', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20/4 (1998) p.14.
[73] Ackerman (note 11) p. 145.

that suits their ideological orientation. For example, some radical environmentalists choose to conflate the animal liberation movement, represented by aboveground organizations such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), with the radical environmentalist movement. For them, the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the ELF are merely different expressions of the same underlying ideology, and they see this unity represented by the similarity of the two movements' names. Other radical environmentalists, however, protest this union because they regard the actions of animal liberationists—who in the past have 'liberated' exotic animals by releasing them into the wild—as being harmful to ecosystems. So, while some choose to see ELF and ALF as twin movements, others—for whom this pairing would be distasteful—can choose to see the ELF as entirely autonomous. Thus, when adherents of the ELF decide to engage in direct action, they can choose with whom they wish to associate ideologically.

The ELF moniker also lends itself to interpretations that are favorable to both sides of another prominent debate within the environmentalist movement, concerning the role that religion and/or myth ought to play in protest. Philosopher Kate Soper noted that there is a:

> spectrum of positions in the green movement ranging from those who would dismiss any recourse to myth or magic as a capitulation to irrationalism that can only discredit its forms of protest, to those who would insist that these forms of thinking offer the most powerful and effective antidote to instrumental rationality.[74]

While primarily political/rational-minded or secular adherents will read 'ELF' as an acronym for 'earth liberation front,' those who have an affinity to the more mystical,

[74] Kate Soper, 'A Green Mythology', *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 7/3 (September 1996) p. 120.

pagan aspects of radical environmentalism will be more likely to read the ELF appellation in terms of its pagan symbolism, seeing themselves as mischievous 'elves' who come to wreak havoc in the night.[75] By being interpretable, the ELF moniker appeals to both ends of the sacred/secular spectrum, reducing the likelihood that someone will abandon his or her adherence to the movement because of disagreements about the role of religion and myth in environmental protest. Thus, the ELF name allows the movement to 'cast its net wide' for adherents with very different ideological orientations.

Second, the ELF's ability to attract *young men* is enhanced by its limitation of ideological content on its website and in its publications. An overwhelming proportion of young men in an organization's constituency will provide a motivational predisposition for a general transition to more violent behavior.[76] This is a result of simple and measurable tendencies of young and male demographics. For example, a survey of US district courts found that 92.9% of all defendants convicted for violent crimes in 2001 were male, while 78.4% percent of defendants convicted were between sixteen and forty years of age.[77] Thus, given that violent actions are most likely to be perpetrated by those who are young or male, movements like the ELF which seek to instigate violent actions do best when their propaganda targets these demographics.

Since, however, young males do not tend to adhere to any *particular* ideology, and are distributed evenly throughout society, it would be difficult to provide an *ideological* basis for attracting young men specifically. Indeed, Chip Berlet, a senior analyst from the left-wing think-tank Political Research Associates, sees the ELF website

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[75] Taylor (note 55) p. 9.
[76] Ackerman (note 11) p. 148.
[77] Bureau of Justice Statistics. 2002. *Sourcebook of criminal justice statistics online*. Table 5.18. Retrieved from www.albany.edu/sourcebook/pdf/t518.pdf on April 22, 2005.

as appealing more to young males' desire for glory rather than to any specific ideological beliefs they might hold. He sees the website as 'a framework for recruiting young men to do this kind of stuff. . . . You come up with an exhortation of what a hero will do, and some person comes out and says "I want to be a hero."'[78]

The wording of ELF communiqués is often rebellious and playful, using themes such as Christmas in an irreverent way that would be appealing to young, disgruntled would-be heroes. Particularly striking in this regard was the communiqué sent to Rosebraugh after the burning of a US Forest Industries office in Medford Oregon in 1998:

> To celebrate the holidays we decided on a bonfire. Unfortunately for US Forest Industries it was at their corporate headquarters office.
>
> On the foggy night after Christmas when everyone was digesting their turkey and pie, Santa's ELFs dropped two five-gallon buckets of diesel/unleaded mix and a gallon jug with cigarette delay; which proved to be more than enough to get this party started.
>
> This was in retribution for all the wild forests and animals lost to feed the wallets of greedy fucks like Jerry Bramwell, USFI president. This action is payback and it is a warning to all others responsible, we do not sleep and we won't quit.[79]

What strikes one about this communiqué are not powerful ideological arguments—indeed, the ideological justifications are quite vague. Clearly more impactful for potential youthful recruits would be the almost comic-bookish *style* in which the communiqué was

[78] Berlet is quoted in Garfinkel (note 7).
[79] Quoted in Rosebraugh (note 10) p. 72.

written. The arson is depicted as a mischievous 'party' carried out by elfish subverters who act under the cover of darkness. At times, the youthful characterization has been explicitly endorsed by the saboteurs themselves, one cell even referring to themselves as the "Night Action Kids."[80]

Ackerman points out that, of the few suspects who have been arrested or indicted for connections to ELF actions, 'all but one have been male and most are teenagers or young adults.'[81] When one looks at these individuals, they are surprisingly bereft of long-standing and deep environmentalist commitments. For example, *New York Times* writer Al Baker had suspicions about how ideological were the motivations of Matthew Rammelkap (16), George Mashkow (17), and Jared McIntyre (17), all of whom plead guilty to arson conspiracy in 2001. He wondered if their ELF-claimed actions were 'the work of a smart, devoted band of eco-terrorists or young vandals merely blowing off adolescent steam?' [82] Then there are Craig 'Critter' Marshall (twenty-eight) and Jeffrey 'Free' Luers (twenty-two). Marshall, sentenced to five-and-a-half years in jail for fire-bombing a Chevrolet dealership in Eugene, Oregon, admitted to *New York Times* reporter Bruce Barcott that growing up, he 'held political beliefs that weren't so much pro-environment as anti-authority.'[83] Similarly, Jeffrey Luers, who was sentenced to twenty-two years and eight-months for his participation, remarked in an interview with *Earth First!* that '[o]riginally I was radicalized by anti-authoritarian, anarchist beliefs, as well as animal rights,' and that his environmental radicalism came only in 1997.[84] Thus, one

[80] Rosebraugh (note 10) p. 205.
[81] Ackerman (note 11) p. 148. It should be noted, however, that contrary to this trend, among those named in the January 19, 2006 indictment of eleven suspected ELF members were six women.
[82] Al Baker, 'A Federal Case in Suffolk: Eco-Terrorism or Adolescence in Bloom?'*New York Times* (February 18, 2001) p. 33.
[83] Barcott (note 32) p. 58.
[84] Interview available at <http://www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk/profiles/free/ef.html> accessed June 10, 2006.

could question whether the ELF would have been able to mobilize these young males if it were more ideologically specific in its propaganda.

Another example of this strategy of limiting ideological content is the ELF's thirty-seven page manual, *Setting Fires With Electrical Timers: an Earth Liberation Front Guide*.[85] While it gives very detailed instructions on how to engage in acts of arson, this manual is nearly devoid of references to environmental issues or ideology. On the second page are instructions to copy and distribute the manual to 'bookstores that specialize in animal rights, environmental and anarchist literature.' After this very brief mention of the broad ideological orientation of its authors, the rest of the manual is devoted to technical issues such as creating a clean room to avoid leaving DNA evidence and soldering a digital timer for an incendiary device. By not explicitly stating ideological precepts, the manual lends itself to use by anyone, regardless of the person's ideological orientation. This open use is of little practical concern for the ELF, however, because, as Garfinkel (commenting on the Vail, CO arson) writes:

> even if the ELF was not responsible for the Vail fire, ELF's claim of the fire gives it a powerful propaganda tool: a photograph of what appears to be the burning hotel appears on the front page of ELF's Web site. Even if people believing in ELF's ideology were not directly responsible for the fire, the existing of ELF and its ideology may have given the arsonists the additional motivation or cover to carry out the crime.[86]

Today, actions from the ELF are very common, and fear of terrorism is rampant. In this climate, there may be no safer way to commit insurance fraud, or revengeful arson, or

[85] Fireant Collective, *Setting Fires with Electrical Timers: An Earth Liberation Front Guide* (2001).
[86] Garfinkel (note 7).

just go thrill-seeking, than to follow the ELF's guidelines, spray paint 'the elves were here' at the site, and lead authorities up the garden path. Thus, the *definition* by the public and law enforcement of many of the ELF's acts as exclusively motivated by environmental concerns is *itself* part of the ELF's mobilization strategy. That the ELF gains notoriety and influence through the actions of those whose true motivations are far from certain underscores a foundational truism of sociological inquiry expressed poignantly by William Isaac Thomas: '[i]f men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.'[87]

Politics as a Contentious Issue Amongst Radical Environmentalists

We have seen how leaderless resistance is beneficial to the ELF specifically, but there are many areas of debate that can be fractious for environmental organizations in general. Before closing this article, I consider just one of these areas – environmental politics—below.

Conventional wisdom is prone to seeing environmental concerns as existing primarily within the domain of left-of-center political interests. The presence of conservative anti-environmentalist organizations such as the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise (CDFE), the "wise use" movement, along with the lack of concern for environmental issues by the Reagan[88] and both Bush administrations reinforces this

[87] William I. Thomas and Dorothy Thomas, *The Child in America* 2nd ed. (Alfred Knopf 1929) p. 572.
[88] Especially reinforcing of this perception was Ronald Reagan's Secretary of the Interior, James Watt. In fact, during his tenure, 'mainstream environmental organizations experienced remarkable growth in membership as a direct result of Watt's policies' (Hal K. Rothman, *Saving the Planet: The American Response to the Environment in the Twentieth Century* [Chicago; The American Ways Series 2000] p. 170). Earth First!er Christopher Manes also wrote that there was an 'influx of people frightened into environmental activism by the retrograde policies of President Reagan's maladroit and messianic secretary of the interior, James Watt.' (*Green Rage: Radical Environmentalism and the Unmaking of a Civilization* [Boston, Toronto, and London; Little, Brown and Company 1990] p. 49). Watt, reportedly speaking in

perception. John Gray summarized the conventional characterization of the relationship between conservatism and environmentalism:

> It is fair to say that, on the whole, conservative thought has been hostile to environmental concerns over the past decade or so in Britain, Europe and the United States. Especially in America, environmental concerns have been represented as anti-capitalist propaganda under another flag.[89]

Today, the idea that environmentalism is an exclusively liberal cause continues to be popularly held despite some recent developments that would challenge such views.[90] Thus, for many, the recent attempts by the Bush administration to open Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling represents merely another incident in continuance with a long legacy of environmental irresponsibility by conservatives in America.

Though it is true that those who hold positions of power within conservative movements have largely been unsympathetic to environmental causes, a conservative political orientation *itself* is not necessarily antagonistic to environmental concerns. Those not in power in the right wing (and thus of more interest for the study of leaderless resistance) are more likely to have interests and beliefs that are divergent from the

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Congress, refuted arguments for conserving natural resources by saying, 'I do not know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns' (quoted in William Martin, 'Waiting for the End: Growing Interest in Apocalyptic Prophecy,' *Atlantic Monthly* 249 (June), p. 35).

[89] John Gray, *Beyond the New Right: Markets, Government and the Common Environment* (London; Routledge 1993) p. 124.

[90] For example, in February of 2006, 86 evangelical leaders, including Rick Warren, author of the best-seller, *The Purpose-Driven Life*, and 39 presidents of evangelical colleges, signed an "Evangelical Climate Initiative" calling for federal legislation to combat global warming—a development that would have been unthinkable even during the 1990s. Also, Rod Dreher outlined the emergence of what he termed the "Crunchy Con"—Republicans in the U.S. who share many lifestyle preferences—including environmentally conscious living—with those on the 'hippy' left (*Crunchy Cons: How Birkenstocked Burkeans, Gun-Loving Organic Gardeners, Evangelical Free-Range Farmers, Hip Homeschooling Mamas, Right-Wing Nature Lovers, and Their Diverse Tribe of Countercultural Conservatives Plan to Save America [or at Least the Republican Party]* New York; Crown Forum 2006). Thus, among social conservatives, at least, there seems to be a newly-opening space for environmental consciousness. These developments are still often seen, however (perhaps rightly), as exceptions that prove the rule as to the overall relationship between conservatism and environmentalism.

mainstream of their movement. As Bruce Pilbeam showed, an environmental consciousness can be consistent with the general political philosophy to which conservatives subscribe. Furthermore, Pilbeam outlined how conservative thought may have an affinity even with many qualities of deep ecology–the philosophy that guides the thinking of many radical environmentalists.[91]

This potential affinity between conservatism and deep ecology makes the fact of Dave Foreman's Republican Party membership, his support of the Vietnam War, and his work as campaign manager for Barry Goldwater[92] seem less surprising. Although the liberal Earth First!er Judi Bari saw 'an inherent contradiction in Dave Foreman,'[93] in fact, his example shows how conservative thought can be combined with radical environmental concerns to form a cogent worldview. Thus, Foreman's orientation is not merely an anomaly, a quirky exception to the general rules of where environmentalist concerns ought to fit within the political spectrum. Rather, he exemplifies how the politics of environmentalism often are incommensurable with the traditional left/right distinction that usually shapes political thought.

Recognition of this incommensurability also provides insight into the motivations of Canada's most prominent ecoteur, Wiebo Ludwig. On April 19, 2000, Ludwig was convicted of bombing a gas well and encasing another wellhead in concrete along with three other explosives-related charges in north-western Alberta,[94] crimes for which he spent twenty-one months in jail. Two of these counts were for mischief by destroying

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[91] Bruce Pilbeam, 'Natural Allies? Mapping the Relationship between Conservatism and Environmentalism', *Political Studies* 51 (2003) pp. 490 – 508.
[92] Lee (note 44) p. 27.
[93] Judi Bari 'Review: Dave Foreman's *Confessions of an Eco-Warrior*', in *Timber Wars* (note 34) p. 104.
[94] James Brooke, 'Radical Environmentalist Convicted of Gas Well Blast in Canada', *New York Times* (April 20, 2000) p. A11.

property and possessing an explosive substance.[95] Interestingly, when committing direct actions, Ludwig used ideas that he gleaned from Dave Foreman's book, *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*, such as covering his shoes with socks to avoid leaving tracks.[96]

A former Christian Reformed Church preacher,[97] Ludwig was intensely conservative on social issues. While pastor of Goderich Christian Reformed Church, his strict views about male 'headship' and the roles of women caused much dissention among his congregation. According to Nikiforuk, '[h]e asked working women why they weren't home caring for children, and women with one or two offspring why they hadn't begotten "a full quiver."'[98] For a time in 1999, rumors were circulating that Ludwig might run for leadership of the ultra-conservative Social Credit party in Alberta.[99] The late Green activist, Tooker Gomberg, who was a prominent liberal, spent some time camping with Ludwig, and summarized his feelings about the man as follows:

> I find myself staring into the fire for relief, trying to work through the paradox that, although this man is a patriarchal diehard, a fundamentalist, anti-gay—and arrogant—we have few differences on the ecological front. Dare I say I admire him? A few years back I stayed at his rambling

[95] Andrew Nikiforuk, *Saboteurs: Weibo Ludwig's War Against Big Oil* (Toronto; Macfarlane Walter & Ross 2001) p. 247.
[96] Ibid. p. 110.
[97] After being expelled from the Christian Reformed Church, Ludwig formed his own church that he named 'Our Shepard King' (Nikiforuk [note 78] p. 3).
[98] Nikiforuk (note 76) p. 2.
[99] Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 'Program Summary for 13/10/99', (1999), retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/insite/CANADA_AT_FIVE_TORONTO/1999/10/13.html> on April 22, 2005.

> farmhouse, where I marveled at the family's self-reliance. But he remains an imperfect hero.[100]

Thus, if one were to gather together a group of radical environmentalists, one can only assume that their discussions of politics would be lively, if not mutually vitriolic. Only with a leaderless resistance strategy could people with political ideologies as divergent as Ludwig and Gomberg be mobilized to commit acts for a similar cause.

Conclusion

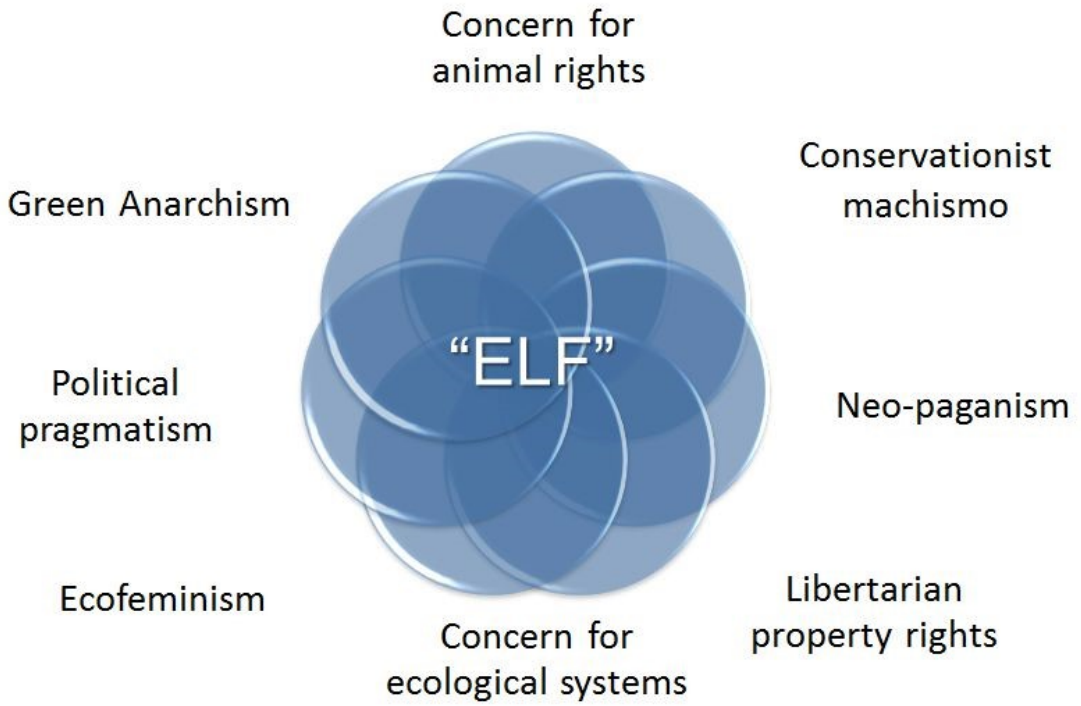
Social movements as different from one another as the American radical right and radical environmentalism are able to employ the strategy of leaderless resistance. The radical environmentalist movement's use of the strategy illustrates how it is conducive to *intra*-movement ideological diversity as well. Although the progenitors of leaderless resistance in these two social movements seek to assure potential followers (and perhaps themselves) that what coheres their respective movements is a shared ideology, the organizational structure (or lack thereof) of leaderless resistance means that there is, in fact, no way of determining if such a shared ideology actually exists. Once a social movement leader implements leaderless resistance, the movement becomes, in a sense, a 'creature unto itself,' and those who commit actions do so of their own ideological volition, completely separate from the wishes of those who are at times considered to be the movement's *de facto* leaders.

There is no doubt that, initially, the impetus for the ELF's adoption of the leaderless resistance strategy was the same as that of the American radical right: to avoid

[100] Tooker Gomberg, 'Flawed Messiah : Lost In The Wilderness With Wiebo Ludwig', *Now* (September 5 – 11 2002), accessed at <http://www.nowtoronto.com/issues/2002-09-05/news_story3.php> on April 22, 2005.

state detection, infiltration, and prosecution by powerful government agencies. Once implemented, however, it became clear that leaderless resistance also allows the ELF to avoid ideological cleavages by eliminating all ideology extraneous to the very specific cause of halting the degradation of nature, thereby *eliminating opportunities for ideological debate*. In effect, ELF's use of leaderless resistance creates an overlapping consensus among those with vastly different ideological orientations, mobilizing a mass of adherents who would have never been able to work together in an organization like Earth First! which is characterized by a more traditional organizational structure. In short, in using leaderless resistance, the ELF allows its adherents to 'believe what they will' while still mobilizing them to commit many direct actions for a specific cause. The general thrust of how the 'overlapping consensus' works in the context of ideological diversity can be expressed in Figure seven, below:

Figure 7. Overlapping Consensuses



Since the initial writing of this article, there has been a rash of arrests and indictments against suspected ELF adherents.[101] Based on the thesis presented here, one recommendation to investigators of terrorism is a caution against relying too heavily on ideological linkages among perpetrators of leaderless resistance actions. In leaderless resistance, the reasons for the formation of a new violent cell may have much more to do with group dynamics at the micro level[102] and the psychological makeup/personal histories of violence-prone individuals rather than with the particular ideology to which perpetrators happen to subscribe or the sub-cultural milieu that they inhabit. An over-reliance on ideological linkages in investigations of leaderless resistance is not only ineffective, but it can also elicit perceptions of harassment,[103] contributing to persecutory ideation which in turn may serve to further radicalize fringe elements of movements that employ leaderless resistance.

[101] Most notably, on January 19, 2006, a 65-count indictment was brought against eleven members of a cell referred to as "the family" alleging their involvement in ELF arsons and attempted arsons that occurred from l996 through 200l (Michael Janofsky and Carolyn Marshall, *New York Times* (January 21, 2006) p. A9).

[102] Especially helpful for this type of analysis is Stark and Bainbridge's 'Subculture-Evolution Model of Cult Innovation' which explains how, 'cults can emerge without authoritative leaders, and . . . points out that even radical developments can be achieved through many small steps.' Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*, (Berkley and Los Angeles, California; University of California Press, 1985) p. 183.

[103] For an example of this type of fear, see the article by "Anonymous" who writes, "More frightening, the FBI has moved forward in attacking nonviolent activists who have identified with or have publicly supported the ELF or ALF. The FBI has called these sprees of harassment as [sic] 'Operation Backfire,' but it has been known by activists as the "Green Scare." This includes the indictment of over 25 activists in early 2006. Trends in current FBI surveillance and harassment point to a move towards another sweep. This time, it may be directed at groups who have supported prisoners of the 'Green Scare,' [the writer is probably here making an allusion to the 'Red Scare' of McCarthy era] or may possibly be branching out to other movements." (retrieved from http://www.infoshop.org/inews/article.php?story=20060913102457804 on September 14, 2006.)

Chapter Three

Elves, Environmentalism, and 'Eco-Terror': Leaderless Resistance and Media Coverage of the Earth Liberation Front

ABSTRACT:

Over the past decade and a half, North America has seen a rash of environmentally motivated arsons. One group in particular, the clandestine Earth Liberation Front (ELF), has targeted ski resorts, genetic research labs, SUV dealerships, and forestry buildings, leading James Jarboe of the FBI to declare the ELF the 'number one' domestic terrorist threat facing the U.S.A. This article analyses the social construction of the 'ecoterrorist threat' in the pages of the New York Times. *Various stakeholders—including ELF spokespersons, moderate environmentalists, corporate interests, and state agencies—have sought to influence the way that media covers the ELF. Ultimately, much to the chagrin of ELF spokespersons, discourses of ecoterrorism have normalized in mainstream media, which regularly frames the spokespersons themselves as 'dangerous clowns.' In turn, this coverage has prevented the expression of the ELF's ideology, foreclosing the potential for the mainstream media to represent as legitimate the concerns of the ELF. I argue that blame for this failure rests in part with certain implications of the ELF's organizational strategy of 'leaderless resistance,' which—unlike civil disobedience movements of the past—is predicated on having its actors remain unsympathetically faceless and nameless.*

"Ecoterrorism Suspected in House Fires in Seattle Suburb"—thus reads a recent *New York Times* headline about the Earth Liberation Front (Yardley 2008: A16). Over the past decade, there have perhaps been no more evocative tropes than 'environmentalism' and 'terrorism.' Both shimmer with connotation, both resonate with the collective hopes and fears of 'the West,' and both, for good or ill, have spurred the mobilization of incredible social forces. It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of 'war on terror' and 'global climate change' to the modern political consciousness, for in many instances these ideas form the basis for political concern

itself. We should not be surprised then, that an age preoccupied with this dual focus would produce discursive hybridities. Indeed, we might say that, given the circumstances, 'ecoterrorism' was bound to happen.

Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, radical environmental groups like Earth First! have been employing civil disobedience and monkeywrenching[104] in their efforts to halt the ongoing degradation of the natural environment. These radical environmentalists often spiked trees, sabotaged logging equipment, and generally tried to wreak non-violent havoc on businesses and industries with environmentally destructive practices. More recently, clandestine radical environmental cells—referring to themselves collectively as the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), have added a new tactic to their repertoire—arson; and along with this tactic came an increasingly inflammatory rhetoric that has caught the attention of authorities and fired the imagination of contemporary North Americans in an a way that previous groups like Earth First! never experienced (Joosse 2007; Taylor 1998).

In this article, I analyze the social construction of what, since the late 1990s, the media has viewed widely as the 'ecoterrorist' threat. I find that popular media has proven to be a battleground in which various stakeholders compete to shape discourses surrounding the ELF and its actions. Major magazines like *Rolling Stone* (Grigoriadis 2006) and *New York Times Magazine* have featured extensive stories about the ELF, and coverage in all major newspapers has been prolific.

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[104] Earth First! leader Dave Foreman defined monkeywrenching as "nonviolent resistance to the destruction of natural diversity and wilderness. It is never directed against human beings or other forms of life. It is aimed at inanimate machines and tools that are destroying life. Care is always taken to minimize any possible threat to people, including to the monkeywrenchers themselves" (quoted at <http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/81/rq-81-earthfirst.html>). The term itself refers to throwing a wrench in the cogs of a running machine, causing it to become inoperable, and thus is related to another term that has much currency in radical environmentalist discourse: 'direct action.'

Hackett (1991) maintained that counter-hegemonic groups can find and exploit 'cracks in the monolith' of mainstream media. Similarly, DeLuca (1999a; 1999b) has argued that counter-hegemonic groups can use spectacular, image-laden, radical tactics to circumvent negative media frames. The present study argues that while some gains are indeed possible for radical groups in terms of media representation, for leaderless groups like the ELF, other countervailing forces are at work—forces that render them largely ineffective from a public relations perspective.

Specifically, I posit that the ELF's current lack of success stems in part from its organizational strategy of 'leaderless resistance' (Garfinkel 2003; Leader and Probst 2003: 37-58; Pressman 2003: 422-425; Joosse, 2007) in which spokespersons—rather than the activists themselves—publicize the various direct actions committed by the group.[105] This strategy is optically inexpedient because—unlike the traditional Gandhian strategy of civil disobedience (in which actors claim responsibility for their legal violations with the aim of revealing the injustice of laws themselves)—these 'elves of the night' avoid such scrutiny, thereby foreclosing the possibility of eliciting a moral solidarity with the wider public, even though many members of that public hold deep concerns about environmental degradation (Vanderheiden 2005: 439). Furthermore,

[105] While I posit in this article that leaderless resistance hinders radical environmentalists' attempts to garner a purchase on public sympathy, historically, the adoption of leaderless resistance as a strategy was itself a factor in above-ground groups' attempts to secure what little purchase they had when operating in a political/legal climate that was already hostile to them. Indeed, the bifurcation of the movement which produced the ELF developed amid deliberations within Earth First! about the public acceptability of the more extreme forms of direct action of some members—a process that first occurred in the UK (Plows, Wall, and Doherty, 2004: 202) and which was later mirrored in North America (Bari 1994: 285). In other words, clandestinity operates as one factor in a cyclical causal loop, being both the product of marginalization and something that can lead to further marginalization (Zwerman, *et al.* 2000). My choice to isolate one segment of this causal loop—to focus on the ways that leaderless resistance hinders attempts of the ELF to gain positive publicity—is justified partly for reasons of lack of space, but also because in particular instances/time periods that I examine, the activists in question have already assumed completely underground positions from which they then attempt to conduct their publicity campaigns.

while their predecessors in Earth First! regularly faced physical danger by blocking logging roads with their bodies or during tree-sits, ELFers, through their non-presence, lack this 'body rhetoric' entirely (DeLuca 1999b). Public-relations duties thus fall to spokespersons, who, because they are only sympathizers, lack the gravitas needed to elicit respect from mainstream media. Consistent with the predictions of labeling theory (Becker 1973; Lemert 1962; Spector and Kitsuse 1977), this 'credibility gap' acts to simultaneously attenuate the influence of radical environmentalists and amplify the influence of their enemies; namely, state and corporate actors. When counterposed with the undeniable juvenility of many ELF proponents, this translates into 'dirty' (Tavener 2000) semiotic excesses surrounding ELF representation, and the promulgation of a negative media frame that I term 'the dangerous clown.'[106]

Specifically then, in this arena I examine how three main stakeholders—a) ELF adherents, b) corporate interests, and c) state agencies—seek to influence the way that popular press covers the ELF. At the center of this battle are arguments about the appropriateness of referring to the ELF as an "ecoterrorist" (or simply, as a "terrorist") organization. Ultimately, I find that, despite the efforts of ELF adherents, and because of the efforts of corporate and state interests, mainstream media have normalized discourses of ecoterrorism. This normalization has prevented the expression of the ELF's ideology, and foreclosed the potential for the concerns of the ELF to be represented as legitimate in media outlets like the *New York Times*.

[106] Special thanks to Mark Stoddart for his help in developing this concept.

Methods

For my purposes here, I choose to focus primarily on definitional wars that occur in sixty-two *New York Times* articles. I do this for two main reasons. First and most obviously, the *Times* is one of the most respected and influential newspapers in the world—commonly regarded as 'the paper of record.' Many other newspapers across North America take their cues for story angles, tone, and priority of issues from the *New York Times*'s determination—just or otherwise—of 'All the News That's Fit to Print.' Thus, *New York Times* coverage, while not generalizable to the universe of news dailies, is nevertheless a strong indicator of trends in media coverage.

Second, during their tenure as spokespeople for the ELF, Craig Rosebraugh and Leslie Pickering directly and persistently targeted the New York media market.[107] In his book, *Burning Rage of a Dying Planet,* Rosebraugh explains why he coveted New York exposure:

> Coverage in New York meant international exposure and a dramatic rise in national publicity. Leslie and I were well aware of this fact and constantly attempted to push the ELF story into the New York scene. Through direct calling, faxing, and emailing press releases, we were determined to saturate the market out East until we noticed results (2004:151).

[107] At times, this fact was not lost on *New York Times* reporters themselves. Al Baker noted, for example:

> With the biggest media center in the world a mere bumper-to-bumper ride west on the Long Island Expressway, the region can be attractive for anyone craving attention. Craig S. Rosebraugh, the ELF spokesman in Portland, said he had received about 70 calls from reporters around the country and the world in the past weeks (Baker 2001: LI.1).

In another article, Dan Barry and Al Baker note that the uprooting of a cornfield at a local research laboratory, "brought [the ELF's] message and notoriety to the quickly vanishing farmlands of Long Island and to the media market of New York" (2001: B1).

Presumably, if we are trying to evaluate the success of the media strategies of the ELF, we would do well to look at a media site that was a particular target of their efforts.

The sample of articles was compiled using ProQuest Newsstand, which—because it began filing *New York Times* and affiliated publications in 1980—was more than adequate for surveying the career of the Earth Liberation Front. The *New York Times* is the flagship publication for a wider brand which includes both *New York Times Magazine* and *New York Times Book Review* and it was therefore appropriate to collect the sample by searching for in-text occurrences in these three publications of "Earth Liberation Front," "ELF," and "E.L.F." Several articles were then excluded from the sample since they only contained tangential or passing references to the group, or because they were simple news summary pieces and not articles in their own right. The sample, comprised of 62 articles total, was downloaded on December 16, 2009, and spanned just over 10 years, from the ELF's first appearance in the *New York Times* on October 22, 1998 to its most recent, on November 28, 2009.

The articles were then imported into a word processor and coded by hand. To analyze the data, I used aspects of content analysis and grounded theory. Content analysis involves generating themes through "identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data" (Patton 1990: 381). Grounded theory, with its roots in symbolic interactionism, is similar to qualitative content analysis in that it aims to generate theory from raw data through coding schemes. An additional characteristic of grounded theory is "constant comparison," where "all pieces of data are compared with other data" (Morse 1995: 27-28). Included in this process was analysis of images that accompanied stories in a few cases. While images are admittedly polysemic in nature,

the interpretations contained herein are methodologically rigorous, in that they occur within this larger context of constant comparison with the textual data.

As I analyzed the news articles, I noted possible themes and emerging concepts in the margins. I then expanded and refined these themes and concepts as I compared them with each other. Eventually, the key themes that emerged became the theoretical categories that now give structure to the article itself. While the bulk of the analysis was qualitative, at times I also employed quantitative elements to check against and bolster the main findings of the piece.[108]

A Brief History of ELF Actions

The ELF first began operating in the United Kingdom in 1992, started by a group of Earth First!ers who were frustrated by their organization's desire to abandon illegal tactics (Taylor 1998: 20; see also Molland 2006: 48-51). ELF actions soon spread to continental Europe, New Zealand, and Australia in 1993, and by 1996 they were occurring in the United States (Molland 2006: 53-55). The year 1998 saw a particularly destructive and spectacular action when a ski resort at a Vail, Colorado burned to the ground, resulting in $12 million in damages. During the period of the late 1990s and early 2000s the ELF was at its most prolific, and James Jarboe (the FBI's top domestic terrorism officer), linked the ELF to 600 criminal acts committed between 1996 and

[108] Once this qualitative analysis was completed, I decided to add a quantitative element to the study by using the themes to generate a set of keywords, the frequency of which I examined both in the titles of the articles, and in the *New York Times'*s own internal subject keywording system. The terms included permutations of the "terrorism" frame ("eco[-]terrorism/ist," "terrorism/ist") and the "environmental activist" frame ("environmentalist/ism," "activist/ism," "anarchist/ism). The comparison of frequencies of these terms between the titles and subject-keywords sections of the articles allowed for interesting insights into the sensational versus instrumental purposes of the articles themselves. For example, in the titles of the 62 *New York Times* articles, the ecoterrorism/terrorism frame occurred 16 times, or 26% of the time, while the environmental activism frame occurred 9 times, or 15% of the time. In the subjects (45 of the articles had lists of subject keywords attached), the environmental activism frame occurred 26 times, or 58% of the time, while the terrorism frame occurred 17 times, of 38% of the time.

