

FAR-LEFT EXTREMIST GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES

JULY 2022



EXTREME LEFT GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES

Key Points



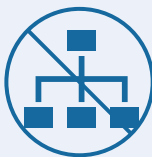
Far-left groups in the United States in the 20th century largely focused on issue-specific causes such as Puerto Rican independence or environmentalism.



Modern far-left groups largely focus on social justice issues such as racial equality, immigration rights, and abortion. These groups often align with socialist or anti-capitalist values out of protest against wealth inequity.



Gun ownership is a central characteristic of far-left groups such as the John Brown Gun Club and Redneck Revolt, which believe they must arm themselves for protection from the far right. These groups appear at protests brandishing firearms and serving as security forces while instructing others on how to use guns.



Today's far-left groups largely do not have hierarchal or even organizational structures like their far-right counterparts. Then-U.S. President Donald Trump called Antifa a terrorist group, but it is less a cohesive group and more a broad ideological opposition to perceived fascism. Antifa's lack of a uniform doctrine or organization results in followers presenting sometimes opposing ideals.

Far-left extremism in the United States largely centers around the notion of correcting an injustice but is otherwise broad in its ideological catchment. In the 20th century, U.S. left-wing extremism was synonymous with either communism or causes such as environmentalism. In the 1960s and '70s, the Weather Underground declared war against the U.S. government and carried out a campaign of political violence.¹

According to the FBI, far-left extremism in the United States was most active during the period between the 1960s and 1980s. Special-interest extremism began to emerge on the far-left in the 1990s, resulting in the promulgation of groups such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and Earth Liberation Front (ELF). The FBI estimated that between 1996 and 2002, these two groups were responsible for 600 criminal acts in the United States that caused more than \$42 million in damages.²

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, ALF and ELF targeted animal research facilities and corporations for acts of vandalism and destruction of property. After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the U.S. government reevaluated how it approached terrorism abroad and at home. While the government focused on al-Qaeda as the primary foreign threat, federal authorities—partly in response to government lobbying by corporations victimized by ecoterrorists—considered ALF and ELF to be the primary

¹ Arthur M. Eckstein, "How the Weather Underground Failed at Revolution and Still Changed the World," *Time*, November 2, 2016, <http://time.com/4549409/the-weather-underground-bad-moon-rising/>.

² Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI, February 6, 2002, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

domestic terrorism threat in what media dubbed the Green Scare.³ By 2010, however, federal authorities had shifted their domestic focus to the threat of the far right, which continued to overshadow the radical far left in violent attacks while ALF and ELF focused on property damage.⁴ A July 2020 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) reviewed almost 900 politically motivated attacks since 1994. Researchers found that far-left attacks had resulted in only one fatality in that 25-year span, compared with 329 fatalities in attacks by the far right.⁵ In recent years, however, the radical far left has seen a resurgence in response to the rise of the far right, particularly since the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, when far-right protesters clashed with far-left counter-protesters. A revitalized American far left has emerged to lead protest movements against the far right and perceived injustices. Armed groups such as the John Brown Gun Club formed to directly confront the violent far right and a broad interpretation of fascism, which often include symbols of capitalism and corporations. These manifestations have been on display during 2020

³ Alleen Brown, "The Green Scare," Intercept, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>; Juliet Eilperin, "As eco-terrorism wanes, governments still target activist groups seen as threat," *Washington Post*, March 10, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/as-eco-terrorism-wanes-governments-still-target-activist-groups-seen-as-threat/2012/02/28/gIQAA4Ay3R_story.html; Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI, February 6, 2002, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

⁴ Kristina Davis, "Ecoterror arsons unsolved 10 years later," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, September 14, 2013, <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/sdut-ecoterror-arsons-elf-fbi-2013sep14.htmlstory.html>; Alleen Brown, "The Green Scare," Intercept, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>.

⁵ Lois Beckett, "Anti-fascists linked to zero murders in the US in 25 years," *Guardian* (London), July 27, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/27/us-rightwing-extremists-attacks-deaths-database-leftwing-antifa>.

protests against police brutality, during which the far left have become increasingly visible and destructive, leading then-President Donald Trump in May 2020 to call for designating the broad anti-fascist ideology Antifa a terrorist organization.⁶

The president's desire to label Antifa a terrorist organization highlighted the problematic nature of modern far-left groups in the United States, which are largely less organized than their predecessors. During the mid- to late 20th century, far-left groups dedicated to causes such as Puerto Rican independence carried out bombings and other violent attacks across the United States. By the 1990s, however, authorities had largely dismantled the leadership infrastructure of these groups.⁷ Today, the far left largely coalesces around ideologies and not specific individuals or structured organizations. Antifa and black bloc, for example, are centered around a broad opposition to fascism but are otherwise left open for individual interpretation, which results in varying tactics and even beliefs among adherents who may disagree on what is included under the fascist label. There are multiple groups in the United States that affiliate with the Antifa ideology, but they have no formal organizational relationship, formal leadership structure, or shared tactical approach. Similarly, black bloc is primarily a tactic used by

⁶ "Antifa: Trump says group will be designated 'terrorist organization,'" BBC News, May 31, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52868295>.

⁷ Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI, February 6, 2002, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

far-left protesters rather than an actual group. But because of the tendency for black bloc agitators to dress all in black, including helmets, they draw more attention.

The far left encompasses multiple ideologies, but security experts believe that a large percentage of far-left radicals subscribe to at least one of three main classifications: anarchism, communism/socialism/Marxism, and autonomous radicals.⁸ Far-left groups have largely embraced social justice as a *raison d'être* in protest of perceived restrictions on liberty by the state. In the early and mid-20th century, the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) played a subversive role in promoting communism in the United States and aligned itself with the Soviet Union. Today, CPUSA promotes its dedication to human rights and personal liberties alongside communism, which it heralds as the only guarantor of those freedoms.⁹

Combined with a desire for violent confrontation and rejection of state authority, some on the far left have used social justice issues such as racial equality and immigration rights as a pretext to engage in violent retribution against symbols of the state. This is most prominently seen today in the use of black bloc tactics during protests, which ideological opponents have seized on to cast black bloc and Antifa as organized and unified groups. Anarchist groups such as the Youth Liberation Front are more organized on a local level but have no cohesive national network linking chapters across the

⁸ Jefferson Chase, "After G20: A look at left-wing radicalism in Europe," Deutsche Welle, July 10, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/after-g20-a-look-at-left-wing-radicalism-in-europe/a-39629507>.

⁹ "CPUSA Program," Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

country.¹⁰ With the May 2022 leak of a U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, which established the constitutional right to abortion, a new autonomous network emerged called Jane's Revenge. Named after the Jane Collective, an underground organization in Chicago that helped women obtain abortions prior to the 1973 decision, the anonymous network has claimed responsibility for vandalism and attacks on anti-abortion clinics around the United States since May 2022.¹¹ Online communiques from the network cite a history of extremist violence against abortion clinics forcing the adoption of extreme tactics to maintain their bodily autonomy.¹² Like ALF and ELF, the members of Jane's Revenge justify their extremism as the pursuit of the greater good.

Anarchism is a millennia-old philosophy that advocates a stateless society.¹³ French writer Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was the first to label himself an anarchist in 1840.¹⁴ Today's anarchists often cite modern anarchist writer Alfredo M. Bonanno as an

¹⁰ "About," PNW Youth Liberation Front, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://pnwylyf.noblogs.org/about/>.

¹¹ Judith Levine, "Beyond Revenge, What Does Jane's Revenge Want?," Intercept, June 16, 2022, <https://theintercept.com/2022/06/16/janes-revenge-abortion-rights/>; Alice Reid, "Report: Group claims credit for Madison anti-abortion office attack, warns of more," NBC 26, May 11, 2022, <https://www.nbc26.com/news/state/report-group-claims-credit-for-madison-anti-abortion-office-attack-warns-of-more>.

¹² Robert Evans, Twitter post, May 10, 2022, 3:24 a.m., <https://twitter.com/lwriteOK/status/1523926941572550656>.

¹³ Kory Flowers, "Understanding the Black Bloc," *Police Magazine*, January 30, 2015, <http://www.policemag.com/channel/patrol/articles/2015/01/understanding-the-black-bloc.aspx>.

¹⁴ Arif Dirlik, George Woodcock, Franklin Rosemont, and Martin A. Miller, "Anarchism," Encyclopaedia Britannica, accessed November 19, 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/anarchism>.

inspiration. In his 1977 essay “Armed Joy,” Bonanno exhorted followers to “shoot the policeman, the judge, the boss....”¹⁵ Bonanno’s works derided capitalism and encouraged followers to tear down its symbols.¹⁶ In his 1993 essay “For An Anti-authoritarian Insurrectionalist International,” Bonanno wrote that conservative voices had sidelined the radical left, causing it to regress. In response, Bonanno called for Mediterranean groups to coordinate an anti-authoritarian insurrection.¹⁷

The far left has not uniformly embraced anarchism. A common theme between anarchist and non-anarchist groups, however, is a rejection of authority. This manifests itself as opposition to colonialism, authoritarianism, and—in common with anarchism—state authority. The far left opposes state oppression and believes that strengthening government and security institutions is a path toward a police state or fascism, which should be confronted.¹⁸ According to German authorities, the extreme left believes that it can goad the state into revealing its true fascist nature by eliciting violent reactions.¹⁹ Far-left protesters have also engaged in violence against the far right as part of a self-declared opposition to racism and fascism, as can be seen by Antifa and black bloc actions during 2020 protests. According to Germany’s Bundesamt für

¹⁵ Alfredo M. Bonanno, “Armed Joy,” The Anarchist Library, accessed November 19, 2018, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/alfredo-m-bonanno-armed-joy>.

¹⁶ Alfredo M. Bonanno, “Armed Joy,” The Anarchist Library, accessed November 19, 2018, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/alfredo-m-bonanno-armed-joy>.

¹⁷ Alfredo M. Bonanno, “For An Anti-authoritarian Insurrectionalist International,” The Anarchist Library, accessed November 19, 2018, <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/alfredo-m-bonanno-for-an-anti-authoritarian-insurrectionalist-international>.

¹⁸ “Left-wing extremists’ fields of activity,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, accessed August 20, 2018, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/en/fields-of-work/left-wing-extremism/figures-and-facts-left-wing-extremism/left-wing-extremists-fields-of-activity-2014>.

¹⁹ “Brief summary 2017 Report on the Protection of the Constitution,” Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 2017, 20, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/embed/annual-report-2017-summary.pdf>

Verfassungsschutz, however, the extreme left only superficially opposes fascist movements, focusing more on undermining the capitalist system.²⁰ U.S. Attorney General William Barr has directly accused Antifa and related groups of hijacking peaceful protests in the United States to promote anarchism.²¹

CEP has profiled



**Far-left movements either
previously or currently active
in the United States**

Organizations

²⁰ "Left-wing extremists' fields of activity," Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, accessed August 20, 2018, <https://www.verfassungsschutz.de/en/fields-of-work/left-wing-extremism/figures-and-facts-left-wing-extremism/left-wing-extremists-fields-of-activity-2014>.

²¹ Claire Hansen, "White House Addresses Trump Pledge to Designate Antifa a Terrorist Group," U.S. News & World Report, June 1, 2020, <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2020-06-01/white-house-addresses-trump-pledge-to-designate-antifa-a-terrorist-group>.



Animal Liberation Front

Base of Operations: International.

Website: Not determined.

Social Media Presence: Not determined.

Leadership: ALF is a leaderless organization.

Membership Size and Relevance: ALF has no formal membership. It is comprised of anonymous, autonomous cells bound by a central ideology to halt animal testing and promote animal rights.²² ALF organizes into these cells to prevent infiltration by law enforcement and accused animal abusers. ALF is present in at least 40 countries around the world.²³ In April 2022, Joseph Mahmoud Dibee pleaded guilty to involvement in multiple arsons committed by a cell of ALF and Earth Liberation Front (ELF) members known as “the family.” Dibee was arrested in 2018 and his case renewed public interest in the group.²⁴

²² “Animal Liberation Front,” PetSide, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://www.petside.com/animal-liberation-front/>.

²³ “Frequently Asked Questions About the North American Animal Liberation Press Office,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/f-a-q-s/#2>.

²⁴ ²⁴ “Pacific Northwest Environmental Extremist and Arsonist Pleads Guilty,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 22, 2022, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/pacific-northwest-environmental-extremist-and-arsonist-pleads-guilty>; Christine Chung, “Man Who Fleed U.S. in 2005 Pleads Guilty to Environmental Arson Conspiracies,” *New York Times*, April 25, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/25/us/joseph-dibee-environmental-arson-fugitive.html>; Sam Raskin, “‘Environmental extremist’ group leader Joseph Dibee pleads guilty to arson,” *New York Post*, April 24, 2022, <https://nypost.com/2022/04/24/environmental-extremist-joseph-dibee-pleads-guilty-to-arson/>; Conrad Wilson, “Trial Will Decide Who Can Be Labeled A Domestic Terrorist,” NPR, July 6, 2021, <https://www.npr.org/2021/07/06/1013496140/trial-will-decide-who-can-be-labeled-a-domestic-terrorist>.

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) is a far-left extremist group focused on animal rights.²⁵ The group originated in the United Kingdom but has a presence in 40 countries around the world. In the United States, ALF has claimed responsibility for arson and vandalism against animal research facilities, farms, restaurants, and other businesses the group considers harmful to animals.

ALF emerged in England in the 1970s. British animal rights activist Ronnie Lee was a member of the Hunt Saboteurs Association (HSA) in England, a group that worked to sabotage hunting expeditions. He later formed an offshoot called the Band of Mercy, which changed its name to the Animal Liberation Front in 1976.²⁶ Lee served three years in prison after his 1974 arrest for a raid on Oxford Laboratory Animal Colonies in Bicester, England, with Cliff Goodman. Upon his release, Lee became press officer of the Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group, for which he was arrested in 1986 and sentenced to 10 years in prison for conspiracy to damage property connected with

²⁵ Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI, February 6, 2002, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

²⁶ "Ronnie Lee," International Animal Rights Conference, accessed June 17, 2022, https://ar-conference.org/2012/ronnie_lee.php; "RONNIE LEE: ENCOURAGING VEGAN EDUCATION," VegfestUK, October 14, 2019, <https://www.vegfest.co.uk/2019/10/14/ronnie-lee-encouraging-vegan-education/#>;

animal abuse. After his release in 1992, Lee began speaking publicly on his own about animal rights and eventually veganism.²⁷

ALF's core ideology is built on four basic tenets: free animals from abuse; damage those profiting from the suffering and exploitation of animals; expose hidden cruelties against animals through non-violent actions and freeing of animals; and take all necessary precautions to prevent harm to animals or humans.²⁸ Despite this commitment to avoiding harm, ALF's actions have included bombings, arson, and other attacks that have resulted in injuries. In the 1980s and 1990s, several letter bombs and car bombs were attributed to ALF. ALF distanced itself from those attacks and they were later claimed by ALF breakaway groups called the Justice Department and Animal Rights Militia. Both groups allegedly broke from ALF because they sought more direct action, but some researchers believe the three groups maintain close ties and ALF uses the other two to maintain plausible deniability of violent activities.²⁹

²⁷ "Ronnie Lee," International Animal Rights Conference, accessed June 17, 2022, https://ar-conference.org/2012/ronnie_lee.php; "RONNIE LEE: ENCOURAGING VEGAN EDUCATION," VegfestUK, October 14, 2019, <https://www.vegfest.co.uk/2019/10/14/ronnie-lee-encouraging-vegan-education/#>; Maria Chiorando, "Animal Liberation Front Founder Proposes New Definition Of Veganism," Plant Based News, August 20, 2018, <https://plantbasednews.org/news/animal-liberation-front-founder-proposes-new-definition-veganism/>; Grace Hwang, "Examining Extremism: Violent Animal Rights Extremists," Center for Strategic & International Studies, August 20, 2021, <https://www.csis.org/blogs/examining-extremism/examining-extremism-violent-animal-rights-extremists>.

²⁸ "Animal Liberation Front," PetSide, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://www.petside.com/animal-liberation-front/>.

²⁹ "Violent Extremism," AREInfo, accessed August 5, 2020, <http://www.animalrightsextremism.info/animal-rights-extremism/history-of-animal-rights-extremism/violent-extremism/>.

The FBI closely associates ALF with the tactic of arson and accuses ALF of setting fire to several animal research facilities, fur companies, mink farms, and restaurants resulting in losses of more than \$45 million during the 1990s.³⁰ Specifically, a cell of ALF and Earth Liberation Front (ELF) members known as “the Family” were responsible for a series of fires between 1995 and 2001.³¹ The group set approximately 20 fires in Oregon, Washington, California, Wyoming, and Colorado blamed by federal investigators on the Family. The alleged ringleader, William C. Rodgers, a.k.a. Avalon, was arrested in December 2005 and committed suicide in an Arizona jail that month.³²

ALF has also released animals from farms and other facilities, such as in August 2003 when ALF claimed responsibility for releasing more than 10,000 mink from a farm in Washington state.³³ ALF allegedly believes it must break “the unjust laws” that allow the exploitation of animals.³⁴ Further, ALF justifies violent acts such as arson because they

³⁰ Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI, February 6, 2002, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

³¹ Conrad Wilson, “Eco-activist and former international fugitive Joseph Dibee pleads guilty in 1997 Oregon arson,” OPB, April 21, 2022, <https://www.opb.org/article/2022/04/21/joseph-dibee-environmental-terrorism-oregon-washington-earth-liberation-front-animal/>.

³² Associated Press, “2 plead guilty in 1998 arson of Vail ski resort; attack caused \$12M in damage,” *USA Today*, December 14, 2006, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-12-14-vail-arsons_x.htm; Vanessa Grigoriadis, “The Rise and Fall of the Eco-Radical Underground,” *Rolling Stone*, June 21, 2011, <https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-eco-radical-underground-245345/>.

³³ Christopher Schwarzen and Jennifer Sullivan, “10,000 mink released from Sultan farm cages,” *Seattle Times*, August 26, 2003, <https://archive.seattletimes.com/archive/?date=20030826&slug=mink26m>.

³⁴ “Frequently Asked Questions About the North American Animal Liberation Press Office,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/f-a-q-s/#2>.

financially hurt those ALF classifies as animal abusers.³⁵ Between 1995 and 2010, ALF was responsible for 45 percent of 239 arson and bombing attacks recorded by the Department of Homeland security and attributed to environmental terrorists.³⁶ After the 9/11 terror attacks, the FBI focused its efforts on domestic terrorist threats, while corporate lobbying pushed the government to take decisive action against ecoterrorists specifically. The FBI labeled ALF a domestic terrorist organization and the Justice Department began a campaign pursuing ecoterrorists as the nation's top domestic terrorist threat.³⁷ In 2009, an ALF spokesman said some members had turned to violence following the failure of years of peaceful campaigning.³⁸

Following the 9/11 attacks, the FBI ramped up its surveillance and other activities against ALF and ELF. In December 2001, domestic terrorism section chief of the FBI, James Jarboe, called ALF and ELF "the No. 1 priority in the domestic terrorism

³⁵ "Frequently Asked Questions About the North American Animal Liberation Press Office," North American Animal Liberation Press Office, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/f-a-q-s/#2>.

³⁶ Steven M. Chermak, Joshua Freilich, Celinet Duran, and William S. Parkin, "An Overview of Bombing and Arson Attacks by Environmental and Animal Rights Extremists in the United States, 1995-2010," Final Report to the Resilient Systems Division, Science and Technology Directorate, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OPSR_TP_TEVUS_Bombing-Arson-Attacks_Environmental-Animal%20Rights-Extremists_1309-508.pdf.

³⁷ Alleen Brown, "The Green Scare," *Intercept*, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>; Juliet Eilperin, "As eco-terrorism wanes, governments still target activist groups seen as threat," *Washington Post*, March 10, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/as-eco-terrorism-wanes-governments-still-target-activist-groups-seen-as-threat/2012/02/28/gIQAA4Ay3R_story.html; *Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI, February 6, 2002*, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

³⁸ Daniel B. Wood, "Animal-rights activists get personal in wave of California attacks," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 13, 2009, <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2009/0313/p02s01-usgn.html>.

program.”³⁹ In congressional testimony in 2004, John Lewis, deputy assistant director of the FBI Counterterrorism Division, called the investigation of animal rights extremists and ecoterrorism matters the FBI’s highest domestic terrorism investigative priority.⁴⁰

Individuals affiliated with the ALF ideology continue to organize protests and carry out acts of sabotage and vandalism of animal research, agriculture, and hunting facilities, resulting in thousands of dollars in damage.⁴¹ A November 2004 raid on an animal research lab at the University of Iowa, for example, resulted in \$450,000 in damage after ALF released more than 400 animals.⁴² In December 2016, ALF members vandalized a

³⁹ Alleen Brown, “The Green Scare,” *Intercept*, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>; Juliet Eilperin, “As eco-terrorism wanes, governments still target activist groups seen as threat,” *Washington Post*, March 10, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/as-eco-terrorism-wanes-governments-still-target-activist-groups-seen-as-threat/2012/02/28/gIQAA4Ay3R_story.html; Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI, February 6, 2002, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

⁴⁰ Sivan Hirsch-Hoefler and Cas Mudde, “Ecoterrorism: threat or political ploy?,” *Washington Post*, December 19, 2014, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/12/19/ecoterrorism-threat-or-political-ploy/>.

⁴¹ “ALF Destroys 29 Hunting Towers (Belgium),” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, June 11, 2022, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2022/06/11/alf-destroys-29-hunting-towers-belgium/>; “Animal Liberation Front Retaliates for the Murder of Activist Regan Russell,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, July 12, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2020/07/12/animal-liberation-front-retaliates-for-the-murder-of-activist-regan-russell/>; “Animal Liberation Front Liberates 21 Mice from Louisiana State University,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, April 26, 2005, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2005/04/26/animal-liberation-front-liberates-21-mice-from-louisiana-state-university/>.

⁴² “University of Iowa Claims \$450K Loss in November ALF Raid,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, March 18, 2005, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2005/03/18/university-of-iowa-claims-450k-loss-in-november-alf-raid/>; Associated Press, “Investigation into 2004 UI lab attack apparently stalls,” *Gazette*, November 30, 2010, <https://www.thegazette.com/news/investigation-into-2004-ui-lab-attack-apparently-stalls/>.

fur store in Ontario, Canada.⁴³ In 2019, ALF members launched a vandalism campaign against McDonald's restaurants in Colorado and Wisconsin.⁴⁴ In June 2022, ALF claimed responsibility for sabotaging 26 hunting towers in Belgium.⁴⁵

Recruitment and Propaganda

A website called the North American Animal Liberation Press Office (NAALPO) relays information from ALF. The website's operators claim they are unaffiliated with ALF and do not know the people in charge of ALF, as it is an anonymous organization.

Nonetheless, the NAALPO outlines ALF's agenda and how to get involved. The website also publishes ALF claims of responsibility and defends the group against accusations of terrorism.⁴⁶

⁴³ "Fur Outlet Sabotaged by ALF in Ontario, Canada," North American Animal Liberation Press Office, December 29, 2016, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2016/12/29/fur-outlet-sabotaged-by-alf-in-ontario-canada/>.

⁴⁴ ALF Defaces McDonalds in Delafield, Wisconsin," North American Animal Liberation Press Office, October 12, 2019, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2019/10/12/alf-defaces-mcdonalds-in-delafield-wisconsin/>; "McDonalds Continues to Incur the Wrath of ALF (Firestone, Colorado)," North American Animal Liberation Press Office, July 26, 2019, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2019/07/26/mcdonalds-continues-to-incur-the-wrath-of-alf-firestone-colorado/>.