2002, totaling $43 million in damages (Leader and Probst 2003: 38). Attacks at many U.S. locations have continued since, including the August, 2003 burning down of a 206-unit apartment complex under construction in San Diego (Ackerman 2003a: 143), the burning of five houses on the 'Street of Dreams' near Maltby, WA (Yardley 2008: A16), and the toppling of two radio towers in Snohomish County, WA (Whitney 2009; AP 2009). The grand total of financial impact of ELF attacks has long been well in excess of $100M (Rosebraugh 2004).

It is important to note that despite these few spectacular examples, most ELF actions are of a considerably smaller scale, consisting of minor acts of vandalism. Also important to remember is that no ELF actions have injured or killed anyone. This fact is quite remarkable—one that can be read both as a testament to the careful planning of ELF actors and perhaps also to simple good fortune—since arson is an unpredictable and therefore undeniably dangerous tactic.

The ELF's Organizational Structure

Throughout this study, I refer to "the ELF" in the singular, but by this phrase, I do not intend to convey a sense that the ELF is characterized by significant levels of organizational unity. Rather than a "group" or an "organization," the ELF is a collectivity in the most limited and virtual sense (Joosse, 2007). The ELF's organizational strategy is anarchical, and various writers have characterized it as "leaderless resistance" (Garfinkel 2003; Joosse, 2007; Leader and Probst 2003: 37-58; Pressman 2003: 422-425). Essentially, leaderless resistance involves the spontaneous formation of cells by those who are inspired by other cells' actions. Thus, ELF does not

have leaders, and no lines of control or command exist between those who decide to go active. In the words of the operators of <earthliberationfront.com>:

> Because the ELF structure is non-hierarchical, there is no centralized organization or leadership. There is also no 'membership' in the Earth Liberation Front. In the past . . . individuals have committed arson and other illegal acts under the ELF name. Individuals who choose to do actions under the banner of E.L.F. do so only driven by their personal conscience. These have been individual choices, and are not endorsed, encouraged, or approved of by the management and participants of this web site (retrieved from <www.earthliberationfront.com>).

In this way, the ELF encourages adherents to act in response to the specific *local* injustices that they perceive going on in the areas in which they live, and to act in accordance with their own consciences. Three guidelines prescribe limits on what is an ELF action. These guidelines include:

> a) To inflict economic damage on those profiting from the destruction and exploitation of the natural environment
>
> b) To reveal and educate the public on the atrocities committed against the earth and all species that populate it
>
> c) To take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human or nonhuman (Bourne and McNabb 2003: 10; Joosse 2007: 365 ft. 27; Leader and Probst 2003: 40; Rosebraugh 2004: 18).

Thus, as well as being a strategy aimed at preventing detection and prosecution by government agencies, leaderless resistance also remains thoroughly in keeping with the

anti-authoritarian ethos to which many in the contemporary radical environmental movement adhere.

Anti-Corporate, Anarchist Ideology in the ELF

Because of their clandestine nature, it is often difficult to ascertain the ideological motivations behind specific ELF actors (Joosse 2007). When an attack occurs, one cannot simply ask the perpetrators about their political leanings. Often this information does become available, however, in a variety of ways—through the ELF website, through publications, through communiqués, and through the writings of convicted ELF prisoners. Often in these cases, ELF actors display an anarchist philosophy along with anti-capitalist/anti-corporate sentiments.

Noteworthy in this regard is a 'Frequently Asked Questions' pamphlet published by the North American ELF Press Office that read:

> . . . it is not enough to work solely on single, individual environmental issues . . . the capitalist state and its symbols of propaganda must also be targeted [p. 4]. . . the ELF ideology maintains that it is the very social and political ideology in operation throughout westernized countries that is creating various injustices on this planet and ultimately the destruction of life. That ideology is capitalism and the mindset that allows it to exist [p. 7] (quoted in Ackerman 2003b: 189).

According to ethnographer Bron Taylor, ELF spokespersons Craig Rosebraugh and Leslie James Pickering "were drawn to the ELF because, as anarchists, if not anarcho-

primitivists, they perceived fellow travelers behind the anti-industrial rhetoric of some ELF statements" (2003: 177).

Perhaps most instructive with regard to the ideological orientations of some ELF actors are the communiqués that usually follow actions. After an arson at Boise Cascade's (a multinational logging company) 8,000 square-foot northwest headquarters the communiqué below appeared, which professed a knowledge and outrage at the international operations of corporations:

> *Boise Cascade has been very naughty. After ravaging the forests of the Pacific Northwest, Boise Cascade now looks toward the virgin forests of Chile. Early Christmas morning, elves left coal in Boise Cascade's stocking. Four buckets of diesel and gas with kitchen timer delay* [sic] *destroyed their regional headquarters in Monmouth, Oregon.*
>
> *Let this be a lesson to all greedy multinational corporations who don't respect their ecosystems.*
>
> *The elves are watching.*
>
> *Earth Liberation Front*

Another communiqué was similarly anti-corporate, and released in 1997:

> *'. . . ELF works to speed up the collapse of industry, to scare the rich, and to undermine the foundations of the state. We embrace social and deep ecology as a practical resistance movement. . . . We take inspiration from Luddites, Levellers, Diggers, the Autonome squatter movement, the ALF, the Zapatistas, and the little people—those mischievous elves of lore. . . .*

> *let's dance as we make ruins of the corporate money system. . . .'* (quoted in Rosebraugh 2004: 20).

Thus, in contrast to moderate environmental organizations that seek to reform the system from within, some ELF adherents display the ideological (though not the organizational) features of what Fitzgerald and Rodgers call a "radical social movement organization" in that they "critique the existing political/economic system and demand radical restructuring rather than reform" (2001: 576). At the level of the spokesperson then, and sometimes at the level of the actor, there is an ideology that views the expansionist compulsion of neoliberal capitalism as inherently threatening to the vitality of the earth. In this framework, ELFers are "earth liberators" when they seek to "eliminate the profit motive from the destruction of the natural environment . . . in the form of economic sabotage" (Leslie Pickering quoted in NAELFPO).

How the ELF Tries to 'Make the News'

Michael Lipsky argued that one of the main functions of protest actions is "to articulate goals and choose strategies so as to maximize their public exposure through communications media" (1968: 1144). In this regard, social movement actors often are faced with a dilemma between, on the one hand, increasing the likelihood of attracting media coverage through the use of extreme tactics, and, on the other hand, decreasing the legitimacy that the media tend to accord movements that employ such tactics. Despite discourses surrounding 'direct action' that frequently emphasize the practical, non-rhetorical aspects of principled attacks, these attacks nevertheless often involve a sophisticated publicity calculus that is in accordance with a long-standing tradition of

'propaganda by the deed' that dates back to the earliest proponents of anarchism. Theorists like Brousse[109] and Kropotkin advocated deeds for propagandistic purposes (Graham 2005:150-170), but probably most influential was Bakunin, who regarded deeds as "the most popular, the most potent, and the most irresistible form of propaganda" (1870: 195-195). In keeping with the ELF's second guideline (see above), we must therefore keep in mind that when the ELF attacks a target, always its aim is at least partly pedagogical—not merely a simple manifestation of the desire to 'make corporations pay.' The actions are carefully calculated media events, meant to act as a wedge that creates a space within mainstream media for the expression of the anti-corporate ideology that I have outlined above.

Several factors increase the likelihood that ELF actions will garner coverage by the mainstream press. One is that ELF actors differ from their radical environmentalist predecessors in that, while groups like Earth First! and the Sea Shepherd Society tended to focus on the protection of areas that are largely unpopulated by humans (such as forests or ocean territory), the ELF consistently has sought to cause damage to high-profile targets in populated areas. Ski resorts, genetic research labs, sprawling urban sectors, and SUV dealerships are common targets.

As already mentioned, often communiqués claiming responsibility will surface on the heels of an ELF action. The ELF spokespersons have played a crucial role in the dissemination of the content of these communiqués. Perpetrators began delivering communiqués claiming responsibility to environmental activists Leslie Pickering and Craig Rosebraugh in 1997, first though their mailboxes and telephones, and then through

[109] Paul Brousse was the one who actually pioneered the phrase 'propaganda by the deed' (Graham 2005: 150).

email (Rosebraugh 2004: 21). Rosebraugh and Pickering then would conduct media interviews that would publicize the communiqués. At first, the two people conducted these activities part-time from their homes, but eventually they decided to set up the North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office (NAELFPO). They also produced a video, a "frequently asked questions about the Earth Liberation Front" booklet, and even published a quarterly magazine (Rosebraugh 2004: 199-200). Rosebraugh had a keen sense of his importance as a spokesperson to the process of disseminating the message of the ELF. He wrote:

> media coverage . . . helps to spread ELF's messages and warnings to other potential targets. It allows people to understand that their property may also be attacked if they are destroying the environment purely for monetary gain. For a group as small as the ELF, this feature is quite important in making the organization's pressure far outweigh its size (Rosebraugh 2004: 155).

In the next section, I attempt to assess the extent to which Rosebraugh was successful in his news-making aims. In other words, I seek to examine the degree to which the anti-corporate ideology that Rosebraugh sought to espouse actually found its way into *New York Times* coverage.

Representations of the ELF in the *New York Times*: Treehuggers, Terrorists, and 'Dangerous Clowns'

Rosebraugh is the most commonly cited individual in the *New York Times* articles I surveyed. During his tenure as spokesperson, he appeared about as many times as did

representatives from the FBI, and far more than did business interests. Thus, from a strictly quantitative point of view, Rosebraugh should be happy with his access to this popular news making institution. When looking at how the articles framed Rosebraugh and the other few representatives of the ELF, however, a different story emerges. In his analysis of *New York Times* coverage of the SDS, Todd Gitlin noticed that often articles trivialized the movement, and that the media had a penchant for "making light of movement language, dress, age, style, and goals" (1980: 27). In their analysis of anarchist protests, McLeod and Detenber similarly note that news stories "tend to focus on the protesters' appearances rather than the issues, emphasize their violent actions rather than their social criticism, pit them against the police rather than their chosen targets, and downplay their effectiveness" (1999: 3).

In the articles I examined, I indeed noticed a trend towards this type of trivialization, but paradoxically at the same time I saw a tendency to treat them seriously as terrorists. In other words, the stories both made light of ELF adherents *and* portrayed them as a menacing threat. A good example is a story from the *New York Times Magazine* about convicted ELF adherent Craig Marshall, provocatively titled, "From Tree-Hugger to Terrorist" (Barcott 2002: 56). Normally, one would not expect to see these labels juxtaposed so starkly, and such a juxtaposition clearly has a striking rhetorical effect. To be a 'tree-hugger' evokes the connotation that one is histrionic, irrational, 'pagan' and, for lack of better words, 'namby-pamby'—to be a terrorist connotes the characteristics of ruthlessness, conviction, and callousness. Another article described Rosebraugh as a "lanky vegan" with a "pale, bespectacled face" while at the

same time touting him as the spokesperson for an "'ecoterrorism' group"[110] (Baker and Barry January 8, 2001: B1). In yet another example, an unflattering portrait of Rosebraugh stares blankly out from a full-page spread in a *New York Times Magazine* article titled, "The Face of Eco-Terrorism" (Sullivan 1998: 47). Here, the reporter described Rosebraugh as someone who, "ran a bakery that he started that made vegan muffins and cookies," and who, during the course of the interview, spoke to "a couple of young men in ski caps and a woman wearing patched-up jeans and a T-shirt with a quote from Gandhi on it in marker" (*ibid.*: 49). All of these descriptions, which work to trivialize ELF adherents, paradoxically appeared in articles about the presumably serious topic of terrorism.

Sometimes the juxtaposition of these contradictory characterizations is too much for even the reporters themselves. Al Baker recounted a court appearance of alleged ELF vandals and described the scene:

> As one of the teenagers, Matthew Rammelkamp, prepared to plead guilty to arson conspiracy, the judge . . . looked down from the bench and asked sternly if he had used any drugs.
>
> "I've taken medicine for acne," [replied the teen] Mr. Rammelkamp, 16, said.
>
> "Acutane" (quoted in Baker, February 18, 2001).

This experience left reporter Al Baker unable to take seriously the "terrorist" characterizations of these ELF adherents, and he wondered if the spate of vandalism was

[110] Ron Arnold, one of the ELF's most dedicated critics (see below) is introduced in a much less critical way, as "the executive vice president of the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise, a non-profit agency" (Baker and Barry January 8, 2001: B1).

"the work of a smart, devoted band of eco-terrorists, or young vandals merely blowing off adolescent steam?" (Baker February 18, 2001: 33).

In these instances, we have ideal examples of what Jo Tavener referred to as "dirt" (2000: 72). Transgressions of binary categorizations, in this case between "treehuggers" and "terrorists," lead not to a liberation from the categories themselves, but rather to a spectacle in which the transgressors come off as cartoonishly silly, childish, morally perverse, and criminal. A 'semiotic excess' is involved in imagining a terrorist organization staffed by incompetent, young, 'punks' or 'hippies,' and this excess makes for compelling news stories. It is thus in the nexus between the 'terrorist' and 'treehugger' frame that the 'dangerous clown' is born.

The result of this narrative strategy, however, is that the environmental motives behind ELF actions are seldom taken seriously, and are almost always obscured from view. Articles need not discuss motives because these discourses express the binary sentiment that, 'they are terrorists' (in which case no motive can be morally exculpatory) and that 'they're just kids,' incapable of mature political thought. Left with these options, the most expedient rhetorical strategy is not to refute the 'dangerous clown' frame *in toto*, but rather to tease apart the frame's constituent elements, and argue in favour of the less deviant of the two. Such was the case when the lawyer for convicted ELF arsonist George Mashkow sought sympathy for his client in the pages of the *New York Times* by arguing, "'I am not representing an environmental activist. I am representing a 17-year-old misguided kid who basically made the monumental mistake in his life'" (quoted in Baker Feb 15, 2001: B5).

In the articles I examined, this lack of seriousness also stems from certain implications of the group's leaderless structure. When discussing the blockages to media representation for counter-hegemonic groups, Hackett noted that "journalism is most comfortably practiced in interaction with hierarchical organizations" (1991: 274). Occupational standards dictate that journalists are under constant pressure to vet and ensure the credibility of their sources, and as such they tend to gravitate towards official sources within recognized authority structures that confer legitimacy on members/leaders. Conversely, these same standards mandate that reporters harbour greater levels of suspicion and incertitude when engaging less conventional sources for which this type of pre-established legitimacy is lacking. Indeed, while other protest groups (not to mention law enforcement agencies) are accustomed to supplying leaders or at least members for comment, ELF spokespersons pointedly eschew these recognizable and credible stations for tactical and ideological reasons. "Trying to get a handle on [the ELF] is like trying to grab a fistful of water," reporters lamented in one article. Adding to their frustration was the fact that Rosebraugh "is the only one attached to the movement" to whom they had access (Baker and Barry January 8, 2001: B1).

A near constant theme for the journalists who interacted with ELF spokespeople, then, was their 'right to speak'—a factor that reporters at times openly challenged. Sullivan, when writing a more in-depth piece for the *New York Times Magazine* remarked:

> Rosebraugh is always careful to explain that he is not a member of the E.L.F. and that *he knows next to nothing* about the group, though he is sympathetic to its

> cause. In *deep spin mode*, he told another reporter, 'To me, Vail expanding into lynx habitat is eco-terrorism' (1998: 47, emphases added).

Here, the lack of credibility of the source links hand-in-hand with the reporter's incredulity toward the radical environmental perspective proffered, seeing it as a cynical product of 'deep spin.' *New York Times* writer Al Baker also expressed grave concerns about inadequacy and inaccuracy of the information that ELF spokespeople were spreading about the group:

> It has not gone unnoticed by federal and local authorities tracking the group that news bulletins about Long Island actions released by an Earth Liberation Front spokesman in Portland, Ore., are chock-full of errors.
>
> Those bulletins have miscalculated the scope of damage (fire gutted one unit in one building in a Middle Island condominium complex, not 16 nearly completed luxury homes, as claimed); overestimated the economic value of their destruction ($200,000 worth of fire and smoke damage in Middle Island, rather than the $3.5 million claimed); and gotten simple facts wrong (the communiqué claimed the Mount Sinai attack was on Dec. 29, when in fact it was a day later) (Baker 2001: LI.1).

In one sense, the ELF spokespersons are functionally operating as independent journalists by issuing press releases, releasing their own publications, and carefully protecting their sources. There can be no doubt, however, that this self-positioning elicits derision from the mainline journalists with whom they interact, since from the perspective of the guild,

perhaps no crime—arson notwithstanding—could be greater than the errors of fact described above.[111]

This preoccupation with the credibility of the ELF spokesperson is further evidenced by the frequency with which Rosebraugh and other spokespersons were made to field questions about their peculiar station. In the thirteen articles where Rosebraugh was consulted as a spokesperson, ten of these appearances contained explanations of leaderless resistance, while only seven also included limited ideological content from Rosebraugh. With spokesperson Elaine D. Close, all three appearances contained descriptions of leaderless resistance, while none of these contained radical environmental ideological content. Leslie James Pickering's two appearances both contained elements of leaderless resistance explanations, with one of these appearances also containing ideological content. Thus, most of the 'face time' in the press that ELF spokespersons enjoyed was devoted to explaining the leaderless cell structure of the ELF and their peculiar role as spokespersons, rather than outlining the movement's ideological underpinnings.

When seeking to understand fully, however, the implications of this leaderless comportment to the press, it is not enough merely to look at difficulties inherent in leaderless resistance itself; it is also important to look at *what previous rhetorical advantages may have been sacrificed* with the establishment of the current arrangement. Here, DeLuca's (1999a; 1999b) previous work with Earth First! is most germane. In an examination of Earth First! actions, where activists imperiled themselves by tree-sitting

[111] Baker's disclaimer about using Rosebraugh as a source takes the form of giving the spokesperson the opportunity to interview himself: "'How do I know that the actions I receive communications for are the ELF?' Well, truthfully, there is no way to know because the ELF is an anonymous group'" (quoted in Baker 2001: LI.1).

in logging areas, by chaining themselves to industrial equipment, or by burying themselves in logging roads, DeLuca notes that "performing [these] unorthodox political tactics highlight[s] bodies as resources for argumentation and advocacy" in that bodies "become not merely flags to attract attention for the argument but the sight and substance of the argument itself" (1999b: 9-10). In these instances, eco-centrism, a cardinal tenet of the radical environmental worldview, is inextricable from messaging of the Earth First!er's body because:

> [i]n putting their bodies on the line in solidarity with trees and ecosystems, the Earth First! activists enact an embodied and embedded defense of nature that belies anthropocentrism's abstraction of 'man' from the natural world and contests science's contextless universalization of nature (DeLuca 1999b: 15).

Thus, for the fundamentally *confrontational* (Short 1991) actions of ELF's predecessors, "the meaning and force of their arguments was dependent on the deployment of their bodies" (DeLuca 1999b: 20)—a factor that is entirely forsaken by the shadowy 'elves of the night.' Because they are performatively silent, the elves allow for unchecked projection and inference by third parties about the meaning of their actions (Jaworski 1993: 141; Joosse 2006: 361-363; Joosse 2007 359-363; Brummet 1980: 293-294).

When the bodies of ELF actors do surface, invariably this occurs amid an aura of defeat; actors finding themselves firmly in the grasp—be it corporeal or ideological—of the oppressive system they had so vehemently opposed. Defeat may happen on the stand, under the compulsion to renounce commitments to direct action, as was the case with convicted arsonist Chelsea Gerlach (AP 2006: 16).[112] Or it may take the form of

[112] "I realized years ago this was not an effective or appropriate way to effect positive change," Gerlach told the court at her sentencing hearing (AP 2006: 16).

treachery, as in the case of Jake (now dubbed "the Snake") Ferguson, who as part of a plea agreement agreed to inform on his friends, wearing a wire while eliciting conversations about past actions (Grigoriadis 2006).[113] A missive from William C. Rodgers, one of those friends, is most powerful, however:

> *Certain human cultures have been waging war against the Earth for millennia. I chose to fight on the side of bears, mountain lions, skunks, bats, saguaros, cliff rose and all things wild. I am just the most recent casualty in that war. But tonight I have made a jail break; I am returning home, to the Earth, to the place of my origins*

This liberatory rhetoric of natural embodiment—reminiscent of so many ELF communiqués—gains a tragic air when one realizes that Rodgers' 'escape' was self-asphyxiation with plastic bags, those non-decaying symbols of consumerism, in a cell altogether different from the one he led in defense of nature. The depressive effect of these examples thus stands in stark contrast with the exuberantly strident-yet-vulnerable bodies DeLuca describes in his examination of Earth Firt!ers (1999a; 1999b).

In cases where no ELF actors or spokespeople were available for comment, the fallback sources for reporters seeking the 'environmental perspective' were moderate environmentalists who it turns out were themselves instrumental in the process of mystifying the ideological motivations for ELF actions. When called upon to comment, most sought to disavow themselves of any ideological agreement with the ELF, presumably fearing that any such association could result in a transference of guilt for the actions to more moderate environmentalisms. For example, after the arson at Vail,

[113] "I was the FBI's bitch from [when he made the deal] until whenever. I had put the nails in my friends' coffins, and I had to pound them in," Ferguson told Rolling Stone reporter Vanessa Grigoriadis (2006).

Colorado, Jeff Berman, a representative of Ancient Forest Rescue, "appeared depressed by the fires, describing them as a setback for public opinion" (Brooke 1998: A14). Daniel Becker, director of the global warming and energy program at Sierra Club's Washington headquarters, argued: "that it was not worth discussing what may have driven the ELF actions because there could be no justification for criminal activity. And whatever their motivation, he said, it had nothing to do with the environment" (Baker, Jan 14, 2001: 14). In another article, Arianna Huffington, who has conducted a very vocal campaign against SUVs, commented, "'[w]hat these people are doing isn't activism—it's vandalism, and I strongly oppose it'" (quoted in Madigan 2003: A20). Finally, Dr. Steve Strauss, who was involved in research into genetically modifying poplar trees, said after an attack on his laboratory, "'I don't call them ecoterrorists anymore. They don't deserve the 'eco.' They're terrorists against science'" (quoted in Verhovek with Yoon 2001: A1).

It seems that a semiotic association between environmentalism and terrorism through the application of the sign, 'eco,' would be objectionable to these stakeholders in the same way that the term "Islamic terrorism" might be offensive to moderate Muslims who regard violence as something that is inimical to the teachings of the Qur'an. Thus, when interviewed by the *New York Times*, they engage in a process of definitional negotiation that seeks to expunge all references to environmental motives from the discourses of terrorism that were shaping discussions of the ELF.[114]

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[114] What would the Rosebraugh and Pickering's prescription for the response of moderate environmentalists be? They are actually quite clear:

> There is no tolerable excuse for an individual or organization that claims to be a part of the movement to protect all life on the planet to come out publicly against the actions of the ELF. If the individual or particular organization disagrees with the tactics, it is just as easy to come out publicly when asked and respond with a statement such as, "Although neither I nor my

Opposing Stakeholders: The Corporation

ELF adherents and moderate environmentalists are not the only stakeholders involved in the struggle to define the ELF in popular media. Indeed, in choosing to threaten corporate interests, the ELF also gained some formidable opponents. Others have already described the work of cultural elites in fomenting moral panics surrounding the ELF (Laurendeau and Gibbs Van Brunschot 2007). The next section will briefly examine how corporate and state interests have contributed to defining the ELF as a terrorist organization in the popular media.

Perhaps there has been no more trenchant enemy of environmentalism generally than the 'wise use' movement. Hal K. Rothman has described 'wise use' as "a well-financed right-wing effort that uses corporate funding to fashion a phony grassroots initiative in an attempt to derail the environmental movement" (2000: 177). Indeed, the Wise Use 'movement' is actually a coalition of over two hundred industry groups such as the National Association of Manufacturers, the United 4-wheel Drive Association, Exxon USA, and the National Forest Products Association, which initially joined forces at a conference in Reno Nevada in 1988 (Beder 2002: 47). At this conference, representatives from these corporations and organizations drafted the *Wise Use Agenda*, a manifesto that promoted a set of environmental policy goals. Those goals included: the immediate development of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; construction projects in national parks that would hire "'private firms with experience in people moving such as

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organization take part in actions like those of the ELF, we can understand the motivations because the threat to life on this planet is very real and serious." What this statement does is to, rather than publicly show a major rift in the movement, give at least the perception of a varied movement, strong and rich in diversity (ELF FAQ, quoted in Pickering 2007: 61).

Walt Disney … [to] enhance the national park experience for all visitors'" (Gottlieb quoted in Manning 1989: A8); and the transfer of public lands to ranchers for use in grazing (Manning 1989: A8). They also advocate the conversion of "all decaying and oxygen-using forest growth on the National Forests into young stands of oxygen-producing carbon-dioxide absorbing trees to help ameliorate the rate of global warming'" (quoted in Beder 2002: 48) —which Beder perceives as code for a simple capitalist desire to replace "old growth forests with plantations" (2002: 48).

Part of the strategy of Wise Use is to delegitimize environmental groups—most especially those radical groups that have posed a financial threat to corporate operations. Member Cliff Gardner, who is president of the Nevada Farm Bureau, claimed that Wise Use's main target, is "'the hard-core groups that are using the environmental movement to their advantage . . . I'm talking about those people who would destroy the free-enterprise system of the United States and set up a tyrannical socialist or collectivist government'" (quoted in Manning 1989: A8). Given this aim, it is not surprising that the Wise Use coalition has subjected radical environmental organizations/groups to continual scrutiny and criticism

Spearheading Wise Use is the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise (CDFE), co-founded and led by Ron Arnold and Alan Gottlieb. The CDFE is a non-profit think tank that conducts research, writes press releases, and seeks to influence public opinion to think negatively of the environmental movement generally. Said Arnold, "'You must fight it …. [Y]ou must turn the public against the environmentalists'" (quoted in Manning 1989: A8). In one article he boasted, "[w]e created a sector of public opinion

that didn't use to exist," and that, along with Gottlieb, he wanted "to destroy environmentalists by taking their money and their members" (Egan, December 19, 1991).

On many occasions over the years, the CDFE has worked to label the ELF a terrorist organization in media. Bob Burton, who is a leading researcher and activist for the Wilderness Society, commented:

> 'The eco-terrorism stuff is where I think they are at their most sophisticated, with dirty tricks and media management. If you work back from the incidences and the way in which sequences are constructed, the only plausible explanation is that someone has got a very good understanding of public relations' (quoted in Rowell 1996: 350).

Coinage for the 'ecoterrorism' label itself may go to CDFE leader Ron Arnold. In a response to an article on the E-zine *The Indypendent,* Arnold claimed to have been the first to use it in 1982 (Indypendent Staff 2007; Arnold 2007). It is clear that by the early 1990s, Arnold had already been applying the 'ecoterrorist' label to the ELF's parent organization, Earth First!, and in 1997 he published *Ecoterror: The Violent Agenda to Save Nature*. Since that time, the terrorist label has proven to be a mainstay in media representations of the ELF, and Arnold and the CDFE has been behind many of these portrayals. For example, in 2003, the CDFE provided a chronology (100 items long) of ELF actions for Stephen Leader and Peter Probst's 2003 academic article, entitled, 'The Earth Liberation Front and Environmental Terrorism.' In the article, Leader and Probst warn about the possibility that ELF activists might threaten nuclear facilities, and that—despite the ELF's guideline which prohibits violence against living beings—'the possibility that . . . individuals could turn to violent tactics . . . cannot be ignored' (2003:

47). In a story for CNSNews.com, Arnold commented on the *Green Anarchy Tour of 2002*—a fundraising effort in support of prisoners who had been convicted of ELF-related crimes. In the article, he warned that groups like the ELF are, "'as much a threat as foreign terrorism. These people are going to damage property and kill people'" (quoted in Morano 2002). In a four minute, twenty second Fox News broadcast about suspected ELF arsons of several luxury homes under construction in the Washington D.C. area, Arnold and his interviewer use the words ecoterrorism/ecoterror eleven times, and the word terrorism twice. At the bottom of the screen in big letters throughout the story alternate the captions, "ECO TERROR?" and "GREEN MEANIES" (news segment retrieved from http://www.cdfe.org/). Finally, a section of the CDFE's website is devoted to "Ecoterrorism top stories" with titles such as "Ecoterrorism suspected in firebomb left at Auburn, California courthouse," 'Ecoterror Suspect Michael Scarpitti, aka "Tre Arrow" Captured,' 'Terror Hits Home,','Burgers Make McDonalds Target for Ecoterrorists,' and 'Jail Violent Eco-Terrorists.' Thus, creating and promulgating the terrorist characterization of the ELF seems to be one of the CDFE's primary aims.

Ethnographer Bron Taylor criticized Ron Arnold and the CDFE's characterization of the ELF, especially their assertion that the ELF is a probable candidate for turning to violence against humans. Taylor, who has conducted extensive ethnographic research in the radical environmental milieu, acknowledged that there is much violent rhetoric in the radical environmental movement, but he cautioned against "assuming that rhetoric that seems sympathetic or enthusiastic about violence will lead to it" (1998: 18). This caution is especially noteworthy because of the biocentric belief—common among radical environmentalists—that all life is sacred (1998: 14-15). He went on to criticize Arnold

for his book, *Ecoterror,* because "the most dangerous incidents Arnold reports . . . were perpetuated by animal rights activists, who Arnold does not distinguish from radical environmentalists" (Taylor 1998: 18). Despite these criticisms in the academic sphere, Arnold has been prolific and successful in his efforts to define the ELF in accordance with his ideological orientation.

Opposing Stakeholders: The State

As I will show below, state agencies such as the FBI also have contributed heavily to the prevalence of the 'ecoterrorist' label in popular media outlets such as the *New York Times*. Along with the post-9/11 tendency of Western states to promulgate terrorism frames generally (Mythen and Walklate 2006), two additional motivational factors may explain these efforts. First, the Bush Administration's popular legitimacy was tied intimately to perceptions of its success (or lack thereof) in the 'war on terror.' Indeed, George W. Bush even staked his legacy on this performance, defining himself to the American public as a "war president" (NBC 2004). In this context, the complete breakdown of coordination between intelligence agencies before September 11, 2001 was a major failing (Wright 2006), as was the failure to capture Osama Bin Laden and to eradicate Al-Qaeda. In this climate, the value to state agencies represented by the capture of a terrorist is at a premium, and given the lack of success against traditional targets such as Al Qaeda, it would seem likely that incentive existed at the institutional level to capture anyone who might be able to perform a surrogate function. Thus, organizational motivation probably is high for declarations like that of John Lewis, an FBI deputy assistant director and top official in charge of domestic terrorism, who labeled

ecoterrorism, along with animal liberation terrorism, as "'the No. 1 domestic terrorism threat,"[115] in 2005 (quoted in Shuster 2005). Against the backdrop of this trumped-up definition, the capture of ELF actors becomes a boon to a national security apparatus striving to gain public confidence (not to mention additional federal funding).

A second reason for the state's active promulgation of the ecoterrorist label has to do with the increased intertwining of corporate and government interests on a more general level. Jurgen Habermas described the current moment as one of advanced or "state capitalism," in which there is a "[r]ecoupling [of] the economic system to the political . . . . The State apparatus no longer, as in liberal capitalism, merely secures the general conditions of production . . . but is now actively engaged in it" (1975: 36). Thus, in the contemporary moment, discourses of terrorism and capitalism tend to develop symbiotically. The foundations for such connections already were present, evidenced when public and private officials justify projects like the drilling of the arctic national wildlife preserve in terms of 'resource security,' and in how, in the wake of September 11, 2001, President Bush urged Americans to spend and consume in order to "help the

[115] Previously, this 'number one' designation had been reserved for right-wing militias that have spawned the likes of Timothy McVeigh and murderous anti-abortionists like Eric Rudolph. The tendency of governmental authorities to prioritize left-wing as opposed to right-wing terrorism was further evidenced when the Department of Homeland Security produced a report titled "Integrated Planning Guidance, Fiscal Years 2005-2011" which contained a list of terrorist threats to the U.S. (Rood 2005). According to Rood, aside from foreign threats like Al-Qaeda, the list contains "left-wing domestic groups, such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), as terrorist threats, but it does not mention anti-government groups, white supremacists and other radical right-wing movements, which have staged numerous terrorist attacks that have killed scores of Americans" (2005:1). Continuing the theme, in an opening statement to a congressional committee on Environment and Public Works entitled "Ecoterrorism," Senator James Inhofe stated that, because of their penchant for arson, the ELF and ALF had become the "No. 1 domestic terror concern over the likes of white supremacists, militias, and anti-abortion groups" (Inhofe 2005: 2). Volpe (2010: 41-51) contrasts the activities of the ELF, which have thus far not injured or killed anyone, with the prevalence of hate crimes in the US, and argues that the FBI's prioritization fails to adequately reflect the sources or likelihood of ideological or propagandistic violence faced by Americans.

country get back on track" (Altheide 2004: 289).[116][117] Also, while on the surface, acts of US foreign policy may seem purely political, justified in terms of 'fighting terror' and 'bringing democracy to the people of Iraq,' popular suspicions point to the idea that key motivation was the procurement of new markets for development by corporations (Palast 2005). Now, however, in a new and very explicit way, the ELF has unwittingly played a crucial role in furthering the capitalist interest in drawing connections between the "war on terror" and anti-environmentalism in North America. There can be no doubt that the emergence or social construction of the 'ecoterrorist threat' has served a frame-bridging (Snow *et al.* 1986: 467) process between discourses of anti-terrorism and anti-environmentalism.

Evidencing this affinity between corporate and state interests, Ron Arnold has gained considerable access to the corridors of power. Government officials called upon him, for example, to speak to the Crime Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee in 1998. The title of the session was "Eco-Terrorism," and in his testimony he defined the term as any "crime committed to save nature"—a definition that could conceivably include even acts of civil disobedience such as road-blocks or sit-ins (CSHJD, 1998). Backing up Arnold's statements was Republican Scott McInnis (CO). In an interview he was asked:

> Q: Should these people be lumped into the same category as what we have come to know after September 11 as terrorists?

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[116] President Bush's exact words, from an October 2001 speech to the California Business Association Breakfast, were that, "The terrorists want us to stop our lives — that's what they want. They want us to stop flying, and they want us to stop buying. But this great nation will not be intimidated by the evildoers. America will do whatever it takes to get our economy moving again" (Whitehouse press release, "President Outlines War Effort, October 17, 2001").

[117] Wolfe (2007) described excellently Bush's strategy of sidestepping environmental controversy by recasting anti-environmental/environmental disputes through a rhetoric of security.

> [to which McInnis replied] McInnis: Sure. . . . Absolutely, they are the number one domestic terror threat we have . . . those people who flew that airplane in that building, they weren't in it for money, they were in it for a message—disobedience, civil disobedience (retrieved from www.youtube.com/watch?v=vchQimuFpyU)

Thus, within some sectors of the government, officials regard ELF actors not only as terrorists, but also as terrorists of the worst order, on par with the September 11 highjackers. FBI Deputy Assistant Director John Lewis summed up official positions on the ELF efficiently when, in a congressional committee on Environment and Public Works, he said ELF members were terrorists "in the truest sense" (Lewis 2005: 11).

In the *New York Times* articles I examined, the FBI's power to define the ELF as a terrorist organization also has been considerable. Twenty-four of the articles contain instances where the FBI directly characterizes the ELF as a terrorist group, along with many other instances where law enforcement or government officials did the same. One article reported that the ELF was "considered by the FBI to be one of America's most prolific domestic terrorist groups" (Bacon, November 18, 2002: A15), in another, James Lewis considered the ELF "the nation's top domestic terror threat" and worried about the ELF's "'escalation in violent rhetoric and tactics'" (quoted in Egan December 9, 2005). The story, however, behind a *New York Times* article from January 21, 2006 is most striking. On the preceding day, January 20, 2006, after the indictment of members of an ELF cell, FBI director Robert Mueller held a press conference and declared, "'Terrorism is terrorism—no matter what the motive'" (quoted in Bernton 2006). The accompanying Department of Justice press release was titled, "Eleven Defendants Indicted on Domestic

Terrorism Charges." All of this language is misleading, however, because, in the actual indictment itself, the charges (65 in all) are not brought in under domestic terrorism statutes. Rather, the counts were for crimes like arson, conspiracy to commit arson, and attempted arson, among others (U.S.A. vs. Joseph Dibee *et al*.). A possible reason for the discrepancy between the language of the press release and the court document would be that, in the court of law, it is much more difficult to make allegations of terrorism than in the court of public opinion. Indeed, during a 2002 hearing in Portland, U.S. District Court, Judge James Redden barred the prosecutor from using the word 'terrorist' to describe defendant Jacob Sherman, fearing that it would create undue bias within the jury (Bernton 2006). The press release and press conference resulted in a major story in the *New York Times* that contained FBI director Robert Mueller's description of the ELF as one of the bureau's "highest domestic terrorism priorities," and comments by Republican Senator James M. Inhofe (OK), who has compared the ELF to Al-Qaeda (Janofsky and Marshall, January 21, 2006: A19).

Conclusion

All three stakeholders involved in the definitional struggle that I have outlined above are independent producers of media. The ELF spokespersons have generated press releases and books, as has the corporate lobby, while government agencies such as the FBI frequently produce press releases and hold news conferences. When it comes to their ability to translate this independent media production into ideological representation in mainstream media outlets, however, the latter two stakeholders have been vastly more successful than those who act on behalf of the ELF. This article, therefore, has

underscored Simon Cottle's assertion that, "[s]ociety's major institutions—government, the courts, the police and so on—are . . . [specially] positioned to pronounce on social affairs and command both the physical resources and the authoritativeness to define and pontificate on newsworthy events" (2000: 433). Indeed, because of corporate and state interests, the discourse of terrorism in connection with the ELF has become *status quo*, much to the chagrin of ELF spokesperson Craig Rosebraugh.

In his book, Rosebraugh expressed frustration at the fact that, in his many dealings with the media, the characterization of ELF adherents as terrorists went unquestioned:

> from the beginning of my time as a spokesperson . . . I dedicated myself to attempting to tear apart the myth that these environmental preservationists were actually terrorists. This, I quickly learned was not an easy task, since nearly all of the reporters I faced daily took it for granted that I was an ecoterrorist spokesperson (2004: 237).

After several years' experience as a spokesperson for the ELF, Leslie Pickering summed up the difficulty of dealing with mainline news institutions like the *New York Times*: "they're not going to give us twenty minutes of free space. What they do is give us ten seconds of free space after saying "You're a violent eco-terrorist. Defend yourself " (Guerilla News Network, 2002: 224).

The marginalization of counter-hegemonic groups by mainline media and law enforcement is nothing new (see, for example, Baylor 1996; Churchill and Vander Wall 1988; Gitlin 1980; McLeod and Detember 1999), but what the spokespeople may have failed to see, and what this article highlights, is that their peculiar subject-position within

a leaderless resistance-style organization may have exacerbated these trends towards marginalization. This happens because journalists tend to accord less credibility to the station of the spokesperson in unorthodox contexts of leaderless resistance. Also, because the actors themselves are not present, the group relinquishes the powerful 'body rhetoric' enjoyed by their predecessors in the radical environmental milieu (DeLuca 1999b), while leaving their actions open to interpretation and inference by moderate environmentalists, agents of capital, and the state. Thus, in this particular intersection of crime, media, and culture, it would seem that the activities of the ELF and its spokespersons have involved a serious miscalculation about the mechanics of media reception, about the modern American mindset, about the willingness of media institutions to report counter-hegemonic ideologies, and about the considerable ability of corporate and state interests to circulate their versions of reality into mainstream media.

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Chapter Four

Charisma and the Ideology of Leaderless Resistance

ABSTRACT:

'Leaderless resistance' is a concept now very much in vogue in the study of oppositional subcultures and terrorist groups, being use to describe the operational realities of a variety of terrorisms, from groups like al-Qaeda to lone wolves like Anders Breivik. In this article, I take a critical view of the concept, seeking to show that leaderless resistance is itself a rhetorical construct, a meaning-conferring 'ideology of effervescence' that lifts the spirits of both movement progenitors who advocate the strategy as well as incipient lone wolves who consider responding to their exhortations. Building on this insight, I secondly argue that the rhetoric of leaderless resistance is a crucial element in a charismatic leadership system that—while placing exculpatory distance between the inspirational leaders and the actors they inspire—preserves a mechanism of "proof" (in the Weberian sense) of charismatic status to followers. The ironic corollary of these two arguments, then, is that rather than constituting an abandonment of leadership per se *(as the ideology of leaderless resistance would have us believe), leaderless resistance is best seen as a product of the transition from bureaucratic to charismatic leadership styles in terrorist groups. With this conception, we can question the assertion of some current counterterrorism researchers that leaderless resistance and other ideologies of effervescence are a hallmark of the 'new terrorism.'*

Introduction

The concept of 'leaderless resistance' has inspired a growing literature in the study of oppositional subcultures and terrorist groups (Brafman and Beckstrom 2006; Chermak et al. 2010; Damphousse and Smith 2004; Dishman 2005; Dobratz and Waldner 2012; Garfinkel 2003; Gartenstein-Ross and Gruen 2010; Joosse 2007; 2012; Kaplan 1997; Leader and Probst 2003; Michael 2010; 2012; Neumann 2009; Pressman 2003; Sageman 2008; Stern 2003a; 2003b: 33-35). Indeed, while past academic attention has evinced a somewhat confused nomenclature, Bruce Hoffman has been unequivocal in his call for study: "[t]his phenomenon, variously termed 'leaderless resistance,' 'phantom

cell networks,' 'autonomous leadership units,' 'autonomous cells,' 'networks of networks,' or 'lone wolves'...has become one of the most important trends in terrorism today" (Hoffman 2006: 271).[118] Traditionally defined as a strategy that allows for and encourages individuals or small cells to carry out acts of violence or sabotage entirely independent of any hierarchy of leadership or network of support, leaderless resistance is most often implemented by weaker actors who are engaged in asymmetrical struggle, and thus is viewed a sign of desperation and failure (Kaplan 1997; Garfinkel 2003; Sageman 2008; McAllister 2004).

With failure as a precondition, then, the rise of leaderless resistance has surely entailed a fall in the spirits of those who are now contemplating adding their own personal footnotes to a long history of lone wolf actors who have had little political impact. From the dismal response to Louis Beam's call on the radical right (Beam 1992 [1983]; Michael 2012: 29-59 [especially the portion of Michael's interview with Harold Covington, pp. 56-57]), to the failure of radical environmentalists to 'ignite a revolution' (Best and Nocella 2006; Joosse 2012; Pickeirng 2007; Rosebraugh 2004), to the underwhelming and spotty performance of the "leaderless jihad" (Lia 2008; Sageman 2008a; Walker 2006), the modern terrorist, rather that surfing the cusp of a political storm, is much more likely to resemble, in the words of American military strategist Thomas Barnett, those "loner wackos…Timothy McVeigh and UNABOMBER [Ted

[118] This prioritization is no different on the political front. For example, during the Homeland Security Review of 2011, CIA director Leon Panetta stated, "It's the lone-wolf strategy that I think we have to pay attention to as the main threat to this country" (quoted in Borum 2011: 362). Likewise, President Obama recently told CNN that "The biggest concern we have right now is not the launching of a major terrorist operation, although that risk is always there, the risk that we're especially concerned over right now is the lone wolf terrorist, somebody with a single weapon being able to carry out wide-scale massacres of the sort that we saw in Norway recently. You know, when you've got one person who is deranged or driven by a hateful ideology, they can do a lot of damage, and it's a lot harder to trace those lone wolf operators" (CNN 2011).

Kaczynski]…"—people "we see shuffling by in orange jumpsuits and chains" (Barnett 2005: 109). One recent case in point is Anders Breivik, who, while plagiarizing large sections of Theodore Kaczynski's writing for his own manifesto (Bertzen and Sandberg 2014: 19 n. 49), would have shuddered had he known just how closely the rest of his story would come to mirror that of his predecessor. Both Kaczynski and Breivik were highly-skilled, patient individuals who carried out their murderous plans with a degree of success that is almost unheard of for lone-wolf attackers (Alston 2003; Sandberg et al. 2014: 11-12). After capture, however, their idiosyncratic ideologies failed to find a sizable constituency[119] and at their trials both suffered the indignity of losing political credibility amid diagnoses of insanity—a fate, according to both of them, "worse than death" (Breivik, quoted in the BBC 2012).[120] To plug examples like these into a system

[119] The social movements and organizations where their ideas might have found a home for the most part have regarded them as toxic, disavowing any association or agreement with them. While Kaczynski at times displayed an affinity for the radical environmental movement (Taylor 1998) and was interviewed in *Earth First! Journal* for its June 1999 issue, and while sometimes he is regarded with admiration in radical environmental circles (see, for example, Zerzan 1996), Bron Taylor (2003) has made a convincing case that the movement is unlikely to develop even a modicum of support for the move toward violence against humans. Similarly, while Breivik is best understood as drawing inspiration from a wider anti-Islamic social movement (Berntzen and Sandberg 2014), the wider movement has not, on the whole, reciprocated this affection. Some members of the English Defense League (EDL) have praised him (Townsend 2012), but its leader has unequivocally condemned his actions (BBC 2011a). Other organizations where Breivik had held membership have banned him for life (Cooper and Sanchez 2011; Skar 2011). Geert Wilders, leader of the Netherlands's far-right Freedom Party (PVV), whom Breivik profusely praises in his manifesto, called the attacks "awful," said that he "abhors all that Breivik represents," and denounced him as "violent and sick" (Clusky 2011). Breivik, it must be noted, fully anticipated that Wilders would need to denounce him (Breivik 2011: 1407).

[120] After Kaczynski learned of his defense team's plan to contradict his wishes and plead not guilty by reason of insanity, he tried to hang himself in his cell (Chase 2003: 144). According to Chase, the motive driving all of Kaczynski's actions, from "first bomb to plea bargain was [his] strong desire to have his ideas—as described in the manifesto—taken seriously" (Chase 2000: 43). Breivik's written reaction to the first round of psychiatric evaluations which diagnosed him as having paranoid schizophrenia goes on to call it "the ultimate humiliation. To send a political activist to a mental hospital is more sadistic and evil than to kill him!" (quoted in the *Globe and Mail* 2012). In a highly unusual step, the court ordered a second opinion, however, which found him rather to have narcissistic personality disorder, which, because it is not characterized by psychosis, opened up the possibility of jail time. Both Kaczynski and Breivik eventually avoided insanity pleas, therefore—though the multiple (sometimes conflicting) diagnoses each received, coupled with the heinousness of their crimes, did much damage to their psychological reputations.

of organization that hitches its star the social mechanism of the copycat is to see clearly the self-limiting nature of the 'leaderless resistance' phenomenon (Sageman 2008a).

But how, then, is it possible for leaderless resistance as a social phenomenon to exist at all? This article seeks to contribute in two ways to answering this question. Firstly, I seek to show that 'leaderless resistance' is itself a rhetorical construct, a meaning-conferring *ideology of effervescence*[121] that lifts the spirits of both movement progenitors who advocate the strategy as well as incipient lone wolves who consider responding to their exhortations. Building on this insight, I secondly argue that the rhetoric of leaderless resistance is a crucial element in a *charismatic leadership system* that—while placing exculpatory distance between the inspirational leaders and the actors they inspire—preserves a mechanism of "proof" of charismatic status to followers (Weber 1922 [1958]: 246). The ironic corollary of these two arguments, then, is that rather than constituting an abandonment of leadership *per se* (as the ideology behind the doctrine would have us believe), leaderless resistance is best seen as a product of the *transition in opportunities* between bureaucratic and charismatic leadership styles.

Study Design

The principles that inform leaderless resistance exist to varying degrees in all forms of asymmetrical struggle. Even hierarchically organized terrorist groups that make use of lines of command and control routinely insulate the core of their power structure through the use of an expendable periphery of entry-level positions that can be easily

[121] My use of 'effervescence' here is distinct from Durkheim's (1995[1912]) usage.

sloughed off when needed.[122] The 'rhizomatic' leaderless resistance organization exemplifies the most extreme formulation of this insulating principle, in that it eschews any notion of 'core' completely, becoming periphery through and through. In the imaginative and anticipatory vision of William S. Burroughs, "'no organ is constant as regards either function or position,…sex organs sprout anywhere,…rectums open, defecate and close,… the entire organism changes color and consistency in split-second adjustments'" (cited in Deleuze and Guattari: 153). In the words of Louis Beam, an early progenitor of the strategy among the radical right, people who make up the amorphous leaderless resistance body, "act when they feel the time is ripe," like "the fog which forms when conditions are right and disappears when they are not" (Beam 1992 [1983]).

These are idealized visions, to be sure, but the ephemeral qualities of leaderless resistance have been well-documented as providing immunity to detection, infiltration, and prosecution by a powerful state (Beam 1992 [1983]; Brafman and Beckstrom 2006; Damphousse and Smith 2004; Dishman 2005; Garfinkel 2003; Kaplan 1997; Leader and Probst 2003; Neumann 2009; Pressman 2003; Sageman 2008; Stern 2003a; 2003b: 33-35).[123] It goes without saying, then, that groups that employ the strategy are also very difficult to study. This difficulty, coupled with common linguistic barriers that attend the study of terrorism, have meant that some of the more subtle, micro-level,

[122] Organized crime also makes use of this insulating strategy. In the drug trade, for example, the most risky tasks are often performed by entry-level 'dial-a-dopers' who liaise between consuming public and the lower-levels of the trafficking apparatus.

[123] Although he never used the term 'leaderless resistance,' the work of Charles Tilly also bears mentioning here. Tilly used the terms "scattered attacks," "resistance," (2003: 170-193) and "autonomists" (2004: 11) to describe many of the above aspects and further to situate them in a larger typology of collective violence that manifests according to two interacting variables: the extent of coordination among violent actors on the one hand, and the degree to which violence is a regular feature of interactions between parties, on the other (2003: 15). The advantage of Tilly's conception is that it searches for the "robust mechanisms and processes that cause change and variation" across the broad range of collective violence he describes (2003: 20). The transition to and from uncoordinated or leaderless forms of resistance is an issue of importance, but ultimately an issue for another paper.

inspirational/rhetorical dynamics of the strategy (which are sought presently) remain all but unassailable to most ethical research methodologies.

This study aims to find a novel avenue into this field of inquiry through an examination of the much less-notorious (though, I would argue, no less instructive) case of Wiebo Ludwig (1941-2012), Canada's most prominent convicted environmental saboteur, and the EnCana Pipeline bombings of 2008-2009—a situation that replicates many of the rhetorical and inspirational dynamics of the more enigmatic (Spaaij 2010), 'true' leaderless resistance.

From October 2008 to July 2009, an individual or individuals claimed responsibility for a series of six bombings aimed at EnCana corporation, the largest producer of natural gas in North America. In several threat letters, the bomber(s) expressed environmental grievances, and demanded that "EnCana and all other oil and gas interests… leave the area" because they were "endangering our families with crazy expansion of deadly gas wells in our home lands" (EnCana bomber, 2008). The attacks never resulted in casualties, and it seems as though the bomber was taking precautions to avoid injuring or killing people (EnCana Bomber 2009). Nevertheless, the case was taken most seriously by the law enforcement community: the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) called the attacks "domestic terrorism" (CTV 2009; Kohler 2009) and employed 250 investigators to work on the case, including Canada's Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (INSET) (RCMP 2009). The attacks also elicited an offer of a $1M reward for information leading to the successful prosecution of the responsible party(ies)—equaling the largest-ever such reward offered in Canada to date (The

Canadian Press, 2009).[124] It was not until January 2010 that Wiebo Ludwig—leader of a small self-sufficient religious community in the area—officially came under suspicion by the RCMP. Throughout the events, however, Ludwig maintained a very public 'gadfly' role in relation to the bombings, commenting regularly in the press, writing an open letter to the bomber (Ludwig 2009), meeting with counterterrorism investigators on a regular basis (Joosse 2010) and even receiving supportive mention in one of the bomber's letters (EnCana bomber 2010). Indeed, even in the days before he became a suspect, Ludwig's name would come up again and again in my conversations with residents, and it is clear that he served as the 'ghost in the machine' for the bombings, a role not unfamiliar to those who analyse inspirational above-ground leaders in contexts of leaderless resistance (Kaplan 1997: 85).

I was able to gain access to the community during the time-period of the bombings, and I interviewed land owners, attended community meetings, and attended the 2009 Northeast BC Energy Conference in Dawson Creek. In addition to collecting media accounts at the national and provincial levels, I performed a systematic collection of the region's daily newspaper, the *Dawson Creek Daily News*,[125] along with *Coffee Talk Express*—both of which were recipients of the bomber's letters. I maintained regular contact with reporters, who became an invaluable source of information, providing me with copies of the bomber's letters, court documents, notices in advance of press releases by the RCMP and EnCana, and in some cases, full transcripts of interviews

[124] $1M was offered once before in a criminal investigation in Canada—for information pertaining to the 1985 bombing of Air India flight 182 which killed 329 people

[125] Special thanks are due to reporter Andrew Bergland and publisher Dan Przybylski for facilitatitng my access to the *Dawson Creek Daily News*.

with authorities.[126] Finally—and most crucially for this project—I paid four visits to Wiebo Ludwig's residence at Trickle Creek Farm, during which I interviewed him and sought to understand his peculiar role vis-à-vis the community and the bombings. The Ludwigs themselves provided some valuable sources, including their self-produced documentary *Home Sour Home* and their recording of one of Ludwig's meetings with INSET, the Canadian counterterrorism team that was charged with investigating the bombings. All of these experiences provided context for this analysis, but because my aim is to seek to understand the inspirational channels that influence the actions of lone saboteurs among the general public, I confine my analysis here primarily to Ludwig's public statements—both in the media, and in his open letter to the Tomslake bomber(s).

As for the residents I interviewed, I have chosen to anonymize them to the greatest extent possible, given the harsh treatment and suspicion that they would often face after giving credited interviews in the press. This offer of anonymity is something that reporters are usually reluctant to grant, and it is of course something that police are unable to offer in the course of their investigations. For this reason, my position as a researcher offered a unique perspective, allowing me to avoid some of the difficulties that often attend inquiries into criminal matters. All of my participants were read an introductory letter to the project and were told that my purpose was not to investigate who was behind the bombings themselves. At certain times during some of my interviews, participants felt inclined to speak about certain subjects 'off record,' a request I invariably honoured. Before speaking with people I committed to the practice of stopping interviews if it were to become clear that I was about to be told of incriminating

[126] Among the reporters who have helped me in this regard, Nicholas Kohler of *Maclean's Magazine,* Karen Kleiss of the *Edmonton Journal*, and Andrew Nikiforuk of *Canadian Business Magazine* deserve special mention.

behavior. To the best of my ability, I have stripped all identifying features from my interviewees.[127] In total, I was able to speak with seventeen area residents, which, considering that there are seventy-five residential post boxes at Tomslake Canada Post, is a decent (without pretensions toward being generalizable) representation of the people who live in the area.

To set the stage for the argument, I contextualize the Tomslake community historically and culturally and give a synopsis of the bombings themselves. I follow this with a description and analysis of charismatic leader Wiebo Ludwig's cultural authority in the community, and the role he played in normalizing property destruction through his negotiations between what James C. Scott (1990) called the "hidden" and "public" transcripts about environmental grievance and the activities of the bomber(s). I end by drawing connections between Wiebo's charismatic legitimacy, his 'ideology of effervescence,' and the bombings themselves. Ultimately, then, this study pushes past the tendency of previous analyses to focus on the *organizational reality* of leaderless resistance, articulating and emphasising its rhetorical, propagandistic aspects.

Tomslake Background

Tomslake, a little hamlet in the Peace River region of Northeastern British Columbia, is a community divided on itself, collectively torn over the expansion of extraction industries that have brought both unprecedented wealth and rapid lifestyle and environmental changes. Most of the expansion of the natural gas industry has occurred in the past fifteen years, and many have welcomed this activity as a lifeline as farming has

[127] An additional tactic that I had hoped would increase the willingness of my participants to speak was to wait six months after the initial bombings to conduct interviews. This intended six-month 'cooling period' was nullified, however, with the attacks of July 1 and 4, 2009.

declined as a viable economic engine and as the pine beetle has devastated forestry in BC. Some, however, hold a different view, including one area resident who invoked classic images of gold-rush decadence when she lamented: "It all goes up someone's nose, in someone's arm or in some lady's purse." EnCana Corporation is the biggest natural gas extractor in North America, and it has some 200 wells in the Dawson Creek area, but it is by no means alone. Many companies compete against one another to expand their operations, sometimes purchasing mineral rights at different strata, so that multiple companies can be found maintaining surface structures on one parcel of land. One resident complained that, "they're going after this stuff like it's going to rot in the ground." Another mentioned "I look out over my community at night and it's lit up like a birthday cake." Anonymous comments that postscript stories about oil and gas development in the area frequently lament the consequences of development. One such comment, claiming to be from a Tomslake resident, will suffice: "How would you like it if every day for the last 10 years Oil Truck[s] . . . are passing through your streets that [are] barely big enough to get 2 normal size trucks safely through . . . how would you like it if you look outside and see oil rigs all over in and around your community?" (quoted in Joosse 2008a). But for all of the discomforts felt by some residents, others—particularly in the nearest city of Dawson Creek—are grateful for the spinoff benefits of such a booming industry. Dawson Creek mayor Mike Bernier commented to the *Globe and Mail*'s *Report on Business*,

> Any time you have economic development, you have hassles, but EnCana has bent over backward to support the community. They gave us $500,000 for the naming rights on an entertainment multiplex, and another $250,000 to launch a

new arts centre. They've been a really good corporate citizen (quoted in McDonald 2009: 47).

The complex, the EnCana Events Centre, can be seen as one enters Dawson Creek from the south, leaving the districts of Pouce Coupe and Tomslake.

Of particular concern to many residents is the drilling and transportation of sour gas containing hydrogen sulphide (H_2S)—a compound so noxious that one breath at a concentrated level can cause instant death (ATSDR 2006). The substance is heavier than air, and can pool in low places on a still day. Every year, workers are 'knocked down'—industry parlance for being rendered unconscious by H_2S—occasionally with fatal results. The BC Oil and Gas Commission catalogued 73 sour gas leaks in the Dawson Creek area in the five years between 1999-2004 (McDonald 2009: 44), and on November 22, 2010 a well blowout necessitated the evacuation of several residences, caused the death of livestock, and revealed serious faults in EnCana's emergency procedures (BC Oil and Gas Commission 2010; Citizens' Meeting Minutes 2010).[128] One well site is just down the road from the Tomslake community's elementary school. At a Peace River Regional Hospital District meeting prior to the leak, one resident of Tomslake complained to a Murphy oil representative that "we don't like knowing we are going to wake up to [a] whistle, have to go outside, figure out where the wind is blowing and run." One interviewee remarked that, while as a girl she used to eat the snow as she walked around her property. "How pure is the snow now?" she wondered.

Increased traffic, unease with the young and male working population, resentment at the encroachment of business interests from neighboring Alberta, and concerns about

[128] Residents claim to be experiencing symptoms related to the leak to the time of this writing (Trumpener 2012b)

long-term health effects associated with industry all arose commonly as grievances for residents of the Tomslake area whom I interviewed. EnCana has responded with a publicity campaign called "Courtesy Matters," which aims to improve relations with local residents. When I mentioned the campaign to residents, many of them scoffed, one responding, "more like currency matters." Three months prior to the first bombing, one resident of Tomslake wrote a letter to the editor in which she claims to have found EnCana "to be very uncooperative in their [*sic*] dealings with landowners and concerned citizens" (Tuttle, 2008).

Residents have staged a number of different protest actions in the past, from roadblocks that target industry vehicles, to letter-writing campaigns, to town hall meetings with industry representatives (Joosse 2008a), but when I interviewed residents, some expressed extreme frustration with these traditional channels of influence. In the 2008-2009 fiscal year (the year of the bombings), the provincial government collected a record $2.4B from the sale of oil and gas land rights (CBC 2009b; see also Simpson 2009). Often Tomslakers, who reside in an area of relatively low population density, feel they lack the political clout that would be necessary to affect any real change. "We're the expendable ones," one rural resident said when asked to compare the situation of Tomslakers with those who live in the nearby city of Dawson Creek.

The Bombings

On October 7, 2008, someone sent three threat letters from a Canada Post outlet in Dawson Creek to *Coffee Talk Express*, a newsletter that circulates in the area, to *The Dawson Creek Daily News*, the region's newspaper, and to EnCana Corporation. The

identical letters claimed to be advocating on behalf of the people of Tomslake and the demanded that "EnCana close down [its] operations … and leave the area" (EnCana bomber 2008). This letter was followed by six bombing attacks against EnCana sites between October 12, 2008 and July 4, 2009, and two more sets of letters from the bomber, one of which warned EnCana that things may "get worse for you and your terrorist pals in the oil and gas business" if they refused to make plans for a pullout of the area (EnCana bomber 2009).[129] All of the attacks were fairly minor in terms of the actual damage caused to gas-line infrastructure, and the bomber claims to have been taking steps to minimize the threat to people, assuring the public that the bombings were "minor" and "controlled" (EnCana bomber 2009). EnCana, claiming millions of dollars in losses due to interruptions in its production, hired extra security and offered rewards—first 500k then $1M—in an effort to apprehend the bomber.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Canada's national police force, also took the matter very seriously, naming the bombings 'domestic terrorism,' employing INSETs to the area, and devoting considerable resources to the investigation (Joosse 2009). The clandestinity of these attacks and the absence of ties to any above-ground organizations have impeded the RCMP in its investigation efforts, as realized by criminologist Irwin Cohen who commented on the bombings:

> It's sort of like having to grab on to Jell-O, because there isn't this traditional kind of organization that we can go after where you can get membership lists, where information is on a computer, where I can arrest some person and they break up the entire cell . . . . These are . . . disorganized groups of individuals who are

[129] See appendix D for all of the bomber(s)'s letters.

> acting on behalf of a specific [cause] but not necessarily tied to any larger organization (quoted in CBC 2009a).

As frustrating for police as this situation may have been, friends of industry, such as the University of Calgary's Tom Flanagan (and former mentor of current Canadian Prime minister Stephen Harper), have taken comfort in the lack of coordination displayed by various types[130] of saboteurs who have targeted industry in the past. In his analysis, he maintains that:

> extra-legal obstruction is unlikely to become large-scale and widespread unless these various groups make common cause and cooperate with each other. Such cooperation has not happened in the past and seems unlikely in the future because the groups have different social characteristics and conflicting political interests (Flanagan 2009).

During the investigation, the RCMP has consistently maintained the theory that the person responsible for the bombings was from the area, and that a few uncooperative people were protecting the bomber. Over the course of the investigations, the RCMP and INSET interviewed nearly every resident of the community, often asking for DNA samples, hand-writing samples, polygraph tests, and returning for interviews in some cases upwards of eight times (Arsenault 2011; Crawford 2009; Hainsworth 2010; Joosse 2009; Thompson 2009). The investigative strategies created what one reporter termed a "land of suspicion" (Hutchinson 2009), brought on by incidents such as when an RCMP officer was discovered impersonating a reporter in order to get information (Cunningham 2008), or when officers reputedly "'accost[ed] people at their places of work and yell[ed]

[130] Five groups worry Flanagan: First Nations, Metis, individual saboteurs, eco-terrorists, and mainstream environmentalists.

at them, denouncing them loudly in public places as the bomber'" (Gratl, quoted in Crawford 2009: 4). In December 2008, the police held a press conference to unveil a specially-created tip-line and webpage (dawsoncreekbombings.com), encouraging the public to visit and offer information (Joosse 2008b). It was later revealed that the RCMP had been collecting information from a local internet provider, extracting names and addresses of people who had simply looked at the site (as the RCMP had directed the public to do), and visiting them for questioning (Joosse 2009). Furthermore, the RCMP posted some surveillance stills from cameras at a Shoppers Drug Mart from which the first threat letter was mailed. Although the RCMP labelled these people "persons of interest," some newspapers took the photos and ran them on their front pages, with the implication that they were suspects. In reality, they had simply been shopping in the store on the day that the letters were sent. Some of these people subsequently hired Jason Gratl, a vice-president of the BC Civil Liberties Association, to represent them, claiming that the posting of the pictures was "'clearly defamatory'" (quoted in Joosse 2009).

These surveillance strategies were accompanied by an intense media interest from local, national, and international outlets, and a common experience during the investigations was that if a resident gave a press interview that expressed dissatisfaction with the oil and gas operations in the area, they would find themselves getting a visit from the RCMP shortly thereafter (Brooymans 2009; Hainsworth 2010; Trumpener 2012a). This dynamic, in turn, frequently stymied journalists looking for comment. *Edmonton Journal* reporter Hanneke Brooymans wrote at the time that "[m]any people approached by *The Journal* declined to say anything at all about development in the area and about the bomber," and one man with whom she spoke would not comment "for fear

of becoming a target of RCMP interrogations, harassment and phone tapping" (Brooymans 2009: A1, A3).

All of this activity seems to have exacerbated the pre-existing[131] estrangement between local authorities and the community. During the investigations themselves, RCMP spokesperson Tim Shields lamented that residents were "'literally running away from the investigators whenever they see them'" (quoted in Bergland 2009a: A1). On the

[131] The difficulties in the interactions between police and the Tomslake public seem trace back much further than the current issues with gas extraction. The settlement of Tomslake was founded in 1939 by ethnic Germans from the Sudetenlands of Czechoslovakia who were mostly members of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). Vehemently opposed to the ascendance of Hitler in Germany and of Nazi influence generally in the region, they felt extremely betrayed—and were ultimately imperiled—by the Munich agreement of 1938 which, in contravention of the Treaty of Versailles, handed their lands over to the Third Reich. As reparation for these actions members of the SDP who fled were allowed to set up two communities in Western Canada, one of them being Tomslake, near Tupper Creek. Mary Drysdale has done some excellent work on the welcome (or lack thereof) that the Sudeten settlers received when first in Canada:

> When war broke out in September 1939, the RCMP arrived in Tomslake to inform the disbelieving immigrants that they were now 'enemy aliens.' The refugees were fingerprinted, told to carry a white 'alien' card and their landed immigrants' card with them at all times and to report to the authorities once a week (Drysdale, 2002: 96).

An RCMP document from 1940 expressed concern that they were flying red flags, but it is clear from other sources that their German tongues evoked suspicion of Nazi sympathy as well (Drysdale 97-105; Amstatter 1978)—despite the known facts about their prior ideological commitments. RCMP Intelligence Offcier E.W. Bavin is characteristically oblique when referring to the basis for his mistrust of the newly-settled immigrants: "While they have not actually engaged in anti-British activities, their attitude is not altogether satisfactory and, on occasion, would almost verge on the point of defiance with respect to their 'rights'"(RCMP 1940). The officer considers the possibility of internment, but ultimately advocates instead,

> that a responsible official who understands the problem, [should] talk to then, pointing out that they are living in a democratic country and it is expected of them not to only respect and obey the laws of our country, but also try to live up to the democratic traditions inherent in our system (RCMP 1940).

Their situation was thus not comparable to the treatment of Japanese-Canadians during WWII (which involved internment, forced moves, and the confiscation/auctioning off of assets), but the irony of this distrust would have at times been frustrating to a group like the Tomslakers, who had come to Canada to live in freedom. It is difficult to prove linkages between this historical distrust and the current difficulties that the RCMP faced in their investigations of the Tomslake bombings. Current RCMP spokesperson Tim Shields entertained publicly the possibility that the bomber is of Sudeten heritage, pointing to the use of the word "territory" and "home lands" by the bomber in the first threat-letter: "we know that the Tomslake area was once referred to, especially after the Second World War, as the Sudeten homeland, and the word 'territory' was also included in that description of Tomslake at that time" (Vanderklippe and Stueck 2009; also see Joosse 2009). It was German sociologist Max Weber who theorized that "Myths of nationalism, community, and shared history nest within one another to produce a sense of belonging and an acquiescence to societal authority and ultimately to the state's monopoly on the legitimate uses of violence." Suffice it to say that an anti-authoritarian streak runs deep in Tomslake and environs, colouring the way that I as a researcher viewed the current spate of clandestine sabotage against gas extraction infrastructure in the area.

political front, the sum total of all of this activity has been a chilling effect on public expressions of opposition to industry. Tim Ewert, a local organic farmer, said in a press interview that police tactics had "virtually silenced" the local movement that had been resisting the operations of the gas companies:

> People were having a lot of unwelcome visits by the police, being hauled off to the police station for many hours of interrogation, totally upsetting their lives.... There was a lot of unhappiness about what was going on with the oil and gas industry — the intrusion, the risk.... I know people who were very active in their concerns about the oil and gas industry who have not said a peep for several years (CBC 2011).