⁴⁵ "ALF Destroys 29 Hunting Towers (Belgium)," North American Animal Liberation Press Office, June 11, 2022, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2022/06/11/alf-destroys-29-hunting-towers-belgium/>.

⁴⁶ "Frequently Asked Questions About the North American Animal Liberation Press Office," North American Animal Liberation Press Office, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/f-a-q-s/#2>.

According to the NAALPO, those who wish to join ALF should join with other like-minded individuals and start taking direct action. The NAALPO provides links to information on how to take direct action in line with ALF's ideology.⁴⁷

Violent Activities

- **January 8, 2012**

ALF activists set fire to a truck storage area at Harris Farms in Fresno County, California. The NAALPO issued ALF's claim of responsibility.

- **March 7, 2009**

Unknown individuals firebomb the car of University of California, Los Angeles professor David Jentsch outside his home because of his animal research. There were no casualties. ALF claimed responsibility.⁴⁸

- **October 2011**

Joseph Mahmoud Dibee and others attempted to destroy the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's Wild Horse Corrals, a government-owned facility used to remove wild

⁴⁷ "Frequently Asked Questions About the North American Animal Liberation Press Office," North American Animal Liberation Press Office, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/f-a-q-s/#2>.

⁴⁸ Daniel B. Wood, "Animal-rights activists get personal in wave of California attacks," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 13, 2009, <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2009/0313/p02s01-usgn.html>.

horses from public lands located near Litchfield, California. The attack destroyed a barn and its contents.⁴⁹

– **October 19, 1998**

Members of ALF and ELF, known as “the Family,” ignite diesel firebombs at the Two Elk Resort in Vail Mountain, Colorado, destroying the lodge. ELF claims told the fire was intended to deter development in Blue Sky Basin, which they said was habitat for the Canada lynx. In December 2006, two of the conspirators, Chelsea Dawn Gerlach and Stanislas Gregory Meyerhoff, pleaded guilty to federal arson charges. Another conspirator, Rebecca Rubin, fled to Canada. After five years as a fugitive, Rubin turned herself over to the FBI in November 2012. In February 2014, Rubin was sentenced to five years in prison. Josephine Sunshine Overaker remains at large. Authorities believe she fled to Europe.⁵⁰

– **July 21, 1997**

Joseph Mahmoud Dibee and others destroyed the Cavel West Meat Packing Plant in Redmond, Oregon, causing \$1.2 million in damages. In April 2022, Dibee pleaded

⁴⁹ “Pacific Northwest Environmental Extremist and Arsonist Pleads Guilty,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 21, 2022, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-or/pr/pacific-northwest-environmental-extremist-and-arsonist-pleads-guilty>.

⁵⁰ Associated Press, “2 plead guilty in 1998 arson of Vail ski resort; attack caused \$12M in damage,” *USA Today*, December 14, 2006, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-12-14-vail-arsons_x.htm; Randy Wyrick, “Two Elk eco-terrorist sentenced to prison,” *Post Independent*, February 2, 2014, <https://www.postindependent.com/news/local/two-elk-eco-terrorist-sentenced-to-prison/>; “MOST WANTED – JOSEPHINE SUNSHINE OVERAKER,” FBI, accessed June 16, 2022, <https://www.fbi.gov/wanted/dt/josephine-sunshine-overaker>; “Pacific Northwest Environmental Extremist and Arsonist Pleads Guilty,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 22, 2022, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/pacific-northwest-environmental-extremist-and-arsonist-pleads-guilty>.

guilty to arson and conspiracy to commit arson in the District of Oregon and conspiracy to commit arson in the Eastern District of California.⁵¹

– **March 11, 1997**

Douglas Joshua Ellerman set fire to the Fur Breeders Agricultural co-op in Sandy, Utah. He later turned himself in and was sentenced to seven years in prison and restitution of approximately \$750,000. ALF did not officially claim the incident but Ellerman admits that he belongs to the group.⁵²

– **October 1996 – December 2005**

At least 16 individuals affiliated with ALF and ELF conspire to damage or destroy various commercial and government-owned properties.⁵³

– **June 1991**

ALF claimed responsibility for arson attacks on an Oregon State University mink research farm near Corvallis, Oregon, and the Northwest Farm Food Cooperative in

⁵¹ “Pacific Northwest Environmental Extremist and Arsonist Pleads Guilty,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 21, 2022, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-or/pr/pacific-northwest-environmental-extremist-and-arsonist-pleads-guilty>; Zane Sparling, “Suspected Earth Liberation Front arsonist captured after 12 years on the run,” *Portland Tribune*, August 10, 2018, <https://pamplinmedia.com/pt/9-news/403164-300186-suspected-earth-liberation-front-arsonist-captured-after-12-years-on-the-run>.

⁵² Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division *Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI*, February 6, 2002, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

⁵³ “Pacific Northwest Environmental Extremist and Arsonist Pleads Guilty,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 21, 2022, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-or/pr/pacific-northwest-environmental-extremist-and-arsonist-pleads-guilty>.

Edmonds, Washington, which produces feed for mink farms.⁵⁴

– **February 28, 1992**

Rodney Coronado broke into the Michigan State University (MSU) office of researcher Richard Aulerich in East Lansing, Michigan, and set off a pre-dawn firebomb. Coronado reportedly believed Aulerich's research was funded by the commercial fur industry. The bomb destroyed Aulerich's office and damaged three others. The attack led to the loss of more than 30 years of research for Aulerich and caused more than \$1 million in damage. The morning of the attack, Coronado also vandalized an MSU-run mink farm near campus. ALF claimed responsibility in a press release, which Coronado admitted to writing. Coronado pleaded guilty in 1995 but claimed he was not the one who set off the bomb. He was sentenced to four years and nine months in prison and ordered to pay \$2.5 million in restitution to MSU and other universities and farms he had targeted. In 2017, he admitted to acting alone on behalf of ALF.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Christopher Schwarzen and Jennifer Sullivan, "10,000 mink released from Sultan farm cages," *Seattle Times*, August 26, 2003, <https://archive.seattletimes.com/archive/?date=20030826&slug=mink26m>; Associated Press, "Fedex Shipment Led To Animal Rights Activist Delinquent Account, Phone Records Helped Catch Fugitive Rodney Coronado," *Spokesman-Review*, August 16, 1995, <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/1995/aug/16/fedex-shipment-led-to-animal-rights-activist/>.

⁵⁵ R.J. Wolcott, "Ecoterrorist admits firebombing MSU 25 years ago," *Detroit Free Press*, February 23, 2017, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2017/02/23/ecoterrorist-rodney-coronado-firebombing-msu/98295732/>.

– 1987

An arson attack destroyed an animal diagnostics laboratory under construction at the University of California, Davis. It is the first arson attack claimed by ALF.⁵⁶

Rhetoric

– **ALF statement, July 12, 2020**

“We want to dedicate this action to Regan Russell, murdered under the truck wheels in front of a Toronto slaughterhouse, and we are hoping from our comrades worldwide to wake up to the reality that animal liberation is a war. Regan, like Jill or Mike, fell martyr in the fight for animal liberation. Don’t let their names be forgotten and fight back the oppressor until we win.”⁵⁷

– **ALF statement, November 1, 2019:**

“For ‘World Vegan Day’, Ben & Jerry’s decided to advertise free plant based ice cream for a day. So we decided to show them that this advertising attracts actual vegans as well.

“The paint on the side of their building ensures that anyone who walks by will know what they are walking by; a company whose massive profits come from the sexual violation of millions of persons, all while pretending to ‘resist’ and be ‘woke’ in their

⁵⁶ Alleen Brown, “The Green Scare,” Intercept, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>.

⁵⁷ “Animal Liberation Front Retaliates for the Murder of Activist Regan Russell,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, July 12, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2020/07/12/animal-liberation-front-retaliates-for-the-murder-of-activist-regan-russell/>.

online presence.

"We do not want your vegan capitalism. We don't want vegan options. We want animal liberation. Take your cash grab and shove it.

"Until all your exploitative business fronts and factories are rubble."⁵⁸

– **ALF statement, October 12, 2019:**

"Anti speciesist action was taken against a McDonalds in 'America's Dairyland'.

"The locals are some of the most grim, unfeeling, and uncaring speciesists in the states. We are doing what little we can to throw a wrench in their gears.

"Multiple messages were painted on the sides of this location, and we planned on destroying some windows hadn't there been a sudden police presence nearby.

"In solidarity with those caught in the 'terrorist' spotlight and spending decades of their life behind bars for victimless 'crimes'.

⁵⁸ "ALF Targets Ice Cream Store in Denver (USA)," North American Animal Liberation Press Office, November 2, 2019, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2019/11/02/alf-targets-ice-cream-store-in-denver-usa/>.

“None of us are free until we are all free.”⁵⁹

– **ALF statement, July 23, 2019:**

“Solidarity with our comrades facing trial.

“Some activist showed up late in the week of solidarity action to redecorate and give a friendly knock to a local McDonalds. The bright red painted messages of peace were washed away quickly, but that window will take a few days to replace.

“We must use our privilege as humans to fight back against the system that keeps animals oppressed.

“Calling out everyone who talks the animal liberation talk but does not take action. You have temporary freedom to lose, the animals lose their entire lives. You feel nervous about getting caught, they feel nervous on their way to see their friends murdered in front of them.

“They can’t wait. The earth can’t wait. Get off your ass and FIGHT.”⁶⁰

⁵⁹ “ALF Defaces McDonalds in Delafield, Wisconsin,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, October 12, 2019, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2019/10/12/alf-defaces-mcdonalds-in-delafield-wisconsin/>.

⁶⁰ “McDonalds Continues to Incur the Wrath of ALF (Firestone, Colorado),” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, July 26, 2019, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/2019/07/26/mcdonalds-continues-to-incur-the-wrath-of-alf-firestone-colorado/>.

– **Rodney Coronado, newspaper interview, 2017:**

“I won’t sugar coat it; we were about psychological warfare. We wanted researchers like Aulerich never to know when they came to work and opened their office door whether there had been an attack. We wanted them to live in fear.”⁶¹

– **Craig Rosebraugh, ALF spokesman, October 2001:**

“If the U.S. government is truly concerned with eradicating terrorism in the world, then that effort must begin with abolishing U.S. imperialism. Members of this governing body, both in the House and Senate as well as those who hold positions in the executive branch, constitute the largest group of terrorists and terrorist representatives currently threatening life on this planet.”⁶²



Antifa

Base of Operations: International.

Website: Various Antifa groups have created individual websites. One group for example, New York City Antifa, has a site at <https://nycantifa.wordpress.com/>. Antifa Philadelphia has a site at <https://phillyantifa.org/>.

⁶¹ R.J. Wolcott, “Ecoterrorist admits firebombing MSU 25 years ago,” *Detroit Free Press*, February 23, 2017, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2017/02/23/ecoterrorist-rodney-coronado-firebombing-msu/98295732/>.

⁶² Alleen Brown, “The Green Scare,” *Intercept*, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>.

Social Media Presence: Various Antifa groups have created accounts on Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, and other social media platforms.⁶³

Leadership: Antifa has no central leadership or organizational structure. Individual Antifa groups exist but they are unrelated to each other and act independently.

Membership Size and Relevance: Antifa has no central organizational structure and thus no membership rolls. Multiple Antifa groups have formed across the United States, but they are largely independent of each other. These groups have turned to social media to spread their messages. Among them, New York City Antifa had more than 70,000 followers on Twitter as of June 2022.⁶⁴ ANTIFA Philadelphia had almost 20,000 followers on Twitter as of June 2022.⁶⁵ A group calling itself Antifa International had more than 40,000 followers on Twitter as of June 2022.⁶⁶ Hub City Antifa in New Brunswick, New Jersey, had more than 5,200 followers on Twitter as of June 2022.⁶⁷

Antifa rose to national prominence in the United States following the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, when Antifa activists

⁶³ Zack Beauchamp, "Antifa, explained," Vox, June 8, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/6/8/21277320/antifa-anti-fascist-explained>; Peter Beinart, "The Rise of the Violent Left," *Atlantic*, September 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/the-rise-of-the-violent-left/534192/?utm_content=edit-promo&utm_campaign=the-atlantic&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_term=2020-06-01T16%253A31%253A00.

⁶⁴ New York City Antifa, Twitter account, accessed June 24, 2022, <https://twitter.com/NYCAntifa>.

⁶⁵ ANTIFA Philadelphia, Twitter account, accessed June 24, 2022, <https://twitter.com/PhillyANTIFA>.

⁶⁶ Antifa International, Twitter account, accessed June 24, 2022, <https://twitter.com/antifaintl>.

⁶⁷ Hub City Antifa, Twitter account, accessed June 24, 2022, <https://twitter.com/HubCityAntifa>.

violently confronted far-right marchers. U.S. media has since reported on numerous protests by Antifa that have turned violent.⁶⁸ In May 2020, U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted that the United States would soon designate Antifa as a terrorist organization.⁶⁹

As of June 2022, the U.S. government had taken no such action. Further, while the U.S. government accused Antifa of driving violence during anti-police and social justice protests in recent years—particularly in Portland, Oregon, during anti-police riots in the summer of 2020—subsequent U.S. government investigations have not found evidence to corroborate such allegations.⁷⁰ In September 2020, acting Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Chad Wolf announced the DHS was investigating prosecuting leaders of Antifa and Black Lives Matter over the Portland riots.⁷¹ On January 6, 2021, however, DHS released an

⁶⁸ Jennifer Williams, “Antifa clashes with police and journalists in Charlottesville and DC,” Vox, August 12, 2018, <https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/8/12/17681986/antifa-leftist-violence-clashes-protests-charlottesville-dc-unite-the-right>; Kyle Swenson, “Black-clad antifa members attack peaceful right-wing demonstrators in Berkeley,” *Washington Post*, August 28, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/08/28/black-clad-antifa-attack-right-wing-demonstrators-in-berkeley/?noredirect=on>.

⁶⁹ Maggie Haberman and Charlie Savage, “Trump, Lacking Clear Authority, Says U.S. Will Declare Antifa a Terrorist Group,” *New York Times*, May 31, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/politics/trump-antifa-terrorist-group.html>.

⁷⁰ Bill Gertz, “Antifa planned anti-government insurgency before George Floyd protests: law enforcement official,” *Washington Times*, June 3, 2020, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/jun/3/antifa-planned-anti-government-insurgency-george-f/>.

⁷¹ Andrew Blake, “Chad Wolf, acting DHS chief: DOJ ‘working on’ bringing charges against leadership of BLM, Antifa,” *Washington Times*, September 1, 2020, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/sep/1/chad-wolf-acting-dhs-chief-doj-working-on-bringing/>.

internal report that concluded senior leadership had promoted unfounded conspiracies about antifascists, encouraged staff to violate constitutional rights, and falsely connected Antifa to protesters who engaged in criminal activity. According to the report, DHS frequently used the term “Violent Antifa Anarchists Inspired” in intelligence reports, but a review team could find no intelligence to support that conclusion a “core set of threat actors” inspired by Antifa were leading the protests.⁷² While individuals who associate with the Antifa ideology have engaged in violence during protests, the evidence that a specific Antifa organization is driving such violence remains unfounded.

Antifa (an abbreviation of anti-fascism) is one of the most prominent far-left movements in the United States. Additionally, Antifa adherents in the United States are

⁷² Maxine Bernstein, “DHS compiled intelligence reports on protesters arrested in Portland without legal justification, report finds,” *Oregonian*, October 2, 2021, <https://www.oregonlive.com/portland/2021/10/dhs-compiled-intelligence-reports-on-protesters-arrested-in-portland-without-legal-justification-report-finds.html>; “DHS compiled intelligence reports on protesters arrested in Portland without legal justification, report finds,” Oregon Live, last updated October 2, 2021, <https://www.oregonlive.com/portland/2021/10/dhs-compiled-intelligence-reports-on-protesters-arrested-in-portland-without-legal-justification-report-finds.html>; Department of Homeland Security, “Report on DHS Administrative Review into I&A Open Source Collection and Dissemination Activities During Civil Unrest Portland, Oregon, June through July 2020,” DocumentCloud, January 6, 2021, <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/21074152-dhs-intelligence-internal-review-report-20210930>.

often associated with violent riots and confrontations with the far right, which has led U.S. officials to call for designating it a terrorist organization. The U.S. Antifa movement is rooted in anti-authoritarianism, which often pushes back against many symbols of authority, such as the police, that protesters perceive have exceeded their authority. Nonetheless, Antifa is not a coherent, centralized group but a broad ideology centered around the so-called opposition to fascism. While there are some formalized groups that call themselves Antifa, Antifa has no centralized and overarching leaders, membership rolls, or structure. Individual Antifa groups are thus unrelated to each other and, at times, promote differing tactics and ideologies.⁷³ In the United States, Antifa is largely made up of decentralized groups and individuals whose interests may or may not align with anarchism, socialism, communism, environmentalism, indigenous rights, gay rights, or other social justice causes. The lack of ideological cohesion also translates to the lack of a common enemy among Antifa groups and activists, who may at times find themselves opposing causes other Antifa adherents support.⁷⁴

Antifa has its roots in Germany, where the Communist Party formed Antifaschistische Aktion (“Antifascist Action,” sometimes abbreviated as antifa) in 1932 as a response to

⁷³ Maggie Haberman and Charlie Savage, “Trump, Lacking Clear Authority, Says U.S. Will Declare Antifa a Terrorist Group,” *New York Times*, May 31, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/politics/trump-antifa-terrorist-group.html>; Jennifer Williams, “Antifa clashes with police and journalists in Charlottesville and DC,” Vox, August 12, 2018, <https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/8/12/17681986/antifa-leftist-violence-clashes-protests-charlottesville-dc-unite-the-right>; Daniel Funke, “Despite Trump talk, antifa has not been designated as a terrorist organization,” PolitiFact, July 21, 2020, <https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2020/jul/21/instagram-posts/despite-trump-talk-antifa-has-not-been-designated-/>; Zack Beauchamp, “Antifa, explained,” Vox, June 8, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/6/8/21277320/antifa-anti-fascist-explained>.

⁷⁴ “Antifa – Background,” Congressional Research Service, March 1, 2018, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10839/2>.

fascism and the rising Nazi Party. The group engaged in direct action against the Nazis, including street brawls. After Hitler's rise to power in 1933, the Nazi regime forcibly disbanded Antifaschistische Aktion.⁷⁵ The modern Antifa movement began in Europe in the 1960s and spread to the United States by the following decade. For years, U.S. Antifa activists largely remained a subset of anarchist and the punk rock movements, maintaining vigilance to keep far-right extremists from disrupting events.⁷⁶ U.S. anti-racists mobilized in the 1980s against the Ku Klux Klan, skinheads, and other racists.⁷⁷ Antifa groups began coalescing and gaining national attention in 2015 with the rise of U.S. populism and a reinvigorated far right.⁷⁸ Antifa rose to national prominence in the United States following the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, when Antifa activists violently confronted far-right marchers. U.S. media has since reported on numerous Antifa protests that have turned violent. Antifa activists commonly consider the views of neo-Nazis, white nationalists, and similar far-right extremists to be repugnant and dangerous and therefore justify violence as a means to silence and delegitimize them. Antifa has also attacked journalists and police who defend far-right

⁷⁵ Zack Beauchamp, "Antifa, explained," Vox, June 8, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/6/8/21277320/antifa-anti-fascist-explained>.

⁷⁶ Zack Beauchamp, "Antifa, explained," Vox, June 8, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/6/8/21277320/antifa-anti-fascist-explained>; "Who are Antifa?," Anti-Defamation League, accessed August 6, 2020, <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounders/who-are-antifa>.

⁷⁷ "Antifa – Background," Congressional Research Service, March 1, 2018, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10839/2>.

⁷⁸ Zack Beauchamp, "Antifa, explained," Vox, June 8, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/6/8/21277320/antifa-anti-fascist-explained>.

protest activities.⁷⁹ In addition to violence, Antifa groups largely utilize the tactic of doxing—publicly revealing personal identification details of opponents.⁸⁰

With a wave of protests against police brutality sweeping across the United States in 2020, various Antifa groups have denounced the police as representatives of a fascist system. Antifa protesters have accused police of shielding neo-Nazis and thus denounced police as collaborators.⁸¹ In July 2020, the political advocacy group American Police Officers Alliance released a report accusing Antifa of contributing to political and social unrest in the United States with a goal of disbanding the police.⁸² However, police reports, FBI intelligence, and court records have recorded little evidence of Antifa's participation in the anti-police protests across the country.⁸³

⁷⁹ Jennifer Williams, "Antifa clashes with police and journalists in Charlottesville and DC," Vox, August 12, 2018, <https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/8/12/17681986/antifa-leftist-violence-clashes-protests-charlottesville-dc-unite-the-right>; Kyle Swenson, "Black-clad antifa members attack peaceful right-wing demonstrators in Berkeley," *Washington Post*, August 28, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/08/28/black-clad-antifa-attack-right-wing-demonstrators-in-berkeley/?noredirect=on>.

⁸⁰ “Peyton Turner: SMU fitness fascist,” ANTIFA Dallas, April 3, 2019, <https://antifadallas.wordpress.com/2019/04/03/peyton-turner-smu-fitness-fascist/>; “Kieran P. Morris,” New York City Antifa, March 13, 2020, <https://nycantifa.wordpress.com/2020/03/13/kieran-p-morris/>.

⁸¹ New York City Antifa, Twitter post, August 16, 2020, 12:07 a.m., <https://twitter.com/NYCAntifa/status/1294848335854149632>; Antifa International, Twitter post, August 15, 2020, 12:39 p.m., <https://twitter.com/antifaintl/status/1294675052139618307>.

⁸² “American Police Officers Alliance Announces Antifa Facts Campaign,” PR Newswire, July 22, 2020, <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/american-police-officers-alliance-announces-antifa-facts-campaign-301097351.html>.

⁸³ Isaac Stanley-Becker, “Scant evidence of antifa shows how sweeping the protests for racial justice have become,” *Washington Post*, June 13, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/protests-antifa-absent/2020/06/13/7f14b8fa-ab80-11ea-9063-e69bd6520940_story.html; Sarah N. Lynch, Mark Hosenball, Mica Rosenberg, and Brad Heath, “Little evidence of antifa links in U.S. prosecutions of those charged in protest violence,” *Reuters*, June 9, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-minneapolis-police-extremists/little-evidence-of-antifa-links-in-u-s-prosecutions-of-those-charged-in-protest-violence-idUSKBN23H06J>; ArLuther Lee, “FBI finds no evidence of Antifa’s involvement in national unrest,” *Atlanta*

Despite its broad opposition to fascism, Antifa itself stands accused of promoting antisemitism because of vocalized opposition to Zionism as part of a broader opposition to racism and inequality. In 2017, the *Canadian Jewish News* (CJN) interviewed three activists about Antifa views on Jews and Israel. Each responded differently but the commonality was that all three felt safe and welcome as Jews within the Antifa movement. Views on Israel varied, however, with some calling it fascist and others saying it is not. One Jewish Antifa member said that Jews do tend to avoid Antifa events because they feel Antifa is demanding that all Jews abandon Israel. That same activist told CJN that “Nazis support the State of Israel” because they use the example of a Jewish ethno-state to argue that whites should also have their own ethno-state and Jews expelled from this ethno-state could just go to Israel.⁸⁴ In 2020, Jewish Antifa activist Daniel Sieradski told media that Jews are welcome in Antifa as its primary goal is to fight a common enemy, the Nazis. Antisemitism is “the prime ideological viewpoint of Nazis,” he said.⁸⁵

Israeli antifa groups have also organized and claimed credit for actions against far-right groups internationally. In January 2021, a group called *Hayalim Almonim*—Hebrew for “Anonymous Soldiers”—hacked the website of the Patriotic Brigade of the Ku Klux Klan,

Journal Constitution, June 6, 2020, <https://www.ajc.com/news/fbi-finds-evidence-antifa-involvement-national-unrest/qV13U9wb8Q6u1QEvVsJ7AJ/>.