In his open letter to the bomber, Wiebo Ludwig similarly maintained that, while he was choosing to speak publicly, many others are:

> now too afraid to speak out for fear of criticism from neighbours, especially from neighbours and even friends who have been silenced by industry monies, jobs, and favours or for fear of suspicion and harassment by police, who are after all, we say, 'Just doing their job' (Ludwig 2009).

One of my participants maintained that this suspicion resulted from close teamwork between of EnCana and the police, who would often appear in press conferences together. Feeling unduly targeted, this participant maintained:

> The people being targeted in the investigation are those who have had the guts to ask for some answers from EnCana about safety issues. No one else has even been questioned. No one from EnCana or any of their prior employees. Only those on a list given to the RCMP from EnCana that were a visible presence both

> in Kelly Lake and Tomslake. People who tried to exercise their freedom of speech. People who had educated themselves to the industry and had concerns about what was happening.

The public communicative strategies of the police and EnCana, which most often involved joint press conferences, did little to disabuse residents of the notion that there was an intertwining of state and corporate interests in the investigative thrust pursued by the RCMP.

Confirming Ewert's, Ludwig's, and my participant's assertions above, many of my interviews uncovered considerable evidence of a developing "hidden transcript" in operation in the community of Tomslake (Scott 1990; see also Joosse 2008a). Hidden transcripts, according to James C. Scott, are speeches, gestures, and practices that contradict the *status quo* 'public transcripts' promulgated by elite, powerful, opinion leaders. They are the product the powerless, marginalized, 'subaltern' sectors of society—those who most naturally have grievances against the governing order. They are 'hidden' precisely because they "characterize discourse that takes place 'offstage,' beyond direct observation by powerholders…. produced for a different audience and under different constraints of power than the public transcript" (Scott 1990: 4-5). Indeed, I was able to ascertain that—despite what they may have told the police or media—residents did in fact harbour considerable sympathy for the bomber's grievances (which in many cases were identical to their own) and empathy for the type of frustration that could lead to property destruction. I will unpack the charismatic importance of this "hidden transcript' later in this article, but first, it is important to understand its counterpart. What was the "public transcript" saying about the Tomslake bomber?

Discursive struggles: Spartacus Vs. the Bush Bunny

Local authorities have obviously been very frustrated by this case, and in the absence of tangible progress in tracking the bomber(s) down, they have marshalled their own persuasive powers for a 'hearts and minds' campaign that seems geared toward preventing common identification with a culture that would serve to replicate political subjects that resemble the bomber's(s'). This aim at times ran contrary to that of law enforcement, for while police needed to justify their (at times controversial) investigative strategies by pointing to suspicious ideological commitments of those in the community they were investigating, political authorities, more attuned to the longer-range need to repress political violence, seemed more likely to lean towards rhetorical strategies that deny the existence or traction of vehemently anti-industry ideologies.

Central to this effort were attempts to depoliticize the attacks and characterize the bomber as completely alien to the people of the area. At the provincial level, British Columbia's Energy Minister Richard Neufeld, who lives in nearby Dawson Creek, made widely publicized statements, for example, calling the bomber a "nut case," a "crazy person," "deranged" and "stupid" (Meissner 2008: 1, 3). Dawson Creek city councillor Paul Gevatkoff was similarly dismissive when a reporter tried to link the bomber to his or her professed cause: "'[t]his is just a crazy person . . . and to connect it with some greater cause is just wrong'" (quoted in Cunningham 2008a: A2). While in one news story RCMP spokesperson Tim Shields consistently maintained that there is a "'significant sentiment' opposing oil developments among the long-tenured members of the rural community," Dawson Creek mayor Calvin Kruk downplayed such a possibility, telling a

Globe and Mail reporter that "he wasn't aware of any opposition in his community"[132] (Wingrove 2008). Kruk's successor Mike Bernier maintained after the fifth bomb blast that, when trying to understand the motives of the bomber,

> I guess it's rational minds trying to figure out what an irrational person is thinking…. There's [*sic*] a lot of people in this area that are employed in the oil and gas industry so when somebody is targeting companies like this, they're not just targeting that company, they're targeting people in this community (quoted in Bergland 2009c: A1).

Finally, former national-level politician Preston Manning,[133] who was invited to speak at a special public session of the Northeast BC Energy Conference, held in Dawson Creek (Northeast BC Energy Conference, 2009) acknowledged the political nature of the attacks, but highlighted their futility: "a violent protest in Canada is not only morally wrong, it's usually counterproductive politically" (quoted in Bergland 2009b: A1).

Thematic unity was given to these sentiments by a particular trope—the "Bush Bunny"—that emerged again and again in the heated days after the bombings. Pouce Coupe[134] mayor Lyman Clark has been particularly instrumental in promulgating the image of the "bush bunny" and giving it definition. *Globe and Mail* reporter Nathan VanderKlippe recounted Clark's description, saying that, in the opinion of the mayor, the bomber could be:

> one of an unknown number of forest hermits who live off-grid in the region.

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[132] Mayor Kruk died of lung cancer five days after delivering this quote. His untimely death at the age of 43 became the occasion for some speculation about the possible ill effects that sour gas extraction was having on lung cancer rates in the area (CBC 2008).

[133] The Reform Party was a populist right-wing party that, with Preston Manning at the helm, reached Official Opposition status in the Canadian parliament from 1997-2000. They later merged with another right-of-centre party to form the Canadian Alliance party, and then today's Conservative Party, which now forms the government of Canada.

[134] Pouce Coupe is the district just north of Tomslake.

> Those so-called ‘bush bunnies’ look like ‘a character you'd see in a 1940s western movie, the Gabby Hayes type,’ said Pouce Coupe Mayor Lyman Clark. ‘And there is a rumour among a lot of people that it's one of those type of individuals’ (quoted in Vanderklippe 2009: A3).

Commenting later in the same week in *The National Post*, Clark continued to advance the “bush bunny theory”:

> It could be one of our local rustics, a recluse. People we call bush bunnies. Someone living in an old beat-up camper trailer who dumps his refuse down a ravine. Someone who has been told by EnCana to shove off. Some vengeful warrior type (Hutchinson 2009: A1).

The mayor goes on to marshal an imaginary posse of upstanding citizens who would take matters into their own hands:

> It's a strange mind we're dealing with. I know plenty of people who would like to find him in action…. Hunters, trappers.
>
> ‘Does he mean people with firearms?’ [asks reporter Brian Hutchinson] Yup.

In another article, this invocation of violence was repeated by Dawson Creek city councillor Paul Gevatkoff: “‘It’s like George Bush said about the terrorists—you’ve got to hunt them down’” (quoted in Cunningham 2008a: A2).

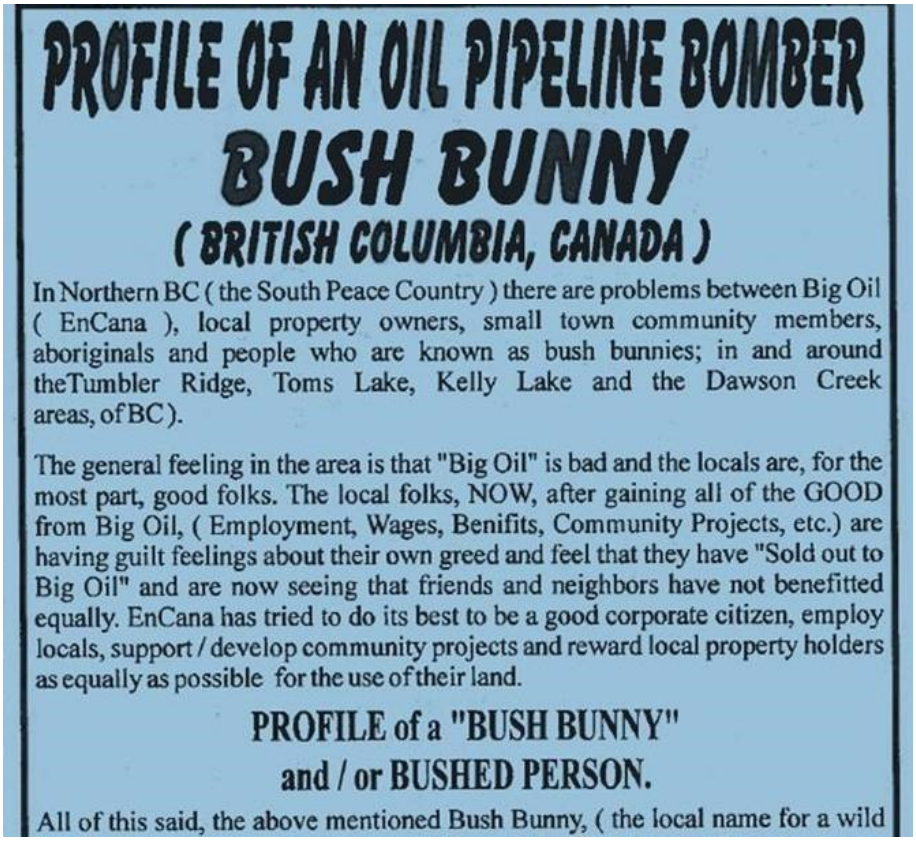
This bush bunny theme seemed to gain such currency and make such an impression that Bob Halstrum, a private citizen, wrote in to *Coffee Talk Express* (the same publication to which the bomber wrote), giving us his own “Profile of a Bush Bunny”. According to Halstrum, a bush bunny is:

1. A crack pot (probably uses both), recluse (in his own little world), a loner

(except for membership in the bunny band), loser (in the city/by Big City standards, fantasizer (has trouble dealing with reality), jobless (trouble getting and holding a job), etc.

2. A crack shot (may shoot up), highly skilled at survival in the bush and is well armed and able to use guns, knives, explosives, etc. to defend himself and (if recognition is in it for him) others' causes and/or positions (Halstrum 2009: 9).

Figure 8. "Profile of an Oil Pipeline Bomber Bush Bunny" (Halstrum 2009)



PROFILE OF AN OIL PIPELINE BOMBER

BUSH BUNNY

(BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA)

In Northern BC (the South Peace Country) there are problems between Big Oil (EnCana), local property owners, small town community members, aboriginals and people who are known as bush bunnies; in and around theTumbler Ridge, Toms Lake, Kelly Lake and the Dawson Creek areas, of BC).

The general feeling in the area is that "Big Oil" is bad and the locals are, for the most part, good folks. The local folks, NOW, after gaining all of the GOOD from Big Oil, (Employment, Wages, Benifits, Community Projects, etc.) are having guilt feelings about their own greed and feel that they have "Sold out to Big Oil" and are now seeing that friends and neighbors have not benefitted equally. EnCana has tried to do its best to be a good corporate citizen, employ locals, support / develop community projects and reward local property holders as equally as possible for the use of their land.

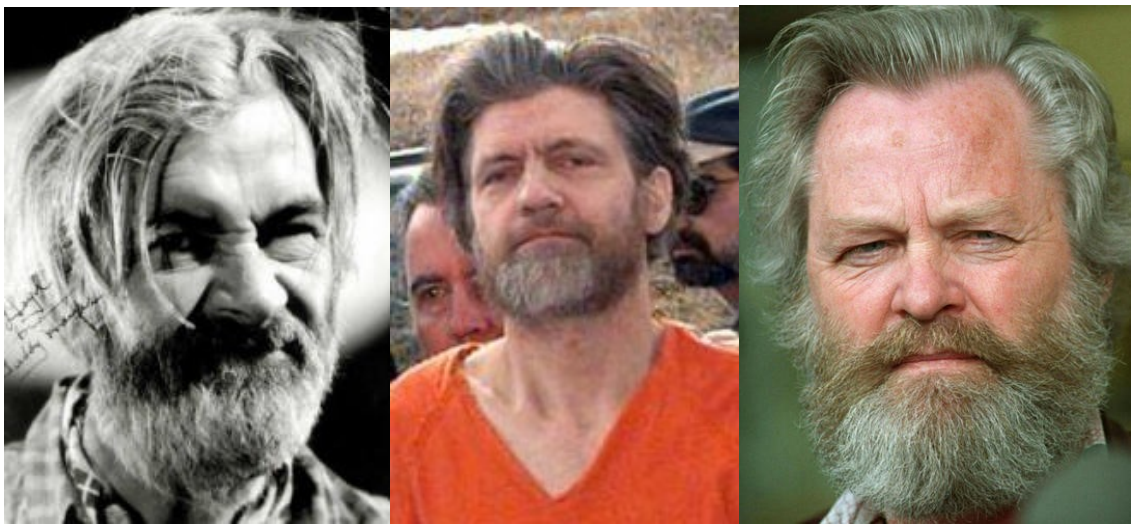
PROFILE of a "BUSH BUNNY"
and / or BUSHED PERSON.

All of this said, the above mentioned Bush Bunny, (the local name for a wild

The character that emerges from these descriptions and other discussions I was party to in the Tomslake area is a composite of the butt-of-joke Western-movie characters of mayor Clark's descriptions and crazed and violent figures like UNABomber Ted Kaczynski. This comical-yet-dangerous characterization is not unfamiliar to those who advocate

property destruction for environmental reasons (Joosse 2012: 81-83). We will also see that these figures, in turn, bear a remarkable resemblance to Wiebo Ludwig, to whom we will turn in a moment.

Figure 9. The Bush Bunny Incarnate



Gabby Hayes	Ted Kaczynski (ASSOCIATED PRESS)	Wiebo Ludwig (CANADIAN PRESS)

If one looks more broadly to uses of the term in other contexts, however, other meanings begin to surface. Richard Wagamese, an Ojibway author from the Wabaseemoong First Nation in northwestern Ontario, recalled some formative experienced growing up:

> In the schools and neighborhoods you found yourself in, you became a wagon burner, a squaw hopper, a bush bunny, a dirty teepee creeper, and sometimes, because they didn't know what to make of you, a chink. You didn't know how to react and shame made you keep them to yourself, to bear them silently, feel the hurt like a bruise and say nothing (Wagamese 2008: 76).

Ernest Carl Oberhotzer, one of the founders of the Wilderness Society, derived much credibility during his lifetime for his associations with and understanding of First Nations. Writes Bruce Littlejohn in the *Mallard Island Newsletter*:

> It was also clear that he had a first-class mind, tremendous experience of wilderness travel and Native people, and was decades ahead of his time. He combined deep cultural interests (including music and literature) with a fine education, enormous interest in the Ojibwa of the area, and a profound love for wilderness and appreciation of its fundamental importance for the earth and for society. Physically, he was amazing, given his years. He hopped around like a 16-year-old! Part scholar and part bush-bunny (Littlejohn 2008: 5).

Indeed, one of my interview participants flat out told me that in the locale of Tomslake, the term "bush bunny" is simply another word for someone from the First Nations. Other sources have pointed to more vulgar iterations such as 'bush bitch,' and 'bush meat,' and while it is impossible to tell whether these terms, which are most often associated with colonial Africa, bear any etymological or cultural relation to "bush bunny," suffice it to say that they all have the discursive potential to position those labeled negatively in hierarchies of race, gender, and species.

But whatever connotative fecundity the term may possess, what is most important for the present argument is that this gaze is both isolating and depoliticizing. It is a humiliating discourse, and to the extent that it points to irrational, animalistic, primitive, racial, and 'crazed' characteristics, it prevents common political identification. In the absence of real leads in capturing the perpetrator of the blasts, these public denunciations arguably take on a greater importance, serving as a prophylactic against further public

expressions of the hidden transcript (Scott 1990). Within the confines of the "bush bunny" characterization, the bomber seemed fated to be a lone voice—that is until Wiebo Ludwig entered the conversation.

Wiebo Ludwig, the Tomslake Bomber(s), and Spartacus

The rhetorical efforts of local politicians described above serve as a counterpoint to another set of discourses promulgated by Wiebo Ludwig, which I assert bear a familial resemblance to sentiments frequently invoked in contexts of leaderless resistance. In an interview with CFCW radio, Ludwig lamented the fact that authorities had been,

> call[ing] these people that live there Bush Bunnies, even the mayor does that, I just, I say why be so stupid, you know. Back up a bit, we're all in this together there's no sense in saying you're the bad guy and I'm the good guy, we have to take a look at the whole picture, I know we can't stop fossil fuel development right away but, we certainly should encourage renewables and walk gently around habitats (quoted in RCMP 2010).

I will show below how Ludwig's public engagement during the bombings spate is directly aimed at challenging and providing an alternative to the "Bush Bunny" label.

Ludwig was[135] a former Christian Reformed minister and founding patriarch of a small, religious, and nearly self-sufficient community close to Hythe, AB called Trickle Creek. He became the *de facto* spokesperson for the bomber in media accounts of the incident, being sought for comment more often than residents of Tomslake or Kelly Lake (on whose behalf the bomber claimed to be acting). Ludwig held this office in large part because of his own long history of antagonistic involvement with natural gas interests in

[135] Wiebo Ludwig died of esophageal cancer on April 9, 2012.

the area (Nikiforuk 2001). On April 19, 2000, he was convicted of bombing a gas well and encasing another wellhead in concrete along with three other explosives-related charges, crimes for which he spent twenty-one months in jail. Two of these counts were for mischief by destroying property and possessing an explosive substance.

He consistently maintained his innocence, however, and perhaps the most revealing insight into Ludwig's method of relating to the crimes was through his romantic conception of Spartacus, described in Andrew Nikiforuk's recounting of an RCMP interrogation of Ludwig in 1999:

> LUDWIG: Spartacus was a ... slave who led a great revolt against imperial Rome. When the Roman legions finally quelled the uprising, they rounded up the survivors and asked . . . 'Who's Spartacus?' One slave after another stepped forward, claiming to be Spartacus, until all stood in front of their persecutors. So they just hung the whole pile of them.
>
> RCMP CPL. DALE COX: And that's how you feel. You're just seeing yourself?
>
> LUDWIG: There are obviously people doing things. I will not help you find them by saying I'm Spartacus. I'll say I'm Spartacus with the rest of them. You can figure it out yourself (Ludwig and Cox quoted in Nikiforuk 2001: 205).

In relation to the current spate of bombings, Ludwig has made similar comments. In an interview with RCMP in early 2009 investigator Blair Sanderson asked:

> If you were in my position as an investigator, what would you do?

> LUDWIG: Well frankly, if I were you, I'd suspect me. There are probably a hundred people you could suspect around here, and I'd be on that list too (Sanderson and Ludwig quoted in Hainsworth, 2010).

Later, reflecting on his multiple interviews with the RCMP, Ludwig surmised:

> they thought that I was a leader of an underground movement against the industry. The truth is no I'm not a leader of an underground movement, believe me. Most of what I've done has been very much above ground (quoted in Hainsworth, 2010).

In this public role Ludwig has served quite ably as a spokesperson for the causes advocated by the bomber, courting media, and even writing a much publicized open letter to the perpetrator. All 1,739 words were printed in the *Dawson Creek Daily News*, and some are excerpted below:

> with all that history of unresolved conflict of oil and gas field tragedies we endured, I naturally feel deeply sympathetic to your plight as I know many others do who have also suffered similarly. I am, therefore, neither ashamed nor afraid to say so publicly…. it is high time I speak out for your sake and in solidarity with others who share your concern….
>
> Even though people are now afraid to speak freely and openly, they are communicating much more intensely, though quietly and discreetly, about what they are really up against, namely, the real dangers of fossil fuel development as well as the long term effects of our continued use of fossil fuels.

He goes on to congratulate the bomber:

> Whoever you are and whatever your objectives, you need to know that you have already set a lot of good things in motion. You've truly woken a lot of people up and stimulated some very valuable discussion in spite of all the police intimidation and the desperate efforts of industry spin doctors to convince people that the only real danger they have to be concerned about now is the bombs.…
>
> …You have fomented these discussions almost single-handedly and (undeniably) by illegal though controlled use of force, but only because of the extreme urgency of the situation, I take it, a pressing scenario which you did not invite upon yourself…

He speaks about the importance of rhetorical tone:

> …I have felt your rage and have had to admit that [in the past] it drove me eventually to 'rhetoric of desperation' which was not wise or helpful. It may well have encouraged some unbecoming conduct by others already on edge over being subjected to similar industrial abuses.

Finally, by means of farewell, Ludwig writes:

> ….Looking to hear a good word from you soon as are many others, especially those who share your concerns. And that number is growing every day as the devastating effects of the continued development and use of fossil fuel energy are being understood and alternatives are being developed (Ludwig 2009: 5).

The picture Ludwig paints is of widespread communal wrath at industry—effervescing with the potential to produce acts of property destruction, from multiple directions, and from any number of disgruntled residents. Where the "bush bunny" characterizations are isolating and dismissive, the "Spartacus" discourses are correspondingly expansive and

legitimizing. Ludwig claims to be on the side of the people, in tune with the hidden transcript, and morally on the right side of the argument.[136]

Charisma, Hoax, and the Hidden Transcript

News stories about Ludwig are replete with references to his charisma, often dwelling on his Old Testament Prophet-cum-Ecowarrior status (see, for example, Blatchford 2009; Climenhaga 2011; Kohler 2012; McLaren 2012; Monk 2011; Simons 2010; Nikiforuk 2001; Wittmeier 2012). While the tendency in popular and scholastic discussion is to point toward personal/psychological factors when explaining charisma, part of a sociological/symbolic interationist treatment involves a processual understanding of the development of charismatic personas within larger, social, *charismatic leadership systems* (Blasi 1991; Couch 1989; Finlay 2002; Joosse 2006; 2012; 2014; Wasielewski 1985; Wallis 1982). Within the counterterrorism literature specifically, the role of charisma has been woefully undertheorized, despite the widespread recognition that traditional, hierarchically-organized groups are giving way to more inspirational modes of engagement. This has remained the case but for a few important examples that bear mentioning. Writing from the counterterrorism perspective about the radical environmental movement, Luther P. Gerlach mentions, for example:

[136] The bomber him/her/themselves picks up on these themes with startling similarity, but turns the isolating, marginalizing gaze against EnCana, twice calling them "terrorists" (EnCana bomber 2008; 2009) and "criminals" (2010). All of the letters characterized EnCana as a bully, the second one demanding that the company "stop[s] pushing people around here" (2009). Expressions such as "our families," "our home lands" (2008), "our territories of the Tomslake and Kelly Lake districts" (2009; 2010), and "this land belongs to us and our children" broaden the constituency that the bomber claims to represent. The third letter in particular warns the company that "we are growing in strength and [are] now ready for actions at all your installations," and that "we are more united now than ever before" (EnCana bomber 2010). The general thematic thrust of all of these letters to EnCana is, "You simply can't win this fight because you are on the wrong side of the argument. So stop pushing people around here" (EnCana bomber 2009).

> Movement leaders are more likely to be charismatic than bureaucratic. People become leaders chiefly by inspiring and influencing others rather than by being chosen for their political or organizational skills. This leadership is usually situational, as leaders arise to cope with particular situations or episodic challenges in the life of a movement. Leaders must continue to prove their worth and are often challenged by rivals (2001: 294).

Jessica Stern, one of the first to pick up on the emergent right-wing doctrine of 'leaderless resistance,' writes:

> Inspirational terrorist leaders work best in postindustrial, virtually net-worked organizations. They inspire 'leaderless resisters' and lone-wolf avengers rather than cadres. They run networks or virtual networks rather than bureaucracies, and they encourage franchises. Inspirational leaders rarely if ever get involved in breaking the law themselves. That is why this style of leadership can persist even in states where the law is generally respected (2003a: 165).

Despite these infrequent nods to the importance of charisma, the literature is bereft of attempts at a micro-level, interactionist exploration of this process of leadership formation. Below, I will describe two ways that the clandestine-attacker/public-figure interaction (a form of interaction that is often present in leaderless resistance) can work to facilitate the charismatic valorization of someone like Wiebo Ludwig.

In a section of his book entitled "Charisma and the Structure of the Hidden Transcript," James Scott describes the social production of charisma in such situations (1990: 221-227). According to Scott, "the first person who publicly confront[s] power" through "public declarations of the hidden transcript" can acquire mystique and charisma

within the constituency out of which he or she arises (1990: 221, 218). This charismatic affectation is partly a function of awe at the reckless temerity of the one who 'speaks truth to power' and partly a result of the fact that such persons open up a new *avenue of identification* in that they come to be seen as speaking on behalf of the larger community as a public, paradigmatic, living emblem of heretofore privately-experienced struggles (Scott 1990: 222; Weber 1922 [1978]). Scott writes, "It is only when this hidden transcript is openly declared that subordinates can fully recognize the full extent to which their claims, their dreams, their anger is shared by other subordinates" (1990: 223).[137] In Scott's example (an impassioned outburst by Mrs. Poyser against Squire Donnithorne in George Elliot's *Adam Bede*), "what she said to the squire" was "told and retold around the parish with glee,"—a hubbub that eventuated in her ascendance to the role of "charismatic heroine" (1990: 221). In the present case, Wiebo Ludwig explicitly sought to cast himself in this potentially-catalyzing role, namely, as someone who "speak[s] out for [the bomber's] sake and in solidarity with others who share your concern … [who] are now afraid to speak freely and openly" (Ludwig 2009: 5). There is no question that this stepping-into-the-limelight added to his reputation (frequently espoused by his biographer) as "essentially a man without fear" (Nikiforuk, quoted in Stuffco 2009; see also, CTV 2012), and that his renown among many Tomslakers was partly due to his choice to publicly say what they, for reasons described above, dared not say.

Ludwig's role transitioned from sideline commentator to central protagonist when on January 8, 2010 the RCMP arrested him in connection with the bombings and began a multi-day search of the Trickle Creek property. In a 113 page warrant application, the

[137] This bears some relationship to Tilly's notion of *setting-based activation*, which provides "political identities [that] connect people with certain social settings and not with others, drawing them into those settings activates the identities" (Tilly 2003: 175).

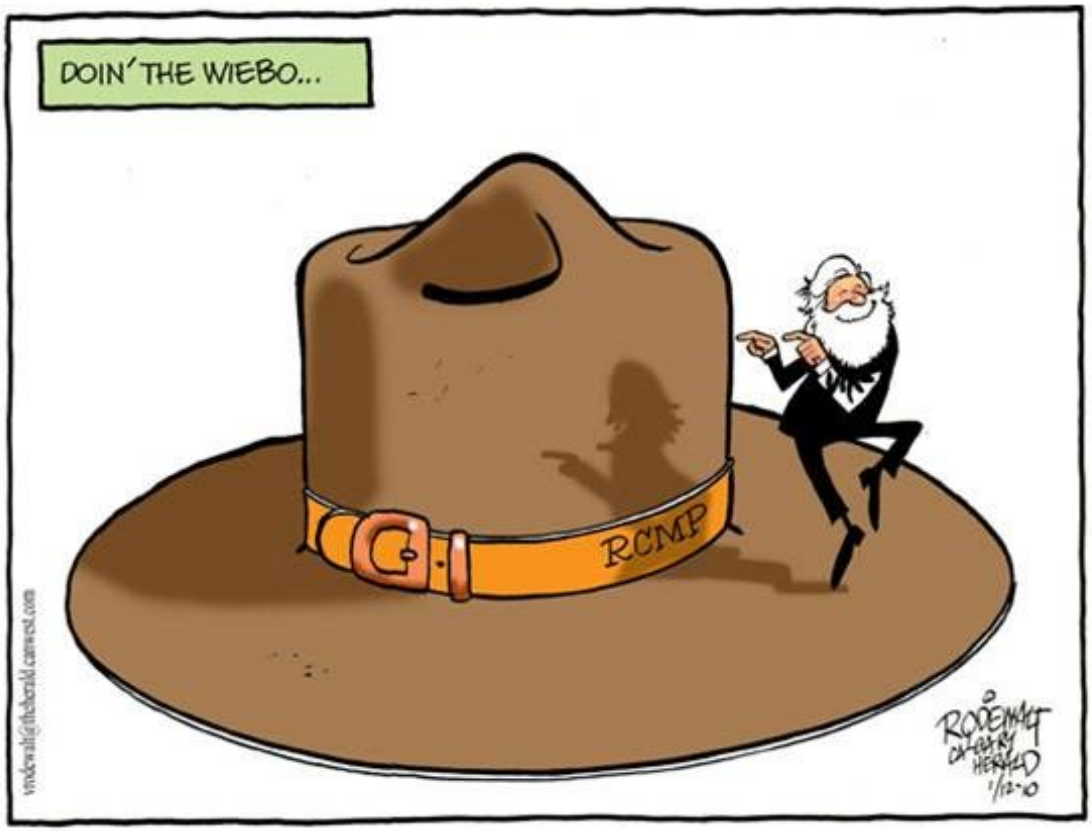
RCMP presented a litany of circumstantial evidence along with lab results linking Ludwig's DNA to that found on two of the threat letters from the bomber (RCMP 2010: 60-61). In the concluding section of the application, the RCMP Corporal Keith Hack informs the court of his belief "that based upon on the totality of the evidence discovered to date surrounding these current pipeline bombings, that [*sic*] Wiebo LUDWIG is involved in the Dawson Creek bombings offences" (RCMP 2010: 84, capitalization in the original).[138] He was subsequently arrested and released after twenty-four hours of interrogation when prosecutors, having viewed the evidence that the RCMP proffered to them, elected not to lay the extortion charges that Ludwig and his lawyer had been told to expect (Joosse 2010).

Despite the lack of charges, the arrest fascinated and regaled the pundit class because of what the Ludwig-as-culprit thought experiment entailed, especially given the prior communicative interactions between Ludwig, the bomber, and authorities (all of which now looked slightly more incestuous). *Edmonton Journal* columnist Paula Simons called the arrest "a wildly ironic turn of events, given that Ludwig had been publicly helping the RCMP with their investigation, had been giving media interviews about the case, and had written an open letter to the bomber..." (Simons 2010: A5). Rosie Dimanno of the *Toronto Star* remarked, "one narcissistic bomber may have sent himself a

[138] Other circumstantial factors, not found in the warrant, bear mentioning here. The bombings themselves began a week after a crew from the National Film Board of Canada arrived at Trickle Creek to begin filming what would eventually become *Wiebo's War* (York 2011). When speaking about why he went after the story *when* he did, director David York revealed: "'I knew he lived a life in conflict, and it seemed likely, given a boom [of industrial development] in his immediate neighborhood, there would be more (incidents of vandalism)'"(York, quoted in Monk 2011). The bombings of AEC installations (AEC being a parent company of EnCana) that occurred in the late 1990s (for which Ludwig and Boonstra were convicted) also were accompanied by anonymous threat letters (Nikiforuk 2001: 73, 106), and one of these made use of the Spartacus metaphor (pg. 192). Also, though I made a point of not asking Ludwig about his role in the bombings, he would often raise these questions himself. He would ask, "Do you think I'm the Tomslake bomber?" And I would reply, "I have to consider that that's a very real possibility"—a response that seemed to cause him some amusement (one of these episodes is recounted in Kohler 2012: 14).

love letter" (DiManno 2010). A cartoonist from the *Calgary Herald* pictured Ludwig dancing gleefully on the brim of an RCMP hat with the caption "Doin' the Wiebo."

Figure 10. Doin' the Wiebo



For some, this presumed toying around with the RCMP, this playing with reality, seems to be a crucial element in what Schiffer calls the "charisma of hoax"—an "excitement with deception, with illusion, with play . . . a secret exquisite delight, which we often then try to stifle, when we hear of a fraud smoothly perpetrated by a hoaxter" (1973: 49). An admixture to this feeling, however, was confirmation of suspicions that Ludwig's self-stylings at times had the tendency to seem calculated, somewhat forced, and perhaps tainted with a narcissistic self-fascination (something the RCMP tried to capitalize on, flattering him by comparing him to Nelson Mandela during his interrogation [Christopher

2010: 16]). In 2000, Lisa Ling interviewed Luwdig and wrote a report for Correctional Services of Canada, in which she characterized him as "a thrill seeker, craving fantastic and uninviting behaviour. Calculated risks seem to be thoroughly planned and enjoyed" (quoted in Nikiforuk 2001: 262). For all of the talk about the 'people's struggle,' it seemed that, increasingly, the story seemed to take on the character of *Wiebo's War* (the title of a National Film Board treatment of the situation [York 2011]).

Meaning and Ideologies of Effervescence

Whatever the organizational realities may be, we can see from this example that discourses of leaderless resistance are nearly always partly (and in this case perhaps fully) *rhetorical* in nature. That is, there is an ideological metric at play, the poles of which consist of the 'crazy lone wolf' (read: "Bush Bunny") at one end and the revolutionary vanguardist (read: "Spartacus") at the other. Ludwig's Spartacus metaphor can be grouped together with leaderless resistance at one end of this metric as an 'ideology of effervescence' that aggrandizes and legitimates the struggle. In every iteration of such an ideology, we find messages addressed to a community of like-minded fellow-travellers (whether this community is real, imagined, or mustered in a modern-day retelling of the Stone Soup fable) who will (or have been) acting out in similar ways, motivated by near-identical grievances. Where Ludwig seeks to invoke the "I'm Spartacus" call, fighters in the Chiapas rebellion declare "We are all Marcos" and countless internet 'hacktivists' declare "we are Anonymous." If we turn to the case that has preoccupied most counterterrorism research for the last decade, we find Abu Mus'ab al-Suri, al-Qaeda member and self-styled "architect of global jihad" who advocates for

"individual terrorism Jihad" by "small Resistance Units completely and totally separated from each other" (Lia 2008: 371, 373).[139] According to him, these leaderless resisters[140] have already,

> had great influence on awakening the spirit of jihad and resistance within the Islamic Nation, and it transformed unknown individuals such as al-Diqamsa, Suleyman Khatir, Sayyid Nusayr, and Ramzy Yusuf into becoming symbols of a nation. The crowds cheer their names, people's thirst for revenge is satisfied, and a generation of youth dedicated to the Resistance follow their example (Lia 2008: 366).

Thus, while there have been intense debates about the extent to which al-Qaeda actually conforms to this "leaderless jihad" model (Sageman 2008a; 2008b; Hoffman 2008a; 2008b; Leggiere 2008),[141] such debates are predicated on an acceptance of the reification of 'leaderless resistance' as a veridical description of objective reality and a fundamentally organizational (rather than rhetorical) form of contestation. An understanding of the propagandistic dimension of leaderless resistance may help in sketching out some middle ground between those who are aligned on different sides of this issue.