⁸⁴ Evan Baggord, “Anti-Fascist and Anti-Israel; Jewish Antifa Talks Views on Israel and Jews,” *Canadian Jewish News*, November 22, 2017, <https://www.cjnews.com/news/international/anti-fascist-anti-israel-jewish-antifa-talks-views-israel-jews>.

⁸⁵ Jewish Telegraphic Agency, “Here’s what you need to know about the anti-fascist group Antifa,” *Jerusalem Post*, June 1, 2020, <https://www.jpost.com/international/heres-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-anti-fascist-group-antifa-629975>.

doxing its members and posting anti-fascist messages on the site. The group has promised to strike a death blow to the KKK in the United States. Representatives of the group told *Newsweek* they do not object to being labeled as Antifa, which they said has been “unfairly demonized” in the United States by a media ignoring the growing threat of white supremacy.⁸⁶ Another Israeli Antifa activist acknowledged to the *Jerusalem Post* in March 2022 that leftists tend to criticize Israel more but Antifa “is an idea, not an NGO,” and it includes a broad spectrum including “communists, social democrats, liberals, and even religious conservatives who oppose the toxic and inflammatory rhetoric of” far-right hate groups.⁸⁷

The Torch Network, a collective of Antifa chapters, lists in its “Points of Unity” opposition to antisemitism, as well as racism, sexism, nativism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination against the disabled in its “Points of Unity.”⁸⁸ The Points of Unity do not mention Zionism. The only reference to Zionism on the Torch Network’s website is in a May 30, 2021, post by a Texas affiliate that primarily focuses on the Proud Boys, though it does negatively cite “love of Zionism” as a trait of the Proud Boys’ manifesto alongside hatred of Muslims.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Ewan Palmer, “What is Jewish Antifa? Meet the Israeli Activists Set to Strike a ‘Death Blow to Fascism,’” *Newsweek*, February 9, 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/kkk-jewish-antifa-hacking-hayalim-almonim-1567893>.

⁸⁷ Michael Starr, “Is Antifa bad for Israel?,” *Jerusalem Post*, last updated March 17, 2022, <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-701442>.

⁸⁸ “Points of Unity,” Torch Network, accessed June 21, 2022, <https://torchantifa.org/points-of-unity/>.

⁸⁹ Central Texas ARA, “Biker Cops, Latino Proud Boys and the Struggle against Imperialism,” Torch Network, May 30, 2021, <https://torchantifa.org/biker-cops-latino-proud-boys-and-the-struggle-against-imperialism/>.

In May 2020, U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted that the United States would soon designate Antifa as a terrorist organization.⁹⁰ Following Trump's announcement, the state-owned Turkish media outlet TRT World alleged that Antifa had been in Syria since 2014 aiding Kurdish militants and received training from them.⁹¹ Representatives of the United Nations condemned Trump's declaration on Antifa as harmful to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression.⁹² Despite Trump's declared intention, actually branding Antifa as a domestic terrorist organization faces legal hurdles as the United States has no method to designate domestic terrorist groups. Antifa's decentralized structure further complicates the issue.⁹³ Trump did not follow through on his proposal to designate Antifa. Two months before his election in November 2020, President Joe Biden issued a condemnation of Antifa, saying he condemned violence on both sides of the political spectrum.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Maggie Haberman and Charlie Savage, "Trump, Lacking Clear Authority, Says U.S. Will Declare Antifa a Terrorist Group," *New York Times*, May 31, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/us/politics/trump-antifa-terrorist-group.html>.

⁹¹ "Antifa: Trained by terrorist PKK in Syria, may end up outlawed in the US," TRT World, May 31, 2020, <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/antifa-trained-by-terrorist-pkk-in-syria-may-end-up-outlawed-in-the-us-36817>.

⁹² "UN experts decry US rhetoric on designation of terrorist group," U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, June 19, 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25980&LangID=E>.

⁹³ Daniel Funke, "Despite Trump talk, antifa has not been designated as a terrorist organization," PolitiFact, July 21, 2020, <https://www.politifact.com/factchecks/2020/jul/21/instagram-posts/despite-trump-talk-antifa-has-not-been-designated-/>; Zack Beauchamp, "Antifa, explained," Vox, June 8, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/6/8/21277320/antifa-anti-fascist-explained>.

⁹⁴ Barbara Barr, "One-on-one interview with Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden," WGAL NBC 8, last updated September 7, 2020, <https://www.wgal.com/article/one-on-one-interview-with-joe-biden-in-harrisburg/33944090#>.

Recruitment and Propaganda

As there is no central, unified Antifa organization, various Antifa groups have largely adopted two primary symbols: a circle containing three downward-facing arrows and two side-by-side flags, one black and one red. The circle with the arrows is known as anti-fascist circle and was originally designed in the 1930s for the German anti-fascist paramilitary organization Iron Front. The black flag traditionally represents anarchy while the red flag represents communism or socialism. Both symbols have been adopted by various groups, including Antifa, which do not necessarily assign the same meaning to the symbols.⁹⁵ In order to appear more intimidating, Antifa protesters typically dress all in black with black masks to obscure their identities.⁹⁶

In terms of recruitment, each individual Antifa group has its own procedures for contacting and joining. Many of them offer methods to contact them online, where they also promote their own activities and ideologies.

Violent Activities

– August 22, 2021

Antifascist counter-protesters violently clashed with members of the Proud Boys and other far-right groups at a far-right rally in Portland, Oregon, called “Summer of Love.” Some of the counter-protesters openly identified themselves as Antifa. One

⁹⁵ Sarah Friedmann, “This Is What The Antifa Flag Symbols Mean,” Bustle, August 15, 2017, <https://www.bustle.com/p/what-do-the-antifa-symbols-mean-the-flags-often-feature-three-arrows-76629>.

⁹⁶ Rick Paulas, “Why Antifa Dresses Like Antifa,” *New York Times*, November 29, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/29/style/antifa-fashion.html>.

recording picked up a far-right protesters saying, “Antifa, come on. Let’s play, let’s play.” In video foots of the clashes, protesters were filmed shooting paintball guns at each other, destroying a white van, detonating what appear to be small gas grenades and spraying chemicals at each other. During street fighting, Dennis G. Anderson fired a handgun toward a group of anti-fascists. No injuries were reported from the shooting and Anderson was arrested on charges of unlawful use of a weapon and unlawful possession of a firearm.⁹⁷

– **August 7, 2021**

Antifa protesters clashed with members of the Proud Boys at a rally hosted by Canadian anti-LGBT Pastor Artur Pawlowski at Tom McCall Waterfront Park in Portland, Oregon. The Proud Boys were acting as event security. In a recording of the clashes, black-clad protesters carrying shields, identified as Antifa, set off smoke grenades and attempted to dismantle the public address system. The opposing protesters fired paintball guns and pepper spray at each other. In a Twitter post, far-right commentator Andy Ngo accused Antifa of trying to “attack & shut down a family Christian prayer & worship event on the waterfront.” A Portland minister

⁹⁷ Ryan Haas and Jonathan Levinson, “Gunfire erupts after Proud Boys and anti-fascists openly brawl in Portland without police intervention,” OPB, last updated August 23, 2021, <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/08/22/far-right-activists-counterprotesters-gather-in-portland/>; Andrew Jeong, “Portland protests descend into violence as opposing groups clash with paintballs, weapons, chemical spray,” *Washington Post*, August 23, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/08/23/portland-protests-descend-into-violence-opposing-groups-clash-with-paintballs-weapons-chemical-spray/>.

responded the event was no “family Christian prayer event” but a far-right political rally.⁹⁸

– **March 28, 2021**

A group of Proud Boys and Trump supporters traveled to Salem, Oregon, for a rally to support “freedom.” The right-wing protesters clashed with a group of about 150 anti-fascist counter-protesters, who threw objects and paint at vehicles attempting to drive through the crowds. Police broke up the rally hours later, declaring it unlawful assembly. One man was arrested after he exited a truck and pointed a gun at anti-fascist protesters. Oregon police reportedly arrested several anti-fascist activists as well.⁹⁹

– **January 9, 2021**

About 100 protesters gathered for a pro-Trump “Patriot March” in San Diego’s Pacific Beach, while another group of about 100 counter-protesters also assembled. The protests devolved into clashes between the two groups, resulting in the arrest of at least three people who refused to disperse. A video recorded a group of black-clad protesters chanting “racists go home.” One of the protesters carried an “Antifascist Action” banner. Eleven protesters were arrested and later indicted in June 2022. According to the indictment, the defendants were “all affiliated with

⁹⁸ “Fact Check-Black Lives Matter and Antifa did not disappear after the election,” Reuters, August 16, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/article/factcheck-antifa-blm-idUSL1N2PN1WT>; Alia Shoaib, “Proud Boys and Antifa exchanged paintball gunfire and pepper spray at rally by controversial pastor in downtown Portland,” Insider, August 8, 2021, <https://www.insider.com/watch-proud-boys-and-antifa-clash-in-portland-2021-8>.

⁹⁹ Sergio Olmos, “Proud Boys clash with anti-fascists in Salem,” OPB, March 28, 2021, <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/03/28/proud-boys-clash-with-anti-fascists-in-salem/>.

Antifa” and responded to social media posts calling for “counterprotesting” about one week before the Patriot March and arrived in Pacific Beach “dressed in black clothing, and armed with weapons and protective gear.” The indictment further accused the defendants of using “force, fear, and violence to further their interests and suppress the interests of others.”¹⁰⁰

– **August 29, 2020**

Following a pro-Trump parade, self-described Antifa activist Michael Forest Reinoehl followed attendee Aaron “Jay” Danielson in a parking garage in Portland, Oregon. Danielson was wearing a hat for the far-right group Patriot Prayer. On September 3, Reinoehl told Vice News he had acted in self-defense because he believed he and a friend were about to be stabbed, but police claimed the murder was premeditated based on security footage of Reinoehl waiting in the parking garage. Later that day, police tracked Reinoehl to an apartment in Lacey, Washington, where they shot and killed him after an exchange of fire. Reinoehl’s Twitter account declared he was a proud supporter of Antifa. He told Vice that he was not a member but supported Antifa. A U.S. Marshals task force in Washington state shot and killed Reinoehl on September 3 as they moved in to arrest him. The Trump administration praised the removal of a “violent agitator.” A months-long investigation determined Reinoehl had likely fired at police first, but a New York Times document review from the

¹⁰⁰ Debbie L. Sklar, “3 Reportedly Arrested After Pro- and Anti-Trump Rallies Face Off in Pacific Beach,” *Times of San Diego*, January 9, 2021, <https://timesofsandiego.com/politics/2021/01/09/unlawful-assembly-declared-as-pro-and-anti-trump-rallies-face-off-in-pacific-beach/>; Elizabeth Ireland, “11 Indicted by Grand Jury on Violent Antifa Attack Charges During PB Demonstration,” *Times of San Diego*, June 7, 2022, <https://timesofsandiego.com/politics/2022/06/07/11-indicted-by-grand-jury-on-violent-antifa-attack-charges-during-pb-demonstration/>.

Thurston County Sheriff's Office revealed the sheriff's office dismissed contradicting evidence indicating Reinoehl may never have fired or pointed a gun at officers.¹⁰¹

– **August 12, 2018**

Antifa activists protesting the Unite the Right Rally 2 in Washington, D.C., threw eggs and water bottles and shot firecrackers at police and reporters.¹⁰²

– **August 27, 2017**

About 100 protesters, including Antifa, broke off from a peaceful counter-protest to attack attendees at a far-right "No to Marxism" rally in Berkeley, California. Five individuals were physically assaulted, according to media reports.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Eileen AJ Connelly, "Antifa-linked Portland shooter appeared to target victim, images show," *New York Post*, September 5, 2020, <https://nypost.com/2020/09/05/antifa-shooter-michael-reinoehl-appeared-to-target-victim-photos/>; Neil MacFarquhar, Mike Baker, and Adam Goldman, "In His Last Hours, Portland Murder Suspect Said He Feared Arrest," *New York Times*, September 4, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/us/portland-shooting-michael-reinoehl.html>; "Man Linked to Killing at a Portland Protest Says He Acted in Self-Defense," *Vice*, September 3, 2020, https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/v7g8vb/man-linked-to-killing-at-a-portland-protest-says-he-acted-in-self-defense; Brie Stimson, "Portland's Antifa-supporting gunman appeared to target victim, police say," *Fox News*, September 6, 2020, <https://www.foxnews.com/us/portlands-antifa-gunman-appeared-to-target-victim-police-say>; Mike Baker and Evan Hill, "Police Say an Antifa Activist Likely Shot at Officers. His Gun Suggests Otherwise.," *New York Times*, April 10, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/10/us/michael-reinoehl-killing-investigation.html>; "Fact check: Joe Biden has condemned Antifa, violent protests," *Reuters*, October 16, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-factcheck-biden-condemned-antifa-idUSKBN2712ZA>.

¹⁰² Jennifer Williams, "Antifa clashes with police and journalists in Charlottesville and DC," *Vox*, August 12, 2018, <https://www.vox.com/identities/2018/8/12/17681986/antifa-leftist-violence-clashes-protests-charlottesville-dc-unite-the-right>.

¹⁰³ Kyle Swenson, "Black-clad antifa members attack peaceful right-wing demonstrators in Berkeley," *Washington Post*, August 28, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/08/28/black-clad-antifa-attack-right-wing-demonstrators-in-berkeley/?noredirect=on>.

– **February 2, 2017**

Ahead of a speech at University of California, Berkeley by right-wing commentator Milo Yiannopoulos, 150 black-clad and masked protesters threw rocks, M-80 flares, and Molotov cocktails at police and university facilities, causing \$100,000 worth of damage to the student union center and other parts of campus and injuring at least six people. Two protesters were arrested after physically attacking two members of College Republicans. The university canceled the speech in response. The university largely blamed black bloc but some members of Antifa are also among the protesters.¹⁰⁴

Rhetoric

– **Antifa International, tweet in response to a post promising violence against those opposing LGBT rights and bodily autonomy, May 8, 2022:**

“RESPECT EXISTENCE OR EXPECT RESISTANCE!”¹⁰⁵

– **New York City Antifa, tweet, August 16, 2020:**

“stop believing the copagenda version of what policing is, if you still do. television

¹⁰⁴ Kyle Swenson, “Black-clad antifa members attack peaceful right-wing demonstrators in Berkeley,” *Washington Post*, August 28, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/08/28/black-clad-antifa-attack-right-wing-demonstrators-in-berkeley/?noredirect=on>; Madison Park and Kyung Lah, “Berkeley protests of Yiannopoulos caused \$100,000 in damage,” CNN, February 2, 2017, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/02/01/us/milo-yiannopoulos-berkeley/index.html>.

¹⁰⁵ Antifa International, Twitter post, May 8, 2022, 8:39 p.m., <https://twitter.com/antifaintl/status/1523462545238990848>.

shows lied to you. policing is about maintaining power and social control.”¹⁰⁶

- **Antifa International, tweet, August 15, 2020:**
“Cops & the Klan go hand-in-hand. #kkkops”¹⁰⁷

- **ANTIFA Philadelphia, tweet, March 15, 2019:**

“People critique us and what Antifa does but we exist to confront fascism in all it’s forms. Fascism breeds days like this, where scores of people are taken away from us all in the most repulsive of acts.

We will not sit on the sidelines, we will not allow fascists to be normal.”¹⁰⁸



Black Bloc

Base of Operations: International.

Website: Not determined.

Social Media Presence: Not determined.

Leadership: Black bloc has no organized leadership structure.

¹⁰⁶ New York City Antifa, Twitter post, August 16, 2020, 12:07 a.m., <https://twitter.com/NYCAntifa/status/1294848335854149632>.

¹⁰⁷ Antifa International, Twitter post, August 15, 2020, 12:39 p.m., <https://twitter.com/antifaintl/status/1294675052139618307>.

¹⁰⁸ ANTIFA Philadelphia, Twitter post, March 15, 2019, 10:39 a.m., <https://twitter.com/PhillyANTIFA/status/1106565478028398592>.

Membership Size and Relevance: Black bloc does not have a formal membership structure.

Black bloc is an international protest movement of violent anarchists who largely want to eliminate the power of governments and financial institutions in the global system. Black bloc is primarily a tactic, not a cohesive group.¹⁰⁹ Groups of protesters dress in all-black and don helmets to conceal their identity and then violently confront symbols of authority and capitalism. The protest movement began in the 1970s in Germany with the goal of direct action against police brutality, economic inequality, and other perceived injustices. It has since spread worldwide through anarchist websites and online forums.¹¹⁰

The black bloc ideology is centered around anarchism and creating chaos.¹¹¹ According to U.S. officials, black bloc protesters tend to target businesses as representations of capitalism. Black bloc protesters often imbed themselves in larger demonstrations to conceal their presence, which led to the label of black bloc as piggyback protesters.¹¹² Black bloc tactics gained national attentions in 1999 during protests against the World

¹⁰⁹ Martin Kaste, "Who Are The Protesters Who Make The Anti-Police Movement Not Entirely Peaceful?," Wyoming Public Media, July 30, 2020, <https://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/who-are-protesters-who-make-anti-police-movement-not-entirely-peaceful#stream/0>.

¹¹⁰ Paige St. John, "Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump," *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>.

¹¹¹ Kory Flowers, "Understanding the Black Bloc," *Police*, January 30, 2015, <https://www.policemag.com/341767/understanding-the-black-bloc>.

¹¹² Keith L. Alexander, "D.C. prosecutors link violent protests on Inauguration Day to 'black bloc' tactics," *Washington Post*, February 21, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/dc-prosecutors-link-violent-protests-on-inauguration-day-to-black-bloc-tactics/2017/02/21/91463da0-f87d-11e6-be05-1a3817ac21a5_story.html?utm_term=.9267c3c4e886&itid=lk_inline_manual_13.

Trade Organization in Seattle, Washington. Since then, black bloc protesters have fomented violence at protests of President Donald Trump's 2017 inauguration and 2020 protests against police brutality.¹¹³

Black bloc protesters have no formal hierarchy and cells are typically temporary as protesters adopt black bloc tactics in protest against symbols of financial and political authority.¹¹⁴ Media and police have prominently linked black bloc to the 2017 G20 protests in Germany and anti-Trump protests in the United States.¹¹⁵ German politicians across the political spectrum called for renewed focus on Europe's radical left after violent black bloc protests at the 2017 G20.¹¹⁶ Protesters have destroyed property, specifically targeting symbols of capitalism, such as during summer 2020 anti-police protests that have targeted courthouses, prison construction sites, and other symbols

¹¹³ Martin Kaste, "Who Are The Protesters Who Make The Anti-Police Movement Not Entirely Peaceful?," Wyoming Public Media, July 30, 2020, <https://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/who-are-protesters-who-make-anti-police-movement-not-entirely-peaceful#stream/0>.

¹¹⁴ Rebecca Staudenmaier, "G20: What is the black bloc?" Deutsche Welle, July 7, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/g20-what-is-the-black-bloc/a-39598505>; Paige St. John, "Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump," *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>; Francis Dupuis-Déri, "How Black Blocs have changed protest movements around the world," *The Conversation*, August 24, 2017, <https://theconversation.com/how-black-blocs-have-changed-protest-movements-around-the-world-80856>.

¹¹⁵ Rebecca Staudenmaier, "G20: What is the black bloc?" Deutsche Welle, July 7, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/g20-what-is-the-black-bloc/a-39598505>; Paige St. John, "Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump," *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>; Francis Dupuis-Déri, "How Black Blocs have changed protest movements around the world," *The Conversation*, August 24, 2017, <https://theconversation.com/how-black-blocs-have-changed-protest-movements-around-the-world-80856>.

¹¹⁶ "We must stop ignoring left-wing extremism in Germany, Merkel's party declares," *The Local*, July 10, 2017, <https://www.thelocal.de/20170710/we-must-stop-ignoring-left-wing-extremism-in-germany-merkels-party-declares>.

of authority and capitalism in the United States. In August 2020, for example, black-clad protesters broke windows and vandalized private property during riots in Seattle, Washington.¹¹⁷ Protesters organize on anarchist websites and online forums.¹¹⁸ Groups on both the right and the left have condemned violent black bloc tactics and the cooption of protest movements.¹¹⁹

Recruitment and Propaganda

Black bloc has no formal membership or recruitment process. Recruits are united by a broad ideology and organize independently while adopting black bloc tactics in protest against symbols of financial and political authority.¹²⁰ Black bloc protesters are unified by dressing in black as an intimidation tactic and attempt to appear unified.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Jon Levine, "Antifa rioters storm through Seattle in night of mayhem while police do nothing," *New York Post*, August 15, 2020, <https://nypost.com/2020/08/15/antifa-rioters-storm-through-seattle-while-police-remain-inactive/>; Martin Kaste, "Who Are The Protesters Who Make The Anti-Police Movement Not Entirely Peaceful?," NPR, July 30, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/30/897345070/who-are-the-protesters-who-make-the-anti-police-movement-not-entirely-peaceful>.

¹¹⁸ Paige St. John, "Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump," *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>.

¹¹⁹ Martin Kaste, "Who Are The Protesters Who Make The Anti-Police Movement Not Entirely Peaceful?," Wyoming Public Media, July 30, 2020, <https://www.wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/who-are-protesters-who-make-anti-police-movement-not-entirely-peaceful#stream/0>.

¹²⁰ Rebecca Staudenmaier, "G20: What is the black bloc?," Deutsche Welle, July 7, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/g20-what-is-the-black-bloc/a-39598505>; Paige St. John, "Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump," *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>; Francis Dupuis-Déri, "How Black Blocs have changed protest movements around the world," *The Conversation*, August 24, 2017, <https://theconversation.com/how-black-blocs-have-changed-protest-movements-around-the-world-80856>.

¹²¹ Kory Flowers, "Understanding the Black Bloc," *Police*, January 30, 2015, <https://www.policemag.com/341767/understanding-the-black-bloc>.

Violent Activities

- **August 2020**

Protesters using black bloc tactics instigated violence and riots during demonstrations against police brutality in Seattle, Washington.¹²²

- **June 20, 2017**

Masked protesters in Washington, D.C., smashed windows at a McDonald's and a Starbucks, set fire to a limousine, and attacked at least one police officer during the inauguration of President Donald Trump. Some protesters carried hammers, crowbars, bricks, rocks, flares, and firecrackers. Washington police later referred to "black bloc" tactics used during the protest. Police arrested 231 people, 214 of whom were linked to black bloc tactics.¹²³

- **February 2, 2017**

Ahead of a speech at University of California, Berkeley by right-wing commentator Milo Yiannopoulos, 150 black-clad and masked protesters threw rocks, M-80 flares, and Molotov cocktails at police and university facilities, causing \$100,000 worth of

¹²² Joseph Guzman, "Several officers injured and 18 arrested following riot in Seattle," *Hill*, August 17, 2020, <https://thehill.com/changing-america/respect/512380-several-officers-injured-and-18-arrested-following-riot-in-seattle>.

¹²³ Keith L. Alexander, "D.C. prosecutors link violent protests on Inauguration Day to 'black bloc' tactics," *Washington Post*, February 21, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/dc-prosecutors-link-violent-protests-on-inauguration-day-to-black-bloc-tactics/2017/02/21/91463da0-f87d-11e6-be05-1a3817ac21a5_story.html?utm_term=.9267c3c4e886&itid=ik_inline_manual_13.

damage to the student union center and other parts of campus and injuring at least six people. Two protesters were arrested after physically attacking two members of College Republicans. The university canceled the speech in response. The university largely blamed black bloc but some members of Antifa were also among the protesters.¹²⁴

Rhetoric

– **Anonymous black bloc protester, February 2017:**

“I subscribe to self-defense in the very same sense that the Black Panther Party does and that Malcolm X does.”¹²⁵

– **Anonymous black bloc protester, February 2017:**

“Which means for me to recognize one type of violence, which is people being beat up for having certain types of political views and being brazen about them, compared to the everyday violence ... like I go through the Bay Area and there are people sleeping in the doorways of million-dollar condos that are empty. ... Is that not

¹²⁴ Kyle Swenson, “Black-clad antifa members attack peaceful right-wing demonstrators in Berkeley,” *Washington Post*, August 28, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/08/28/black-clad-antifa-attack-right-wing-demonstrators-in-berkeley/?noredirect=on>; Madison Park and Kyung Lah, “Berkeley protests of Yiannopoulos caused \$100,000 in damage,” CNN, February 2, 2017, <https://www.cnn.com/2017/02/01/us/milo-yiannopoulos-berkeley/index.html>; Paige St. John, “Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>.
¹²⁵ Paige St. John, “Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>.

violent? That is the most cruel and violent thing I think I have ever seen.”¹²⁶

- **Anonymous black bloc protester after protesters targeted bank machines and a Starbucks on the University of California, Berkeley campus, February 2017:**

“Starbucks is a symbol of global capitalization.”¹²⁷



Communist Party USA

Base of Operations: New York, New York, USA¹²⁸

Website: <https://www.cpusa.org/>

Social Media Presence: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#)

Leadership: CPUSA is led by co-chairs Joe Sims and Rossana Cambron.¹²⁹

Membership Size and Relevance: CPUSA is headquartered in New York

¹²⁶ Paige St. John, “Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>.

¹²⁷ Paige St. John, “Inside the black bloc militant protest movement as it rises up against Trump,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 12, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-black-bloc-20170212-story.html>.

¹²⁸ Communist Party USA, Facebook account, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/cpusa>.

¹²⁹ “Remarks: CPUSA co-chair Joe Sims,” Communist Party USA, July 10, 2019, <https://www.cpusa.org/article/remarks-cpusa-co-chair-joe-sims/>; John Wojcik and C.J. Atkins, “U.S. Communists elect new leaders to begin party’s second century,” *People’s World*, June 25, 2019, <https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/u-s-communists-elect-new-leaders-to-begin-partys-second-century/>.

City and has 29 chapters across the United States.¹³⁰ CPUSA claims to have 2,000 to 3,000 members around the country.¹³¹ As of September 8, 2020, CPUSA had 4,730 subscribers on YouTube and 176 videos.¹³² As of the same date, CPUSA had 31,500 followers on Twitter and 185,820 followers on Facebook.¹³³

The Communist Party USA (CPUSA) is a U.S.-based communist political organization founded in 1919 in Chicago, Illinois, to promote the interests of the American working class.¹³⁴ CPUSA formed from the merger of two breakaway groups from the Socialist Party of America—the Communist Labor Party and the Communist Party of America.¹³⁵ CPUSA purports to be a “political party for the working class” and advocates for the implementation of socialism. According to the party’s program, the survival of the United States depends on its transformation to socialism. CPUSA blames the capitalist system, and the U.S. government specifically, for the exploitation of workers, widespread oppression, the destruction of the environment, and imperialism. CPUSA

¹³⁰ “Contact,” Communist Party USA, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://www.cpusa.org/contact/>.

¹³¹ Aidan Lewis, “The curious survival of the US Communist Party,” BBC News, May 1, 2014, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-26126325>.

¹³² Communist Party USA, YouTube account, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/user/TheCommunistpartyUSA>.

¹³³ Communist Party USA, Twitter account, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://twitter.com/communistsusa>; Communist Party USA, Facebook account, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/cpusa>.

¹³⁴ “Authors: Communist Party USA,” Communist Party USA, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://www.cpusa.org/authors/communist-party-usa/>.

¹³⁵ Daeha Ko, “Communism in Washington State,” University of Washington, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/cpproject/ko.shtml>.

advocates socialism as the only system that can ensure human rights and peace in the United States and around the world.¹³⁶

U.S. authorities arrested several CPUSA members during the first so-called Red Scare, when federal authorities targeted communists between 1919 and 1921.¹³⁷ Between 1949 and 1957, dozens of CPUSA members were convicted of plotting to overthrow the U.S. government.¹³⁸ Most notable among these convictions were those of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, CPUSA members who were convicted and executed in 1953 for conspiring to pass U.S. nuclear secrets to the Soviet Union.¹³⁹ CPUSA belonged to an international network that advocated communism and defended the Soviet Union, the Communist International or COMINTERN.¹⁴⁰ In the 1950s, the CIA dubbed CPUSA a “Russian-inspired, Moscow-dominated, anti-American, quasi-military conspiracy against our Government, our ideal, and our freedom.”¹⁴¹ Today, CPUSA emphasizes its efforts in

¹³⁶ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

¹³⁷ Daeha Ko, “Communism in Washington State,” University of Washington, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/cpproject/ko.shtml>.

¹³⁸ “CPUSA - 1950s - Red Scare,” Global Security, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/usa/government/political-parties-cpusa-07.htm>.

¹³⁹ Joe Helm, “Sons of executed spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg ask Obama to exonerate their mother,” *Washington Post*, December 1, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/sons-of-executed-spies-julius-and-ethel-rosenberg-ask-obama-to-exonerate-mom/2016/12/01/a654c7ca-b7e6-11e6-b8df-600bd9d38a02_story.html.

¹⁴⁰ Emile Schepers, “A brief history of the world communist movement,” Communist Party USA, October 3, 2018, <https://www.cpusa.org/article/a-brief-history-of-the-world-communist-movement/>.

¹⁴¹ “The Communist Party of the United States of America: What It Is, How It Works – A Handbook for Americans,” CIA, 1956, 1, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP78-00915R000600140037-0.pdf>.

promoting civil rights and democracy, including what it calls a “Bill of Rights” socialism that protects civil liberties and adheres to the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution.¹⁴²

CPUSA refers to itself as a Marxist organization, indicating that communism is its end goal. CPUSA’s platform posits that communism will result in “a society without exploitation, without social classes, without war, without constant attacks on our shared environment, and without any coercive apparatus,” while guaranteeing full democratic freedom and the “humane development of society and the individual—for human happiness.”¹⁴³ Nonetheless, CPUSA claims to fully support democracy and the guarantee of personal liberties, including voting rights and full democratic representation. According to CPUSA, capitalism presents the greatest danger to democratic freedom.¹⁴⁴

Recruitment and Propaganda

CPUSA’s propaganda centers around combating two primary ideological enemies: capitalism and the extreme right. According to CPUSA’s platform, the extreme right has influenced the Republican Party and injected Islamophobia, ultra-nationalism, and authoritarianism into the U.S. government. CPUSA accuses the Trump Administration of

¹⁴² Eric Lutz, “‘A leftward shift’: Communist party USA sees chance as progressives surge,” *Guardian* (London), June 23, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/23/communist-party-usa-chicago-cpusa-convention>; Roberta Wood and Dee Miles, “Bill of Rights Socialism,” Communist Party USA, May 1, 2016, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/socialism-in-the-usa/.

¹⁴³ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

¹⁴⁴ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

being authoritarian while the extreme right seeks to use capitalism to extend its control over the entire country. Further, CPUSA alleges the U.S. government uses the threat of terrorism to curtail individual freedoms, including free speech and assembly.¹⁴⁵ CPUSA obligates all party members to fight against racist ideologies and for full political and social rights for all. CPUSA opposes anti-Semitism and discrimination based on race, religion, nationality, or color.¹⁴⁶

CPUSA offers a membership option through its website to individuals over the age of 18.¹⁴⁷ The party charges annual dues of \$60 per year, or \$24 per year for low-income individuals.¹⁴⁸ CPUSA holds an annual convention for its members¹⁴⁹ and also supports the online magazine People's World, though it is published independently.¹⁵⁰

Violent Activities

- CPUSA is not linked to recent specific acts of violence.

¹⁴⁵ "CPUSA Program," Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

¹⁴⁶ "New CPUSA Constitution (final draft)," Communist Party USA, June 10, 2014, https://cpusa.org/party_voices/draft-new-constitution/.

¹⁴⁷ "Join Us," Communist Party USA, accessed September 8, 2020, https://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/51018/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup_page_KEY=10379.

¹⁴⁸ "Pay Dues," Communist Party USA, accessed September 8, 2020, https://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/51018/p/salsa/donation/common/public/?donate_page_KEY=12980.

¹⁴⁹ Eric Lutz, "'A leftward shift': Communist party USA sees chance as progressives surge," *Guardian* (London), June 23, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jun/23/communist-party-usa-chicago-cpusa-convention>.

¹⁵⁰ "About People's World," People's World, accessed September 8, 2020, <https://www.peoplesworld.org/about-the-peoples-world/>.

Rhetoric

– **CPUSA Program, April 13, 2020:**

“There is growing recognition that U.S. policies threaten not only world peace and the environment but the very existence of humanity.”¹⁵¹

– **CPUSA Program, April 13, 2020:**

“U.S. imperialism is home to the bulk of the dominant transnational corporations. It seeks control over the entire world, including over other imperialist powers. Under extreme right political leadership, U.S. imperialism has immense instruments for winning its aims—ranging from its direct military power to its various means of economic domination and political pressure, from sanctions to bribery to ideological attacks. But even with all of these instruments, U.S. domination is slowly weakening.”¹⁵²

– **CPUSA Program, April 13, 2020:**

“The problems facing humankind—of exploitation, oppression, environmental degradation and human survival—can only be solved, ultimately, by the elimination of the exploitative system of capitalism. Our survival depends on a transformation to socialism.”¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

¹⁵² “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

¹⁵³ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

– **CPUSA Program, April 13, 2020:**

“Exploitation of workers for profit is inherent in capitalism and causes or exacerbates all the major social and environmental ills of our times.”¹⁵⁴

– **CPUSA Program, April 13, 2020:**

“The appeal of a communist society is a response to the real human needs of the masses of people. Communism will enable people to set aside worries about health care and education, about losing their livelihood and their dignity. Communism will eliminate the economic insecurity of the masses of working people. Instead, it will offer us the opportunity to reach our full human potential.”¹⁵⁵

– **CPUSA Program, April 13, 2020:**

“U.S. colonialism has forced Puerto Rico’s economy into dependency. For Puerto Ricans to exercise their right to independence they must be able to break with the colonial dependency forced on them by the U.S.; otherwise independence would be a sham. We support the full transfer of all powers to the Puerto Rican nation and monetary compensation with no strings attached to Puerto Rico to make up for the super-exploitation of Puerto Ricans and for colonial oppression.”¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

¹⁵⁵ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

¹⁵⁶ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

– **CPUSA Program, April 13, 2020:**

“As a result of U.S. aggression throughout the Middle East, especially in Afghanistan and Iraq, a substantial majority of Arabs, Muslims, and South Asian peoples in the U.S. have become active opponents of the extreme right. The U.S. has close relationships with the most reactionary forces in the region, supports Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, refuses to accept the rights of the Palestinian people to form their own autonomous state, and demonizes Muslims.”¹⁵⁷



Earth Liberation Front

Base of Operations: International.

Website: Not determined.

Social Media Presence: Not determined.

Leadership: ELF is a leaderless organization.¹⁵⁸

Membership Size and Relevance: ELF does not maintain membership records. It is decentralized into anonymous, autonomous cells to prevent

¹⁵⁷ “CPUSA Program,” Communist Party USA, April 13, 2020, https://www.cpusa.org/party_info/party-program/#Capitalism.

¹⁵⁸ “Frequently Asked Questions About the North American Animal Liberation Press Office,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/f-a-q-s/#2>.

infiltration by law enforcement and accused animal abusers.¹⁵⁹ ELF cells act independently of each other¹⁶⁰

In December 2001, domestic terrorism section chief of the FBI, James Jarboe, called ALF and ELF “the No. 1 priority in the domestic terrorism program.”¹⁶¹ In congressional testimony in 2004, John Lewis, deputy assistant director of the FBI Counterterrorism Division, called the investigation of animal rights extremists and ecoterrorism matters the FBI’s highest domestic terrorism investigative priority.¹⁶² The ELF was the subject of a 2011 documentary film called “If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front,” which documented the group’s ideology and terrorist tactics.¹⁶³

The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) is an ecoterrorist group made up of autonomous cells that carry out attacks on those the group accuses of damaging the environment. ELF emerged in 1992 in Brighton, England, as an offshoot of the British Earth First

¹⁵⁹ “Frequently Asked Questions About the North American Animal Liberation Press Office,” North American Animal Liberation Press Office, accessed August 5, 2020, <https://animalliberationpressoffice.org/NAALPO/f-a-q-s/#2>.

¹⁶⁰ North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, “Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front,” Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, 2, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>.

¹⁶¹ Alleen Brown, “The Green Scare,” *Intercept*, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>.

¹⁶² Sivan Hirsch-Hoefler and Cas Mudde, “Ecoterrorism: threat or political ploy?,” *Washington Post*, December 19, 2014, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/12/19/ecoterrorism-threat-or-political-ploy/>.

¹⁶³ John Anderson, “Activist or Terrorist, Rendered in Red, White and Green,” *New York Times*, June 8, 2011, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/12/movies/if-a-tree-falls-documentary-by-marshall-curry.html>.

movement. ELF began operations in the United States later that decade with an October 1996 arson attack on a U.S. Forest Service truck in Oregon.¹⁶⁴

ELF's primary tactic is arson. It has set fire to research labs, homes, and businesses. ELF has also engaged in vandalism, including breaking windows and graffiti.¹⁶⁵ Between 1996 and 2002, the FBI estimated that ELF and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) were together responsible for some 600 criminal acts in the United States totaling more than \$42 million in damages.¹⁶⁶ Between 1995 and 2010, ELF was responsible for 55 percent of 239 arson and bombing attacks recorded by the Department of Homeland security and attributed to environmental terrorists.¹⁶⁷ Specifically, a cell of ELF and ALF members known as "the Family" were responsible for a series of fires between 1995

¹⁶⁴ North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, "Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front," Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, 1, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>; "ECO-TERRORISM SPECIFICALLY EXAMINING THE EARTH LIBERATION FRONT AND THE ANIMAL LIBERATION FRONT – HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS UNITED STATES SENATE ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION," Govinfo, May 18, 2005, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-109shrg32209/html/CHRG-109shrg32209.htm>.

¹⁶⁵ John Stossel, "Give Me a Break: E.L.F. and Arson," *New York Times*, January 6, 2006, <https://abcnews.go.com/2020/story?id=124096&page=1>; Al Baker, "Police Say an Anti-Sprawl Group Burned New Long Island Homes," *New York Times*, January 3, 2001, <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/01/03/nyregion/police-say-an-anti-sprawl-group-burned-new-long-island-homes.html>.

¹⁶⁶ Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division *Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI*, February 6, 2002, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

¹⁶⁷ Steven M. Chermak, Joshua Freilich, Celinet Duran, and William S. Parkin, "An Overview of Bombing and Arson Attacks by Environmental and Animal Rights Extremists in the United States, 1995-2010," Final Report to the Resilient Systems Division, Science and Technology Directorate, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/OPSR_TP_TEVUS_Bombing-Arson-Attacks_Environmental-Animal%20Rights-Extremists_1309-508.pdf.

and 2001.¹⁶⁸ The group set approximately 20 fires in Oregon, Washington, California, Wyoming, and Colorado blamed by federal investigators on the Family. The alleged ringleader, William C. Rodgers, a.k.a. Avalon, was arrested in December 2005 and committed suicide in an Arizona jail that month.¹⁶⁹

After the 9/11 terror attacks, the FBI focused its efforts on domestic terrorist threats, while corporate lobbying pushed the government to take decisive action against ecoterrorists specifically. The FBI labeled ELF a domestic terrorist organization and the Justice Department began a campaign pursuing ecoterrorists as the nation's top domestic terrorist threat.¹⁷⁰ ELF mouthpiece North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office (NAELFPO) called the FBI's focus on the ELF a "clear sign that the ELF is successfully threatening that nation state which is destroying life on the planet."¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Conrad Wilson, "Eco-activist and former international fugitive Joseph Dibee pleads guilty in 1997 Oregon arson," OPB, April 21, 2022, <https://www.opb.org/article/2022/04/21/joseph-dibee-environmental-terrorism-oregon-washington-earth-liberation-front-animal/>.

¹⁶⁹ Associated Press, "2 plead guilty in 1998 arson of Vail ski resort; attack caused \$12M in damage," *USA Today*, December 14, 2006, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-12-14-vail-arsons_x.htm; Vanessa Grigoriadis, "The Rise and Fall of the Eco-Radical Underground," *Rolling Stone*, June 21, 2011, <https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-eco-radical-underground-245345/>.

¹⁷⁰ Alleen Brown, "The Green Scare," *Intercept*, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>; Juliet Eilperin, "As eco-terrorism wanes, governments still target activist groups seen as threat," *Washington Post*, March 10, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/as-eco-terrorism-wanes-governments-still-target-activist-groups-seen-as-threat/2012/02/28/gIQAA4Ay3R_story.html; *Testimony of Dale L. Watson, Executive Assistant Director, Counterterrorism/Counterintelligence Division Federal Bureau of Investigation, Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington, DC, FBI, February 6, 2002*, <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/news/testimony/the-terrorist-threat-confronting-the-united-states>.

¹⁷¹ North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, "Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front," Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, 31, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>.

ELF no longer carries out as many actions as it did in the 1990s or early 2000s, but federal agencies continue to be vigilant of the group.¹⁷²

Recruitment and Propaganda

The North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office (NAELFPO) distributed press materials on behalf of the ELF. The NAELFPO claimed to be “a legal, above ground news service dedicated to exposing the political and social motives behind the direct actions of the ELF.”¹⁷³ The NAELFPO admitted public support for the ELF and “acts of economic sabotage against those who profit from the destruction of the natural environment.”¹⁷⁴ Craig Rosebraugh and Leslie James Pickering founded the NAELFPO in 1999. Rosebraugh became known as the national spokesman for the ELF until he stepped down in the early 2000s while claiming disappointment with the escalation of the group’s recent attacks.¹⁷⁵ The NAELFPO’s website is now offline.

¹⁷² Kristina Davis, “Ecoterror arsons unsolved 10 years later,” *San Diego Union-Tribune*, September 14, 2013, <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/sdut-ecoterror-arsons-elf-fbi-2013sep14-htmlstory.html>; Alleen Brown, “The Green Scare,” *Intercept*, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>.

¹⁷³ North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, “Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front,” Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>.

¹⁷⁴ North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, “Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front,” Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>.

¹⁷⁵ Bryan Denson, “Once the ‘Face of Eco-Terrorism,’ former Portlander Craig Rosebraugh is now lawyer, filmmaker,” *Oregonian*, last updated January 10, 2019, https://www.oregonlive.com/portland/2013/03/once_the_face_of_eco-terrorism.html.

Violent Activities

- **March 3, 2008**

Five “green” luxury homes were destroyed or heavily damaged by arson in Maltby, Washington. ELF signs were found at the site. There were no reported casualties.¹⁷⁶

- **August 1, 2003**

Suspected ELF members set fire to the construction site of a University City housing project in San Diego, California, resulting in \$50 million worth of damage. It was the costliest act of ecoterrorism in the United States. ELF banners were found at the scene. There were no reported casualties.¹⁷⁷

- **January 2, 2001**

ELF members set fire to Superior Lumber Company in Glendale, Oregon, causing \$400,000 in damages. There were reported no casualties.¹⁷⁸

- **January 2001**

ELF members set fire to new homes under construction in Suffolk County, Long

¹⁷⁶ William Yardley, “Ecoterrorism Suspected in House Fires in Seattle Suburb,” *New York Times*, March 4, 2008, <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/04/us/04homes.html>.

¹⁷⁷ Kristina Davis, “Ecoterror arsons unsolved 10 years later,” *San Diego Union-Tribune*, September 14, 2013, <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/sdut-ecoterror-arsons-elf-fbi-2013sep14-htmlstory.html>.

¹⁷⁸ Mindy Sink, “Radicals Take Responsibility for Burning Oregon Timber Office,” *New York Times*, January 11, 2001, <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/01/11/us/radicals-take-responsibility-for-burning-oregon-timber-office.html>.

Island, New York. The homes were constructed on what was previously farmland.

There were no reported casualties.¹⁷⁹

– **November 2000**

ELF claimed credit for burning down a \$2 million home under construction in Colorado. There were reported no casualties.¹⁸⁰

– **October 1998**

ELF activists burned down several buildings at a new ski resort near Vail, Colorado, causing \$12 million worth of damage. There were no reported casualties.¹⁸¹

– **November 29, 1997**

ELF members released wild horses and burned down a Bureau of Land Management Horse Corral in Oregon, causing approximately \$450,000 in damage. There were no reported casualties.¹⁸²

– **October 1996**

¹⁷⁹ John Stossel, "Give Me a Break: E.L.F. and Arson," *New York Times*, January 6, 2006, <https://abcnews.go.com/2020/story?id=124096&page=1>; Al Baker, "Police Say an Anti-Sprawl Group Burned New Long Island Homes," *New York Times*, January 3, 2001, <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/01/03/nyregion/police-say-an-anti-sprawl-group-burned-new-long-island-homes.html>.

¹⁸⁰ Mindy Sink, "Radicals Take Responsibility for Burning Oregon Timber Office," *New York Times*, January 11, 2001, <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/01/11/us/radicals-take-responsibility-for-burning-oregon-timber-office.html>.

¹⁸¹ Alleen Brown, "The Green Scare," *Intercept*, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>.

¹⁸² North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, "Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front," Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, 1, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>.

- ELF activists carry out an arson attack on a U.S. Forest Service truck in Oregon.¹⁸³

Rhetoric

- **Craig Rosebraugh, ELF spokesman, October 2001:**

"If the U.S. government is truly concerned with eradicating terrorism in the world, then that effort must begin with abolishing U.S. imperialism. Members of this governing body, both in the House and Senate as well as those who hold positions in the executive branch, constitute the largest group of terrorists and terrorist representatives currently threatening life on this planet."¹⁸⁴

- **ELF banner left at arson site in California, September 2003:**

"Environmental murder. Nature demands justice. The E.L.F.s are mad."¹⁸⁵

- **ELF banner left at site of firebombed construction site in San Diego, California, August 1, 2003:**

¹⁸³ "ECO-TERRORISM SPECIFICALLY EXAMINING THE EARTH LIBERATION FRONT AND THE ANIMAL LIBERATION FRONT – HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS UNITED STATES SENATE ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION," Govinfo, May 18, 2005, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-109shrg32209/html/CHRG-109shrg32209.htm>.