When one addresses the topic of 'leaderless resistance' etymologically, we find more reasons to highlight this propagandistic nature. Indeed, the emergence and inclusion of the 'leaderless resistance' term in the modern terrorism-studies lexicon would make an

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[139] Like other instances of the development of leaderless resistance, this call for "Individual Terrorism Jihad" comes against the backdrop of what al-Suri refers to as "the failure of the operational methods of secret, hierarchical organizations, in light of the international and regional (counter-terrorism) co-ordination" (Lia 2008: 391).

[140] Lawrence Wright translates al-Suri's term as "'leaderless resistance'" (2006: 49).

[141] The recently released *Letters from Abbottabad* reveal that in his last years Osama Bin Laden vacillated between micromanaging some cells that he indeed had contact with, and worrying about damage that had been done to the al-Qaeda 'brand' (Bin Laden 2012).

interesting case study in the sociology of knowledge, since it originally emerged not within this literature, but rather as a piece of movement doctrine (Beam 1992 [1983]; Kaplan 1997; Dobratz and Waldner 2012). Leaderless resistance would have perhaps forever remained as an idiosyncratic buzz term within the racist far right had it not been for Jeffrey Kaplan's seminal article, "'Leaderless Resistance'," published in *Terrorism and Political Violence* in 1997. But while this marked the term's entrance into academe, at this stage there were no pretensions toward theoretical abstraction. Rather, displaying a fealty to the ethnographic calling to explore cultural phenomena on their own terms, Kaplan presented 'leaderless resistance' as "a long-standing subject of internal debate in the American radical right," and clearly signaled its status as movement parlance by ensconcing his title in 'scare quotes' ("'Leaderless Resistance'" 1997: 80). The subject of analysis for Kaplan's piece were key texts written by strategists/theorists from various tributaries of the racist far right, making it clear that what he was doing was tracing the development of a movement *doctrine*—not advancing a new ideal-type of organizational strategy in asymmetrical warfare. In her early discussions of the phenomenon, Jessica Stern also suggests that it should not be accepted at face value as an academically-tested organizational form, nearly always referring to it as "the doctrine of leaderless resistance," and even suggesting at one point that it is "not really leaderless" (Stern 2003a: 150, 144). When speaking more generally about oppositional movements that have had to abandon traditional hierarchical organization, Stern prefers the term "virtual networks" to "leaderless resistance" (2003a: 141; 144). A more intricate tracing of its usage (which, due to space limitations, I cannot provide here)[142] reveals that, with a

[142] Even as he closed the piece with "a speculative consideration of Timothy McVeigh as a possible case study of the strategy of leaderless resistance," Kaplan stops shy of actually characterizing McVeigh's act as

'leaderless resistance' (1997: 80). For Kaplan, a direct, provable inspirational link between the progenitor of the concept of 'leaderless resistance' and the movement denizen is necessary for determining whether a particular case study qualifies as an example. Kaplan thus uses the case of McVeigh not to operationalize the concept, but rather to display the intractable "problem of interpretation" that attends all such attempts at operationalization (1997).

Following closely in this vein, Jessica Stern (2003a; 2003b) was another important early analyst of the idea as it developed in the radical right. Her commentary specifically on 'leaderless resistance' consistently suggests that it should not be accepted at face value as an academically-tested organizational form, nearly always referring to it as "the doctrine of leaderless resistance," and even suggesting at one point that it is "not really leaderless" (Stern 2003a: 150, 144). When speaking more generally about oppositional movements that have had to abandon traditional hierarchical organization, Stern prefers the term "virtual networks" to "leaderless resistance" (2003a: 141; 144). Suffice it to say that at this stage, 'leaderless resistance' had not yet shed its scare quotes.

Garfinkel (2003) circumvented the problem that Kaplan encountered when he sought to apply the leaderless resistance concept more generally, eschewing the requirement for an intra-movement progenitor to didactically exhort the strategy, thereby advancing the more contemporary notion of leaderless resistance as something that can emerge organically and quite unintentionally. Thus, with Garfinkel's piece, leaderless resistance appears as a *model* for academic study, generalizable to a wide range of groups outside the radical right, applying simply to all "groups that employ cells and that lack bidirectional vertical command links — that is, groups without leaders." His analysis deals with Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty (SHAC), the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), and certain acts of Islamic terrorism against US interests. Pressman, writing at the same time as Garfinkel, took a similar tack, applying to the Washington D.C. area snipers of 2002 and the Earth Liberation Front, with the aim of understanding the likely developments that would affect al-Qaeda as its hierarchy was coming under intense pressure (2003). In the piece, Pressman outlines several common features of leaderless resistance and, contrary to Kaplan, asserts that "[l]eaderless resistance need not even be a conscious act" (2003: 422). Since the publication of these two essays myriad variations of the leaderless resistance thesis have been advanced by students of right-wing extremism (Gartenstein-Ross and Gruen 2010; Michael 2012), Islamic terrorism (Suri, cited in Wright, Lia 2008; Sageman 2008), anti-federalist American Militia groups (Pressman 2003; Joosse 2007; Kaplan 1997), the animal rights movement (Flükiger 2009; Garfinkel 2003; Michael 2012), radical environmental groups (Joosse 2007; 2012; Leader and Probst 2003; Becker 2006; Chalk 2001), anti-abortionists who operate as the 'Army of God' (Levin and Pinkerson 2000; Stern 2003a: 150-151), and even online 'hacktivist' groups like Anonymous (Michael 2012: 94; Whipple 2008).

I maintain that with this proliferation of studies, and with this transformation from far-right doctrine into an academic organizational model, has come a disciplinary amnesia about the original doctrinal, propagandistic nature of the leaderless resistance concept as advocated by Beam and others on the radical right.

Partial fault for this situation also might rest with the issuing journal for Kaplan's article, *Terrorism and Political Violence* (for which Kaplan himself maintains a longstanding tenure both as editorial board member and book reviews editor), which remarkably uses the article as one of its examples for potential authors of the journal's preferred citation style (see below).

gradual transformation from far-right doctrine into an abstract organizational model (expressed explicitly in this manner first by Garfinkel [2003] and Pressman [2003]) has come a disciplinary amnesia about the original doctrinal, propagandistic nature of the leaderless resistance concept.

When we turn to original texts, however, this aspect is hard to miss. Louis Beam, for example, when pioneering the 'leaderless resistance' term, seems to be writing with the same pen as al-Suri, but to a different audience—America's "brave sons and

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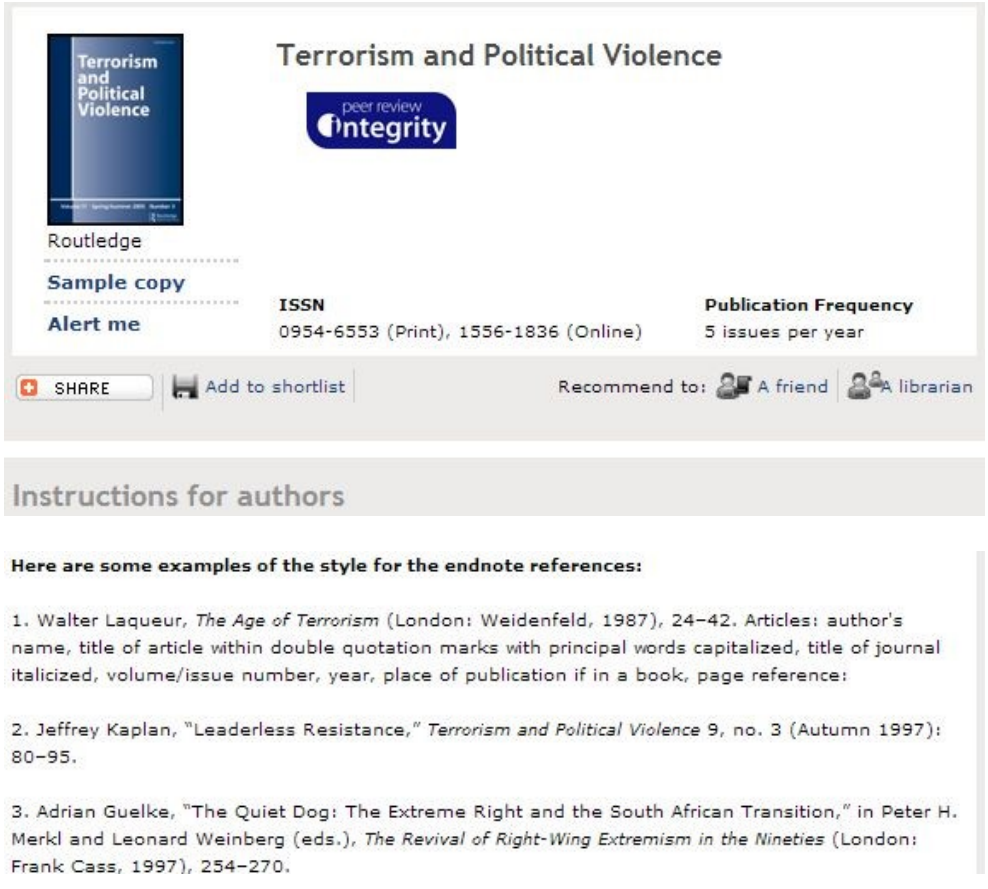

Above is a screen capture of the current submission guidelines on the *Terrorism and Political Violence* section of the Taylor & Francis website, containing the erroneous Kaplan citation style as an example for potential authors. A version of this guideline is also found on the last page of current print editions of the journal.

I am not here suggesting that these quotes marks are the *cause* of the slippage of meaning from doctrinal to reified academic/typological status. Rather, the desertion of punctuation merely serves as an indicator that such a slippage has taken place.

daughters" (1992 [1983]). Despite the objective fact of the record unpopularity for his *alma mater* organizations like the KKK, he stressed that,

> They are there. I have looked into their sparking eyes; sharing a brief moment in time with them as I passed through this life. Relished their friendship, endured their pain, and they mine. We are a band of brothers, native to the soil gaining strength one from another as we have rushed head long into a battle (Beam [1983] 1992).

Harold Covington, a prominent white supremacist activist and writer, gave some personal reflections to researcher George Michael fifteen years after the publication of Louis Beam's essay. He noted that the *Leaderless Resistance* essay failed to stir the masses into action, and rather than valorizing the purported constituency from which such actions would flow as a stoic band of heroic brothers, Covington—speaking from a perspective that witnessed the further dwindling of the racist far right—is no longer able to avoid what were (to him) depressing realities. Speaking of leaderless resistance as a salve for "that nagging little bit of shame and remorse and self-contempt that tells the White man that he really should be doing something", Covington opines that:

> Louis [Beam] tripped over the same obstacle that I and everyone else who has ever tried to do something with "the Blob" [white masses] have tripped over—the wretchedly poor character of the twenty-first century white American. Louis's concept of leaderless resistance was based on the assumption that actual acts of resistance would in fact take place, and that never happened…. [I]t basically turned into yet another excuse for the white man to do nothing. "Shhh, I can't

help you Harold. I have to keep a low profile, I'm practicing leaderless resistance" (Covington quoted in Michael 2012: 55-56).

The salience of humiliation as a factor for the invention and eventual rejection of the leaderless strategy among certain elements of the radical right is clearly demonstrated by intra-movement deliberations like these.

Indeed, while Scott (1990) highlights the 'test balloon' function of speech acts for discharging energy pent up in suppressed grievance, ideological effervescence also clearly serves a second, meaning-conferring function,[143] lifting the spirits of above ground movement progenitors who advocate/exhort leaderless resistance and the lone wolves who might consider responding to their call.[144] Thus, while the operational capabilities between these contesting parties are invariably asymmetrical, the field and structure of the ideological argumentation evinces a mirror-like symmetry. "Spartacus" and the "Bush Bunny" dance together, with each fighting for the lead. We can see, therefore, that the ebullient discourses of leaderless resistance find their counterpart in the

[143] According to Weber, such a function is central to the draw of politics as a vocation generally:

> He who lives 'for' politics makes politics his life, in an internal sense. Either he enjoys the naked possession of the power he exerts, or he nourishes his inner balance and self-feeling by the consciousness that his life has meaning in the service of a 'cause.' In this internal sense, every sincere man who lives for a cause also lives off this cause (Weber 1919 [1958]: 84).

[144] While scholastic treatments of leaderless resistance tend to make a fundamental distinction between the above-ground movement progenitors and the lone wolves who respond to these calls, the Ludwig/Spartacus interactions suggest that, in terms of charismatic affectation, such a distinction may not be germane. Max Weber maintained that there are two types of prophet, namely, the "exemplary prophet" (those who inspire others through their actions and way of living) and the "ethical prophet" (those who challenge received wisdom through new revelations in writing or speech [Weber 1922 [1978]: 447-448]). Both accrue charismatic recognition through these different styles of engagement with constituencies, and as the case of Ludwig shows, it may be possible to affect both styles simultaneously. Thus, while from his "hidden transcript" framework Scott is mainly concerned with public speech acts, Tilly's "scattered attacks" discussion emphasizes the role of sabotage as a "signalling spiral" which "communicate[s] the current feasibility and effectiveness of generally risky practices and thereby alters the readiness of participants to face the risks in question" (Tilly 2003: 132). Thus, the Tomslake bomber's efforts to show EnCana—which has thousands of miles of pipeline infrastructure spidering over the privately-owned land of many industrious farmers—that "you are vulnerable [and] can be rendered helpless, despite your megafunds, your political influence, craftiness and deceit," functions communicatively in a similar manner as the above-ground speech acts themselves (EnCana bomber 2009).

demobilizing rhetoric of hearts-and-minds campaigns of authorities who are invested in maintaining social relations in their present state. A nuanced and contextualized analysis of the concept will find that leaderless resistance-style ideation develops *dialectically*, in relation and response to pre-existing marginalizing discourses and depressing political realities.

But how, in the end, is the nearly-universally condemned and idiosyncratic lone wolf to be distinguished from the true, vanguard-occupying 'leaderless resister' who shows a real proclivity for compelling collective resistance? While the temptation may be to resort to what are unhelpfully metaphorical or quasi-mystical terms like 'resonance,' 'inspiration,' 'contagion,' or 'metastasization,' James C. Scott's (1990) notion of the 'hidden transcript' helps to demystify and make more intelligible the set of conditions that can predispose a population for inspirational, collective, spontaneous resistance:

> If the first act of defiance succeeds and is spontaneously imitated by large numbers of others, an observer might well conclude that a herd of cattle with no individual wills or values had been stampeded inadvertently or by design. The same pattern of action can, however, be produced when a subordinate group learns from a breakthrough event that they may now, more safely, venture open defiance (Scott 1990: 222).

If there is a lack of such spontaneous imitation, we know that the experiment has failed, that the hopeful charismatic leader is not legitimate in the Weberian sense (1922 [1978]). Ultimately, therefore, while political aspirants may be "deviant, peculiar, or perhaps insane," "insipient charismatics" are transformed into "genuine charismatics" through

one process only—namely, the confirmation of a grandiose self-feeling through *social recognition* (Friedland 1964: 21, 25[for more on the fundamentally symbolic interactionist quality of charisma as a process of social recognition, see Couch 1989; Finlay 2002; Joosse 2012; Wallis 1982; Wasielewski 1985]).[145] According to Weber, the charismatic leader retains power over subordinates only ''so long as he knows how to maintain recognition through 'proving' himself'' (Weber 1922 [1958]: 246). In the specific case of leaderless resistance, then, it is inspired attacks that serve as these "proofs" of charismatic status, by legitimizing the cause being promulgated and by serving as confirmation of the power of the leader to lead.

Conclusion

To summarize the explication so far, we may now turn to four contributions to the study of leaderless resistance that the above analysis presents. They are:

1. **Leaderlessness as *ideology* not *actuality***: Pushing past analyses that focus on the *organizational realities* of leaderless resistance, this article has highlighted its rhetorical, propagandistic function. Just as the term 'leaderless resistance' emerged as a doctrine in the radical right, ideologies of leaderlessness, incorporating assertions about the similarity, capability, and effervescent nature of the actors involved, are prone to be developed in many different contexts of asymmetrical conflict. This study has presented a micro-level, dialectical account of one such originating process, resulting in a rhetorical battle between

[145] Sociologist of religion Bryan Wilson put it succinctly: "If a man runs naked down the street proclaiming that he alone can save others from impending doom, and if he immediately wins a following, then he is a charismatic leader: a social relationship has come into being. If he does not win a following, he is simply a lunatic" (1975: 7).

"Spartacus" and the "Bush Bunny." From this perspective, a new irony emerges: while counterterrorism research has reified leaderless resistance, seeing it as a veridical description of objective reality and a fundamentally *organizational* (rather than a rhetorical) form of contestation, those they are fighting against (namely inspirational terrorist leaders and the lone wolves they exhort) also seek to naturalize the concept, casting it as inevitable (and therefore legitimate) effervescence.

2. Following from this insight, we can problematize Bruce Hoffman's supposed **terminological equivalence** between terms "'leaderless resistance,' 'phantom cell networks,' 'autonomous leadership units,' 'autonomous cells,' 'networks of networks,' or 'lone wolves'" (Hoffman 2006: 271). On rhetorical grounds, the lone wolf symbolizes the isolated loner, perhaps crazily howling at the moon, while the leaderless resister alternately occupies a prized vanguard position. It is in this sense that ideologies of leaderlessness can, to varying degrees, perform a meaning-conferring function for those exhorting perilous contestation and those contemplating engaging in it. As Bakker and de Graaf point out, "lone wolves, by definition, are idiosyncratic" (2012: 46). By definition, then, we might also say that they stand in particular need of this function.

3. **The Role of Charisma:** The incorporation of Scott's (1990) work on the 'hidden transcript,' as well as other insights from the sociological literature on charisma, provides a mechanism for understanding how leadership *persists* in contexts of leaderless resistance. The failure or infeasibility of traditional bureaucratically-based leadership in these cases is thus not an occasion for the absence of

leadership *per se*. Quite the opposite: it is a moment that often flushes with leadership of simply another (that is, charismatic) type. When conceptualized this way, we can see how 'leaderless resistance' (as an ideological construct) serves simultaneously to put what is for legal purposes exculpatory distance between the inspirational leader and inspired actors, while allowing incipient charismatics to continue to claim a form of credit for the actions, which in turn act as further 'proofs' (in the Weberian sense) of their charismatic legitimacy. Again, we see a new irony emerging, since we might say that ideologies of "leaderless resistance" can be characterized as an artifact of the *transition*, in terms of political opportunities, from bureaucratic to charismatic leadership styles. I should note that this contribution is only novel in the context of counterterrorism research: it has long been recognized that the breakdown of bureaucratic systems is often attended by—if not causally related to—resurgences in charismatic leadership styles (Weber 1922 [1978]).

4. **The "New Terrorism?"** This leads to a consideration of the novelty of 'leaderless resistance' itself. Many scholars have pointed to leaderless modes of mobilization being a hallmark of the "new terrorism" (Arquilla, Ronfeldt, and Zanini 1999; Crenshaw 2009: 132-133; Giddens 2004: 7; Laqueur 1999: 5; Morgan 2004: 38-39; Neumann 2009: 17-21, 56-68; Hoffman 2006: 39-40, 267-272; Tucker 2001: 1-3). This perspective maintains a focus on the globalization of social movements, internet-based radicalization, and the importance of social media for communication and coordination. While there is no doubt that these are salient factors in modern patterns of contentious politics, the example of

> "Spartacus vs. the Bush Bunny," should temper the enthusiasm of those who would seek for an absolute dichotomization between 'old' and 'new' in this regard. The present study gives an account of how ideologies of leaderlessness can develop through what are relatively old-fashioned modes of communication (pen-to-paper threat-letters, press conferences, opinions expressed in local and national newspapers, and a localized communicative frame for sabotage). Given the fact that the place of origination for the concept is so often in the minds of movement progenitors/advocates, it stands to reason that leaderless resistance and other ideologies of effervescence would be as old as is contestation between the powerful and the powerless.

This analysis has therefore been an exercise in both deconstruction and affirmation. It has been a deconstruction in that it sought to unpack and challenge some of the unwarranted assumptions in the terrorism literature about the phenomenon we call 'leaderless resistance.' It has been affirmative in that it has displayed the continued facility that leaderless resistance has for acting as a descriptor of developments in contemporary terrorism, particularly as it manifests in charismatic rather than bureaucratic modes of interaction. In order to illustrate this continued facility, we would do well to turn to the latest and most notorious example that explicates "lone wolf terror and the rise of leaderless resistance" (Michael 2012)—namely, Anders Breivik.

In his manifesto, Breivik claimed to be a part of a re-founded version of the Knights Templar[146] (made up of "Justiciar Knights"), a group of entirely independent "solo martyr cells" numbering, in his estimation fifteen to eighty in Western Europe (Breivik 2011: 839, 841). By the time of his first court appearance Breivik's estimation

[146] Breivik terms this the "Pauperes commilitones Christi Templique Solomonici" (2011: 826).

of this number had shrunk to "two more cells" (BBC 2011b). As Spaaij has perceptively noted, "much like McVeigh, Breivik believes that his attack is the opening salvo in a wider campaign. It remains unclear, however, if this is a figment of his imagination or if Breivik has some factual basis for his belief that there are others like him planning attacks" (Spaaij 2012: 18; see also Bertzen and Sandberg 2014: 20 n. 80). For all of his attempts to self-style as a charismatic figure,[147] sociologists are fond of pointing out that charisma is not a trait—it is a *relationship*. We can therefore be thankful that, for the time being at least, Breivik's overtures have been refused.

[147] These include a host of self-portraits in pseudo-military regalia, and a manifesto in which he speaks as one of "several leaders of the National and pan-European Patriotic Resistance Movement" (Breivik 2011: 9). See Sandberg (2013: 76-77) for an account of Breivik's self-styling as an "evangelist."

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APPENDIX A: Letter to potential participants and consent form

[Date]

Dear [Name of potential participant],

I am writing to ask whether you be interested in participating in an interview with me on the topic of your experiences as a resident of the Tomslake area during a time of controversial industrial expansion.

I am currently working to complete towards a PhD in the Sociology department at the University of Alberta. I would like to do the interview as part of the research for my dissertation.

If you are interested in participating, our meeting would be fairly undemanding, consisting of an approximately hour-long interview in a comfortable place of your choosing. The interview would be scheduled at your convenience. I may then contact you for a brief follow-up telephone conversation, in which I might ask you to clarify one or two points from our discussion in the initial interview.

Please know that your participation is voluntary. You would be free to withdraw at any time during the interview, or for two months following the date when interview takes place. If you decide to withdraw your participation during this time, any data collected from you would be withdrawn from my dissertation. A tape recorder will be used to record our interview and I will transcribe the tapes. I will use a pseudonym to represent you in all work that is written about the interview, and I will mask any identifiable information so as to ensure to the best of my ability that you remain anonymous. I will also keep your interview tape and transcripts locked in a secure place for a minimum of five years following completion of this research activity.

I do not foresee any harm resulting from this activity. Instead, people often find the opportunity to reflect on their experiences to be beneficial.

If you have any further questions about the interview activity, please feel free to contact me at xxxxxxx, or email me at xxxxxxx. You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. Stephen A. Kent at xxxxxxx. Please complete the attached consent form to indicate your decision. If you are willing to participate, please return the consent form to me. Thank you for considering this request.

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Paul Joosse

Informed Consent Form

Project Title: The Experience of a Community Divided: Living in the Tomslake Area in a Time of Industrial Expansion

Researcher: Paul Joosse

_____ **No**, I do not choose to participate in the research project.

_____ **Yes**, I agree to participate in the research project.

I give my consent to be interviewed for this research. I understand that the interview will be recorded on tape. I understand that only the investigator, Paul Joosse will have access to the audio tape and transcripts of the tape. I understand that Paul Joosse will attempt to keep the information I provide anonymous by not referring to me by my name or location, but by using a pseudonym. I understand that the information I provide may be used in a dissertation produced by Paul Joosse.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time within two months of the scheduled interview. I understand that I am free to refuse to answer specific questions, and/or to withdraw my participation at any time during or between interviews. I understand that participation in any aspects of the study is voluntary.

Name of participant (Please print):

_____

Signature of participant:

_____

Date _____

APPENDIX B: Adding new recruitment techniques to the Tomslake study

Ethics proposal addition for: **The Experience of a Community Divided: Living in the Tomslake Area in a Time of Industrial Expansion**

After my first few trips to Tomslake, I have been somewhat disappointed with the level of participation from residents of the area. Those who did contact me were very helpful and the interviews proceeded in a comfortable and productive fashion, but the actual number of people who contacted me was small. I suspect that this is due to the fact that my letters involved asking people to phone or email me. In this remote, rural, and elderly community, there may be reluctance—or simply an inability—to contact me via these methods. The phone calls required would be long-distance, which is a financial disincentive, and many people may not be comfortable with email.

I have therefore felt the need to expand my solicitation techniques to include approaching people *in situ* to see if they are willing to talk. I also hope to employ a limited form of snow-ball sampling. My description of these two extensions is as follows:

A) Approaching people: Very often on my visits to the area of Tomslake, BC, I would end up in conversations with people who were generally very friendly and open to talking about the presence of industry in their community. Further, the bombing campaign has been the "talk of the town" of late, and as such, many people are very willing to give their opinions and experiences, often with very little prompting. Up until this point, I have been unable to document these naturally-occurring encounters, many of which would have been very valuable. Thus, after assessing the situation on my first few research trips, I have come to the opinion that approaching residents in a respectful way in order to ask them to participate would present no additional ethical problems. All of the ethical considerations in my first application (informed consent and the determination that there is a very low likelihood of harm coming to participants as a result of participation in the study), will still come to bear in equal measure on this mode of participation. When one of these serendipitous conversations is beginning, I will stop the conversation, explain explicitly my research purposes, have them read my letter of introduction, and ask them if they wouldn't mind consenting to an interview some time at a place of their choosing. Before any formal interview takes place, I will ensure their informed consent by having them sign the consent form.

B) Snow-ball sampling: I would like to pass out business cards to my participants, who can then distribute them as they see fit to other members of the community. In being given the business cards, these "secondary" members will be able to contact me (or choose not to) of their own volition. Thus, "primary" participants will not be able to know with any level of certainty whether their acquaintances have chosen to speak to me, especially because of the anonymization of all work that I will publish through the use of pseudonyms and the stripping of all other 'telling' biographical data.

APPENDIX C: Adding a new population to the Tomslake study

I also would like to add a new population of participants to my study; people I will term "public figures."

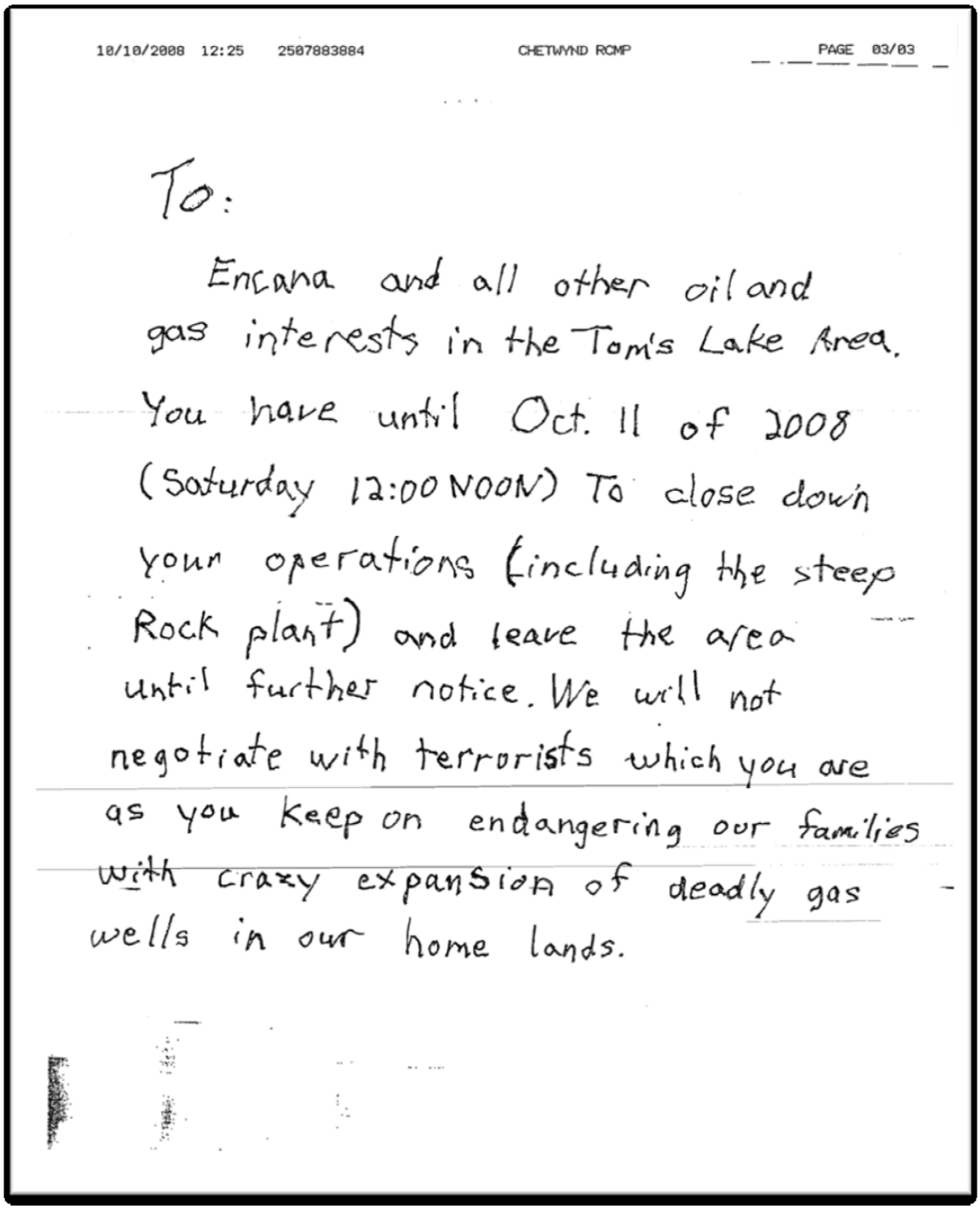
In the course of my research, I have come into contact with some prominent members of society who have long histories of speaking out publicly on matters that pertain to my research. For these people, I would like to add a box to my consent form that they may check if they feel that they wish to forego the privilege of anonymity. These are people who routinely voice opinions in the public sphere, and who wish that they be named in my representation of them in my study. Two examples of such figures will suffice:

a) Wiebo Ludwig: this man is a long-time activist who has given countless media interviews, participated willingly with a journalist for the production of a biography (Nikiforuk 2001), and produced his own documentary, entitled *Home, Sour Home*. He is an out-spoken activist whose opinions have extra gravity given his historical role in the radical environmental milieu.
b) Similarly with Mike Hudema: this former UofA Students' Union president, lawyer, and head of Greenpeace Alberta should not be automatically anonymized, as he routinely puts his name to his opinions in public discourse.

Other figures like this may emerge, and I would like to have the discretion to offer these prominent figures the "opt out of anonymity" check box. The questions that I used for my other interviewees will form a guide for my questions to these public figures, but they will also be tailored to the specific knowledge and social/occupational location of these uniquely experienced subjects.

APPENDIX D: Letters from the EnCana Bomber

Letter number one, October 7, 2008

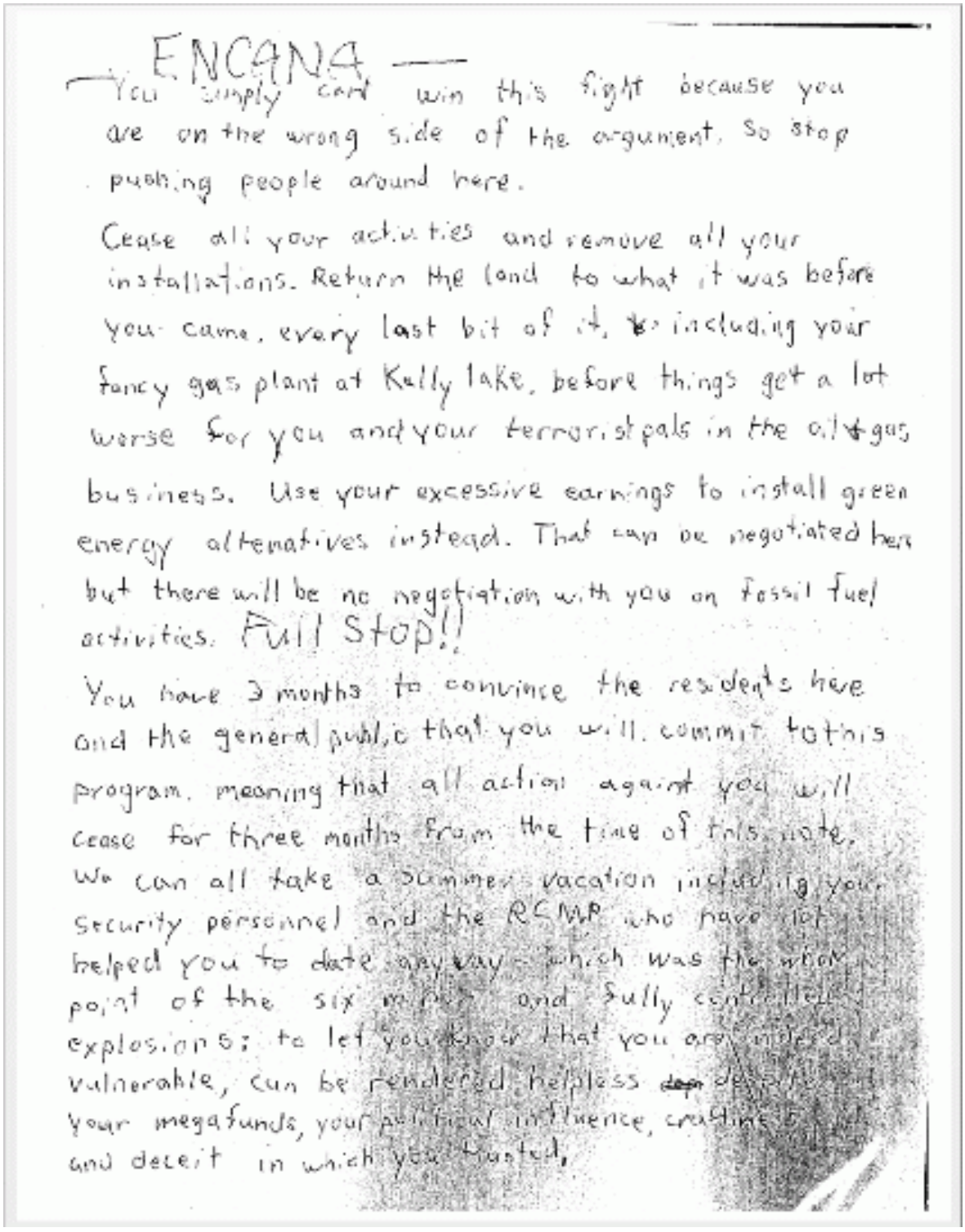


10/10/2008 12:25 2507883884 CHETWYND RCMP PAGE 03/03

To:

Encana and all other oil and gas interests in the Tom's Lake Area. You have until Oct. 11 of 2008 (Saturday 12:00 NOON) To close down your operations (including the steep Rock plant) and leave the area until further notice. We will not negotiate with terrorists which you are as you keep on endangering our families with crazy expansion of deadly gas wells in our home lands.