¹⁸⁴ Alleen Brown, "The Green Scare," Intercept, March 23, 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/03/23/ecoterrorism-fbi-animal-rights/>.

¹⁸⁵ Kristina Davis, "Ecoterror arsons unsolved 10 years later," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, September 14, 2013, <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/sdut-ecoterror-arsons-elf-fbi-2013sep14-htmlstory.html>.

"If you build it, we will burn it. The E.L.F.s are mad."¹⁸⁶

– **Frequently Asked Questions about the Earth Liberation Front, North American ELF Press Office, 2001:**

"This hypocrisy and genocide against the horse nation will not go unchallenged! The practice of rounding up and auctioning wild horses must be stopped."¹⁸⁷

– **Frequently Asked Questions about the Earth Liberation Front, North American ELF Press Office, 2001:**

"The choice to use economic sabotage is a very deliberate and purposeful strategy to target the real underlying threat to life – the quest for profit and power. The ELF does not engage in state sanctioned tactics or those which physically harm people or life in general due to the group's belief that economic sabotage is the best, most direct way to take the profit motive out of destroying the planet."¹⁸⁸

– **Frequently Asked Questions about the Earth Liberation Front, North American ELF Press Office, 2001:**

"The real violence and danger comes from businesses clear-cutting forests and

¹⁸⁶ Kristina Davis, "Ecoterror arsons unsolved 10 years later," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, September 14, 2013, <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/public-safety/sdut-ecoterror-arsons-elf-fbi-2013sep14-htmlstory.html>.

¹⁸⁷ North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, "Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front," Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, 2, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>.

¹⁸⁸ North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, "Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front," Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, 28, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>.

destroying ecosystems, from pollutants carelessly pumped into our air by industrial and consumer society, from water being poisoned to the point of being undrinkable, by people eating commercially grown non-organic food, and many, many more. Very often by labeling the ELF as violent it is a means by which mainstream society, government, and big business can attempt to forget about the real true violence which occurs everyday, the violence against life.”¹⁸⁹



Independent Media Center

Base of Operations: IndyMedia initially launched in Seattle, Washington, but has since grown into an international network of linked-but-independent sites.¹⁹⁰

Website: <https://indymedia.org/> is the network’s primary website.

Social Media Presence: The IndyMedia network maintains multiple accounts on Twitter and Facebook. The primary IndyMedia site also maintains a [Facebook](#) account.

Leadership: Each IndyMedia site is independently run. There is no leadership structure in place.

¹⁸⁹ North American Earth Liberation Front Press Office, “Frequently Asked Questions About The Earth Liberation Front,” Internet Archive, March 18, 2012, 28, <https://archive.org/details/FrequentlyAskedQuestionsAboutTheEarthLiberationFront>.

¹⁹⁰ Homepage, Independent Media Center, accessed August 14, 2020, <https://indymedia.org/>.

Membership Size and Relevance: The IndyMedia network has more than 60 affiliated websites around the world.¹⁹¹

Independent Media Center (a.k.a. IndyMedia or IMC) is a loose international network of far-left news websites that international legal authorities accuse of promoting violence in pursuit of anti-globalist and anti-capitalist positions. U.S., Swiss, British, and other European authorities have all taken legal action against affiliated IMC sites for promoting violence.¹⁹²

In 2004, the FBI shut down 20 U.S.-based IndyMedia sites at the request of European police, though the exact reason was not made clear to journalists.¹⁹³ European far-left militant groups such as Greece's Revolutionary Self-Defense have used Indymedia websites to post claims of responsibility for terrorist attacks.¹⁹⁴ In December 2014, Nikos Maziotis, the jailed leader of Greek guerilla group Revolutionary Struggle, posted a document on IndyMedia entitled "Elections are not the answer, armed struggle is."¹⁹⁵ The German government linked IMC's Germany platform, Linksunten.indymedia.org, to violent protests at the 2017 G20 summit and shut down the site for "sowing hate

¹⁹¹ Homepage, Independent Media Center, accessed August 14, 2020, <https://indymedia.org/>.

¹⁹² "US seizes independent media sites," BBC News, October 11, 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/3732718.stm>.

¹⁹³ "US seizes independent media sites," BBC News, October 11, 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/3732718.stm>.

¹⁹⁴ "Guerrilla group claims responsibility for attack at French embassy in Athens," Reuters, November 14, 2016, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-greece-france-diplomacy-attack/querrilla-group-claims-responsibility-for-attack-at-french-embassy-in-athens-idUSKBN1392M6>.

¹⁹⁵ "Greek Police Fear Politicians, Judges Targets," *National Herald*, December 16, 2014, <https://www.thenationalherald.com/69107/greek-police-fear-politicians-judges-now-terrorist-next-targets/>.

against different opinions and representatives of the country.”¹⁹⁶ In December 2017, IndyMedia posted pictures of 54 German police officers in response to a police investigation of the G20 protests earlier that year. The authors asked for information regarding where the officers lived or “could be met privately.”¹⁹⁷ In January 2019, the European far-left militant Group of Popular fighters posted a claim of responsibility for a December 17, 2018, bombing on IndyMedia.¹⁹⁸ After banning IndyMedia in 2017, German Interior Minister Thomas de Maizi re accused the network of inciting violence and spreading criminal content. He called the network the “most influential online platform for vicious left-wing extremists in Germany.”¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Ben Knight, “Interior Ministry shuts down, raids left-wing German Indymedia site,” Deutsche Welle, August 25, 2017, <https://www.dw.com/en/interior-ministry-shuts-down-raids-left-wing-german-indymedia-site/a-40232965>; Chloe Farand and Jon Stone, “Germany bans far-left extremist online platform accused of inciting violence at G20 summit in Hamburg,” *Independent* (London), August 25, 2017, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/germany-far-left-extremists-g20-summit-hamburg-violence-incite-online-platform-linksunten-a7913066.html>.

¹⁹⁷ “Far-left post photos of police officers online, leading to accusation of ‘terrorism,’” *The Local*, December 18, 2017, <https://www.thelocal.de/20171218/far-left-lash-out-at-police-by-posting-photos-of-them-online>.

¹⁹⁸ Niki Kitsantonis, “Greek Militants Say They Bombed Media Offices to Protest ‘Capitalist’ Agenda,” *New York Times*, January 9, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/09/world/europe/greece-bombing-group-of-popular-fighters.html>.

¹⁹⁹ Edmund Heaphy, “Germany, in a First, Shuts Down Left-Wing Extremist Website,” *New York Times*, August 25, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/25/world/europe/germany-bans-far-left-antifa-website.html>.

Recruitment and Propaganda

IndyMedia bills itself as “a network of collectively run media outlets for the creation of radical, accurate, and passionate tellings of the truth.”²⁰⁰ The main IndyMedia site allows visitors to publish content.

Violent Activities

- IndyMedia itself has not executed violent attacks, but the network stands accused of fomenting violence through propaganda, primarily in Europe. For example, after violent protests at the G20 summit in Hamburg, Germany, in August 2017, German Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière accused IndyMedia of mobilizing violent protesters. Germany banned IndyMedia soon after.²⁰¹ IndyMedia website continue to post calls for rioting and criminal acts.²⁰² Violent far-left groups have also used the IndyMedia platforms to publicize their own violent activities. For example, French anarchist group Révolte Anarchiste des Gendarmes Exilés (Anarchist Revolt Against Exiled Gendarmes) claimed responsibility on a French IndyMedia site for an arson attack on a police parking lot in September 2017.²⁰³

²⁰⁰ “About IndyMedia,” Independent Media Center, accessed November 20, 2018, <https://indymedia.org/en/static/about.shtml>.

²⁰¹ Edmund Heaphy, “Germany, in a First, Shuts Down Left-Wing Extremist Website,” *New York Times*, August 25, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/25/world/europe/germany-bans-far-left-antifa-website.html>.

²⁰² Simon Osborne, “Far left extremists urge riots, looting and violent uprising amid coronavirus chaos,” *Express* (London), March 19, 2020, <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1257518/coronavirus-germany-far-left-extremists-riot-looting-violence>.

²⁰³ Henry Samuel, “Ultra-Left group torch 50 police vehicles on day of anti-Macron protests,” *Telegraph* (London), September 21, 2017, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/09/21/ultra-left-group-torch-50-police-vehicles-day-anti-macron-protests/>.

Rhetoric

- **Statement on state oppression of Indymedia sites, September 28, 2017:**

“For years, the sites in the Indymedia network have, among other things, lent visibility to the political nature of direct action. This new attack against free media outlets seeks to silence radical political opposition, and to criminalize the collectives and individuals who would communicate their political objectives without the distorting filter of traditional media outlets. This attack must also be viewed in light of the raids that, this week, targeted the anti-nuclear activists at Bure. Their computers, along with the photocopier that they had been using to print flyers were seized by the police. All means seem to have been mobilized to repress the autonomous expression of movements of struggle.”²⁰⁴

- **Statement on the German government shutdown of Linksunten Indymedia, August 28, 2017:**

“On August 25, the German government raided and shut down Linksunten Indymedia, an integral part of the global Independent Media Center network, and the most widely used German-language platform for radical politics and organizing. In Freiburg, riot police seized computers and harassed those they accuse of maintaining the site, justifying their actions on the grounds that the alleged administrators constitute an illegal organization intent on destroying the German

²⁰⁴ “State Repression Against IMC Grenoble and IMC Nantes,” Independent Media Center, September 28, 2017, <https://indymedia.org/or/2017/09/988319.shtml>.

Constitution. This represents a massive escalation in state repression against what the authorities call ‘left-wing extremism,’ disingenuously suggesting an equivalence between those who seek to build communities beyond the reach of state violence and Neo-Nazis organizing to carry out attacks and murders.”²⁰⁵

Jane’s Revenge

Base of Operations: Jane’s Revenge’s first arson took place in Madison, Wisconsin, but the group has claimed to be “all over the US.”²⁰⁶

Website: Not determined.

Social Media Presence: Not determined.

Leadership: Jane’s Revenge has no known hierarchal structure. Its messaging support autonomous networks and the group’s driving leadership has not publicly revealed itself.²⁰⁷

Membership Size and Relevance: Jane’s Revenge began releasing statements and claiming credit for arsons and vandalism in May 2022. While the first arson on May 8 was covered in the *New York Times* and local media, the group has since largely been covered nationally by Fox News and other right-wing media. Since the Supreme Court overturned

²⁰⁵ “GERMAN GOVERNMENT SHUTS DOWN LINKSUNTEN INDYMEDIA: WHAT IT MEANS AND WHAT TO DO,” Independent Media Center, August 28, 2017, <https://indymedia.org/or/2017/08/988264.shtml>.

²⁰⁶ Robert Evans, Twitter post, May 10, 2022, 3:24 a.m., <https://twitter.com/lwriteOK/status/1523926979333918720>.

²⁰⁷ Jane’s Revenge, “Jane’s Revenge – Night of Rage,” Anarchist Federation, May 31, 2022, <https://www.anarchistfederation.net/janes-revenge-night-of-rage/>.

Roe v. Wade on June 24, 2022, the group's national profile has risen among other media sources as well.²⁰⁸

Jane's Revenge is a militant pro-abortion rights group that emerged after the May 2022 leak of a U.S. Supreme Court draft opinion overturning its 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, which established abortion as a constitutional right.²⁰⁹ Ahead of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* the following month, Jane's Revenge issued warnings of violent responses. The group has since claimed responsibility for acts of vandalism and fire bombings of anti-abortion offices and clinics. The name is a reference to the Jane Collective, an underground organization in Chicago that helped women obtain abortions prior to the 1973 decision.²¹⁰

A May 6, 2022, public leak of a draft opinion in the Supreme Court case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* revealed the court's intention to overturn the landmark 1973 case of *Roe v. Wade*. The draft ruling determined that it was up to

²⁰⁸ Luke Vander Ploeg and Addison Lathers, "Anti-Abortion Group in Wisconsin Is Hit by Arson, Authorities Say," *New York Times*, May 8, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/us/madison-anti-abortion-center-vandalized.html>; Alice Reid, "Report: Group claims credit for Madison anti-abortion office attack, warns of more," NBC 26, May 11, 2022, <https://www.nbc26.com/news/state/report-group-claims-credit-for-madison-anti-abortion-office-attack-warns-of-more>; Adam Sabes, "Minnesota pregnancy center vandalized by 'Jane's Revenge': 'We should've done more,'" Fox News, June 17, 2022, <https://www.foxnews.com/us/minnesota-pregnancy-center-vandalized-janes-revenge>.

²⁰⁹ Jack Dutton, "What Is Jane's Revenge? Abortion Rights Group Vows 'Night of Rage' Over Roe," *Newsweek*, June 24, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/what-janes-revenge-abortion-rights-group-vows-night-rage-over-roe-1718919>.

²¹⁰ Judith Levine, "Beyond Revenge, What Does Jane's Revenge Want?," *Intercept*, June 16, 2022, <https://theintercept.com/2022/06/16/janes-revenge-abortion-rights/>.

individual states to decide whether to make abortion legal.²¹¹ On May 8, the Madison, Wisconsin, office of the anti-abortion Wisconsin Family Action was set on fire after a Molotov cocktail thrown through a window failed to ignite. Police also found graffiti that read, “If abortions aren’t safe then you aren’t either.” The building was empty at the time and no injuries were reported.²¹² On May 10, a group calling itself Jane’s Revenge sent a message to Bellingcat’s Robert Evans claiming responsibility for the attack and promising more. The message began by acknowledging it was not a declaration of war but a response to a war that had been forced on them for decades and they were fighting for their lives. The group called the Madison arson a warning and demanded the disbanding of all “anti-choice establishments” within 30 days.²¹³

In its graffiti and online messaging, Jane’s Revenge promised, “If abortions aren’t safe, you’re not either.”²¹⁴ Jane’s Revenge’s first communique claimed anti-abortion extremists bombing abortion clinics and shooting at doctors had forced them to “adopt

²¹¹ Josh Gerstein and Alexander Ward, “Supreme Court has voted to overturn abortion rights, draft opinion shows,” *Politico*, last updated May 3, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/02/supreme-court-abortion-draft-opinion-00029473>.

²¹² Luke Vander Ploeg and Addison Lathers, “Anti-Abortion Group in Wisconsin Is Hit by Arson, Authorities Say,” *New York Times*, May 8, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/us/madison-anti-abortion-center-vandalized.html>; Alice Reid, “Report: Group claims credit for Madison anti-abortion office attack, warns of more,” NBC 26, May 11, 2022, <https://www.nbc26.com/news/state/report-group-claims-credit-for-madison-anti-abortion-office-attack-warns-of-more>.

²¹³ Robert Evans, Twitter post, May 10, 2022, 3:24 a.m., <https://twitter.com/lwriteOK/status/1523926913806336000>.

²¹⁴ Jack Dutton, “What Is Jane’s Revenge? Abortion Rights Group Vows ‘Night of Rage’ Over Roe,” *Newsweek*, June 24, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/what-janes-revenge-abortion-rights-group-vows-night-rage-over-roe-1718919>; Catholic News Agency, “WHO, OR WHAT, IS ‘JANE’S REVENGE’? A LOOK AT THE GROUP INVOKED IN PRO-ABORTION VANDALISM,” *Catholic Telegraph*, June 13, 2022, <https://www.thecatholictelegraph.com/who-or-what-is-janes-revenge-a-look-at-the-group-invoked-in-pro-abortion-vandalism/81507>.

increasingly extreme tactics to maintain freedom over our bodies.”²¹⁵ The group further explained the Madison arson was a warning they intended to target “the infrastructure of the enslavers,” which the group promised would not survive.²¹⁶ On May 31, in anticipation of the Supreme Court overturning *Roe v. Wade*, Jane’s Revenge issued a call for a “night of rage” on the night the ruling is revealed. The group told supporters their anger has been stolen from them for decades and it is time to bring their anger out into the world and express it physically.²¹⁷

Recruitment and Propaganda

Jane’s Revenge graffiti and online messaging have utilized the slogan, “IF ABORTIONS AREN’T SAFE, YOU’RE NOT EITHER. JANE’S REVENGE”²¹⁸ Jane’s Revenge has called on all who are sympathetic to their cause to physically express their anger. The group has endorsed the creation of “autonomously organized self-defense networks” to confront “misogynistic violence directly.”²¹⁹

²¹⁵ Robert Evans, Twitter post, May 10, 2022, 3:24 a.m., <https://twitter.com/lwriteOK/status/1523926941572550656>.

²¹⁶ Robert Evans, Twitter post, May 10, 2022, 3:24 a.m., <https://twitter.com/lwriteOK/status/1523926979333918720>.

²¹⁷ Jane’s Revenge, “Jane’s Revenge – Night of Rage,” Anarchist Federation, May 31, 2022, <https://www.anarchistfederation.net/janes-revenge-night-of-rage/>.

²¹⁸ Jack Dutton, “What Is Jane’s Revenge? Abortion Rights Group Vows ‘Night of Rage’ Over Roe,” *Newsweek*, June 24, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/what-janes-revenge-abortion-rights-group-vows-night-rage-over-ro-1718919>.

²¹⁹ Jane’s Revenge, “Jane’s Revenge – Night of Rage,” Anarchist Federation, May 31, 2022, <https://www.anarchistfederation.net/janes-revenge-night-of-rage/>.

Violent Activities

- Jane’s Revenge has been linked to multiple attacks on and vandalization of anti-abortion crisis pregnancy centers since May 2022.

- **June 22, 2022**

June 22, 2022: Police in Jackson, Michigan, responded to reports of overnight vandalism at a building hosting Jackson Right to Life, which also shares space with the campaign office of pro-life Republican U.S. Rep. Tim Walberg. Police found two broken windows and messages declaring, “If abortion isnt safe niether r u! (sic)”

- **June 14, 2022**

June 14, 2022: Unknown vandals graffitied and broke windows at the office of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life overnight. Jane’s Revenge claimed responsibility online for the vandalism committed “in a small gesture of defiance and joy.”²²⁰

- **June 7, 2022**

Vandals broke windows and set a fire the Eggertsville, New York, office of pro-life group CompassCare. Graffiti was left on the outside wall declaring, “Jane Was Here.” No injuries were reported as the building in the Buffalo area was empty at the

²²⁰ Adam Sabes, “Minnesota pregnancy center vandalized by ‘Jane’s Revenge’: ‘We should’ve done more,’” Fox News, June 17, 2022, <https://www.foxnews.com/us/minnesota-pregnancy-center-vandalized-janes-revenge>.

time of the fire. The CEO of CompassCare likened attacks on anti-abortion clinics to “the pro-abortion ‘Kristallnacht,’” drawing a comparison to the 1938 pogroms destroying Jewish homes, synagogues, and businesses across Germany.²²¹

– **May 8, 2022**

The Madison, Wisconsin, office of the anti-abortion Wisconsin Family Action was set on fire after a Molotov cocktail thrown through a window failed to ignite. Police also found graffiti that read, “If abortions aren’t safe then you aren’t either.” The building was empty at the time and no injuries were reported. Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin condemned the attack. Jane’s Revenge sent a message to Bellingcat’s Robert Evans claiming responsibility for the attack.²²²

²²¹ “Kristallnacht,” U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed June 28, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/kristallnacht>; “CompassCare’s Buffalo Office Firebombed by Abortion Terrorists,” CompassCare, June 7, 2022, https://www.compasscarecommunity.com/2022/06/compasscares-buffalo-office-firebombed-by-abortion-activists/?fbclid=IwAR2y36JG4eWXLQcQof34fizJgM0ksywjn00v6mcOIhC8fYnk55tRrq2vf_w; Stephen T. Watson, “Political violence blamed in arson at anti-abortion group’s center in Amherst,” *Buffalo News*, last updated June 20, 2022, https://buffalonews.com/article_9da26e5e-e669-11ec-babe-cbbcb6659a2.html.

²²² Luke Vander Ploeg and Addison Lathers, “Anti-Abortion Group in Wisconsin Is Hit by Arson, Authorities Say,” *New York Times*, May 8, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/us/madison-anti-abortion-center-vandalized.html>; Judith Levine, “Beyond Revenge, What Does Jane’s Revenge Want?,” *Intercept*, June 16, 2022, <https://theintercept.com/2022/06/16/janes-revenge-abortion-rights/>; Alice Reid, “Report: Group claims credit for Madison anti-abortion office attack, warns of more,” *NBC 26*, May 11, 2022, <https://www.nbc26.com/news/state/report-group-claims-credit-for-madison-anti-abortion-office-attack-warns-of-more>.

Rhetoric

– **Claim of responsibility for vandalization of the Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life, June 14, 2022:**

"Minnesota Citizens Concerned For Life" [sic] or MCCL is the largest anti-abortion organization in so-called Minnesota and responsible for untold amounts of suffering as a result of their anti-science propaganda campaigns, ghoulish legislative attempts at social control and support for hateful bigoted politicians. So, in a small gesture of defiance and joy, we decided to smash all their windows and leave them a message from our friend Jane.

"Their offices and infrastructure deserve the same fate if not worse than that of the dozens of fake pregnancy clinics in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area that carry out the vision of MCCL toward a hellscape in which pumping out the 'domestic supply of infants' is the only thing people with a uterus are good for. Fuck them – the time of us reluctantly permitting their hatred for actual living people is over. We should've done more."²²³

– **Online post, June 14, 2022:**

"From here forward, any anti-choice group who closes their doors, and stops operating will no longer be a target. But until you do, it's open season, and we know where your operations are. The infrastructure of the enslavers will not survive. We

²²³ Adam Sabes, "Minnesota pregnancy center vandalized by 'Jane's Revenge': 'We should've done more,'" Fox News, June 17, 2022, <https://www.foxnews.com/us/minnesota-pregnancy-center-vandalized-janes-revenge>.

will never stop, back down, slow down, or retreat. We did not want this; but it is upon us, and so we must deal with it proportionally. We exist in confluence and solidarity with all others in the struggle for complete liberation.”²²⁴

– **Statement, May 31, 2022:**

“Within the month we anticipate a verdict will be issued that overturns Roe v. Wade, setting in motion an evisceration of abortion access across the so-called United States.

“This is an event that should inspire rage in millions of people who can get pregnant...and yet, the response thus far has been tepid.

“We have agonized over this apparent absence of indignation. Why is it that we are so afraid to unleash hell upon those who are destroying us? Fear of state repression is valid, but this goes deeper than that.

“Your anger has been stolen from you.

“To this we say: no more. We need to get angry.

“We need the state to feel our full wrath.

²²⁴ Adam Sabes, “Minnesota pregnancy center vandalized by ‘Jane’s Revenge’: ‘We should’ve done more,’” Fox News, June 17, 2022, <https://www.foxnews.com/us/minnesota-pregnancy-center-vandalized-janes-revenge>.

"We need to express this madness fully and with ferocity. We need to quit containing ourselves.

"We need them to be afraid of us.

...

"Whatever form your fury takes, the first step is feeling it.

"The next step is carrying that anger out into the world and expressing it physically.

"Consider this your call to action.

"On the night the final ruling is issued—a specific date we cannot yet predict, but we know is arriving imminently—we are asking for courageous hearts to come out after dark.

"Whoever you are and wherever you are, we are asking for you to do what you can to make your anger known.

...

"To those who work to oppress us: If abortion isn't safe, you aren't either. We are everywhere."²²⁵

— **Communique sent to Bellingcat's Robert Evans, May 10, 2022:**

²²⁵ Jane's Revenge, "Jane's Revenge – Night of Rage," Anarchist Federation, May 31, 2022, <https://www.anarchistfederation.net/janes-revenge-night-of-rage/>.

"This was only a warning. We demand the disbanding of all anti-choice establishments, fake clinics, and violent anti-choice groups within the next thirty days. ... As you continue to bomb clinics and assassinate doctors with impunity, so too shall we adopt increasingly extreme tactics to maintain freedom over our bodies."²²⁶

– **Communique sent to Bellingcat's Robert Evans, May 10, 2022:**

"We are forced to adopt the minimum military requirement for a political struggle. Again, this was only a warning. Next time the infrastructure of the enslavers will not survive. Medical imperialism will not face a passive enemy. Wisconsin is the first flashpoint, but we are all over the US, and we will issue no further warnings."²²⁷

– **Communique sent to Bellingcat's Robert Evans, May 10, 2022:**

"And we will not stop, not back down, nor will we hesitate to strike until the inalienable right to manage our own health is returned to us."²²⁸

– **Flyer distributed following the leak of a U.S. Supreme Court draft decision overturning Roe v. Wade, May 2022:**

²²⁶ Robert Evans, Twitter post, May 10, 2022, 3:24 a.m., <https://twitter.com/lwriteOK/status/1523926941572550656>.

²²⁷ Robert Evans, Twitter post, May 10, 2022, 3:24 a.m., <https://twitter.com/lwriteOK/status/1523926979333918720>.

²²⁸ Robert Evans, Twitter post, May 10, 2022, 3:24 a.m., <https://twitter.com/lwriteOK/status/1523926986883706880>.

- “THE NIGHT SCOTUS OVERTURNS ROE V. WADE HIT THE STREETS YOU SAID YOU’D RIOT. TO OUR OPPRESSORS: IF ABORTIONS AREN’T SAFE, YOU’RE NOT EITHER. JANE’S REVENGE”²²⁹



John Brown Gun Club

Base of Operations: National

Website: <https://psjbgc.org/>, <http://www.midmojbgc.org/>

Social Media Presence: [Facebook \(Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club\)](#) (deleted), [Twitter \(Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club\)](#), [Twitter \(Mid-Missouri John Brown Gun Club\)](#), [Twitter \(Steel City John Brown Gun Club\)](#), [Twitter \(Spokane John Brown Gun Club\)](#)

Leadership: The John Brown Gun Club chapters act independently and have no formal hierarchy.²³⁰ Members who have spoken publicly, including chapter founders, did not provide their full names.²³¹

²²⁹ Jack Dutton, “What Is Jane’s Revenge? Abortion Rights Group Vows ‘Night of Rage’ Over Roe,” *Newsweek*, June 24, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/what-janes-revenge-abortion-rights-group-vows-night-rage-over-roe-1718919>.

²³⁰ “About,” Mid-Missouri John Brown Gun Club, accessed September 1, 2020, <http://www.midmojbgc.org/about/>; “Say Hello to Spokane John Brown Gun Club!,” Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://psjbgc.org/blog/say-hello-to-spokane-john-brown-gun-club/>.

²³¹ Kim Kelly, “‘If others have rifles, we’ll have rifles’: why US leftist groups are taking up arms,” *Guardian* (London), July 22, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/jul/22/if-others-have-rifles-well-have-rifles-why-leftist-groups-are-taking-up-arms>.

Membership Size and Relevance: Gun Club chapters do not publish their membership numbers. In August 2020, Facebook deleted multiple accounts affiliated with John Brown Gun Clubs as part of a purge of extremist groups.²³² Various Gun Club chapters maintain a presence on Twitter. As of September 1, 2020, the Mid-Missouri chapter had 1,039 followers.²³³ As of the same date, the Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club had 12,700 followers.²³⁴ The Steel City John Brown Gun Club had 3,248 followers as of that date.²³⁵ The Gun Club's presence at protests across the United States has garnered international media attention.²³⁶

The John Brown Gun Club is a leftist gun-rights group originally based in Kansas. The original club was active between 2002 and 2008, but it has since given rise to spinoff groups such as the Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club. The original club sought to militarize the white working class and spur it toward a social-justice revolution.²³⁷ Gun

²³² Alan Buddug, "The Great FB Purge of 2020," Mid-Missouri John Brown Gun Club, August 20, 2020, <http://www.midmojbgc.org/2020/08/20/the-great-fb-purge-of-2020/>; Natasha Lennard, "Facebook's Ban on Far-Left Pages Is an Extension of Trump Propaganda," Intercept, August 20, 2020, <https://theintercept.com/2020/08/20/facebook-bans-antifascist-pages/>.

²³³ Mid-Missouri John Brown Gun Club, Twitter account, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://twitter.com/MidMoJBGC>.

²³⁴ Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, Twitter account, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://twitter.com/PugetSoundJBGC>.

²³⁵ Steel City John Brown Gun Club, Twitter account, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://twitter.com/SteelCityJBGC>.

²³⁶ Kim Kelly, "If others have rifles, we'll have rifles': why US leftist groups are taking up arms," *Guardian* (London), July 22, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/jul/22/if-others-have-rifles-well-have-rifles-why-leftist-groups-are-taking-up-arms>.

²³⁷ Devon Douglas-Bowers, "WHITE WORKERS RESISTING CAPITALISM AND WHITE SUPREMACY: AN INTERVIEW WITH REDNECK REVOLT," Redneck Revolt, July 29, 2016, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/single-post/2016/07/28/WHITE-WORKERS-RESISTING-CAPITALISM-AND-WHITE-SUPREMACY-AN-INTERVIEW-WITH-REDNECK-REVOLT>.

Club chapters claim to promote racial equality and social justice while seeking to abolish the police and other perceived symbols of oppression. The Gun Club firmly supports members' rights to bear arms for their own protection and as a safeguard against state overreach.²³⁸ The Puget Sound John Brown Club in Washington state is one of the most visible chapters. According to that group, the John Brown Gun Club seeks to disrupt fascists and fascist organizations and events. The Gun Club arms itself to defend against far-right violence and often appears as a security force at protests to protect against expected far-right violence.²³⁹

John Brown was a 19th-century abolitionist who was part of the Underground Railroad and helped create the League of Gileadites, which helped protect escaped enslaved people from slave catchers. He eventually began leading guerilla raids in pro-slavery towns that resulted in multiple deaths. In 1859, Brown was convicted of treason in South Carolina and executed for his role in the failed raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry.²⁴⁰ The affiliates of the John Brown Gun Club have dedicated themselves to emulating Brown's brand of direct action in support of ideals of freedom and equality.²⁴¹ One of the spinoffs of the original John Brown Gun Club is Redneck Revolt,

²³⁸ Mawa Iqbal, "Left-Wing Groups Take Up Arms in Name of Abolitionist John Brown," Flatland, July 23, 2020, <https://www.flatlandkc.org/news-issues/left-wing-groups-take-up-arms-in-name-of-abolitionist-john-brown/>.

²³⁹ Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, homepage, accessed August 19, 2020, <https://psjbgc.org/>; Kim Kelly, "'If others have rifles, we'll have rifles': why US leftist groups are taking up arms," *Guardian* (London), July 22, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/jul/22/if-others-have-rifles-well-have-rifles-why-leftist-groups-are-taking-up-arms>.

²⁴⁰ "John Brown 1800-1859," PBS, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p1550.html>.

²⁴¹ Mid-Missouri John Brown Gun Club, homepage, accessed September 1, 2020, <http://www.midmojbgc.org/>; Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, homepage, accessed August 19, 2020, <https://psjbgc.org/>.

which formed in 2009 after the original Gun Club disbanded.²⁴² The Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club in Washington state was founded in 2017 as part of the Redneck Revolt Network and broke away from Redneck Revolt in 2019. It claims to be a “public facing, above ground, armed community defense group” that seeks to disrupt fascist activities.²⁴³ Other independent John Brown Gun Clubs have since organized.

To date, Gun Club members have reportedly not engaged anyone with their weapons during one of these protests. Unlike other groups under the Antifa umbrella, Gun Club members typically do not cover their faces to maintain the appearance of an open, lawful organization rather than a militia.²⁴⁴ One Gun Club member did engage in a violent attack on an Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in 2019. He was killed after attempting to blow up the detention center.²⁴⁵

²⁴² Redneck Revolt, homepage, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/>; Cecilia Saixue Watt, “Redneck Revolt: the armed leftwing group that wants to stamp out fascism,” *Guardian* (London), July 11, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jul/11/redneck-revolt-guns-anti-racism-fascism-far-left>.

²⁴³ “Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club Leaves Redneck Revolt Network,” Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, January 23, 2019, <https://psjbgc.org/blog/puget-sound-john-brown-gun-club-leaves-redneck-revolt-network/>.

²⁴⁴ Kim Kelly, “‘If others have rifles, we’ll have rifles’: why US leftist groups are taking up arms,” *Guardian* (London), July 22, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/jul/22/if-others-have-rifles-well-have-rifles-why-leftist-groups-are-taking-up-arms>.

²⁴⁵ Claudia Koerner, “Police Shot And Killed An Armed Man Allegedly Attempting To Set Fire To An ICE Detention Facility,” BuzzFeed News, last updated July 14, 2019, <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/claudiakoerner/tacoma-ice-shooting>; “Rest in Power, Will, One Year Later,” Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, July 13, 2020, <https://psjbgc.org/blog/rest-in-power-will-one-year-later/>.

Recruitment and Propaganda

John Brown Gun Club chapters promote themselves as community defense organizations dedicated to direct action and mutual aid.²⁴⁶ The Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club offers firearms classes and distributes literature at community events around Washington, including at the Anarchist Book Fair and other events aligned with the group's far-left ideology.²⁴⁷

Violent Activities

– July 13, 2019

69-year-old Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club member Willem Van Spronsen snuck into the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Northwest Detention Center facility in Tacoma, Washington, with a rifle. He set his car on fire and threw incendiary devices at propane tanks on the facility's grounds. Van Sponsen was killed by Washington State Police. There were no other casualties.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ "About," Mid-Missouri John Brown Gun Club, accessed September 1, 2020, <http://www.midmojbgc.org/about/>; "Say Hello to Spokane John Brown Gun Club!," Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://psjbgc.org/blog/say-hello-to-spokane-john-brown-gun-club/>.

²⁴⁷ "PSJBGC at the Seattle Anarchist Bookfair 2019!," Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, November 16, 2019, <https://psjbgc.org/blog/psjbgc-at-the-seattle-anarchist-bookfair-2019/>; "See Us Today at Debbie Bookchin's Speaking Tour!," Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, November 2, 2019, <https://psjbgc.org/blog/see-us-today-at-debbie-bookchin-s-speaking-tour/>.

²⁴⁸ Claudia Koerner, "Police Shot And Killed An Armed Man Allegedly Attempting To Set Fire To An ICE Detention Facility," BuzzFeed News, last updated July 14, 2019, <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/claudiakoerner/tacoma-ice-shooting>; "Rest in Power, Will, One Year Later," Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, July 13, 2020, <https://psjbgc.org/blog/rest-in-power-will-one-year-later/>.

Rhetoric

– **Spokane John Brown Gun Club, tweet, August 29, 2020:**

“If there is a standoff against the cops, stick together to form a cohesive front. Stragglers are more susceptible to getting arrested, but it’s hard to do that to a larger group. De-arresting is also important, if someone is getting dragged off, don’t just stand and watch.”²⁴⁹

– **Spokane John Brown Gun Club, tweet, August 8, 2020:**

“Why is the SPKJBC necessary? Put simply: racists, fascists, and cops. Below will be a regularly updated list of fascist/racist violence and threats, police brutality, and the bigotry of public officials. It won’t be a complete list, but it will show why solidarity is key.”²⁵⁰

– **Willem Van Spronsen, final statement, July 2019:**

“Fascism serves the needs of the state serves the needs of business and at your expense. Who benefits? Jeff Bezos, Warren Buffet, Elon Musk, Tim Cook, Bill Gates, Betsy de Vos, George Soros, Donald Trump, and need I go on? Let me say it again: rich guys (who think you’re not really all that good), really dig government (every government everywhere, including ‘communist’ governments), because they make

²⁴⁹ Spokane John Brown Gun Club, Twitter post, August 29, 2020, 5:16 a.m., <https://twitter.com/SPKJBGC/status/1299637136996663297>.

²⁵⁰ Spokane John Brown Gun Club, Twitter post, August 8, 2020, 7:05 p.m., <https://twitter.com/SPKJBGC/status/1292235389458173957>.

the rules that make rich guys richer.”²⁵¹



Redneck Revolt

Base of Operations: National²⁵²

Website: <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/>

Social Media Presence: [Facebook](#) (deleted), [Twitter](#), [Twitter \(San Diego RR\)](#), [Twitter \(North Country RR\)](#), [Twitter \(Lake Ontario Redneck Revolt\)](#)

Leadership: Redneck Revolt’s leadership remains largely anonymous in public.

Membership Size and Relevance: Redneck Revolt claims to have more than 30 chapters across the United States.²⁵³

Redneck Revolt is leftwing pro-gun club that claims basic knowledge of weaponry is necessary for self-defense and to confront the far right and fascists, bringing it under

²⁵¹ “On Willem Van Spronsen’s Action against the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma,” CrimethInc, July 14, 2019, <https://crimethinc.com/2019/07/14/on-willem-van-spronsens-action-against-the-northwest-detention-center-in-tacoma-including-the-full-text-of-his-final-statement>.

²⁵² Madison Pauly, “A New Wave of Left-Wing Militants Is Ready to Rumble in Portland—and Beyond,” Mother Jones, May/June 2017, <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2017/06/antifa-movement-anti-trump-politics-nazi/>.

²⁵³ Madison Pauly, “A New Wave of Left-Wing Militants Is Ready to Rumble in Portland—and Beyond,” Mother Jones, May/June 2017, <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2017/06/antifa-movement-anti-trump-politics-nazi/>.

the wide umbrella of Antifa (anti-fascist) groups. Redneck Revolt members provided security for protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia, and other rallies against the far right and Confederate symbols.²⁵⁴ Redneck Revolt first launched in 2009 as an offshoot of the John Brown Gun Club. Its founding members watched the nascent Tea Party of the Republican Party attract working-class people but saw this as a contradiction because of a belief that the Tea Party promoted the values of the wealthy.²⁵⁵

Redneck Revolt claims to be a community defense group against racism and fascism. Its two main goals are to counter the growth of white supremacy while strengthening community defense initiatives in marginalized communities. The group claims that physical defense is increasingly necessary to defend minorities and houses of worship under physical threat, though the group insists its members use physical force defensively only. Arming themselves is a direct response to threats of violence against marginalized communities, according to the group's propaganda.²⁵⁶ Members insist on

²⁵⁴ Virginia Bridges, "They're leftists with guns. Meet the Redneck Revolt," *Herald-Sun*, September 1, 2017, <https://www.heraldsun.com/news/local/counties/durham-county/article170840742.html>; Stephanie March, "Antifa: The hard left's call to arms," Australian Broadcasting Corporation, March 18, 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-15/redneck-revolt-and-the-hard-lefts-call-to-arms/9303758?nw=0>.

²⁵⁵ Redneck Revolt, homepage, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/>; Cecilia Saixue Watt, "Redneck Revolt: the armed leftwing group that wants to stamp out fascism," *Guardian* (London), July 11, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jul/11/redneck-revolt-guns-anti-racism-fascism-far-left>.

²⁵⁶ "Redneck Revolt Organizes Community Defense Against Racism and Fascism," Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, https://0d37a29d-b50d-4d43-8ae5-760bf0294308.filesusr.com/ugd/c1543a_b43e9ba0b15a4ace9b87ac8ca8d9768d.pdf.

carrying weapons while patrolling protests in order to be ready to defend against an attack, but they also insist that their weapons are purely defensive.²⁵⁷

In addition to opposing fascism and white supremacy, Redneck Revolt also stands against capitalism and the concept of the nation-state, including its symbols such as police, prisons, and courts. According to Redneck Revolt ideology, these symbols exist only to serve the rich and protect the wealthy class while oppressing the working class. Redneck Revolt seeks to eliminate capitalism and the oppressive patriarchy in order to fashion a new society that allows for the equal distribution of resources.²⁵⁸

Recruitment and Propaganda

Redneck Revolt promotes the concept that the wealthy elites have enslaved the working class for their own benefit while the working class continues to suffer.²⁵⁹ Redneck Revolt is committed to bringing about a societal revolution that will uproot the patriarchy, capitalism, and exploitation of the working class while ensuring liberty and access to necessary resources for all. Redneck Revolt's guiding principles classify capitalism as a system that has ravaged the world and caused numerous genocides. The group recognizes the need to use "any and all means" to bring about this revolution,

²⁵⁷ Stephanie March, "Antifa: The hard left's call to arms," Australian Broadcasting Corporation, March 18, 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-15/redneck-revolt-and-the-hard-lefts-call-to-arms/9303758?nw=0>.

²⁵⁸ "Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles," Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/principles>.

²⁵⁹ Dave Strano, "Of Tea Parties and Patriots: Liberty for Who?," The Anarchist Library, 2009, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/dave-strano-of-tea-parties-and-patriots-liberty-for-who>.

including violent methods.²⁶⁰ Though Redneck Revolt promotes anti-racist positions, it also recognizes that its core is made up primarily of white people from the working class. Founding member Dave Strano wrote in 2009 that the white elite had particularly exploited the white working class, which had become the “footsoldiers of political and economic elites seeking to dominate and control land, resources, and wealth....”²⁶¹ According to Strano, the “rich whites” have used skin color and fear to turn the white working class against other races with ideas of “white supremacy” and “white pride” and “white nationalism,” all while the white elites enrich themselves.²⁶²

Redneck Revolt targets its recruitment to the working class. Its rhetoric conveys the message that the wealthy have used capitalism to oppress the working class, which must arm itself for its own defense.²⁶³ Redneck Revolt recognizes that the term “redneck” carries a demeaning connotation. The group seeks to reclaim the word as both a badge of pride in being part of the working class and resistance to the wealthy class.²⁶⁴ The group’s prime identifier is the red bandana worn by members and imposed on propaganda. The bandanas are reminiscent of the same red bandanas worn by West

²⁶⁰ “Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles,” Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/principles>.

²⁶¹ “Redneck Revolt Organizes Community Defense Against Racism and Fascism,” Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, https://0d37a29d-b50d-4d43-8ae5-760bf0294308.filesusr.com/ugd/c1543a_b43e9ba0b15a4ace9b87ac8ca8d9768d.pdf; Dave Strano, “Of Tea Parties and Patriots: Liberty for Who?,” The Anarchist Library, 2009, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/dave-strano-of-tea-parties-and-patriots-liberty-for-who>.

²⁶² Dave Strano, “Of Tea Parties and Patriots: Liberty for Who?,” The Anarchist Library, 2009, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/dave-strano-of-tea-parties-and-patriots-liberty-for-who>.

²⁶³ “Redneck Revolt Organizes Community Defense Against Racism and Fascism,” Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, https://0d37a29d-b50d-4d43-8ae5-760bf0294308.filesusr.com/ugd/c1543a_b43e9ba0b15a4ace9b87ac8ca8d9768d.pdf.

²⁶⁴ “About,” Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/about>.

Virginia coal miners during a 1921 revolt against mining companies and the state.²⁶⁵ Redneck Revolt invites visitors to its website to seek out local chapters or create their own. It also offers classes on using tactical firearms as well as the role of firearms in creating societal revolutions.²⁶⁶

Various Redneck Revolt chapters maintain a social media presence on Twitter. The group's Facebook pages appear to have been deleted. In addition, Redneck Revolt hosts a podcast, which is available on its website. As of September 1, 2020, however, the podcast had only two episodes that had been recorded in 2017.²⁶⁷ Redneck Revolt's website provides multiple options for visitors to donate funds, either directly to Redneck Revolt or to the John Brown Solidarity Fund.²⁶⁸

Violent Activities

- Redneck Revolt has not carried out specific attacks, but members have gotten into violent altercations with the far right during protests and rallies. The group remains dedicated to not initiating any violent confrontation.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁵ Stephanie March, "Antifa: The hard left's call to arms," Australian Broadcasting Corporation, March 18, 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-15/redneck-revolt-and-the-hard-lefts-call-to-arms/9303758?nw=0>.

²⁶⁶ "Contact," Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/contact>.

²⁶⁷ "The Redneck Revolt Podcast," Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/podcast>.

²⁶⁸ "Ways to Support," Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/support>.

²⁶⁹ Stephanie March, "Antifa: The hard left's call to arms," Australian Broadcasting Corporation, March 18, 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-15/redneck-revolt-and-the-hard-lefts-call-to-arms/9303758?nw=0>.

Rhetoric

– **Jeremy Beck, Redneck Revolt member, July 2017:**

"If you haven't noticed, we aren't liberals. You know, if you keep going further left, eventually, you go left enough to get your guns back."²⁷⁰

– **Facebook ad for a meeting in Durham, North Carolina, 2017:**

"Armed self defense is necessary for the survival and relevance of our future organizing in the face of a growing insurgent fascism."²⁷¹

– **Dave Strano, Redneck Revolt founding member, 2009:**

"We now live in a country with a huge division between rich and poor. We live with a failed economy. We live in a nearly failed state. The government of the United States has systemically become a monstrous giant of bureaucrats and neo-tyrants. The whole government, every single politician, is part of this corrupt system."²⁷²

– **Dave Strano, Redneck Revolt founding member, 2009:**

"The blunt reality is that for the last five hundred years on this continent, white working class people have been used by mostly white rich people to colonize for, kill for, work for, and then better the living standards of those same white rich people, all

²⁷⁰ Cecilia Saixue Watt, "Redneck Revolt: the armed leftwing group that wants to stamp out fascism," *Guardian* (London), July 11, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jul/11/redneck-revolt-guns-anti-racism-fascism-far-left>.

²⁷¹ Virginia Bridges, "They're leftists with guns. Meet the Redneck Revolt," *Herald-Sun*, September 1, 2017, <https://www.heraldsun.com/news/local/counties/durham-county/article170840742.html>.

²⁷² Dave Strano, "Of Tea Parties and Patriots: Liberty for Who?," *The Anarchist Library*, 2009, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/dave-strano-of-tea-parties-and-patriots-liberty-for-who>.

the while sacrificing our own needs, wants, aspirations, and even lives. It really is as simple as that. No one denies the history of what has happened at working people's expenses. Wars, poverty, homelessness, wage slavery... these are all ills created by someone, and perpetuated by us... the same workers who suffer these ills.

"For some five centuries we've been used by the rich among our own race to promote their agenda and suffered because of it. Yet, somehow, we've still been convinced that it is in our interests to protect the rights of the rich to own as much property as they can, to protect the right of the rich to even exist, to protect these same rich people who would just as soon see us die for their benefit."²⁷³

– **Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles, undated:**

"Police, prisons, courts, artificial borders, and other systems of social control only exist to serve the rich. The nation-state project came into existence to protect the propertied classes and keep us working people poor and without power, often using varying types of standing armies to enforce laws which disproportionately impact the poor."²⁷⁴

– **Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles, undated:**

"Capitalism is an economic system that methodically keeps the vast majority of people in the world impoverished while they labor to enrich a small minority of

²⁷³ Dave Strano, "Of Tea Parties and Patriots: Liberty for Who?," The Anarchist Library, 2009, <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/dave-strano-of-tea-parties-and-patriots-liberty-for-who>.