Letter number two, July 15, 2009



ENCANA

You simply can't win this fight because you are on the wrong side of the argument. So stop pushing people around here.

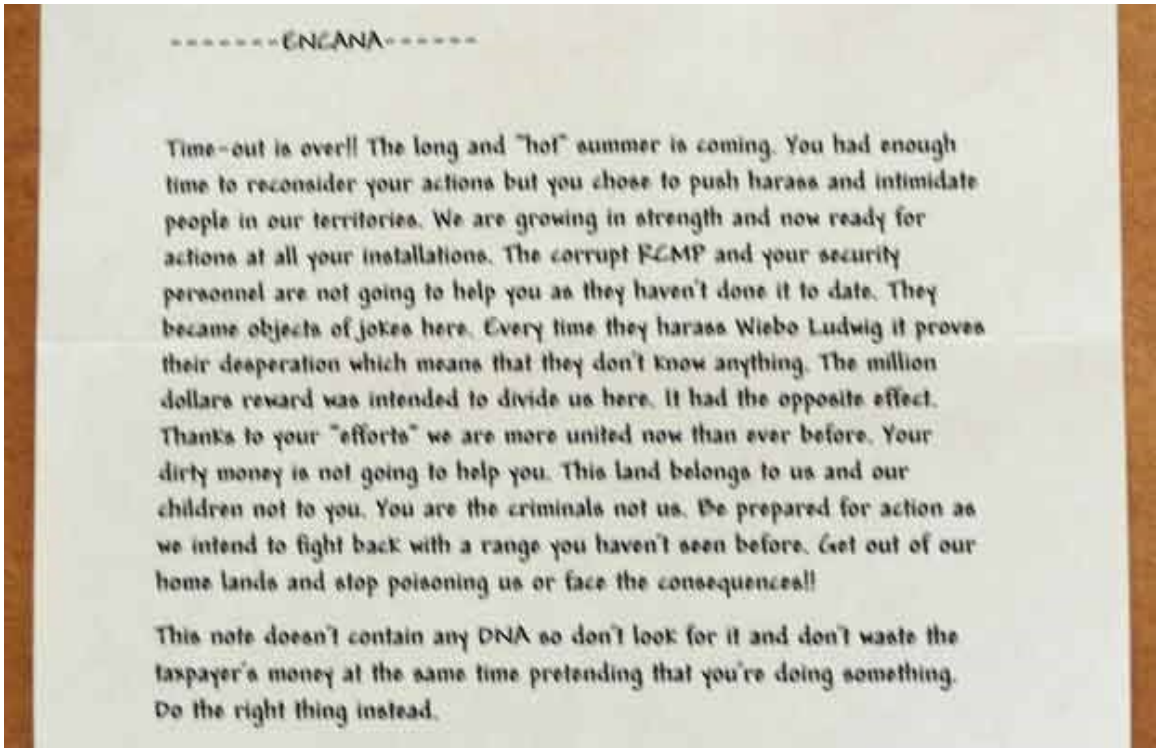
Cease all your activities and remove all your installations. Return the land to what it was before you came, every last bit of it, including your fancy gas plant at Kelly lake, before things get a lot worse for you and your terrorist pals in the oil & gas business. Use your excessive earnings to install green energy alternatives instead. That can be negotiated here but there will be no negotiation with you on fossil fuel activities. Full Stop!!

You have 3 months to convince the residents here and the general public that you will commit to this program, meaning that all action against you will cease for three months from the time of this note. We can all take a summer vacation including your security personnel and the RCMP who have not helped you to date anyway - which was the whole point of the six murders and fully controlled explosions; to let you know that you are indeed vulnerable, can be rendered helpless despite your megafunds, your political influence, cruelties and deceit in which you excelled.

Don't press the issue in your pride and greed and force worse things to happen. In the meantime, give the people here room during these three months to talk about these problems unmolested by any further interrogations and/or investigations so that they can speak their minds without reprisal.

You have 5 years to shut down and remove all the oil and gas facilities you have established over the last 8 years in our territories of the Tamsluke and Kelly Lake districts. Don't Delay!!

Letter number three, April 15, 2010



-------ENCANA------

Time-out is over!! The long and "hot" summer is coming. You had enough time to reconsider your actions but you chose to push harass and intimidate people in our territories. We are growing in strength and now ready for actions at all your installations. The corrupt RCMP and your security personnel are not going to help you as they haven't done it to date. They became objects of jokes here. Every time they harass Wiebo Ludwig it proves their desperation which means that they don't know anything. The million dollars reward was intended to divide us here. It had the opposite effect. Thanks to your "efforts" we are more united now than ever before. Your dirty money is not going to help you. This land belongs to us and our children not to you. You are the criminals not us. Be prepared for action as we intend to fight back with a range you haven't seen before. Get out of our home lands and stop poisoning us or face the consequences!!

This note doesn't contain any DNA so don't look for it and don't waste the taxpayer's money at the same time pretending that you're doing something. Do the right thing instead.

APPENDIX E: Some pictures from the Tomslake research trips.

From the top left: the EnCana Events Centre, Dawson Creek; a warning sigh outside of an EnCana riser, Tomslake; a typical flare in progress; the 'Courtesy Matters' EnCana campaign; road kill on the Old Edmonton Highway; the first bombing blast site; a surveillance trailer in Tomslake.


T-14

Chapter Five

Antiglobalization and Radical Environmentalism: An Exchange on Ethical Grounds

ABSTRACT:

Since 1992, clandestine radical environmentalist cells, calling themselves the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), have carried out arson attacks in an effort to punish corporations for environmentally deleterious practices. I examine the radical environmental movement and find that its recent rise to prominence and notoriety is part and parcel of the larger development of the more general anti-globalization/anti-capitalist movement. Specifically, I examine how, despite its libertarian conservative origins, the ideology of Earth First! changed after an influx of new members with anti-state, anarchist sympathies. Finally, I assess the applicability of three major criticisms of 'globalization from below' to the case of the ELF, namely: a) that its preoccupation with the transnational sphere and abandonment of electoral politics is misguided, b) that direct actions such as property destruction are counterproductive to the wider aims of the movement, and, c) that its strategies of contention are too episodic, and do very little to encourage practical, inclusive, local, and sustained action in the service of global justice.

Introduction

Today, a sense of futility pervades many environmentalists' attitudes toward traditional channels of political influence. The Bush administration's rejection of the Kyoto protocol and the utter lack of political will displayed at the Copenhagen Climate Summit have been major defeats for conventional moderate lobby groups and environmentally-conscious political parties. The economic crisis of late 2008 and subsequent recession became an occasion for a further marginalization of environmental ethics in the corridors of power, evidenced most recently when, with jobs as the forefront issue in a hotly contested presidential race, both Barack Obama and Mitt Romney competed to boast about their credentials as friends of coal (NPR 2012; Vozzella 2012). As the political currency of environmental ethics has declined in value, corporate interests have seemed only to get stronger, pushing to commodify ever more areas of

public life (Soron and Laxer 2006). Indeed, the advancement of corporate power has reached new levels of insidiousness, with the advent of "greenwashing" (Vos 2009), "aggressive mimicry" (Peeples 2005), and the "linguistic high-jacking" of concepts such as "sustainability" (Johnston 2004: 1)—cynical appropriations of the stylings of *environmentalism itself*. For environmentalists who take the apocalyptic visions of ecological and climatological science seriously, these have no doubt been bitter developments.

Thus, while there have been surges in popular enthusiasm for environmental causes in the past—of which the success of Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* is only the most prominent example—many who have held long-standing commitments to the movement see these developments as hollow and insubstantial. Indeed, such enthusiasms, which often manifest as calls for technological solutions to environmental ills, nearly always obfuscate what is seen as the most important factor contributing to environmental decline: global capitalism's inherent pursuit of unfettered economic growth. Habermas (1981) was right to characterize (traditional) environmentalism as a "defensive" social movement because of its heritage of resistance to this expansionistic tendency. Indeed, its historical mandate has been to defend against the erosion of the life-world by the ever-increasing complexity of the economic-administrative complex, and in this vein, one of its essential qualities is a strident "critique of growth" (Habermas 1981: 34). Thus, many see calls for 'ecological modernization,' 'sustainable development,' and 'wise use,' as betrayals of environmentalism's true character. Representing this attitude in paradigmatic fashion is Richard Smith, who laments:

> as long as [Tony] Blair, [Sir Nicholas] Stern, Al Gore, and the rest of the corporate and political elite are committed to maintaining and perpetuating global capitalism as their first and foremost priority, they have no choice but to subordinate the environment to growth and consumption, override their own environmental targets, turn themselves into hypocrites, and doom the future of humanity (2007: 26).

Accordingly, for many, the present era of carbon credits, 'clean coal', and slick 'corporate responsibility' campaigns promises nothing more than a *continuance* of environmental depletion on a global scale. Environmental ethics in this climate are thus an ethics in progress—a desperate striving for novel answers to that fundamental question, 'what is to be done?'

Increasingly, some are answering this question by taking up arms. Existing on the "radical cusp" between political action and militancy (Beck 2007) is the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) which, since 1997, has committed over 600 acts of sabotage and arson in North America, causing over $100 million in damages to biomedical research centres, logging companies, ski resorts, and SUV dealerships (Joosse 2012; Rosebraugh 2004). Abandoning traditional politics in favor of 'direct action,' this group and others like it seek to create a transnational, revolutionary challenge to neoliberal globalism.

New avenues for ethical consideration and critique are inevitably raised by these developments, and this article will serve as a vehicle for a preliminary airing of some of these. Specifically, in what follows I make the case that the rise of radical environmentalism is part and parcel of the larger development of the more general anti-globalization/anti-capitalist movement, a fact that allows for a 'cross-pollination' of

critique between the two phenomena. Ethical debates that take place within the antiglibalization movement can have salience when considering radical environmentalism—and vice versa. Following from this premise, I assess the applicability of three major criticisms of 'globalization from below' to the case of the ELF, namely: a) that its preoccupation with the transnational sphere and abandonment of national electoral politics is misguided; b) that direct actions such as property destruction are counterproductive to the wider aims of the movement; and c) that episodic cycles of contention, whether they be in the form of 'mega-protests' or 'direct action' attacks do very little to encourage practical, local, and sustained action in the service of global justice.

Thus, while others have sought to assess whether the actions of the ELF can be justified morally on its own terms (Vanderheiden 2005; Brown 2007), this article seeks to situate radical environmentalism in a wider context of political contention, assessing the ethical and tactical feasibility of Earth Liberation Front-style direct action. In his rebuttal against those who would equate ecotage/monkeywrenching with terrorism, Vanderheiden (2008) writes:

> Defending ecotage as distinct from terrorism need not necessarily entail endorsing it as an effective part of a larger strategy, and more debate over its merits and perils is needed before the former can be taken to involve the latter (Vanderheiden 2008: 316).

I hope that this article will contribute to discussion by positioning debates over ecotage and environmentally-motivated arson within the larger discourses and ethical considerations of the anti-globalization movement.

The Anti-globalization Movement

Variously called anti-capitalism (McNally 2002) 'globalization from below' (Falk 1993; della Porta 2005; della Porta 2006), or 'alter-globalization' (Best and Nocella 2006c: 20; Starr 2006), the anti-globalization movement seeks to tie together a wide range of issues into a global 'movement of movements' (Harvie, Milburn, Trott and Watts 2005), which accommodates a slough of different and sometimes conflicting struggles surrounding issues such as global warming, human rights, nuclear proliferation, and poverty. If there is one unifying theme for the movement, however, it seems to be an agreement on the need to challenge the neoliberal domination of the transnational sphere, what Richard Falk refers to as 'globalization-from-above' (1993: 39).

Though the movement has had a long developmental history, with precedents going back to the anti-slavery and international workers movements' during the era of European colonialism (Broad and Heckscher 2003), its modern formulation is widely seen to have come to a head through a series of mega-protests at major meetings of the G8, World Bank, IMF, Summit of the Americas, and WTO. Also important have been venues such as the World Social Forum, which have explored the possibility of a "new kind of globalization" (Ramonet 2001). The movement had gathered so much momentum by the turn of the century that Walden Bello went so far as to predict that the year 2000 (in which he includes November 1999's "Battle of Seattle") "would go down as one of those defining moments in the history of the world economy, like 1929" (Bello 2001: 1).

Despite sporadic resurgences (the Occupy movements being the most recent iteration [Gitlin 2012]), the revolutionary acceleration that Bello saw in 2001 seems to

have stalled. According to Gregory Albo, a change in the "ideological climate" since the attacks of September 11, 2001 has '"sealed the political opening that was being exploited by the anti-globalization movement'" and has "'provide[d] a serious check on the freedom of assembly'" (quoted in French 2002). Indeed, in the wake of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, we have seen a delegitimation of protest tactics generally—especially those that would directly and fervently challenge basic principles of liberal democracies. The implementation of the PATRIOT Act has undoubtedly served to stymie radical mobilizations in the US, both through the creation of legal climes that are favorable to the counter-mobilizations of state agencies such as the FBI, and, more generally, through the fear that it inspires in potential anti-globalization movement adherents.

Aside from these external factors, the tactics of the anti-globalization movement have met with considerable controversy even among those who would usually be ideologically sympathetic. For instance, there are those from the left who are strongly critical, claiming that the movement as it has manifested contains many strategic deficiencies. Below, I will describe these general criticisms of anti-globalization, and determine whether they are applicable to the specific case of the ELF. First, however, I must make the case that it even makes sense to regard the ELF and its actions as being, if not part of, then at least analogous to, the anti-globalization movement—a task to which I turn now.

The Historical Rise of Anarchism and Anti-globalist Sentiments in the Radical Environmental Movement

Although direct action among workers' movements has a history that stretches back to the Luddites in 19th century England, direct actions motivated by "deep ecological"[148] environmental concerns first appeared only twenty-five years ago. At this time, radical environmentalist groups like Earth First! began employing direct action tactics such as civil disobedience and monkeywrenching[149] in their conservational efforts to halt the degradation of the wilderness. Before 1992, when Earth First! abandoned its sanctioning of illegal tactics (Taylor 1998: 20; see also Molland 2006: 48-51), treespiking, treesitting, and the sabotage of logging equipment were hallmarks of the movement.

This development owes to a particular set of historical circumstances that favored unconventional protest and action through two motivational factors. First, the advent of Ronald Reagan's presidency 1981 fostered a general fear about his environmentally irresponsible vision for America. This was especially so during the tenure of Reagan's first Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, who many saw as representing the most irresponsible form of Christian millenarianism.[150] Rothman maintained that, at this time, "mainstream environmental organizations experienced remarkable growth in membership

[148] In 1973, Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess made a distinction between the 'deep' and 'shallow' ecological movements. The main difference that he saw between these movements is that deep ecology is biocentric, while shallow ecology is anthropocentric. In other words, deep ecology sees things in nature as having *intrinsic* worth, while shallow ecology sees nature as having only *instrumental* value in that it serves humanity's wants and needs (Naess 1973).

[149] Earth First! leader Dave Foreman defined monkeywrenching as 'nonviolent resistance to the destruction of natural diversity and wilderness. It is never directed against human beings or other forms of life. It is aimed at inanimate machines and tools that are destroying life. Care is always taken to minimize any possible threat to people, including to the monkeywrenchers themselves' (Foreman and Hayduke 1993:9).

[150] It was widely reported that, in Congress, Watt once refuted arguments for conserving natural resources by saying, '"I do not know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns"' (Martin 1982: 35).

as a direct result of Watt's policies" (2000: 170). It would seem, however, that *radical* groups experienced this growth as well. Prominent Earth First!er Christopher Manes also saw an "influx of people frightened into environmental activism by the retrograde policies of President Reagan's maladroit and messianic secretary of the interior, James Watt" (1990: 49).

Despite the current liberal or anarchical reputation of the radical environmental movement, it is important to note that at this stage in its development, Earth First! bore the indelible stamp of its most important forbearer, Edward Abbey.[151] Indeed, it initially attracted mainly right-wing libertarians, or, as Foreman's supporters playfully referred to themselves— "rednecks for wilderness" (Taylor 2005: 519). Thus, Foreman, a supporter of the Vietnam War and former campaign manager for Barry Goldwater (Lee 1995: 27), does not at all typify the group that Earth First! eventually became, nor the splinter group that would lead to the ELF. Writes Taylor:

> Foreman wished to focus the movement exclusively on conserving the earth's biological diversity . . . . He did not assume that nation-states were intractably corrupt and impossible to influence democratically. Unlike a growing number of Earth First!ers, Foreman did not consider himself a revolutionary at war with the entire industrial system or western civilization itself (2005: 519).

[151] Edward Abbey was an American novelist, essayist, and raucously libertarian conservative who wrote *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, a novel about a troupe of eco-bandits who seek to preserve the American southwest from development through the sabotage of machinery such as bulldozers and trains. The book was a major source of inspiration for Dave Foreman and other founders of Earth First!, and the term 'monkeywrenching' (see note 2) entered the radical environmental vernacular through the book's popularity.

Indeed, as the 1980s progressed, Foreman began to lament the anarchical direction that the movement was taking, and he found it increasingly necessary to point out to newer members that Earth First! did "not emerge from the anarchist movement, or from the left. Neither were we born of sea foam, like The Birth of Venus. Earth First! came directly out of the public lands conservation movement" (Foreman 1991: 217). He resented those who "wear their 'radicalness' as a badge . . . [and who] have been attracted to Earth First! because it represented to them a reincarnation of the style and intensity of the New Left" (Foreman 1991: 217). In Taylor's analysis, Foreman led a disgruntled faction of 'old guard' Earth First!ers who believed "that tying environmental protection to other issues, such as social justice, anti-imperialism, or workers rights, alienates many potential wilderness sympathizers"—Earth First!'s traditional base (1994: 199). In 1989, when it became clear to Foreman that the anarchical turn within Earth First! would be lasting, he left altogether and started the Wildlands Project and its affiliated journal, *Wild Earth*.[152]

If traditional Earth First! members such as Dave Foreman were leaving because of ideological differences, others, who had no ideological qualms with the anarchical turn, were growing disgruntled with the organization's movement towards abandoning illegal tactics (Taylor 1998: 20; see also Molland 2006: 48-51). These newer members would not truck with the leadership's attempts to quell monkeywrenching and other more extreme forms of direct action. Although it is difficult to pinpoint with certainty the moment that clandestine groups like the ELF form, Taylor cites various Earth First! sources which claim that the ELF began as a radical offshoot of Earth First! in England in 1992 (2005: 521). Plows, Wall, and Doherty (2004) interviewed members of Britain's

[152]*Wild Earth* ceased publication in 2004.

Earth First!, and among them was Edgar (pseudonym) who recalls that at Earth First!'s national gathering of that year it was agreed that,

> Earth First! would be split into two. On the one hand there would be an underground group the Earth Liberation Front which would do ecotage and all the embarrassing naughtiness stuff and, on the other hand, all the open civil disobedience kind of thing that would retain the name Earth First! […] people were insisting there if there was going to be a split it shouldn't be a case of competition between units. They should be supportive so there should be toleration by groups (quoted in Plows *et al.* 2004: 202).

Despite the apparent amiability of this schism as Edgar describes it, Plows *et al*. go on to note that "most in EF! (UK) were hostile to the ELF, viewing it as a product of masculine posturing" (2004: 202). This first British wave of attacks seems to have inspired similar developments in North America. By 1996, ELF actions were occurring in the United States, and have continued at a remarkable pace ever since then (Molland 2006: 53-55). James Jarboe, the FBI's top domestic terrorism officer, linked the ELF to 600 criminal acts committed between 1996 and 2002, totaling $43 million in damages (Leader and Probst 2003: 38). Most destructive of these was the arson of a Vail, Colorado ski resort resulting in $12 million in damages. In August 2003, the ELF claimed responsibility for the arson of a 206-unit apartment complex that had been under construction in San Diego, causing roughly $50 million in damages (Ackerman 2003a: 143). In March of 2008, north of Woodinville, Washington, four yet-to-be-inhabited multimillion dollar homes that had been advertised as 'eco-friendly' were burned. The banner allegedly left

by ELF adherents read, “Built green? Nope black! McMansions in RCD's [rural cluster development] r [are] not green. ELF.”

There are three reasons why it no longer makes sense to postulate a necessary connection between Earth First! in the USA and what is now known as the ELF. First, similar to the British context, though the initial call for the development of the ELF came from within Earth First!’s ranks, there are undoubtedly many in Earth First! who are unsupportive and even hostile to the ELF because of its tactics. Second, with the rhizomatic branching that characterizes the way that the ELF garners recruits (Joosse 2007), the ELF has outgrown any necessary ties with its parent organization as a simple matter of organizational drift. Finally, the notoriety of the ELF, because of their penchant for arson attacks, has reached a scale that far surpasses any achieved by Earth First! in the past.

Antiglobalism within the ELF

In a Frequently Asked Questions pamphlet published by the North American ELF Press Office, we can read the statement:

> . . . it is not enough to work solely on single, individual environmental issues . . . the capitalist state and its symbols of propaganda must also be targeted [p. 4]. . . the ELF ideology maintains that it is the very social and political ideology in operation throughout westernized countries that is creating various injustices on this planet and ultimately the destruction of life. That ideology is capitalism and the mindset that allows it to exist [p. 7] (quoted in Ackerman 2003b: 189).

Such proclamations are crucial to my case that we should regard the ELF and its supporting community as an analogue of the wider anti-globalization movement. While the ideological leanings of particular ELF adherents may be difficult to ascertain because of their clandestine nature (Joosse 2007), thus far much of the evidence seems to point in this direction.

Convicted ELF actors frequently display anti-globalist and anarchist tendencies. Craig 'Critter' Marshall, now serving a five-and-a-half year sentence for fire-bombing a Chevrolet dealership in Eugene, Oregon, admitted to *New York Times* reporter Bruce Barcott that growing up, he "held political beliefs that weren't so much pro-environment as anti-authority" (Barcott 2002: 58). In an article entitled, 'Attack the System,' he professes to have come to the conclusion that "what we need to attack is the totality of the death machine that is industrial society, AKA civilization" (2006: 195). Similarly, Jeffrey Luers, who was sentenced to twenty-two year and eight-month years in prison for his participation in the arson,[153] remarked in an interview with *Earth First! Journal* that "[o]riginally I was radicalized by anti-authoritarian, anarchist beliefs, as well as animal rights," and that his environmental radicalism came only in 1997.[154] According to ethnographer Bron Taylor, ELF spokespersons Craig Rosebraugh and Leslie James Pickering "were drawn to the ELF because, as anarchists, if not anarcho-primitivists, they perceived fellow travelers behind the anti-industrial rhetoric of some ELF statements" (2003: 177). Thus, it would seem that the change in the direction that the radical environmentalist movement took, from the relatively mild direct actions of Earth First! to the incendiary tactics of the ELF, was the result of an influx of those who 'greened' their

[153] Hi sentence was later reduced to ten years.
[154] Interview available at <www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk/profiles/free/ef.html> accessed October 20, 2008.

preexisting sympathies towards anarchism and anti-globalization, rather than through an increased radicalization of long-term members.

Perhaps most instructive with regard to the green anarchist ideological orientations of ELF actors are the communiqués that usually follow actions. One communiqué, released after an arson attack on a United States Forest Service research station in Irvine Pennsylvania on August 11, 2002 claimed that:

> . . . [t]his lesson in "prescribed fire" was a natural, necessary response to the threats posed to life in the Allegheny Forest by proposed timber sales, oil drilling, and greed-driven manipulation of Nature. . . .
>
> . . . These agencies continue to ignore and mislead the public, at the bidding of their corporate masters . . . the irrevocable acts of extreme violence they perpetrate against the Earth daily are all inexcusable, and will not be tolerated. If they persist in their crimes against life, they will be met with maximum retaliation. . . . The diverse efforts of this revolutionary force cannot be contained, and will only continue to intensify as we are brought face to face with the oppressor in inevitable, violent confrontation. We will stand up and fight for our lives against this iniquitous civilization until its reign of TERROR is forced to an end—by any means necessary.
>
> In defense of all life,
>
> —Pacific E.L.F.
>
> Earth Liberation Front (quoted in Best and Nocella 2006a: 413-414)

An arson at Boise Cascade's[155] 8,000 square-foot northwest headquarters was followed by the communiqué below, which professed a knowledge and outrage at the international operations of corporations:

> Boise Cascade has been very naughty. After ravaging the forests of the Pacific Northwest, Boise Cascade now looks toward the virgin forests of Chile. Early Christmas morning, elves left coal in Boise Cascade's stocking. Four buckets of diesel and gas with kitchen timer delay destroyed their regional headquarters in Monmouth, Oregon.
>
> Let this be a lesson to all greedy multinational corporations who don't respect their ecosystems.
>
> The elves are watching.
>
> Earth Liberation Front (quoted in Rosebraugh 2004: 94).

Finally, one of the most incendiary of the communiqués was also one of the earliest, released in 1997:

> . . . ELF works to speed up the collapse of industry, to scare the rich, and to undermine the foundations of the state. We embrace social and deep ecology as a practical resistance movement. . . . We take inspiration from Luddites, Levellers, Diggers, the Autonome squatter movement, the ALF, the Zapatistas, and the little people—those mischievous elves of lore. . . . let's dance as we make ruins of the corporate money system. . . . (quoted in Rosebraugh 2004: 20).

[155] A multinational logging company.

These communiqués display many hallmark themes of the anti-globalization movement—most notably a commitment to fighting neoliberal capitalism and a general disdain for hierarchical authority structures.

Some publications, such as the quarterly, *Green Anarchy: An Anti-Civilization Journal of Theory and Action*, also give signal to the general ideological orientation of the milieu in which the ELF operates. The journal reports on ELF actions world wide, highlights the plight of ELF prisoners, and frequently contains articles by John Zerzan and other anarcho-primitivists who figure heavily in the most revolutionary strains of radical environmentalism (Best and Nocella 2006b: 18). The Spring, 2006 issue of *Green Anarchy* contains sections devoted to "anti-capitalist and anti-state activities" (Anonymous 2006: 40-43, 45), "anarchist resistance" (ibid. 36), and "ecological resistance" (ibid. 30).

The theme of worldwide revolution also figures very prominently in the discourses of ELF adherents. Best and Nocella's book,[156] which contains chapters by ELF prisoners and ELF communiqués, is titled *Igniting a Revolution: Voices in Defense of the Earth*, implying that ELF arsons are meant to serve as catalysts to a wider revolutionary force. In a more aggressive tone, ELF spokesperson Leslie James Pickering writes, "we've gotta prove to the people that we are fighting to win, that revolution is possible, that we can turn this motherfucker upside down and finally break free" (2006: 305). Many ELF proponents, when speaking about their revolutionary role, display a penchant for aggrandizing their struggle to near universal proportions. Best and Nocella maintain that their effort is in solidarity with:

[156] It is published by, AK Press, which is "

> earth liberationists, animal liberationists, Black liberationists, Native Americans, ecofeminists, political prisoners, primitivists, saboteurs, grassroots activists, and militant academics. It reaches out to exploited workers, indigenous peoples, subsistence farmers, tribes pushed to the brink of extinction, guerilla armies, armed insurgents, disenfranchised youth, and to all others who struggle against the advancing juggernaut of global capitalism, neo-fascism, imperialism, militarism, and phony wars on terrorism that front for attacks on dissent and democracy (2006b: 24).

Thus, within the ELF and in its surrounding group of supporters we find many ideological linkages and cross-connections with attitudes prevalent in the wider anti-globalization movement. A focus on the injustices of neoliberal capitalism, a dismissive attitude towards nation-states and electoral politics, claims of solidarity with many other social movements, and the belief that a transnational revolution is in the making are all common themes.

Discussion: Criticisms of the Anti-globalization Movement and their Applicability to the ELF

If it is the case that we should regard the ELF as one extension, among many, of the larger anti-globalization movement, then we would do well to assess it on those terms. Aside from the obvious neoliberal objections that corporate elites and some state leaders have to the anti-globalization movement, the movement also has endured much criticism from those on the left. These criticisms have taken three main forms.

First, there has been much criticism against some forms of the 'direct action' [157] prevalent in the movement, especially the property destruction carried out by the Black Bloc and other anarchical elements. Because the media unfailingly frames these actions as "senseless violence" and links them to "discourses of terrorism and fear" (Juris 2005: 423), many feel that these actions work counter to the movement's aims by enabling corporate media and law enforcement to demonize activists as anarchical parasites who seek to take advantage of the free-for-all atmosphere created by mega-protests (Albertani 2002). The media's often sensationalistic gaze means that a few acts of property destruction can taint public perceptions of an entire protest, and accordingly, many of the most vehement arguments against property destruction have been leveled by more moderate, 'reformist' factions of the left (discussed by McNally 2002: 246-247; Rosebraugh 2004: 92). In sum, this first criticism argues that property destruction has had a negative effect on the seriousness with which political leaders and the public take the protests, and has resulted in a further legitimation of police brutality and the militarization of protest management.

On the one hand, the ELF's actions do not occur in conjunction with specific protests, and it cannot, therefore, be accused of acting to sabotage these protests' effectiveness in any immediate way. On the other hand, despite the best efforts of ELF spokespersons, corporate and state interests have been very successful in shaping popular conceptions of the ELF as an 'ecoterrorist' organization (Joosse 2012; Vanderheiden 2008). As a result, discourses of 'ecoterrorism' have been normalized to the point where John Lewis, who is an FBI deputy assistant director and top official in charge of domestic

[157] 'Direct action' is an umbrella term that includes acts of civil disobedience, such as sit-ins, as well as acts of sabotage and property destruction.

terrorism, labeled 'ecoterrorism'—along with 'animal liberation terrorism'—as 'the No. 1 domestic terrorism threat' [158] in 2005 (quoted in Schuster 2005). Thus, the ELF has unwittingly played a crucial role in furthering the capitalist interest in frame-bridging between the 'war on terror' and anti-environmentalism in North America and promulgating the stereotypical vision of greens as anti-rational, potentially dangerous, 'kooks.' Thus, while the ELF may not be damaging in an immediate way to the mega-protests of the anti-globalization movement, in the wider arena of public discourse in which there is a struggle to make environmental and radical social justice concerns legitimate, the ELF has clearly played a similarly damaging role as the Black Bloc, which often had a 'spoiler' effect on the otherwise-peaceful mega-protests of the anti-globalization movement.

The second criticism comes from environmental activists and theorists who question the effectiveness of the mega-protests themselves as a form of resistance. Naomi Klein has criticized the mega-protest strategy, saying that it tends to attract "meeting-stalkers, [who are intent on] following the trade bureaucrats as if they were the Grateful Dead" (2000: 4 of 6). Similarly, Stainsby (2003) points to a need to move beyond what he somewhat playfully and somewhat derisively refers to as "summit-hopping." The general thrust of these criticisms is that, while the major gatherings provide a venue for people to profess their idealistic visions for the future and for global change, they provide very little direction or motivation for concrete, local action in the times *between* these gatherings. What is more, the shifting of the 2001 Asian Development Bank meeting to Honolulu from Seattle (Bello 2001) and the siting of the

[158]This 'number one' designation had been reserved for right-wing militias that have spawned the likes of bomber Timothy McVeigh and murderous anti-abortionists like Eric Rudolph.

2002 G8 summit in Kananaskis, Alberta, show that there is nothing to prevent meeting organizers from simply moving meetings to increasingly inaccessible locations in order to avoid uncomfortable confrontations with protestors. Thus, the mega-protests—which are aimed at giving a voice to those who are 'below,' could ironically serve as impetus for a 'Bilderbergization' of meetings—creating *more* distance between the powerful and the powerless.

In some senses, the method of the ELF would seem to be the perfect antidote to the highly episodic form that the anti-globalization movement has taken thus far. Through the strategy of 'leaderless resistance,' the ELF encourages ongoing, local action in response to specific environmental problems (Joosse 2007; 2012). By seeking to cause economic damage to corporations with environmentally deleterious practices, the ELF strives to make a *practical* difference by eliminating the profit motive from environmental destruction. Indeed, as history has shown, and as is discussed above, the impetus for the formation of radical groups like the ELF and, in its time, Earth First!, was the desire to move beyond mere banner waving in favor of getting real results.

When one looks over the years in which the ELF has been operative, however, the actions have proven to be not only impractical, but also counterproductive. Insurance payouts often mean that corporate operations will continue after a brief interruption—at times even on a greater scale after having been given the opportunity to build new facilities (as happened with the Vail ski resort). What is more, the lack of broader organizational cooperation among ELF adherents may foster the NIMBY effect, so that even if actions *are* actually successful in driving corporate operations away from a particular area, the problems associated with them may merely be exported to other areas

where, for whatever reason, there is a less bullish environmental activist community. Finally, though ELF adherents intend that their actions will serve to spark a wider revolutionary force 'from below,' one cannot help but sense that there is something elitist in the way that these small bands of would-be heroes are seeking this catalytic role for themselves. Thus, while (from the perspective of movement adherents) there may be some immediate benefits to the ELF's challenging of corporate operations in some areas, their actions are still very different from the inclusive, continual, local, political involvement that is sorely lacking in the anti-globalization movement generally. This brings us to the last critique of the anti-globalization movement that we will consider here.

Third and finally, some criticize the anti-globalization movement's near exclusive preoccupation with the transnational political sphere. Anti-globalists often see their protests not:

> as acting in opposition within a particular state, nor [in] the relation of society and the state, but . . . more and more [as] acting to promote a certain kind of political consciousness transnationally that could radiate influence in a variety of directions (Falk 1993: 47).