²⁷⁴ "Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles," Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/principles>.

people. Since the very first arrivals of European settlers in what is now called the United States, the propertied classes established a serving class to maintain their power, and systematically murdered the native folks of this land for resisting their claim to ownership. We have nothing to gain by maintaining an allegiance to an economic system that has destroyed much of the natural world, committed countless acts of genocide, and ravaged our communities and natural resources in the name of profit.”²⁷⁵

– **Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles, undated:**

“Our struggle against patriarchy is central to our struggle against capitalism and the nation-state. Just as the white working class has benefited from white supremacy, many men (especially those who are not trans) have benefited from patriarchy. Patriarchy benefits the rich by controlling those who labor for them and dividing the people against one another. Traditional “women’s work,” despite its importance to families and communities, is devalued in our society. The police and courts exist to protect the rich and powerful, not the people, and they are unable to provide justice for the victims of gender-based violence... and in fact often inflict the same violence themselves.”²⁷⁶

– **Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles, undated:**

“We are not pacifists. Redneck Revolt believes in using any and all means at our

²⁷⁵ “Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles,” Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/principles>.

²⁷⁶ “Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles,” Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/principles>.

disposal to gain our freedom and true liberty, provided those methods do not violate our basic humanity or integrity. We believe in the inherent right of every individual and community to defend themselves from those who exploit or oppress them.”²⁷⁷

– **Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles, undated:**

“We believe in the need for revolution. Redneck Revolt believes that there will have to be a complete restructuring of society to provide for the survival and liberty of all people. We will fight for the end of predatory exploitation of our communities, and the creation of a world where no one is without food, shelter, water, or any other means of survival.”²⁷⁸

– **Redneck Revolt homepage, undated:**

“We need real formulated responses for the upsurge in reactionary and racist violence. We need armed community defense programs in every community. We need to be ready to rapidly respond to the armed right wing threat that menaces our communities. We need to stop being reactionaries when it comes to the topic of armed defense. We are approaching truly dangerous times. Will we be ready?”²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ “Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles,” Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/principles>.

²⁷⁸ “Redneck Revolt Organizing Principles,” Redneck Revolt, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/principles>.

²⁷⁹ Redneck Revolt, homepage, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.redneckrevolt.org/>.



Weather Underground

Base of Operations: The Weather Underground undertook actions across the United States. Its leadership was divided into three subgroups based in San Francisco, New York, and the Midwest.²⁸⁰

Website: N/A

Social Media Presence: N/A

Leadership: Bernardine Dohrn, James Mellen, and Mark Rudd led the original Weathermen faction of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), initially known as SDS's "action faction." After SDS's collapse in 1969, Dohrn, Mellen, and Rudd led the newly emerged Weathermen.²⁸¹

Membership Size and Relevance: When the FBI began investigating the Weather Underground in 1969, the fledgling guerilla network had approximately 400 members across the United States.²⁸² Following the March 6, 1970, accident that destroyed a New York City townhouse and killed three Weather Underground leaders, the group reportedly lost hundreds of supporters and shrunk to about

²⁸⁰ Bryan Burrough, "Meet The Weather Underground's Bomb Guru," *Vanity Fair*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2015/03/weather-underground-bomb-guru-burrough-excerpt>.

²⁸¹ "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>; "Weather Underground," Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

²⁸² "Weather Underground," Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

30 members nationwide.²⁸³ The Weather Underground officially disbanded in 1976.²⁸⁴ Core members began surrendering to authorities in 1977.²⁸⁵ Historians have written the FBI and the Nixon administration overestimated the strength and threat posed by the Weather Underground, which elevated the group's profile beyond what it should have been.²⁸⁶

Some former Weather Underground members reformed after serving time in prison. They drew national attention after their incarceration. For example, Kathy Boudin, who became a fugitive after the March 1970 New York City townhouse explosion and later spent 22 years in prison for her role in a 1981 armored car robbery, was hired as an adjunct professor at Columbia University's School of Social Work in 2013.²⁸⁷ Boudin died in May 2022.²⁸⁸ Republicans and other conservatives reignited interest in the Weather Underground during the 2008 presidential campaign after it came

²⁸³ Bryan Burrough, "Meet The Weather Underground's Bomb Guru," *Vanity Fair*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2015/03/weather-underground-bomb-guru-burrough-excerpt>.

²⁸⁴ Daniel J. Wakin, "Quieter Lives for 60's Militants, but Intensity of Beliefs Hasn't Faded," *New York Times*, August 24, 2003, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/24/nyregion/quieter-lives-for-60-s-militants-but-intensity-of-beliefs-hasn-t-faded.html>.

²⁸⁵ Bryan Burrough, "Meet The Weather Underground's Bomb Guru," *Vanity Fair*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2015/03/weather-underground-bomb-guru-burrough-excerpt>.

²⁸⁶ "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

²⁸⁷ Larry Celona, "Outrage 101: Radical jailed in slay now Columbia prof," *New York Post*, April 2, 2013, <https://nypost.com/2013/04/02/outrage-101-radical-jailed-in-slay-now-columbia-prof/>.

²⁸⁸ Paul W. Valentine, "Kathy Boudin, Weather Underground outlaw, dies at 78," *Washington Post*, May 1, 2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/kathy-boudin-weather-underground-dead/2022/05/01/979153ec-38e4-11eb-9276-ae0ca72729be_story.html.

to light former Underground leaders Bill Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn had hosted a campaign event for Barack Obama in 1995 when he was running for Illinois state senate.²⁸⁹

The Weather Underground was a radical, militant organization founded in 1969 at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Emerging from opposition to the Vietnam War, the Weather Underground adhered to a communist and anti-war ideology, targeting what it saw as symbols of U.S. military power, authoritarianism, and racism. The Weather Underground was responsible for multiple bombings in the 1970s targeting police, military, government offices, and other symbols of authority.²⁹⁰

The Weather Underground originated as a faction of the antiwar group Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Bernardine Dohrn, James Mellen, and Mark Rudd belonged to the Third World Marxists faction of SDS and formed what became known as SDS's "action faction," advocating street fighting to weaken the United States. At the June 1969 SDS convention, the Third World Marxists published their position paper, "You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows," in the SDS newspaper, *New Left Notes*. The paper called for a white revolutionary

²⁸⁹ Peter Jamison, "Time Bomb," *SF Weekly*, September 16, 2009, <https://archives.sfweekly.com/sanfrancisco/time-bomb/Content?oid=2174174&showFullText=true>; "Which Way The Wind Blows: Bill Ayers On Obama," NPR, November 18, 2008, <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/97112600>.

²⁹⁰ Daniel J. Wakin, "Quieter Lives for 60's Militants, but Intensity of Beliefs Hasn't Faded," *New York Times*, August 24, 2003, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/24/nyregion/quieter-lives-for-60-s-militants-but-intensity-of-beliefs-hasn-t-faded.html>; "Weather Underground Bombings," FBI, accessed July 6, 2022, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/weather-underground-bombings>.

movement to support black liberation, which the faction called central to SDS's anti-imperialist fight.²⁹¹ The paper's title—and the Weather Underground's name—referenced a lyric from the Bob Dylan song "Subterranean Homesick Blues": "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows."²⁹² This paper became a founding document of the Weather Underground.²⁹³ The Weathermen, as the group was originally known, formally emerged in December 1969 after a meeting of SDS's so-called "war council" to discuss the need for further education on the use of firearms and bombs. SDS had collapsed earlier that year and the Weathermen advocated transforming the remnants into an underground guerilla warfare group that would target U.S. sites of power.²⁹⁴ The group later changed its name from the Weathermen to the Weather Underground at the behest of members who found the original name sexist.²⁹⁵

²⁹¹ "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>;

"Weather Underground," Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

²⁹² Daniel J. Wakin, "Quieter Lives for 60's Militants, but Intensity of Beliefs Hasn't Faded," *New York Times*, August 24, 2003, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/24/nyregion/quieter-lives-for-60-s-militants-but-intensity-of-beliefs-hasn-t-faded.html>; Brad Dress, "What was the Weather Underground?," *Hill*, May 2, 2022, <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/3473755-what-was-the-weather-underground/>.

²⁹³ "Weather Underground Bombings," FBI, accessed July 6, 2022, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/weather-underground-bombings>.

²⁹⁴ "Weather Underground," Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

²⁹⁵ Daniel J. Wakin, "Quieter Lives for 60's Militants, but Intensity of Beliefs Hasn't Faded," *New York Times*, August 24, 2003, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/24/nyregion/quieter-lives-for-60-s-militants-but-intensity-of-beliefs-hasn-t-faded.html>.

The Weather Underground took a more violent approach than SDS as it sought to “dismember and dispose of US imperialism.”²⁹⁶ According to some who were present at that December 1969 meeting, there were discussions on the Weathermen’s tactics and willingness to kill in the name of the goals of targeting the U.S. war machine. Police and military became legitimate targets. In January 1970, the Weather Underground divided into three subgroups based in San Francisco led by Howard Machtinger, New York led by Terry Robbins, and a loose network of cells in the Midwest led by Bill Ayers.²⁹⁷ According to the group’s 1974 manifesto, *Prairie Fire*, the group’s goal was “to disrupt the empire ... to incapacitate it, to put pressure on the cracks.”²⁹⁸ By 1970, the Weather Underground had inspired the creation of three- to five-person cells across the country that were overseen by the group’s leadership, called the Weather Bureau.²⁹⁹ By 1975, the Weather Underground had claimed responsibility for 25 bombings around the United States, including at the U.S. Capitol, the Pentagon, the California Attorney General’s office, and a New York City police station.³⁰⁰

The FBI-New York City Police Anti-Terrorist Task Force—a precursor to the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Forces in FBI field offices nationwide—reportedly played a key

²⁹⁶ Brad Dress, “What was the Weather Underground?,” *Hill*, May 2, 2022, <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/3473755-what-was-the-weather-underground/>.

²⁹⁷ Bryan Burrough, “Meet The Weather Underground’s Bomb Guru,” *Vanity Fair*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2015/03/weather-underground-bomb-guru-burrough-excerpt>.

²⁹⁸ “Weather Underground Bombings,” FBI, accessed July 6, 2022, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/weather-underground-bombings>.

²⁹⁹ “Weather Underground,” *Britannica*, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

³⁰⁰ “Weather Underground Bombings,” FBI, accessed July 6, 2022, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/weather-underground-bombings>.

role in disrupting the Weather Underground's activities.³⁰¹ The FBI began infiltrating the Weather Underground as early as the 1969 SDS conference and reportedly encouraged the formation of the Weathermen out of a belief that faction represented the least threatening option. Some historians argue the Weather Underground—despite carrying out some prominent bombings in its early years—never achieved a large following and the FBI devoted too many resources and attention to the group.³⁰² In 1973, federal prosecutors dropped all major charges against Weather Underground members because of legal questions surrounding FBI tactics—including wiretaps and illegal searches and seizures—while pursuing the group.³⁰³

By 1974, the organization's bombing campaign had slowed significantly. The Weather Underground underwent another name change to the Weather Underground Organization as its leaders struggled with fading relevancy among other far-left radical groups. This led to the creation of the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, which released the group's 1974 manifesto in a bid to recapture its influence on the far left.³⁰⁴ Internally, the Weather Underground began to fracture over whether to

³⁰¹ "Weather Underground Bombings," FBI, accessed July 6, 2022, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/weather-underground-bombings>.

³⁰² Arthur M. Eckstein, "How the Weather Underground Failed at Revolution and Still Changed the World," *Time*, November 2, 2016, <https://time.com/4549409/the-weather-underground-bad-moon-rising/>.

³⁰³ Arthur M. Eckstein, "How the Weather Underground Failed at Revolution and Still Changed the World," *Time*, November 2, 2016, <https://time.com/4549409/the-weather-underground-bad-moon-rising/>; "Nation: Infiltrating the Underground," *Time*, January 9, 1978, <https://web.archive.org/web/20091204151846/http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,912056,00.html>; "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

³⁰⁴ "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

continue embracing violence. The Prairie Fire committee had concluded the Weather Underground needed to win the support of the working class, which set up a division between pro- and anti-violence factions within the group. Original members such as Ayers either left or were expelled.³⁰⁵ In December 1976, the Weather Underground underwent a public split over an “inversion” plan for members to come resume public lives. Dohrn accused other members of the group’s Central Committee of being “white, male supremacists” for supporting the plan. Though she had initially supported the plan, she released an audio tape denouncing “the counter-revolutionary politics” in the Weather Underground and acknowledging the group’s “real” split.³⁰⁶ More radical leftists accused the Weather Underground leadership of abandoning armed struggle and diluting their ideology to win over the working class.³⁰⁷ The Weather Underground officially disbanded in 1976.³⁰⁸ Radical leftist Clayton Van Lydegraf seized control of what remained of the Weather Underground, expelling any remaining original leadership. By 1977, all that remained of the Weather Underground was Van Lydegraf and four followers, all of whom were

³⁰⁵ Arthur M. Eckstein, “How the Weather Underground Failed at Revolution and Still Changed the World,” *Time*, November 2, 2016, <https://time.com/4549409/the-weather-underground-bad-moon-rising/>.

³⁰⁶ John Kifner, “Weather Underground Splits Up Over Plan to Come Into the Open,” *New York Times*, January 18, 1977, <https://www.nytimes.com/1977/01/18/archives/weather-underground-splits-up-over-plan-to-come-into-the-open.html>.

³⁰⁷ John Kifner, “Weather Underground Splits Up Over Plan to Come Into the Open,” *New York Times*, January 18, 1977, <https://www.nytimes.com/1977/01/18/archives/weather-underground-splits-up-over-plan-to-come-into-the-open.html>.

³⁰⁸ Daniel J. Wakin, “Quieter Lives for 60’s Militants, but Intensity of Beliefs Hasn’t Faded,” *New York Times*, August 24, 2003, <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/24/nyregion/quieter-lives-for-60-s-militants-but-intensity-of-beliefs-hasn-t-faded.html>.

arrested that November for conspiring to bomb the office of California State Senator John Briggs.³⁰⁹

After spending years in prison, a handful of Weather Underground leaders reformed and took positions as academics and writers. Ayers and Dohrn were indicted in 1970 and spent 10 years in hiding. Charges were eventually dropped because of prosecutorial misconduct.³¹⁰ At the end of his term in January 2001, President Bill Clinton pardoned Weather Underground member Susan L. Rosenberg.³¹¹ Prominent former Weather Underground member Kathy Boudin, who spent 22 years in prison for her role in an October 1981 Brink's armored truck robbery in Nanuet, New York, was hired as an adjunct professor at Columbia University's School of Social Work in 2013.³¹² Despite these reformations, critics continued to view former Weather Underground members with suspicion.³¹³

³⁰⁹ "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>; "Around the Nation," *New York Times*, November 21, 1977, <https://www.nytimes.com/1977/11/21/archives/around-the-nation-5-held-in-plot-to-bomb-california-aides-office.html>.

³¹⁰ "FACTBOX: Weather Underground resurfaces in U.S. politics," Reuters, April 18, 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-politics-underground-idUSN1717462220080418>.

³¹¹ Eric Lipton, "Officials Criticize Clinton's Pardon of an Ex-Terrorist," *New York Times*, January 22, 2001, <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/01/22/nyregion/officials-criticize-clinton-s-pardon-of-an-ex-terrorist.html>.

³¹² Larry Celona, "Outrage 101: Radical jailed in slay now Columbia prof," *New York Post*, April 2, 2013, <https://nypost.com/2013/04/02/outrage-101-radical-jailed-in-slay-now-columbia-prof/>.

³¹³ "FACTBOX: Weather Underground resurfaces in U.S. politics," Reuters, April 18, 2008, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-politics-underground-idUSN1717462220080418>.

Recruitment and Propaganda

The Weather Underground was rooted in communism and promoted an anti-war ideology, particularly focused against the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. At the June 1969 SDS convention, Weather Underground forerunner Third World Marxists published their position paper, “You Don’t Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows,” in the SDS newspaper, *New Left Notes*. The paper called for a white revolutionary movement to support black liberation, which the faction called central to SDS’s anti-imperialist fight.³¹⁴ On July 25, 1974, the Weather Underground distributed its manifesto, *Prairie Fire*. The manifesto identified the Weather Underground as a guerilla organization made up of “communist men and women” seeking to “destroy US imperialism.”³¹⁵ The manifesto went on to explain the Weather Underground’s devotion to “armed struggle” in U.S. urban centers.³¹⁶

Violent Activities

– October 20, 1981

Former Weather Underground members David Gilbert, Judith Alice Clark, Kathy Boudin, and Marilyn Buck—then associated with the May 19 Communist Organization—joined armed members of the Black Liberation Army (BLA) in robbing

³¹⁴ “Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen),” Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>; “Weather Underground,” Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

³¹⁵ Weather Underground, *Prairie Fire*, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources, July 1974, 1, <https://www.sds-1960s.org/PrairieFire-reprint.pdf>.

³¹⁶ Weather Underground, *Prairie Fire*, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources, July 1974, 3-4, <https://www.sds-1960s.org/PrairieFire-reprint.pdf>.

a Brink's armored truck in Nanuet, New York. They stole \$1.6 million in cash and killed a guard and two police officers. The former Weather Underground members were assigned as the getaway drivers while the BLA members carried out the robbery. Sekou Odinga and Silvia Baraldini were convicted of conspiracy and a related racketeering charge. Edward L. Joseph and Cecil Ferguson were convicted as accessories. Bilal Sunni-Ali and Iliana Robinson were acquitted of all charges. On May 4, 1984, Boudin was sentenced to 20 years to life in prison for her role in the Brink's robbery.³¹⁷

– **September 5, 1975**

A Weather Underground bomb exploded in a bathroom at the Kennecott Corporation in Salt Lake City, Utah, causing an estimated \$40,000 to \$50,000 in damage. No injuries were reported. The Weather Underground said the bombing was in protest of Kennecott's support for the current Chilean government and the company's support for a 1973 military coup that killed President Salvador Allende Gossens. The bombing occurred days before the second anniversary of the coup on September 11.³¹⁸

³¹⁷ Arnold H. Lubasch, "4 OF 6 ARE GUILTY IN U.S. BRINK'S CASE," *New York Times*, September 4, 1983, <https://www.nytimes.com/1983/09/04/nyregion/4-of-6-are-guilty-in-us-brink-s-case.html>; Larry Celona, "Outrage 101: Radical jailed in slay now Columbia prof," *New York Post*, April 2, 2013, <https://nypost.com/2013/04/02/outrage-101-radical-jailed-in-slay-now-columbia-prof/>; James Feron, "KATHY BOUDIN GIVEN 20 YEARS TO LIFE IN PRISON," *New York Times*, May 4, 1984, <https://www.nytimes.com/1984/05/04/nyregion/kathy-boudin-given-20-years-to-life-in-prison.html>.

³¹⁸ "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>; United Press International, "None Hurt as Blast In Utah Damages Kennecott Offices," *New York Times*, September 6, 1975, <https://www.nytimes.com/1975/09/06/archives/none-hurt-as-blast-in-utah-damages-kennecott-offices.html>.

– **January 29, 1975**

A bomb planted by the Weather Underground at the headquarters of the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C., damaged 20 offices on three separate floors. There were no injuries reported. A second bomb was found and safely detonated hours later at a military induction center in Oakland, California.³¹⁹

– **September 10, 1974**

The Weather Underground bombed the Anaconda American Brass Company in Oakland, California. The Weather Underground claimed it targeted Anaconda “in international solidarity with the Chilean people and their revolutionary struggle. The Weather Underground accused Anaconda, along with Kennecott and ITT, of playing “a decisive role in the US-sponsored fascist coup in Chile.”³²⁰

– **June 13, 1974**

Following a warning call from the Weather Underground, several sticks of dynamite exploded at 9:41 p.m. on the 29th floor of the Gulf Oil Corporation building in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, causing approximately \$1 million in damages. There were

³¹⁹ “Weather Underground Bombings,” FBI, accessed July 6, 2022, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/weather-underground-bombings>.

³²⁰ Weather Underground, “Weather Underground Organization Bombs Anaconda,” Freedom Archives, September 11, 1974, http://freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC31_scans/31.WUO.Bombs.Anaconda.Sept.11.1974.pdf; U.S. Government Printing Office, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee To Investigate The Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of Committee on the Judiciary of the United States Senate Ninety-Third Congress Second Session Part 1*, Google Books, September 23, 1974, 51, <https://books.google.com/books?id=GjkTAAAAIAAJ&pg=PA51&lpg=PA51&dq=Anaconda++bombing+WEATHER+underground&source=bl&ots=Nj4so-t634&sig=ACfU3U39ZfUFVgss1U2pTakcqx-goRzKUg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewjVjJ7xkPT4AhXGM1kFHbbiCk04ChDoAXoECA8QAw#v=onepage&q=Anaconda%20%20bombing%20WEATHER%20underground&f=false>.

no casualties. A letter from the Weather Underground taped to a phone booth in downtown Pittsburgh claimed Gulf Oil had committed “enormous crimes,” including financing “the Portuguese colonial war against the people of Angola in Africa” and exploiting people and resources in 70 countries, including stealing profits from “poor and working people in the US.”³²¹

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— **September 28, 1973**

A bomb destroyed four rooms in the Latin-American section of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation (ITT) in New York City early in the morning. The building was almost empty at the time and no injuries were reported. An advance call to the *New York Times* at 2:19 a.m. warned of the explosion “in retaliation of the I.T.T. crimes they committed against Chile.”³²²

— **May 19, 1972**

The Weather Underground placed a bomb in the women’s bathroom in the Air Force wing of the Pentagon, causing flooding that destroyed computer tapes with classified information and causing approximately \$1 million in damages. There were

³²¹ Chris Potter, “In 1974, a group called the Weather Underground bombed the Gulf Building. Can you shed any light on the reason?,” *Pittsburgh City Paper*, December 15, 2005, <https://www.pghcitypaper.com/pittsburgh/in-1974-a-group-called-the-weather-underground-bombed-the-gulf-building-can-you-shed-any-light-on-the-reason/Content?oid=1337599>; Associated Press, “Explosion Damages Gulf Headquarters After Phone Threat,” *New York Times*, June 14, 1974, <https://www.nytimes.com/1974/06/14/archives/explosion-damages-gulf-headquarters-after-phone-threat.html>.