McNally similarly advocates that we "overcome the horizons of nationalism" (2002: 241) and downplays the importance of national, electoral politics though his recommendation of "the overcoming of passive, representative 'democracy' by activist, direct democracy" (2002: 240). Contrasting this view, Laxer (2003) argues that states remain central actors in the world economy, and that combating the US—the most powerful state in the world—is an essential component to any serious challenge of neoliberal globalism (also

see Gindin 2003). In this argument, national contexts are the most effective locus of resistance, because the US's global dominance is administered not directly, but rather *through* the governments of core state allies that are complicit with neoliberal aims. Thus, discourses of nationalism and systems of electoral politics have the greatest potential for mobilizing citizens to challenge and change their governments' complicity with the economic aims of American-led corporate globalization.

Clearly mobilizing in this regard are grievances that stem from double standards in trade relations between the US and its core allies. The disputes that have occurred between Canada and the US over softwood lumber and steel tariffs in recent years are examples. Additionally, a too-close relationship with the US has the potential to be toxic for the careers of individual national political leaders. Tony Blair, for example, endured much criticism for his government's lock-step following of US foreign policy (Cowell 2006), and during his tenure, it was clear that no self-respecting British citizen wanted to be led by someone who is portrayed as an emasculated 'poodle' of George W. Bush (Hoge 2002; Hoge 2003; Stanley 2006; Tyler 2004). Other leaders who have been largely supportive of the US's foreign policy aspirations, such as Stephen Harper in Canada have had to fend off similar accusations. Thus, keeping the 'poodle' perception at bay has been a key impression-management problem for national leadership generally.

Those who argue for nationalistic resistance to US imperialism believe that the grievances of the core nation states that surround the US can have vast implications—if these grievances reach a sufficient pitch. They argue that these nations do in fact have the power (collectively, if not singularly) to jeopardize the taken-for-granted support that the US enjoys and uses to carry out its foreign policy aims (Canada's refusal to support

the US's war with Iraq is one example, the rise of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela offers another). This decidedly nationalist strategy fittingly requires political mobilizations within *national* contexts—a vastly different requirement than that of transnationalists, who see the nation-state as an outmoded and therefore ineffectual political sphere of resistance.

As we have seen above, the ELF, when viewed as a radical branch of the anti-globalization movement, also has ignored national and international political dynamics, comporting itself primarily to the *trans*national sphere. In classic Marxian transnational fashion, its adherents seek to "ignite" a worldwide revolution, in which the "elves" rise up to "make ruins of the corporate money system" (quoted in Rosebraugh 2004: 20). They take no advantage of the mobilizing potential of international trade disputes, and they have not sought to capitalize on embarrassing national leaders who are complicit with US hegemony. Thus, the nationalistic criticism of the anti-globalization movement would seem to be similarly applicable to the ELF, for though political channels are often frustrating, giving up on them may be unwise and perilous.

But in the end, debates about the need for national foci may be moot in the case of the ELF; for even when judged on transnational terms, the ELF is open to charges of simple failure. Though ELF actions have been occurring since 1992, thus far they have failed to produce any substantial achievements in the transnational sphere, and have yet to spark even the beginnings of the transnational mass-movement that adherents had envisioned.

Conclusion

This article has made a case for conceiving modern radical environmentalism—the ELF in particular—as at least analogous with, if not part of, the larger anti-globalization movement. In the final analysis, it would seem that criticisms directed against the anti-globalization movement also provide an interesting starting point for a critique of the ELF and other advocates of environmentally-motivated large-scale property destruction. These criticisms have maintained that the movement's preoccupation with the transnational sphere and abandonment of national electoral politics is misguided; that direct actions such as property destruction are counterproductive to the wider aims of the movement; and that the tactics employed, whether they be 'mega-protests' or leaderless direct action attacks, are too episodic and do very little to encourage practical, inclusive, local, and sustained action in the service of global justice. Thus, whatever benefits the ELF gains from its tactics of property destruction—either in the facilitation of radical identity formation or in the satisfaction of financially damaging their enemies—they do not seem to remedy the problems found in the larger anti-globalization movement that it inhabits.

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Chapter Six

Contributions to Knowledge and Directions for Future Research

Laurel Richardson (1990) suggested that the process of writing is a methodology in itself in that its performance enables greater insight into the phenomenon in question. We move hermeneutically during the process of inquiry, and insofar as we are engaging in "constant comparison," our writings *about* data become data in and of itself (Morse 1995: 27-28). As a result, the initial aims for a project like the one set forth here (namely, a series of publishable papers) seldom correspond to the eventual target reached. While this fact was tremendously disconcerting for me during my master's work, for this current project I have managed to yield control of this process to the process itself.

In this regard, while I started out taking 'leaderless resistance' at face value, I no longer do so. I still agree with and accept the counterterrorism literature that views leaderless resistance as a Mertonian innovation—an outcome of the closing down of opportunities, an attempt by radical social movement organizations to achieve, self-sacrificially through their own disintegration or atomization, immunity to detection, infiltration, and prosecution in the context of asymmetrical warfare. I have learned, however, that this explanation is incomplete. Aided, when possible, by a micro-level analysis, and informed by the tenets of symbolic interactionism, I have developed an approach that is critical of the conventional wisdom about leaderless resistance. The object of PhD work is to contribute to knowledge, and I assert that what contributions the current project makes are largely due to this critical thrust, to my attempt to set leaderless

resistance against the backdrop of larger cultural systems, and to my adherence to the notion that the underlying mechanism of leaderless resistance is inspirational and 'open-source' communicative channels. These three commitments are imbricated into the model I described in the introduction and then explored over the course of the above papers. Below, I will outline these contributions, entertain future directions for this research, and discuss two sources of criticism that I have encountered as I undertook this project.

In chapter two, I argued that current understandings from the terrorism literature of the benefits of leaderless resistance to oppositional groups were incomplete. Through a comparison of Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front, I was able to show how leaderless resistance could serve as a salve to the fractious tendencies of the radical environmental milieu. Where movement progenitors and counterterrorism researchers had maintained that it was shared ideology that brought cohesion to movements that employed leaderless resistance, I argued that *ideological non-specificity* played a large role in the successful mobilization record of the ELF. Leaderless resistance can work to create unwitting 'overlapping consensuses' among those from vastly different tributaries in the radical environmental milieu.

Chapter three involved testing one part of the communicative cycle through which leaderless resistance operates. Specifically, I assess the role of the above-ground spokesperson as a link between current saboteurs and those they hope to inspire. I find that these spokespersons' peculiar role in contexts of leaderless resistance hampers their ability to spread their ideological message, and exacerbates the more general problems that counter-hegemonic groups experience in their interactions with mainstream media.

Furthermore, I show that, by forsaking the 'body rhetoric' that had been the mainstay of previous radical environmental groups like Earth First!, ELF actors find themselves being less able to elicit sympathy, by virtue of their facelessness and namelessness.

Chapter four examines a situation (that of the resource extraction struggles and the EnCana bombings) that may not seem to constitute 'true' leaderless resistance at all. Rather than a disadvantage, however, an examination of this situation at the micro-level enabled me to mount a challenge to the ontological status that counterterrorism researchers have accorded leaderless resistance. I argue that, rather than a veridical description of objective reality as a fundamentally organizational form of contestation, leaderless resistance also can be one example of the rhetorical framing that movement progenitors often engage in, namely, *rhetorics of effervescence*. In this sense, I argue that 'leaderless resistance' is so much more than an organizational form; it is itself a piece of movement propaganda—a struggle-aggrandizing ideology and an instance of wishful thinking on the part of incipient inspirational leaders. One irony that comes to the fore as a result of this framing is that counterterrorism researchers who are invested in 'the problem' can become co-creators, along with their stated enemies, of this vision. Purveyors of moral panics and self-styled vanguardists are allies, at the rhetorical level at least. A second irony that emerged in the course of this chapter is that situations of leaderless resistance can become the occasion for the expression of charismatic leadership. 'Proofs' of authority (in the Weberian sense) combine with the exculpatory distancing of the above-ground/underground distinction to create a charismatic leadership system that awarded authority to Wiebo Ludwig.

Chapter five departs from prior chapters in that, rather than putting forth leaderless resistance as the object of analysis, *per se*, I incorporate it as one element in a larger discussion of ethical considerations as they come to bear on both the antiglobalization and radical environmental movements. These strategic and ethical considerations would be germane for those occupying any of the communicative positions in the model I describe in the introduction. I find that while these modes of critique do not fit perfectly across these two cases, some considerations do apply and serve as a basis for discussions about the tactics of the ELF.

Directions for Future Research

I am planning for future extensions of this research, and what follows are some preliminary sketchings of where I might head from here. First, the data I gathered was more voluminous than what I could present here, at least within the thematic constraints of an examination of leaderless resistance. The emergence of Wiebo Ludwig in the middle of this project was serendipitous in that it dove-tailed nicely with my other research interests in charisma and cultic groups. I hope that a further examination of my interviews with him and notes from my stays at Trickle Creek will afford new insights into the dynamics of charismatic relationships and build on previous work I have done in the sociology of religion (Joosse 2006; 2012a) and classical sociology (Joosse 2014b). In particular, I have begun to explore the dynamics of the 'routination of charisma' since Ludwig's death. Preliminary directions for this research have appeared in the popular press (see appendix F). Possible academic venues for this work would include *Sociology*

of Religion, The Journal of Contemporary Religion, Cultic Studies Review, or *Nova Religio*.

Second, while it is important to understand the various tributaries of radical environmentalism and their proclivities for political violence, my hope is that the true value of this research on organizational strategy stems from its potential theoretical application to a wider variety of movements. A further exploration, therefore, could involve considering the dynamics of 'leaderlessness' and personal autonomy in the Sovereign Citizen/Freeman on the Land movement in Canada. I have made contact with some movement participants and attended one court appearance, and I plan to extend my reach into this rapidly-developing case. Originally a doctrine in the radical right (Beam 1983), leaderless resistance seems to have come full cirle and is now inspiring survivalists, 'detaxers,' radical libertarians, and those who do not recognize the state. I have no doubt that many imperfections in the model I described in the introduction, and causes for its extentions, will come to light through such tests against other empirical cases.

Third, this dissertation opened with a rumination on the applicability of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas, particularly their 'thought-image' of the rhizome. The body chapters, however, are nearly bereft of mention of their ideas, partly because I had some trepidation about 'getting it right' (though these authors themselves express little concern about this mode of fidelity [Deleuze and Foucault 1977: 208]). Another future direction, therefore, will involve a more explicit examination of the applicability of Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome philosophy to leaderless resistance. In particular, the credence that

Delueze and Guattari pay to *heterogeneity* and *multiplicity* would help to give nuance to explanations of how rhizomes can territorialize without needing to homogenize.

This acommodation of difference is a key consideration of chapter two, in which I contrasted the intentions of movement progenitors, who had an interest in the maintenance of ideological purity, with the reality of leaderless resistance as it is appropriated among a plurality of radical environmentalisms. Particularly helpful in this regard would be Deleuze and Guattari's exploration of how the structure of the rhizome interrupts and subverts intentionality:

> [p]uppet strings, as a rhizome or multiplicity, are tied not to the supposed will of an artist or puppeteer but to a multiplicity of nerve fibers, which form another puppet in other dimensions connected to the first…. [W]e will therefore speak of a plane of consistency of multiplicities, even though the dimensions of this 'plane' increase with the number of connections that are made on it. Multiplicities are defined by the outside: by the abstract line, the line of flight or deterritorialization according to which they change in nature and connect with other multiplicities (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 8-9).

I submit that an exploration of the tensions between movement progenitors and movement outcomes would be fruitful and add to the rather small number of instances where researchers actually apply Deleuze and Guattari to analyses of asymmetrical struggle (Becker 2006; Brisman 2010; Weizman 2006).

Fourth, I envision that this project will prepare me to understand more fully the dynamics involved in future environmental contestations. Because this analysis involved an exploration both of elements of the radical environmental movement sector (the ELF

and Earth First!) and of a typical small community's struggle with the resource extraction industry (Tomslake), other future developments that combine these societal levels will be more recognizable. A domain of contestation that already has seen a pairing between locally-based movements and the larger social movement sector involves the mega-pipeline projects that are in the offing, connecting Alberta's oilsands to both the West coast of Canada (the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project) and the US market (the Keystone XL extension). At this stage, the debates are conceptual: raging about where, when, and if to build. As an environmentalist, I am pessimistic about the outcomes of these deliberations. As a researcher, I am eager about what this pessimism portends.

Fifth and finally, future work may stem from the application of social movement theory to my work on leaderless resistance. This application is far from a given, however, since a balkanization has kept terrorism studies and social movement studies as discreet domains.[159] We find that "leaderlessness" in particular occupies an uncertain and troubled position in the literature available from the social movement studies perspective. For example, Colin Beck provides a near exhaustive elaboration of points of consonance between terrorism studies and the social movement theory, but allows for the lone exception of "lone wolves, as they may not be best analyzed from a social movement perspective" (Beck 2008: 1566). Similarly, Hsu and Low perceive a "clear gap in the literature that fails to explain the threat posed by leaderless social movement organizations in terms of the models provided by social movement theory" (2010: 4).

[159] Silke notes that a keyword search in the two core terrorism journals *Terrorism and Political Violence,* and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* reveals that out of 1,569 articles only one contained the phrase "social movement theory, and that the term "social movement" appeared in only five articles (2004, cited in Gunning 2009: 156). For at least one prominent social movement theorist, this incommensurability is bi-directional (della Porta 1995: 5-7). Considering the topic of this dissertation, it is also worthwhile noting that a similar lack of interaction with social movement theory is to be found in the work of researchers of the radical fringes of the environmental movement (see Lee 1995; Scarce 1990; Taylor 1993; 1998; 2003; 2005).

Rik Scarce, who is one of the earliest ethnographers of the radical environmental underground and the author of *Eco-warriors* (1990), gained credibility from radical environmentalists and sociologists alike when, during the course of his research, he spent over four months in jail while refusing to reveal his sources in front of a grand jury (Monaghan 2012). After showing him my first article on the ELF (Joosse 2007), Scarce, recalling his own experience, remarked on:

> the poor mesh between sociological social movement theory and what I saw in the radical environmental movement. In particular, "leaderlessness" is a defining part of the character of the movement, as you rightly note, but it is either impossible or irrelevant in theoretical approaches like political process and resource mobilization…. When I first read those theories, immediately on the heels of *Eco's* [*Eco-Warriors*, 1990] publication, I didn't know what they were talking about—"Where are the social movements?" I asked the prof I was doing a direct readings course with (Scarce, personal correspondence with the author, August 17, 2007).

While initially I struggled alongside these interlocutors to find points of connection between the research I was doing and social movement theory, I have become more cognizant that certain tools from the social movement literature in fact can have relevance in studies of leaderless resistance. Before closing, then, I therefore will discuss this relevance over the course of three sections. Specifically, I will discuss the applicability of *resource mobilization theory*, *repertoires of contention*, and *strategic framing* to the study of leaderless resistance.

Resources

At first glance, it may seem odd to put much focus on resources when studying leaderless resistance or lone wolves, primarily because analyses within the resource mobilization perspective often are predicated on the ability to map and understand real-world *connections* among actors working corporately within the formalized structure of 'social movement organizations' (SMOs [Zald and Ash 1966]). These analyses tend to examine the organizational structures within social movements and consider how these structures fit with and adapt to larger societal processes of resource distribution (Zald 1980: 62). Given this focus, it is understandable that the main utility for this line of research would be its ability to determine the relative effectiveness of different organizational structures for mobilizing resources. A classic example would be Morris's (1984) illustration that the preexisting structures of Black churches greatly augmented the mobilizing potential of the Civil Rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s.

For the above reason, one might surmise that resource mobilization theory only gains relevance to extent that leaderless cells *depart* from the ideal vision put forward by progenitors of the leaderless resistance model. For example, Smith and Damphousse were able to perform an analysis of the resource-generating "precursor activities" of an ELF cell called "the family" (which was responsible for some of the more remarkable attacks perpetrated by the ELF) because the cell was atypically large (20 members) and interrelated.[160] While it is true that the 'social movement organization' (SMO) serves as the centerpiece of traditional resource mobilization approaches to the study of social

[160] Smith and Damphousse found that even this larger cell had relatively short planning cycles when compared to other smaller environmental terrorism groups (2009: 493).

movements (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Zald and Ash 1966) and also to more modern syntheses that have included mobilizing structures into a model of political process (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996), resource mobilization theory is nevertheless amenable in two ways for use in the study of even profoundly disorganized groups.

The first way relates to the importance that resource mobilization theory places on recruitment to movements. Social movements typically try to acquire a pool of committed supporters who provide resources that will help ensure their survival and create conditions for them to flourish (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1221). In terms of our interests presently, lone actors or leaderless resisters are important for creating the "constant stream of new actions, … hold[ing] the interest of adherents, [and] creat[ing] the impression of visible progress towards a goal," (Garfinkel 2003)—the sustained challenges against powerful opponents that are a hallmark of a widely-accepted definition of social movements (Tarrow 1998: 2). McCarthy and Zald (1977: 1221) categorize individuals who are involved in social movements as *constituents* if they provide resources to the social movement and stand to benefit from the realization of movement goals, and as *conscience constituents* if they support the movement with resources but receive no personal gain for their participation.

In his analysis of the ELF, Loadenthal (2013) finds that membership in the ELF is best understood as occurring at two levels. The first and most obvious is the level of the covert cell—it is necessary to inspire and attract people who are willing to carry out attacks on behalf of the wider movement. Also important, however, is the aboveground level, where we find "support entities that help to publicize attacks carried out by cells, respond to media inquiries and other public engagements, identify and coordinate aid to

imprisoned cell members, and develop and distribute sympathetic propaganda produced by, and in support of affiliated individuals" (2013: 16, 35-38). Thus, in this cooperative system between aboveground and covert constituents, we see the importance of *constituents* (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1221), *tangible resources* (which may encompass items such as money and materials) and *intangible resources* which may include (but are not limited to) expertise, experience, and efficient infrastructure (Zald 1981: 323).

Second, examples of leaderless resistance underscore the importance of resources, albeit indirectly, in that they often display innovations that compensate for the non-connectedness of lone actors or small cells at the level of resource acquisition. The pioneers of the resource mobilization perspective maintained that "the most limited resource pool which individuals can control is their own time and labor" (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1221). These authors may seem to have been tabling this reduction simply for heuristic purposes, to illustrate a principle within the theory about the minimal value of a single constituent. For cases of leaderless resistance, however, we can see that mobilization at the level of the individual is a dynamic process, germane for understanding how leaderless movements can thrive. Two innovations illustrate this dynamism.

The first innovation within a leaderless systems is illustrated by Anders Breivik and Theodore Kaczynski, who show that individuals can accrue vast resources and know-how simply through endurance and study over many years. The second, more interesting innovation, however, involves the diffusion of *individually-comported* instructions, targets, and tactics, within movements. Websites in the extreme anti-abortion movement have published 'hit-lists' so that adherents can select the abortion doctors near them, for

example. Gruenwald et al. examined all ideologically-motivated homicides perpetrated by the far right between 1990 and 2010 and found that loners, when compared to organizationally-connected murderers, were far more likely to rely on firearms (84.8% as compared with 40%, respectively [2013: 80]). When bombs started going off against energy infrastructure in northeastern British Columbia, I learned from some farmers in the area that we should not be so surprised, since for many years farmers have been able to apply for permits to purchase dynamite, ostensibly for the purposes of clearing their land of beaver dams. Although generally non-lethal in their attack style, covert members of the Earth Liberation Front also 'keep it simple' as far as resources go. Loadenthal summarizes some of the devices used in ELF attacks:

> Typical designs for improvised incendiary devices utilize widely available items such as alkaline batteries, kitchen/egg timers, basic electrical components, matches, road flares, model rocket igniters, filament light bulbs, alligator clips, granulated sugar, liquid hydro-carbon fuels (gasoline, diesel, oil, kerosene, etc.), paraffin, saw-dust, incense sticks, sponges, tampons, plastic jugs, cigarette lighters, solder and insulated wire (2013: 30).

Grigoriadis mentions the simplicity of the recipe for "vegan jello," the incendiary material sometimes used in ELF attacks—a half and half mix of diesel fuel and gasoline with the occasional additive of glycerin (Grigoriadis 2006: 73).

Actions perpetrated in the mode of leaderless resistance are therefore more feasible to the extent that the supporting movement is able to increase capability of its individual constituents through the diffusion of 'tactics of the individual' among its members (see appendix G for some instruction manuals from the radical environmental

movement). The limitations posed by the horizon of individualistic action therefore do not contradict or invalidate the resource mobilization perspective's contention that resources are fundamental to social movement activity. Rather, examples of leaderless resistance underscore the importance of resources, whether considering the participation of above-ground actors, or the particular ways that lone wolves/small cells approach the task of mobilizing resources.

Repertoires

If part of the goal of future work is to expand understanding of leaderless resistance beyond the instrumentally-focused dialectic between counterterrorist surveillance and terrorist evasion, then it would make sense to look beyond the dynamics of the latest crackdowns and out toward the level of subcultural evolution. The previous discussion of resource mobilization pointed to the need for a diffusion of tactics among incipient movement participants, and at this point another prominent concept from social movement theory gains relevance in the study of leaderless resistance; namely, the *repertoire of contention*. Charles Tilly defined repertoires as:

> limited set[s] of routines that are learned, shared, and acted out through a relatively deliberate process of choice. Repertoires are learned cultural creations…. At any particular point in history, however, they learn only a rather small number of alternative ways to act collectively (1993: 264).

Furthermore, Tarrow's notion of cycles of protest describes a more complete ecology that can account for how repertoires arise "slowly, constrained by overarching configurations of economics and state-building and by the slow pace of cultural change" (Tarrow

1991:91). The dialectic of tactical innovation between terrorist and counterterrorist should only ever be seen, then, as one mechanism in a much broader and complex process of cultural evolution.

At the most general level, we might view the adoption of leaderless forms of mobilization as a repertoire in itself (Kaplan 1997; Dobratz and Waldner 2012). Leaderless resistance also serves, however, as a forum *within* which different and more specific repertoires of contention can find expression (Plows et al, 2004). Small-scale, anonymous, individualized-yet-collective violence provides an agora where repertoires can come into being, evolve, and disappear, all the while adhering to specific historical, geographical, and social spaces. For example, within the radical environmental movement, treespiking had its time for a particular community in the Pacific Northwest in the 1980s and 1990s, as did arson attacks against symbols of urban sprawl in the late 1990s and early 2000s. More recently, we have seen attacks against telecommunications installations (most often Telmex phone booths) in Mexico (Stewart 2009). At different times, and for different sets of actors, repertoires have reflected conservationist, green anarchist, animal liberationist, and anti-globalist sentiments, among others (Joosse 2007; 2014a).

At the level of the repertoire, inspirational leaders clearly have their place. Aldo Leopold is one of the founding fathers of modern environmentalism, and while not generally cited as a progenitor of radical environmental tactics, he rounded out his *A Sand County Almanac* with the seldom-remembered assumption that "a militant minority of wilderness-minded citizens must be on watch throughout the nation and vigilantly available for action" (1949 [1966]: 278-279). In the years since, we have seen repetitions

of this call. Edward Abbey's *The Monkey Wrench Game* (1975) became a movement classic and provided a blueprint and terminology for industrial sabotage in the radical environmental milieu. Following in this train, Dave Foreman and Bill Haywood's *Ecodefense: a Field guide to Monkeywrenching* (1985) described the nature of monkeywrenching in detail, maintaining, among other things, that "Monkeywrenching is not organized…. Monkeywrenching is individual…. Monkeywrenching is dispersed…. [and] Monkeywrenching is simple" (Foreman 1985 [2002]: 9-11).

It is easy to identify such movement leaders and their books, and for this reason it is also easy to overestimate their influence. Tilly is careful to note, however, that repertoires "do not descend from abstract philosophy or take shape as a result of political propaganda; they emerge from struggle" (1993: 264). The stream of tactical directives issued in such books are by and large best seen in this context, then, as being *reflective* of extant struggles and actions that invariably preceded processes of codification and compilation by inspirational movement leaders. Indeed, in the introduction to *Ecodefense* Foreman maintains that while:

> it is widely believed that *Ecodefense* (or Abbey's *Monkey Wrench Gang*) launched the practice of monkeywrenching…. In fact, ecological sabotage was widespread before *Ecodefense* was first published in 1985 and even before *The Monkey Wrench Gang* was published in 1975 (Foreman 2002: 1).

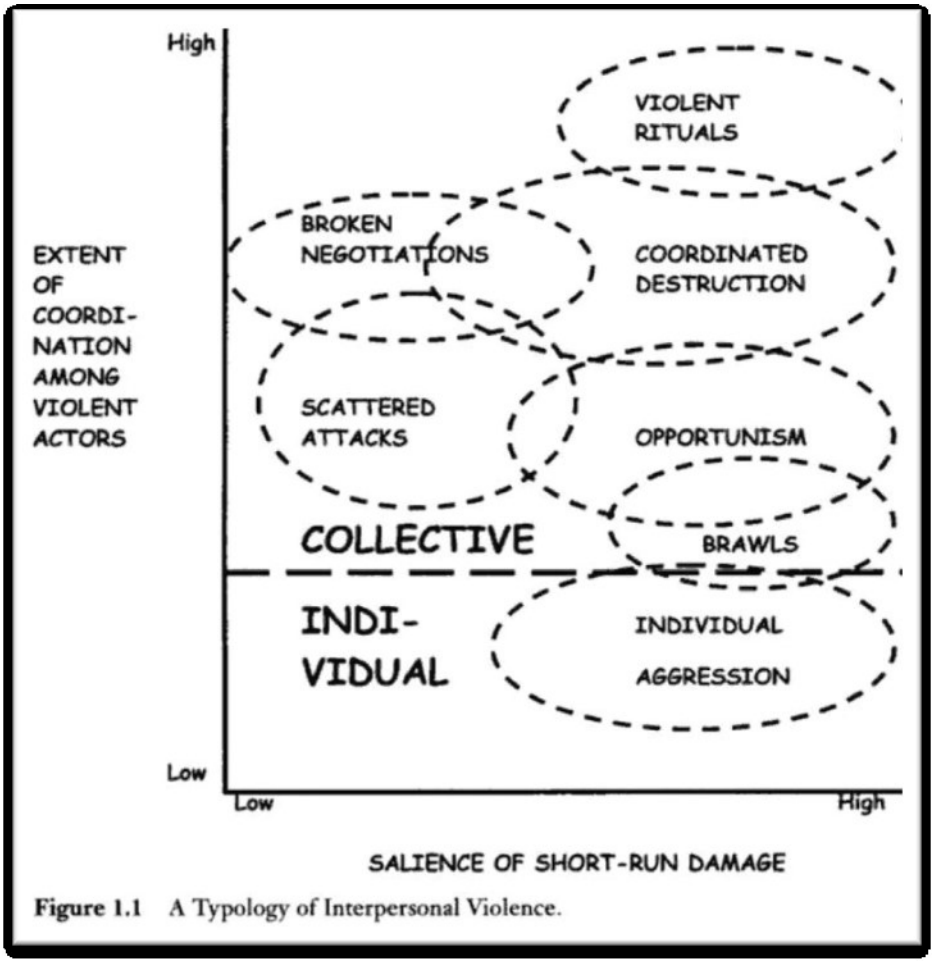
Ecodefense is itself a testament to the widespread appropriation of different repertoires, since as an edited volume it contained, by the time of the third edition "over two dozen major contributors and at least one hundred other contributors" (Foreman 1985 [2002]: 1). Later, as Earth First! lost its status as the sharpest edge of the radical environmental

wedge to the Earth Liberation Front, we saw the dissemination of *Setting Fires with Electrical Timers* (Fireant Collective 2001, appendix G), though ELF cells had been using the tactic of arson for years before its publication (Leader and Probst 2003: 49-58). Most recently, manuals of *Deep Green Resistance,* appearing in the wake of the Operation Backfire arrests,[161] take stock of practices within the movement, make criticisms, and suggest a doubling-down on the principles of leaderless resistance, most notably engaging in a network analysis of past actions and prescribing that cells remain small and unconnected (see appendix G). Thus, the empirical examples from the radical environmental movement listed above bear out the contention found in the theoretical literature that repertoires are far from simple laundry-lists of options dreamt up by movement progenitors in response to specific contexts of state repression (Tilly 1993; Tarrow 1991). Rather, they are reflective of, reactive to, and indeed a part of much larger processes of cultural evolution.

Within this broad framework that stresses the importance of repertoires, Tilly (2003) developed descriptions of specific social arrangements to elucidate particular forms of collective violence. Although he never used the term 'leaderless resistance,' Tilly used the terms "scattered attacks," "resistance," (2003: 170-193) and "autonomists" (2004: 11) to describe many of the above aspects and further to situate them in a larger typology of collective violence that manifests according to two interacting variables: the extent of coordination among violent actors on the one hand, and the degree to which violence is a regular feature of interactions between parties, on the other (2003: 15):

[161] Operation Backfire was a major FBI investigation that led to the arrest of several members of the ELF cell called "the family."

Figure 11, from Tilly 2003: 14



The advantage of Tilly's conception is that it searches for the "robust mechanisms and processes that cause change and variation" across the broad range of collective violence he describes (2003: 20).

Here again, we see the importance of inspirational dynamics in the mobilization of disparate individuals. In the case of 'scattered attacks,' three common ingredients serve to foment an escalation of attack frequency. *Signalling spirals* "communicate the current feasibility and effectiveness of generally risky practices and thereby alter the readiness of participants to face the risks in question" (Tilly 2003: 176). *Setting-based activation* provides "political identities [that] connect people with certain social settings

and not with others, drawing them into those settings activates the identities" (Tilly 2003: 175). Finally, *polyvalent performances* involve the "presentation of gestures simultaneously to two or more audiences in ways that code differently within the audiences" (Tilly 2003: 176). With this stress put on multiple audiences, the communication of feasibility, and the creation of political identities, we may turn to a consideration of a third school within social movement theory that bears relevance to leaderless resistance; namely, *framing theory*.

Framing

Framing theory is founded on the basic interactionist tenet that people will act in particular situations based on the way they perceive those situations. While frame analysis frequently is applied to structured social movement organizations, right from its original iterations it has had applicability to the most micro levels (Snow et al 1986), and very recent work has displayed its relevance for the study of lone wolves (Berntzen and Sandberg 2014). Indeed, the work of framing theory's progenitor advances frame analysis as being concerned mainly with "the structure, or form, of experiences [that] *individuals* have at any moment of their social life" (Goffman 1986: 13, emphasis added). Goffman's widely-cited definition is useful:

> I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events—at least social ones—and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify […M]y phrase "frame analysis" is a slogan to

> refer to the examination in these terms of the organization of experience (1974: 10-11).

Thus, this first iteration of the 'frame' concept is marked by an emphasis on the subjective and interpretive aspects of our involvement as individuals with social endeavors.

Fundamental to framing theory is the principle of *selection*. In his book-length analysis of the Students for a Democratic Society from 1980, Todd Gitlin described frames as "principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters" (Gitlin 1980: 6). Frames both enable and filter meaningful interaction. Because, for example, the 'ELF' is a symbol as much as it is the name of a particular group or organization, it serves ably as a signifier for a diverse array of approaches to the radical environmental involvement (as explored in chapter two). Thus, rather than being selective in a merely restrictive sense (as in how, say, a picture frame excludes most of the visual field), we can see that frames also can create the conditions of possibility for expansive interpretive inclusions of a vast array of ideological orientations. This expansive potential is therefore intimately linked with a frame's mobilizing potential (Snow and Benford 1992: 140-141).

Since the work of Goffman and Gitlin, others have developed framing theory, parsing it into sets of aspects or elements that combine to constitute 'collective action frames.' In this vein, William Gamson developed a typology which stresses that collective action frames have "injustice," "agency," and "identity" components (1992). Benford and Snow (2000: 614-618; see also Snow and Benford 1988) articulate a similar three-fold typology comprised of "core framing tasks," including "diagnostic,"

"prognostic," and "motivational" framing. Points of connection and departure exist between these two typologies, but since both have become influential (and mutually referential), it is important to outline how these typologies contribute to answering questions about how framing contributes to mobilization and collective action.

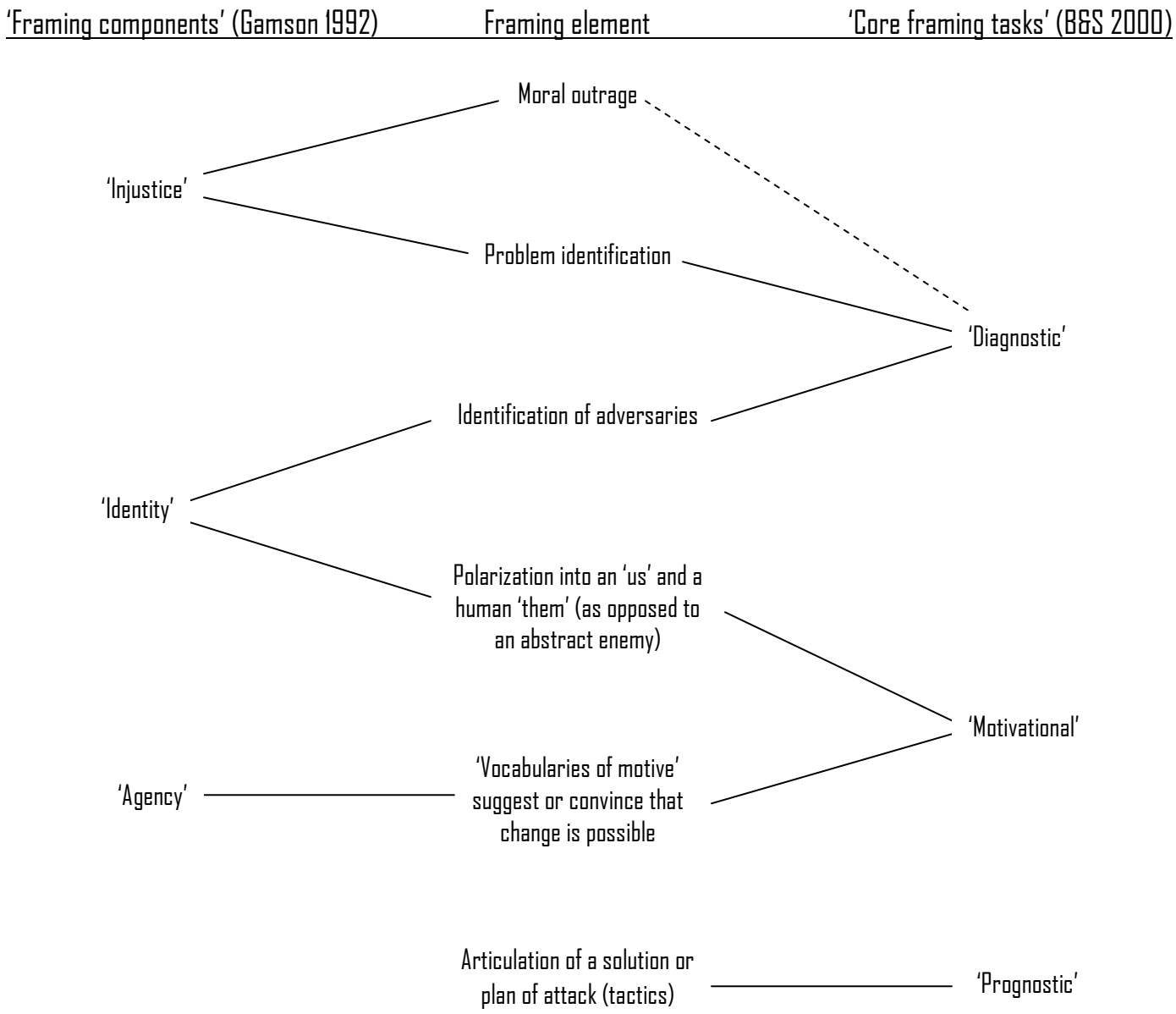
Gamson's "injustice" component of framing theory refers to a frame's ability to bring to light a heretofore unrecognized or naturalized social inequity and cast it in moral terms so as to arouse passions among incipient movement participants. Gamson views such injustice framing as a prefatory, necessary precursor to any collective action.[162] In that this "injustice" component outlines 'the problem,' it also can be overlain, though imperfectly,[163] onto Benford and Snow's "diagnostic framing" task (2000: 615). Both Gamson's "injustice" component and the "diagnostic framing" task of Benford and Snow outline a problem that is to be redressed, but the latter's conceptualization contains the additional element of "focussing blame or responsibility . . . onto culpable agents" (2000: 616). This 'identifying-the-enemy' function of "diagnostic framing," in turn, connects to Gamson's "identity" component, in which political consciousness is obtained dialectically, through a process of polarization in which a field of contention is divided into 'sides' involving 'us' versus 'them' (1992: 7-8). While dualistic, this struggle is not Manichean (at least not in the original metaphysical sense of the term) because, for Gamson, this identity-forming struggle implicates real-life people who can either win or be defeated—these are not railings against elephantine abstractions like 'war,' 'disease,'

[162] In his political process model, Doug McAdam argues that "before collective [action] …can get under way, people must collectively define their situations as unjust and subject to change through group action (1982: 51). This collective definition is part of what he refers to as "cognitive liberation."
[163] Benford and Snow question Gamson's asserted ubiquity of 'injustice' sentiments in movements, stressing that self-help, religious, and identity-based movements are sometimes spurred into action even if they are not informed by a sense of injustice (2000: 615).

or ‘poverty’ (1992: 7). ‘Achievability,’ therefore, is important for both Benford and Snow and Gamson. The former stress that incipient movement participants must gain a consciousness that *change is possible*, and outline a “motivational” core task in which “vocabularies of motive” create the possibility for “compelling accounts for engaging in collective action and for sustaining . . . participation” (Benford and Snow 2000: 617). Gamson in turn proffers his ‘agency’ component which “den[ies] the immutability of some undesirable situation” (1992: 7). Finally, Benford and Snow’s core task of ‘prognostic framing’ involves “the articulation of a proposed solution to the problem, or at least a plan of attack, and the strategies for carrying out the plan” (2000: 616). This core task is preoccupied with concrete questions of how participants can become involved, what they should do, and how their actions will combine together strategically for positive movement outcomes, and is without an analogue in Gamson’s injustice/agency/identity model, though it has some resonance with the repertoires scholarship that I have discussed above.

To summarize the above, one can see that the two typologies of these social movement scholars mesh together in a matrix involving overlapping elements surrounding issues such as moral evaluation, problem-identification, blame estimation, identity-formation, motive-generation, and tactical ideation. I summarize these elements in the diagram below.

Figure 12, Points of Connection and Departure in Two Models of Collective Framing.



We can concretize further this abstract scheme by examining an ELF communiqué that was released on the heels of an attack on a housing development in Bloomington, Indiana:

> *Greetings from Bloomington, IN:*
>
> *The Earth Liberation Front would like to take credit for a late-night visit to the Sterling Woods Development on the evening of January 23rd. During the visit we torched one house that was under construction. It was completely destroyed. The walls had caved in by the time the fire department arrived. Damage has been assessed at $200,000. When finished the house was to be worth $700,000. 'No Sprawl, ELF' was painted on the developers [sic] sign. The house was targeted because the sprawling development it is located in is in the Lake Monroe watershed. This is the drinking water supply for the town of Bloomington, Indiana, and the surrounding area. It is already being jeopardized by existing development and roads. Once again the rich of the world are destroying what little we have left in terms of natural areas and collective holdings (the water). Hopefully they will get the message that we will not take it anymore* (quoted in Pickering 2007: 51-52).

Here we see all of the elements from the framing process in the model above. First, the communiqué invokes moral outrage and a sense of injustice through the depiction the rich lining their pockets by taking and destroying the basic necessities (water) of the ordinary people of Bloomington. Urban sprawl is 'diagnosed' as problematic, and this diagnosis in turn leads to the identification of 'the rich,' but more specifically, the developers, as real-life adversaries. This identification takes place dialectically, a process through which the Bloomington towns-people emerge as the identifiable and sympathetic 'we' in the statement. Perhaps the most powerful aspect of the communique, however, is the agency of the participants that the communiqué *displays* rather than argues for. 'The rich' are actually hurt in the way that counts—economically—and the communiqué elaborates at length the precise extent to which they are hurt. The thrust of the message, if stated in a phrase, is that 'we are redressing this injustice.' Moreover, the attackers give the impression that the action was relatively low-risk (seeming to claim to have been watching as fire crews arrived), demonstrating the feasibility of such attacks.

The second letter from the EnCana pipeline bomber, below, is also instructive in this regard:

> *--ENCANA—*
>
> *You simply can't win this fight because you are on the wrong side of the argument. So stop pushing people around here.*
>
> *Cease all your activities and remove all your installations. Return the land to what it was before you came, every last bit of it, including your fancy gas plant at Kelly Lake before things get a lot worse for you and your terrorist pals in the oil and gas business. Use your excessive earnings to install green energy alternatives instead. That can be negotiated here but there will be no negotiation with you on fossil fuel activities. FULL STOP!!*
>
> *You have 3 months to convince the residents here and the general public that you will commit to this program meaning that all actions against you will cease for three months from the time of this note. We can all take a summer vacation including your security personnel and the RCMP who have not helped you to date anyway -- which was the whole point of the six minor and fully controlled explosions: to let you know that you are indeed vulnerable, can be rendered helpless despite your megafunds, your political influence, craftiness, and deceit in which you trusted.*
>
> *Don't press the issue in your pride and greed and force worse things to happen. In the meantime, give the people here room during these three months to talk about these problems unmolested by any further interrogations and/or investigations so that they can speak their minds without reprisal.*
>
> *You have 5 years to shut down and remove all the oil and gas facilities you have established over the last 8 years in our territories of the Tomslake and Kelly Lake districts. Don't Delay!!*

Along with the problem-articulating and identity-forming aspects of the above letter, what is most striking again is the display of agency. The letter addresses the corporate bully ("stop pushing people around") in a manner that belies its power. The writer notes that EnCana, despite all of its "megafunds" and "political influence" is "indeed vulnerable" and "can be rendered helpless," and that the RCMP (Canada's national police force) has been unable to apprehend or stop the attacks. The "whole point" of the attacks,

writes the bomber, was to display such vulnerability. The bomber presents this vulnerability as a game changer, and for the writer it seems to precipitate a "saturnalia of power" (Scott 1990: 202-227) in which the subordinated are now in the position to command action ("cease all your activities…"), to set time-frames ("you have three months…"), and to dictate the terms on which the company might operate in the area ("convince the residents here and the general public that you will commit to this program"). Indeed, it seems like these types of clandestine attacks are above all communications about the agency of the 'little guy' (in one ELF communique they are presented as "the little people—those mischievous elves of lore" [Rosebraugh 2004: 20]) who can strike out and hurt the powerful, and reveal their feet of clay.

In the ideology and theory that accompanies leaderless resistance, it is clear that these displays of agency are cast as potential game-changers only if there is a likely possibility of *imitation* by others. Tilly's contribution of the "signaling-spiral" which "communicate[s] the current feasibility and effectiveness of generally risky practices and thereby alter[s] the readiness of participants to face the risks in question" (Tilly 2003: 176) is therefore crucial element in the framing of leaderless resistance. If this mimetic principle fails to be realized, then we are merely looking at small battles won in the context of a lost war. This is why leaderless resistance is dynamic and communicative. Consider, for example, ELF spokesperson Craig Rosebraugh's discussion of the logic of ELF-style attacks:

> A common argument against the actions of the ELF has been that each target has been covered by insurance so the given entity fails to suffer little if any economic loss. While it is largely true that most if not all of the ELF targets have been

> insured it is completely ludicrous to believe that insurance companies can suffer losses of hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars without greatly raising the rates of insurance. If the given entity or even industry was targeted repeatedly by the ELF, insurance companies would either cease to cover these entities or raise the cost too high for a profitable business.
>
> The only problem with ELF actions at this point is there are not enough occurring (ELF FAQ, quoted in Pickering 2007: 54).

The calculus behind the moral and tactical status of ELF-style attacks thus relies on the assumption that said attacks will inspire imitation, and in this regard the ELF FAQ is quite didactic:

> Individuals interested in becoming active in the ELF need to follow the above guidelines[164] and create their own close knit anonymous cell made up of trustworthy and sincere people. Remember the ELF and each cell within it are anonymous not only to one another but also to the general public. So there is not a realistic chance of becoming active in an already existing cell. Take initiative, form your own cell and do what needs to be done to protect all life on the planet! (NAELFPO, quoted in Loadenthal 2013: 26).

Truly, then, in leaderless resistance the medium is the message, and the tactic is the frame.

Another important contribution that framing theory can make to the study of leaderless resistance is in the way that it approaches ideology. While several theorists

[164] The ELF's three main guidelines are: a) To inflict economic damage on those profiting from the destruction and exploitation of the natural environment. b) To reveal and educate the public on the atrocities committed against the earth and all species that populate it. c) To take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human or nonhuman.

within terrorism studies have posited that a shared ideology is the basis for the collective action we see in leaderless resistance (Beam 1992 [1983]; Garfinkel 2003; Pressman 2003; Sageman 2008), framing theory helps to problematize this contention. In particular, Snow and Byrd's analysis of Islamic terrorist movements warns against viewing "ideology in a homogenized, monochromatic manner" (2007: 132). Indeed, in an ideologically-contentious climate, the atomization that results in cellular organization may even be advantageous, in that it allows for actors to work together on an ideologically-superficial level while avoiding the fractiousness that often plagues more centralized ideological groups (Joosse 2007).

Much of the framing activity within systems of leaderless resistance, then, will take place at the level of the inspirational leader, who will struggle to frame disparate actions as being in alignment with his or her own vision for the movement. To the extent that clandestine elements, as a function of their position, will relinquish some control over the messaging associated with their actions, the inspirational leaders will have the ability to frame said actions, by virtue of their pre-existing movement credibility. They also will be able to disassociate themselves (and the movement they purport to represent) from particular actions or attacks that run against stated movement guidelines or collectively-recognized movement mores. This advantage is not absolute, however, as was shown in the case of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the deceased leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, who caused great consternation among the leadership of al-Qaeda central—and arguably great damage to the al-Qaeda brand—with his penchant for killing Muslims (Sageman 2008: 63-64).

Furthermore, inspirational leaders also have the often difficult task of framing their movement's actions in the face of the powerful framing efforts of countermovements (Benford 1987). From this angle, we can conceive of the 'war on terror' as a discursive battle involving 'hearts and minds' on both (or many) sides (Crelinsten 2009: 122-157). But as with the actual battle field, the rhetorical one is far from level. According to Simon Cottle, "[s]ociety's major institutions—government, the courts, the police and so on—are . . . [specially] positioned to pronounce on social affairs and command both the physical resources and the authoritativeness to define and pontificate on newsworthy events" (2000: 433). As I described in chapter three, it is clear that the framing of leaderless resistance will be affected by these asymmetrical relationships of power (Joosse 2012a).

Finally, framing theory provides an opportunity to critique the ontology of leaderless resistance itself. As Brafman and Beckstom note, it is sometimes very difficult to distinguish between a (centralized) spider and a (decentralized) starfish—so much so that they proffer a ten point checklist to aid in discernment between the two (2006: 46-53). The exculpatory distance provided by decentralization may tempt some to represent centralization as decentralization to state authorities in order to mask either covert chains of command and control or direct culpability. Such was the case when William Rodgers[165] uploaded instructions for the incendiary devices he was using to the internet after he believed that state authorities had linked such devices to him. As Smith and Damphousse note, "[h]e reasoned that this posting would allow him to claim that others had simply picked up his techniques from the Web and that they were being used by

[165] William Rodgers was an ELF cell leader.

numerous 'elves'" (2009: 491). Rodgers was unsuccessful in his attempt to convince authorities along this line of reasoning.

To the extent that reality is a social construction, the framing of leaderless resistance even carries with it the possibility of 'stone soup' (i.e. creating 'something from nothing') interactions in which inspirational leaders will try to jumpstart their movements into action through calculated framing. Kurzman found that *perceived* structural opportunities are often just as relevant as actual structural opportunities when it comes to individuals' proclivities for mobilization, since "individuals are more likely to participate in the protest movement when they expect large numbers of people to participate" (1996: 154). Thus, leaders may be tempted to inflate the number of attacks that they and their movement have inspired, or claim certain actions for their movement even though they are quite uncertain if these actions were ideologically-motivated at all. As I suggested above (chapter four), the concept of 'leaderless resistance' therefore can be a framing device in itself, an 'ideology of effervescence' that advances the "grassroots" (as opposed to "astroturf") characterization of relatively powerless movements in contexts of asymmetrical struggle.[166]

From the work above, I therefore believe that there is a future piece to be written which describes in greater detail the applicability of concepts from *resource mobilization*, *repertoires of contention*, and *framing* social movement theory to the study of leaderless resistance. While some of my already published work has been cited in social movement periodicals like *Mobilization*, *Social Movement Studies*, and *Research in Social*

[166] A common debate involving the legitimacy of social movements involves the extent to which they are uncentralized and democratic (i.e. 'grass roots'), versus highly-centralized, externally funded, or motivated by powerful interests (i.e. 'astroturf').

Movements, Conflict and Change, it will take more thought and empirical exploration to adequately adjust my research to be able to contribute to these venues myself.

Attendant Controversies

Studying terrorism and political violence is inherently controversial, and examining radical environmentalism revives many of the controversies that attend such studies, but with sometimes interesting twists. Two objections to my research that I have noticed over the years deal particularly with the issue of 'leaderlessness,' and for this reason I would feel remiss not to mention them before closing.

Controversies have stemmed from some of the comparisons I make between the radical environmental movement, the radical right, and Islamist terrorism. I sympathize with the unease that some feel when I make these comparisons. Indeed, criticizing these comparisons when they were made by the FBI in the political realm is a task that I took up in chapter three. Furthermore, if it were to come to a choice between supporting any of the above social movements, I would unreservedly join up on the side of those expressing environmental grievances against corporations (as I have done already in the public realm [Joosse 2008a; 2008b; 2009; 2010]). For the purposes of academic analysis, however, I find the comparison quite useful, as have other analysts and ethnographers who have begun to discern the rhizomatic linkages (or at least opportunities for them) among the globalizing oppositional subcultures that make up the 'cultic milieu' (Campbell 1972). Kaplan and Lööw have been particularly influential on my thinking about the matter:

> with the explosion of Internet communications in the present day, ideas move with unimaginable speed to an ever increasing audience of consumers. Seekers, however, may not be as fungible. Seekers may, for example, sample many cultic religious groups or drift through the various enclaves of the racist or environmental subcultures, but they probably would not join utterly incompatible groups. An Earth First!er in this conception would be aware of the ideas emanating from neo-Nazi circles, and certainly the neo-Nazis would be well aware of Earth First! ideas, but to actually cross into that space inhabited by 'the other' would be almost unthinkable. Yet, because the ideas move so easily within the vast cultic milieu, it is not only conceivable, but likely, that vastly incompatible groups, belief systems, and individual adherents could (and do) materialize together, as if from the very ether itself for events on which interests converge. At antiglobalization demonstrations, for example, a 'wide variety of parading malcontents' may converge, despite the fact that politically, ideologically or religiously, they would seem to have little enough in common (Kaplan and Lööw 2002: 6).

Thus, infungible participants become a medium for the diffusion of ideas and cultural forms, however distasteful the broader trajectory of this diffusion may look. An online posting on April 5, 2010 by the American Resistance Movement (ARM) (a militant fringe of the Tea Party mobilizations of that year) entitled "Leaderless Resistance" is fairly instructive in this regard.[167] The posting itself was mainly a copy-and-paste of the Wikipedia page for the topic—with exemplars from radical environmentalism, animal

[167] Retrieved from www.americanmilitiamovement.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=89&t=401, April 5, 2010.

rights groups, and Islamic militancy conspicuously absent. Alternatively, while radical environmentalists cite inspiration from long-standing anarchist traditions and eco-feminists like Andrea Dworkin (Jensen, Keith, and McBay 2009: 5-6), the particular arrangement and discourses of radical environmentalists like the Earth Liberation Front and those currently lecturing about "deep green resistance" situates them squarely in a current milieu of oppositional strategic discussions over which Louis Beam's essay has been dominant (Garfinkel 2003; Joosse 2007; Kaplan 1997; Michael 2010; 2012; Pressman 2003).

Second, some in progressive circles have the tendency to view the rejection of hierarchy itself as a prophylactic against a replication or recapitulation of the power dynamics that have been the main source of oppression so far, as though inspired by the Nietzschean aphorism, "[w]hoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster" (1886[1992]: 279). At times, this suspicion is entirely warranted, and I am again therefore largely sympathetic to the impulse to challenge power. My reservations, however, arise about the converse: namely, the supposition that antiheirarchical systems are in some way inherently progressive. Those who examine the matter closely warn against a programmatic favouritism toward non-hierarchical systems of organization:

> It will not do simply to assign a political content to a network form. Worse would be to claim that a network form is innately reactionary or progressive. It is foolish to fall back on the tired mantra of modern political movements, that distributed networks are liberating and centralized networks are oppressive. This truism of the Left may have

> been accurate in previous decades but must today be reconsidered (Galloway and Thacker 2007: 18).

This disconnect between liberatory proclivity and organizational form resonates with my own experiences and research in radical green groups, whether it is in Greenpeace meetings, Direct Action camps, Deep Green Resistance workshops, from reading about the tree-sitting campaigns of the Pacific Northwest, or in the debates between early Earth First! leaders Dave Foreman and Judi Bari (1994: 194). In these contexts, *ideological expressions* of disdain for hierarchy and domination, once explicitly expressed in a perfunctory manner (via declarations of feminist sympathies, expressions of thanks to former occupiers of the land, promises of openness to discussion/challenge, displays of class credibility), were often followed by the most incredible performances of domination by White, urban, privileged males. (Wiebo Ludwig, by contrast, had no pretentions towards progressivism and made no apology for his dominant status). Ideologies of antihierarchicalism can mask and thereby enable domination, and true antihierarchical organization, when it manifests, cannot always be equated with a progressive egalitarianism. If there is any takeaway from the above work, it would be that power dynamics are insidious if not ineradicable, and that, for this reason, we should closely examine all pretentions towards leaderlessness.

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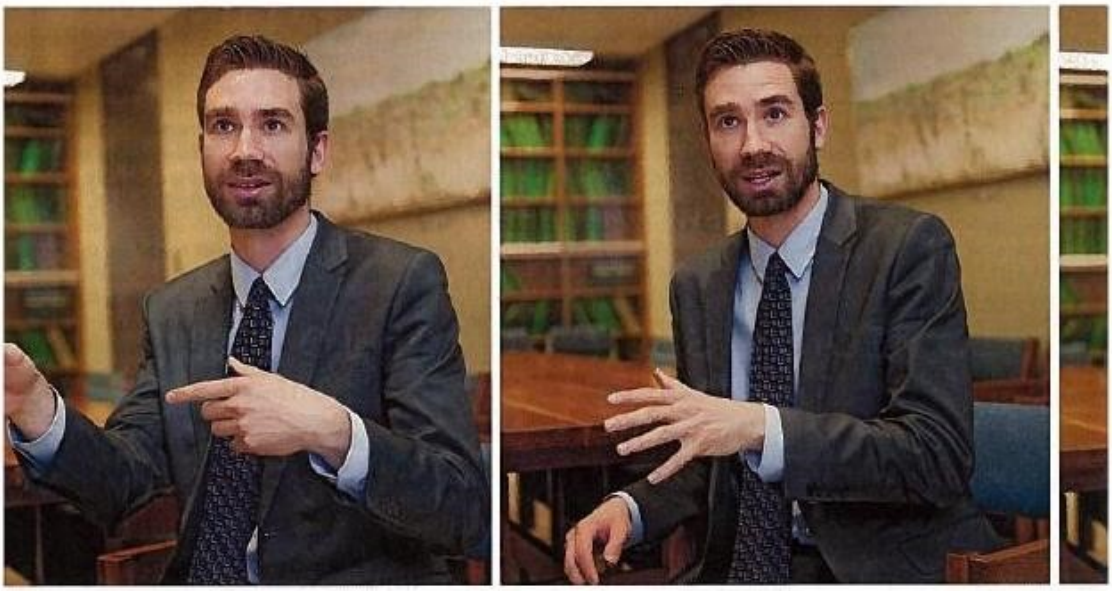
APPENDIX F: *Maclean's* article, April 30, 2012
On Wiebo Ludwig, Sabotage, Charisma, and Routnization



WIEBO LUDWIG

Head shaving, dandelion wine, life on Ludwig's farm—and whether he was guilty or not

PAUL JOOSSE IN CONVERSATION WITH NICHOLAS KÖHLER

WHILE WRITING HIS dissertation on radical environmentalism, Paul Joosse, a doctoral candidate in sociology at the University of Alberta, began examining a string of bombings in 2008 and 2009 targeting EnCana gas installations in northeast B.C.'s Tomslake area. Speaking to rural people who felt under siege by the oil and gas industry, Joosse heard one name pop up again and again, often with admiration—that of Wiebo Ludwig, convicted in connection with similar attacks on gas wells in Alberta 10 years earlier. Joosse felt he had to interview Ludwig, leader of a radical Christian community in Hythe, Alta., called Trickle Creek, and talked his way onto Ludwig's farm. Over multiple stays there, he got to know him, and wrote a chapter of his dissertation on Ludwig and his followers. Ludwig died this month of esophageal cancer at age 70.

Q: *How did you first meet Wiebo Ludwig?*
A: Fittingly perhaps, I met him on the set of a TV show—*Alberta Primetime*. That's the thing about Wiebo Ludwig. As much as people like to point out that he loved courting the media, it was reciprocal—journalists loved interviewing him, because he would always give incredibly pithy, often humorous soundbites that would make you think. He was also fond of keeping you thinking, especially in terms of his involvement, or not, in any criminal activity. He loved tap dancing over the laser beams, saying just enough, but not enough to incriminate himself.

Q: *He was a suspect in the Tomslake bombings, and also in the 1999 death of Karman Willis, a 16-year-old girl shot on his farm while joyriding with friends one night. Ludwig was never charged in either crime. Was he involved?*
A: With all of the criminal activities, both the bombings and the incident with Karman Willis, I'm not convinced either way—of anything. I didn't make it my objective to, quote-unquote, crack the case. I knew the RCMP had tried their hardest—in fact, they'd brought the interrogator from the Robert Pickton case out of retirement to interview Ludwig—and they weren't able to get anything. And, of course, innumerable reporters have asked about his involvement. So I just refrained from asking those questions. But they did get raised, because he raised them. He said, 'Do you think I'm the Tomslake bomber?' And I had to reply, 'I have to consider that that's a very real possibility.' And there was a twinkle in his eye when he heard my response. He was a strong, charismatic figure—a combative personality. He was also fearless, and I think that inspired his community.

Q: *The RCMP claimed they found his DNA on two letters written by the Tomslake bomber—evidence that led to a search warrant and a raid on the Trickle Creek farm. Yet he was never actually charged.*
A: The prosecutor decided it wasn't enough. The RCMP wanted to charge him with extortion, but they weren't able to. If they actually had DNA evidence, you would think that that would be enough.

Q: *Something the RCMP apparently did uncover on the farm was 75 grams of marijuana. Is marijuana part of their lifestyle?*

A: I never witnessed consumption of marijuana. They said it was to aid the sheep in childbirth. But the marijuana goes toward defying what a lot of people think about them, which is that they're puritanical. And in no respects are they that way. They like to have a good time, eat good food, make their own wine—I've tried their dandelion wine, blackcurrant wine, I've tried their cheeses. I often found myself leaving the farm with a package of these goods.

Q: *What's a typical meal like there?*

A: It was a big meal in the dining room. They usually had one table for each family unit, and it would start with a prayer and a devotion. They'd eat and there'd be lots of conversation. And then often there'd be singing—they would use the now-outdated blue Psalter hymnal from the Christian Reformed Church. They had fun. Our discussions, even about the most weighty theological matters, would often end with the crack of a joke. And so there was sort of a joviality there that perhaps you wouldn't expect from a family that's in such a pitched battle against industry.

Q: *What are their religious beliefs?*

A: They're Christian. One Bible verse that Wiebo was fond of quoting is Isaiah 24:5: "The earth is defiled by its people. They have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant." This idea of covenant means there's a relationship between God and people that's based on a trust. The Trickle Creek families moved away from contemporary society because they felt it had gone off track. And our dependence on fossil fuels is a large part of that. That's why they tried to establish a new way of living more in accordance, they thought, with a Biblical rather than a consumerist vision.

Q: *Their operations at Trickle Creek are said to be extensive.*

A: That's what Wiebo hoped would be his legacy, really: the straw-bale houses, the biodiesel refinery, the bee-keeping operation—an alternative vision for how you can live without being dependent on the oil industry. They frequently claim they're 80 per cent off fossil fuels.

Q: *Apart from radical environmental movements, you study "new religious movements," or cults. Should we think of Ludwig's group as a cult? It's been reported in the past that followers who refused Ludwig's requests would have their heads shaved or be banished—things most people would lump in with cult behaviour.*

A: I know this practice of head-shaving did take place, and I think it perhaps can still happen. I don't know the precise things that lead to that punishment. I know several people have had their heads shaved—including Wiebo Ludwig, at one point. And I do know people can stay and submit to those punishments, but they can also leave—people have left in the past, and they've also come back.

Q: *What about the intermarriage at Trickle Creek—how has that shaped the group? You would think at some point they'll need new blood.*

A: There are rumours out there with no basis whatsoever about polygamy or incest—all those things that typically get thrown at alternative religious groups. But none of that is happening, as far as I've seen. It was a community essentially founded by two patriarchs, Richard Boonstra and Wiebo Ludwig. Ludwig had mostly sons and Boonstra had mostly daughters, and they intermarried. So for that generation, everything worked out. Now they're getting to the point where the next generation is old enough to start wanting to make lives of their own, and I think they're heading for a crisis.

He said, 'Do you think I'm the Tomslake bomber?' I said, 'That's a very real possibility.'

Q: *Will the group survive Ludwig's death?*

A: I think they will. Everybody wants to know who Wiebo's successor is, and I know he appointed one. But you don't replace a charismatic leader. Rather, you take the practices and beliefs of that leader and you formalize them into traditions you can then repeat. That's how traditions start in religious communities. I expect that rather than one of his sons becoming the new Wiebo Ludwig, we'll see this routinization. Very often there are also attempts to keep the leader's physical presence in the community in some way—we see this with skull preservation in Papua New Guinea, and we see it in the strange case of English philosopher Jeremy Bentham, who on special occasions is still wheeled out to preside over the council meetings at University College London. Wiebo Ludwig is going to rest in a coffin of his own making and he'll be kept in a concrete crypt above ground at Trickle Creek. They're doing that so that if the community has to move, they can bring his body with them.

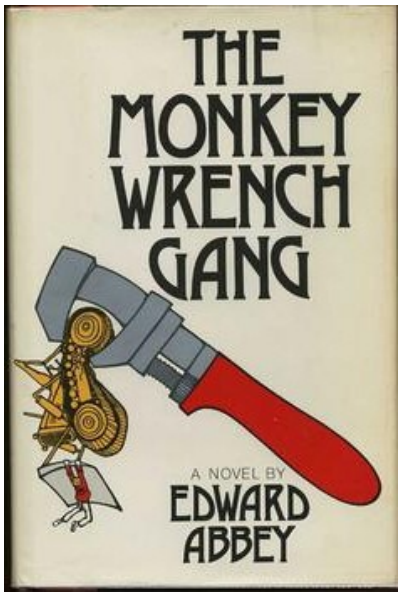
Q: *Many of the issues Ludwig championed are legitimate. Yet many would argue he dealt with his concerns in altogether the wrong way—with violence and property destruction. A lot of people call him a terrorist.*

A: I've walked around Edmonton with him and been in Grande Prairie with him, and people often came up and said, "You're Wiebo Ludwig—I want to say I appreciate what you've done." They'd shake his hand. I don't have a stake in this, but this is what happened. And yes, there are people in Hythe who do not like him at all. I think the death of Karman Willis is an indelible stain. He never admitted to being involved in it or knowing anything about it, but his legacy is tied to that event. Many people like to see him as a retrograde figure, as a fundamentalist, as old-fashioned. Yet I think you can also see him as being in the vanguard of this comingling of Christianity with environmentalism. If scientists are correct and we're heading toward a perilous situation environmentally, it stands to reason you will more often see this pairing of traditional Christianity with environmental causes.

Q: *When you last spoke to him you must have broached the topic of his illness.*

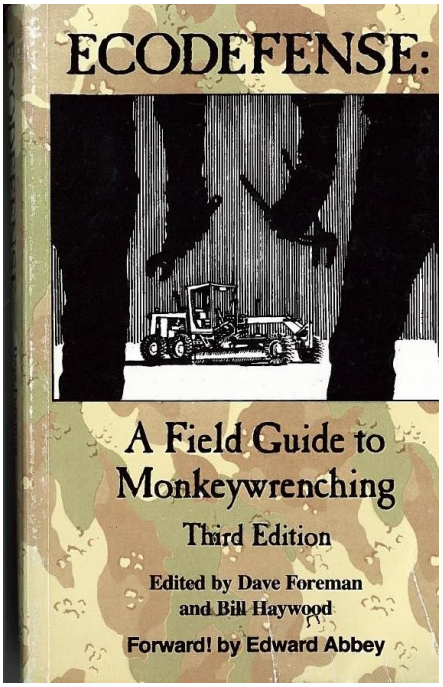
A: I talked to him on the phone maybe 2½ months ago. He was resigned to his fate. He knew death was coming. He was happy he'd had the chance to make peace with his family members and spend time with them before the end came. The one thing he did express was that he hoped the passing would occur without a lot of pain. And I was able to hear from the family since then and that was the case. He was an extremely interesting person to talk to. I think I'll miss him in that respect.

APPENDIX G: Environmental direct action manuals through time

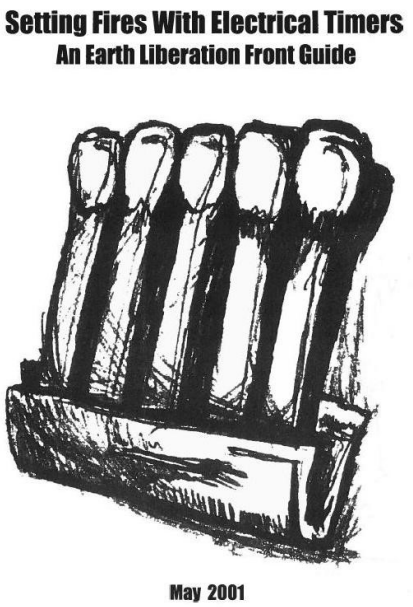


The Monkey Wrench Gang (Abbey, 1975)

"Monkeyrenching"repertoire



Ecodefence: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching (first published in 1985)



Setting Fires with Electrical Timers: an Earth Liberation Front Guide (2001)

Cover, plus two excerpts from the *Deep Green Resistance* manual. The first shows the problems with "The Family" an ELF cell that they considered to be too large and too interconnected. The second shows their ideal cell-type. Published 2009.

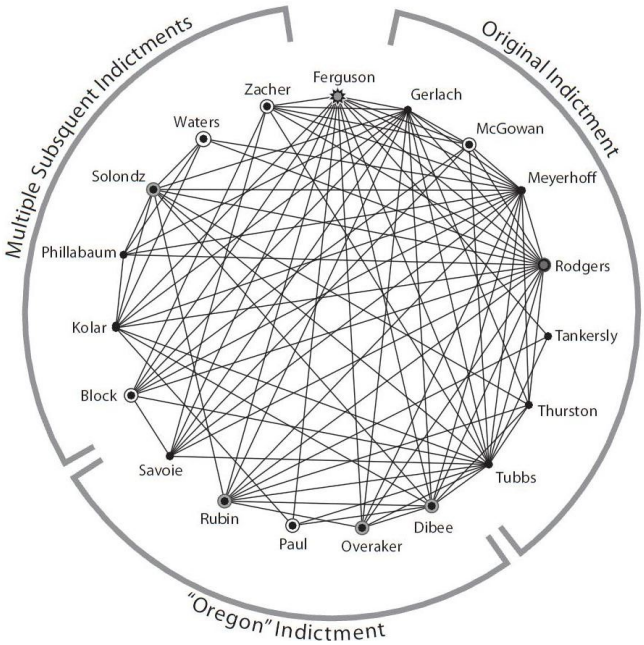
Deep Green Resistance

Crescent City, CA
September 25-28, 2009

Participant Handbook

Derrick Jensen - Lierre Keith - Aric McBay

2a) "Operation Backfire" Arrests



2a) Underground Affinity Group
(Limited direct relationships with broader movements)