³²² Paul L. Montgomery, “L T. T. OFFICE HERE DAMAGED BY BOMB,” *New York Times*, September 29, 1973, <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/09/29/archives/itt-office-here-damaged-by-bomb-caller-linked-explosion-at.html>.

no injuries due to an advance warning call. The date coincided with the birthdays of Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh and Malcolm X.³²³

– **September 18, 1971**

After warnings were sent to two New York City newspapers and a radio station, a bomb exploded just after 7:30 p.m. in a bathroom at the State Department of Correction in Albany, New York, causing damage but no injuries. The Weather Underground claimed the bombing was in retaliation for the recapture of the Attica prison facility after a prisoner revolt left 30 prisoners dead in the week.³²⁴

– **March 1, 1971**

At 1:32 a.m., a bomb exploded in a bathroom in Senate wing of the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., damaging multiple rooms but not causing any injuries. The bomb caused \$300,000 in damage. A warning call came in a half hour before the bomb exploded and claimed the bombing was in response to “the Nixon involvement in Laos.” The Weather Underground said it had attacked “the very seat of U.S. white arrogance” in response to Laos.³²⁵

³²³ “Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen),” Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

³²⁴ “ALBANY BUILDING JOLTED BY BLAST,” *New York Times*, September 18, 1971, <https://www.nytimes.com/1971/09/18/archives/albany-building-jolted-by-blast-none-injured-in-explosion-near.html>; “Weather Underground,” Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

³²⁵ John W. Finney, “Bomb in Capitol Causes Wide Damage,” *New York Times*, March 2, 1971, <https://www.nytimes.com/1971/03/02/archives/bomb-in-capitol-causes-wide-damage-capitol-bombing-does-wide-damage.html>; Lawrence Roberts, “When the Left Attacked the Capitol,” *Politico*, February 28, 2021, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/02/28/when-the-left-attacked-the-capitol-471270>; “Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen),” Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

– **October 8-15, 1970**

Over the course of a week, the Weather Underground detonated five bombs at military and law enforcement sites in San Francisco, Seattle, Santa Barbara, California, New York City, and Cambridge, Massachusetts. There was extensive damage but no casualties.³²⁶

– **October 5, 1970**

Ron Fleigelman and a group of Weathermen blew up the Haymarket police officer statue in Chicago that the Weathermen had previously targeted in 1969. The following day, a recording of Bernadine Dohrn warned of more bombings from “Santa Barbara to Boston.”³²⁷

– **September 12, 1970**

The Weathermen aided LSD and psychedelic drug advocate Timothy Leary escape from the California Men’s Colony West minimum-security prison near San Louis Obispo. Leary was serving a 10-year sentence on marijuana possession. The Weather Underground smuggled Leary and his wife to Algeria. Bernardine Dohrn announced that “the Weatherman Underground has had the honor and pleasure of

³²⁶ “Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen),” Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>; “New York Courthouse Bombed; Radicals Claim Responsibility,” *Kentucky New Era*, October 9, 1970, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=W-crAAAAIBAJ&sjid=OWcFAAAAIBA&pg=4011,790062&dq=weathermen+marin+courthouse+bombing&hl=en>.

³²⁷ “Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen),” Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

helping Dr. Timothy Leary escape from a POW camp at San Luis Obispo, California.”
Leary was later recaptured in Afghanistan.³²⁸

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— **June 9, 1970**

A bomb planted in a bathroom damaged offices on the second floor of the New York Police Department headquarters, wounding eight. An anonymous caller warned of the bomb 15 minutes before it went off.³²⁹

— **March 6, 1970**

A Weather Underground bomb exploded in the basement of a townhouse at 18 West 11th Street in New York City’s Greenwich Village, killing three founding members of the group—Diana Oughton, Ted Gold, and Terry Robbins. Two Underground members escaped the explosion—Cathy Wilkerson, whose father owned the house, and Kathy Boudin, daughter of a prominent liberal defense attorney. Following the explosion, police found an additional 57 sticks of dynamite, four completed bombs, detonators,

³²⁸ “Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen),” Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>; United Press International, “Timothy Leary, Drug Advocate, Walks Away From Coast Prison,” *New York Times*, September 14, 1970, <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/14/archives/timothy-leary-drug-advocate-walks-away-from-coast-prison.html>; Michael S. Roth, “President Richard Nixon and LSD guru Timothy Leary, crazy in their own ways,” *Washington Post*, January 12, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/president-richard-nixon-and-lsd-guru-timothy-leary-crazy-in-their-own-ways/2018/01/12/76220fa4-ebf2-11e7-b698-91d4e35920a3_story.html.

³²⁹ Frank J. Priol, “Bomb at Police Headquarters Injures 7 and Damages Offices,” *New York Times*, June 10, 1970, <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/06/10/archives/bomb-at-police-headquarters-injures-7-and-damages-offices-explosion.html>; Weather Underground,” Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>; “Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen),” Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

timing devices, and other bomb-making equipment. The Weather Underground had intended to target a dinner dance at Fort Dix in New Jersey. Members of the Weather Underground said after the explosion they were more careful to ensure no one was hurt in their bombings. Almost two months after the explosion, the remaining Weather Underground leadership met in San Francisco. Bernardine Dohrn recorded a message for the media declaring “war” on America. By this point, the Weather Underground had reportedly lost dozens of members and hundreds of supporters.³³⁰

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— **March 2, 1970**

Teenagers affiliated with the Weathermen threw two firebombs onto the front porch of a Cleveland, Ohio, police detective. The flames were extinguished without casualties. Bill Ayers had allegedly encouraged Ohio members to select a target linked to the prosecution of a leftist accused of killing three Cleveland police officers.³³¹

— **February 21, 1970**

Led by bomb-maker Terry Robbins, the New York City Weathermen coordinated a

³³⁰ “Weather Underground Bombings,” FBI, accessed July 6, 2022, <https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/weather-underground-bombings>; “Weather Underground,” Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>; Zachary Kussin, “The many lives of Weather Underground townhouse — 50 years after infamous bomb blast,” *New York Post*, March 4, 2020, <https://nypost.com/2020/03/04/the-many-lives-of-weather-underground-townhouse-50-years-after-infamous-bomb-blast/>; Lawrence Roberts, “When the Left Attacked the Capitol,” *Politico*, February 28, 2021, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/02/28/when-the-left-attacked-the-capitol-471270>; Bryan Burrough, “Meet The Weather Underground’s Bomb Guru,” *Vanity Fair*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2015/03/weather-underground-bomb-guru-burrough-excerpt>.

³³¹ “Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen),” Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

series of Molotov cocktail attacks around New York City. Two bombs targeted a New York Police Department vehicle but did not cause any serious injuries or damage. Two bombings targeted military recruiting booths at Brooklyn College. A third bombing targeted the Columbia University Law Library while the fourth bombing targeted the home of a judge in a criminal Trial involving the Black Panther Party, resulting in damage to the home but no casualties.³³²

– **February 16, 1970**

At 10:45 p.m., a bomb on a window ledge exploded at the Park Police Station in the San Francisco's Upper Haight neighborhood, severely wounding officer Brian McDonnell, who died of his wounds two days later. According to the FBI, eyewitnesses linked the Weather Underground to the bombing, but Weather Underground leaders Bill Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn denied their group was responsible for the attack.³³³

– **February 12, 1970**

A group of Weathermen set off bombs in the Berkeley police complex parking lot in San Francisco, just after midnight as shifts changed and officers were in the lot. Several officers were wounded but none died. Some Weathermen lamented their

³³² "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>.

³³³ Peter Jamison, "Time Bomb," *SF Weekly*, September 16, 2009, <https://archives.sfweekly.com/sanfrancisco/time-bomb/Content?oid=2174174&showFullText=true>.

failure to kill officers. The Weathermen did not claim credit and their responsibility did not come to light for several years.³³⁴

– **January 18, 1970**

Silas Bissell, a.k.a. Terry Jackson, attempted to blow up an Air Force ROTC building on the University of Washington campus. The bomb did not detonate. Campus police immediately arrested Bissel and his wife, Judith, and charged them with conspiring to damage federal property and possessing an unregistered firearm. The couple fled after posting \$50,000 in bail. They later separated and Judith Bissell was arrested in 1979 and sentenced to prison. Silas Bissell was arrested on January 20, 1987, after 17 years in hiding. Bissell claimed the Weathermen had betrayed him and alerted police. Bissell was convicted and sentenced to two years in prison. He was released after 18 months. Bissell died in June 2002 from brain cancer.³³⁵

– **October 8-11, 1969**

The Weather Underground organized a “Days of Rage” protest in Chicago, which was marked by rioting and slogans of “Bring the war home” and “The time has come for fighting in the streets.” Reports vary of 100 to almost 300 people arrested by the end

³³⁴ Bryan Burrough, “Meet The Weather Underground’s Bomb Guru,” *Vanity Fair*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2015/03/weather-underground-bomb-guru-burrough-excerpt>.

³³⁵ Wallace Turner, “TIP LEADS TO THE ARREST OF RADICAL SOUGHT IN 1970 OREGON CASE,” *New York Times*, January 22, 1987, <https://www.nytimes.com/1987/01/22/us/tip-leads-to-the-arrest-of-radical-sought-in-1970-oregon-case.html?pagewanted=1>; George Tibbets, “Former Fugitive Silas Bissell Freed On Bond,” Associated Press, February 6, 1987, <https://apnews.com/article/f91d0c891cf2110c7197ef24626cbbda>; Associated Press, “Silas Trim Bissell, 60, Longtime Antiwar Fugitive,” *New York Times*, June 25, 2002, <https://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/25/us/silas-trim-bissell-60-longtime-antiwar-fugitive.html>.

of the protests, but the overall turnout for the protests reportedly disappointed the Weathermen. The following December, the Weather Underground organized a national “war council” meeting of the SDS to discuss the need for further education on firearms and bombs. The council also discussed the need to kill police and target U.S. sites of power.³³⁶

– **October 6, 1969**

The Weathermen blew up a bronze statue in Chicago’s Haymarket Square commemorating the policemen who had died in an 1886 riot.³³⁷

Rhetoric

– **Weather Underground claim of responsibility for bombing of Anaconda American brass Company in Oakland, California, September 11, 1974:**

“We attack Anaconda Corporation in international solidarity with the Chilean people and their revolutionary struggle.”³³⁸

³³⁶ Brad Dress, “What was the Weather Underground?,” *Hill*, May 2, 2022, <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/3473755-what-was-the-weather-underground/>; “Weather Underground,” Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

³³⁷ Brad Dress, “What was the Weather Underground?,” *Hill*, May 2, 2022, <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/3473755-what-was-the-weather-underground/>; “Weather Underground,” Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

³³⁸ Weather Underground, “Weather Underground Organization Bombs Anaconda,” Freedom Archives, September 11, 1974, http://freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC31_scans/31.WUO.Bombs.Anaconda.Sept.11.1974.pdf.

– ***Prairie Fire, Weather Underground manifesto, July 1974:***

“We are a guerrilla organization. We are communist women and men, underground in the United States for more than four years.

“We are deeply affected by the historic events of our time in the struggle against US imperialism. Our intention is to disrupt the empire ... to incapacitate it, to put pressure on the cracks, to make it hard to carry out its bloody functioning against the people of the world, to join the world struggle, to attack from the inside. Our intention is to engage the enemy ... to wear away at him, to harass him, to isolate him, to expose every weakness, to pounce, to reveal his vulnerability.

“Our intention is to encourage the people ... to provoke leaps in confidence and consciousness, to stir the imagination, to popularize power, to agitate, to organize, to join in every way possible the people's day-to-day struggles.

“Our intention is to forge an underground ... a clandestine political organization engaged in every form of struggle, protected from the eyes and weapons of the state, a base against repression, to accumulate lessons, experience and constant practice, a base from which to attack.

“The only path to the final defeat of imperialism and the building of socialism is revolutionary war. Revolution is the most powerful resource of the people. To wait,

to not prepare people for the fight, is to seriously mislead about what kind of fierce struggle lies ahead.”³³⁹

– ***Prairie Fire, Weather Underground manifesto, July 1974:***

“At this early stage in the armed and clandestine struggle, our forms of combat and confrontation are few and precise. Our organized forces are small, the enemy's forces are huge. We live inside the oppressor nation, particularly suited to urban guerrilla warfare. We are strategically situated in the nerve centers of the international empire, where the institutions and symbols of imperial power are concentrated. The cities will be a major battleground, for the overwhelming majority of people live in the cities; the cities are our terrain.”³⁴⁰

– ***Prairie Fire, Weather Underground manifesto, July 1974:***

“Attacks by the Weather Underground have been focused and specific. These actions were a catalyst for thousands of politically-directed armed actions between 1970 and 1972, almost all of which complemented mass struggles.”³⁴¹

– ***A Weather Underground warning call to the New York Times about a bomb at the International Telephone and Telegraph building in New York City, September 28, 1973:***

³³⁹ Weather Underground, *Prairie Fire*, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources, July 1974, 1-2, <https://www.sds-1960s.org/PrairieFire-reprint.pdf>.

³⁴⁰ Weather Underground, *Prairie Fire*, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources, July 1974, 3, <https://www.sds-1960s.org/PrairieFire-reprint.pdf>.

³⁴¹ Weather Underground, *Prairie Fire*, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Archives and Resources, July 1974, 4, <https://www.sds-1960s.org/PrairieFire-reprint.pdf>.

"Take this down because am only going to say this once. I am the Weatherman underground. At the I.T.T.-American building, a bomb is going to go off in 15 minutes. This is in retaliation of the I.T.T. crimes they committed against Chile."³⁴²

- **A Weather Underground warning call to the Kennecott Corporation in Salt Lake City, Utah, shortly before a bomb exploded in the building, September 5, 1975:**

"Only resistance will win. Call the police and have the building evacuated."³⁴³

- **Bernardine Dohrn, after the Weather Underground broke drug advocate Timothy Leary out of prison, September 1970:**

"Now we are at war."³⁴⁴

³⁴² Paul L. Montgomery, "L T. T. OFFICE HERE DAMAGED BY BOMB," *New York Times*, September 29, 1973, <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/09/29/archives/itt-office-here-damaged-by-bomb-caller-linked-explosion-at.html>.

³⁴³ "Weather Underground (Weatherman/The Weathermen)," Influence Watch, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.influencewatch.org/organization/weather-underground-weatherman-weathermen/>; United Press International, "None Hurt as Blast In Utah Damages Kennecott Offices," *New York Times*, September 6, 1975, <https://www.nytimes.com/1975/09/06/archives/none-hurt-as-blast-in-utah-damages-kennecott-offices.html>.

³⁴⁴ Michael S. Roth, "President Richard Nixon and LSD guru Timothy Leary, crazy in their own ways," *Washington Post*, January 12, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/president-richard-nixon-and-lsd-guru-timothy-leary-crazy-in-their-own-ways/2018/01/12/76220fa4-ebf2-11e7-b698-91d4e35920a3_story.html.

– **Weather Underground member Mark Rudd, December 1969:**

“It’s a wonderful feeling to hit a pig. It must be a really wonderful feeling to kill a pig or blow up a building.”³⁴⁵

– **Slogan during Days of Rage protest, October 8-11, 1969:**

“The time has come for fighting in the streets.”³⁴⁶



Youth Liberation Front

Base of Operations: The YLF is based in the Pacific Northwest region with chapters throughout Washington and Oregon.³⁴⁷ The group also has chapters in Florida, California, and the Carolinas.³⁴⁸

Website: <https://pnwylf.noblogs.org/>

Social Media Presence: [Twitter \(Pacific Northwest YLF\)](#), [Twitter \(Youth Liberation Front Seattle Division\)](#), [Twitter \(NorCal YLF\)](#), [Twitter \(Carolina YLF\)](#), [Twitter \(Bay Area YLF\)](#), [Twitter \(Ft. Lauderdale YLF\)](#), [Mastadon](#)

³⁴⁵ Peter Jamison, “Time Bomb,” *SF Weekly*, September 16, 2009, <https://archives.sfweekly.com/sanfrancisco/time-bomb/Content?oid=2174174&showFullText=true>.

³⁴⁶ “Weather Underground,” Britannica, accessed July 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Weathermen>.

³⁴⁷ “Chapters, PNW Youth Liberation Front, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://pnwylf.noblogs.org/chapters/>.

³⁴⁸ NorCal YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/norcalylf>; Carolina YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/CarolinaYlf>; Bay Area YLF Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/BayYlf>; Ft. Lauderdale YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, https://twitter.com/fla_ylf.

Leadership: YLF is made up of independent, leaderless cells. The leaders of these cells remain anonymous.³⁴⁹

Membership Size and Relevance: YLF does not maintain public membership records. Each chapter acts independently. As of October 2, 2020, PNW YLF had 274 followers on Mastadon³⁵⁰ and 36,300 followers on Twitter.³⁵¹ As of that same date, a Twitter account belonging to the Seattle Division had 5,782 followers and had been temporarily restricted but remained online.³⁵² The NorCal YLF had 744 followers,³⁵³ while the Carolina YLF had 166 followers,³⁵⁴ the Bay Area YLF had 276 followers,³⁵⁵ and the Fort Lauderdale chapter had 223 followers.³⁵⁶

The Youth Liberation Front (YLF) is a self-described “decentralized network of autonomous youth collectives dedicated to direct action towards total liberation....”³⁵⁷

³⁴⁹ Hal Bernton, “Meet the Youth Liberation Front behind a militant marathon of Portland protests,” *Seattle Times*, July 12, 2020, <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/meet-the-youth-liberation-front-the-militant-group-promoting-a-marathon-of-angry-portland-protests/>.

³⁵⁰ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Mastadon account, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://kolektiva.social/@PNWYLF>.

³⁵¹ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter account, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF>.

³⁵² Youth Liberation Front Seattle Division, Twitter account, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://twitter.com/seattleYLF>.

³⁵³ NorCal Youth Liberation Front, Twitter account, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://twitter.com/norcalylf>.

³⁵⁴ Carolina YLF, Twitter account, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://twitter.com/CarolinaYlf>.

³⁵⁵ Bay Area YLF, Twitter account, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://twitter.com/BayYlf>.

³⁵⁶ Ft. Lauderdale Youth Liberation Front, Twitter account, accessed October 2, 2020, https://twitter.com/fla_ylf.

³⁵⁷ “About,” PNW Youth Liberation Front, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://pnwylf.noblogs.org/about/>.

YLF describes itself as part of the umbrella of “anarchist projects” online.³⁵⁸ YLF social media accounts call for attendance at rallies and protests against symbols of authority. These accounts also provide suggestions on how to prepare for protests.³⁵⁹ YLF groups began to emerge on social media in 2018 but gained greater prominence in 2020 with the spread of nationwide protests against police brutality and racial inequality.³⁶⁰ YLF has at least seven affiliates across the country, all of which act independently of each other.³⁶¹ While YLF groups only loosely connected, a common denomination among them is their call for “direct action” in pursuit of their goal of tearing down the allegedly racist and inequitable political and capitalist systems.³⁶²

³⁵⁸ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Mastadon post, September 22, 2020, 1:21 p.m., <https://kolektiva.social/@PNWYLF/104909721208356199>.

³⁵⁹ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF>; NorCal YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/norcalylf>; Carolina YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/CarolinaYlf>; Bay Area YLF Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/BayYlf>; Ft. Lauderdale YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, https://twitter.com/fla_ylf.

³⁶⁰ Hal Bernton, “Meet the Youth Liberation Front behind a militant marathon of Portland protests,” *Seattle Times*, July 12, 2020, <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/meet-the-youth-liberation-front-the-militant-group-promoting-a-marathon-of-angry-portland-protests/>.

³⁶¹ “About,” PNW Youth Liberation Front, accessed September 21, 2020, <https://pnwylf.noblogs.org/about/>; NorCal YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/norcalylf>; Carolina YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/CarolinaYlf>; Bay Area YLF Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/BayYlf>; Ft. Lauderdale YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, https://twitter.com/fla_ylf.

³⁶² PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF>; NorCal YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/norcalylf>; Carolina YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/CarolinaYlf>; Bay Area YLF Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, <https://twitter.com/BayYlf>; Ft. Lauderdale YLF, Twitter account, accessed September 25, 2020, https://twitter.com/fla_ylf.

YLF is declaredly anti-fascist and anti-capitalist. Members who have spoken to media remain anonymous. During these interviews, they have declared YLF's belief that the current political system is broken and needs to be replaced rather than reformed. The nationwide protests that erupted after the May 25, 2020, death of George Floyd in police custody reportedly provided YLF with a recruitment boost over social media.³⁶³ YLF propaganda declares "the time for discussing reform is over," and calls for "full abolition for our communities to be safe and free from rampant police terror."³⁶⁴

Recruitment and Propaganda

YLF claims to be a network of "loosely connected autonomous groups of kids" fighting against fascism, the state, and capitalism.³⁶⁵ PNW YLF encourages visitors to its Twitter page to find "some other kids and form your own affinity group," suggesting that there is no formal process for creating YLF affiliate chapters.³⁶⁶ Per its name, YLF targets youth for recruitment. The operator of the PNW YLF Twitter account admitted in a September 30, 2020, post to being a current high school student.³⁶⁷

³⁶³ Hal Bernton, "Meet the Youth Liberation Front behind a militant marathon of Portland protests," *Seattle Times*, July 12, 2020, <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/meet-the-youth-liberation-front-the-militant-group-promoting-a-marathon-of-angry-portland-protests/>.

³⁶⁴ "July 25th: Call For A Day Of Action In Solidarity With Portland & Against The Federal Invasion," PNW Youth Liberation Front, July 23, 2020, <https://pnwylf.noblogs.org/post/2020/07/23/july-25th-call-for-a-day-of-action/>.

³⁶⁵ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter post, September 30, 2020, 12:44 a.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1311165012573118464>.

³⁶⁶ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter post, September 30, 2020, 12:44 a.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1311165012573118464>.

³⁶⁷ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter post, September 30, 2020, 1:50 a.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1311181556426313728>.

The YLF utilizes a black flag in its imagery to symbolize anarchy.³⁶⁸ YLF chapters are active on social media, particularly Twitter. Twitter temporarily suspended the PNW YLF in September 2020, which led the group to create an account on the anarchist social media forum Mastadon.³⁶⁹

Violent Activities

- YLF has not be linked to specific violent attacks.

Rhetoric

- **PNW YLF, Tweet, September 26, 2020:**

“Great to see Portland show up today to oppose some piss babies, and the level of support infrastructure that folks built was fantastic. The day isn’t over and the threat from vacationing chuds continues. Stick with your crew, be alert and stay dangerous. See ya in the streets!Black heart.”³⁷⁰

- **PNW YLF, Mastadon post, September 22, 2020:**

“Expect us to use this platform and other alternative media platforms more and more frequently, as anarchist projects continue to be censored from corporate

³⁶⁸ K. Rambo, “Who is the PNW Youth Liberation Front at the center of recent Portland protests,” Oregon Live, June 2, 2020, <https://www.oregonlive.com/news/2020/06/who-is-the-pnw-youth-liberation-front-at-the-center-of-recent-portland-protests.html>.

³⁶⁹ NorCal Youth Liberation Front, Twitter post, September 22, 2020, 5:27 p.m., <https://twitter.com/norcalylf/status/1308518218768678912>; PNW Youth Liberation Front, Mastadon post, September 22, 2020, 1:21 p.m., <https://kolektiva.social/@PNWYLF/104909721208356199>.

³⁷⁰ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter post, September 26, 2020, 11:59 p.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1310066570333487105>.

social media.”³⁷¹

– **PNW YLF, Twitter post, September 19, 2020:**

“we’d encourage bringing banners against the US Supreme Court and all other colonizer courts and judges.”³⁷²

– **PNW YLF, Twitter post, September 16, 2020:**

“Reduce the prisons to rubble”³⁷³

– **PNW YLF, Twitter post, September 13, 2020:**

“Youth Liberation: Burn the Schools and Destroy the Media!

<https://warzonedistro.noblogs.org/post/2017/09/07/youth-liberation-burn-the-schools-and-destroy-the-media/>”³⁷⁴

– **PNW YLF, Twitter post, September 13, 2020:**

“Solidarity with Zoom (and Google Meet, etc.) bombers, DDOSers, and all brave school saboteurs in these trying times”³⁷⁵

³⁷¹ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Mastadon post, September 22, 2020, 1:21 p.m., <https://kolektiva.social/@PNWYLF/104909721208356199>.

³⁷² PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter post, September 19, 2020, 3:44 p.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1307405220541018118>.

³⁷³ PNW Youth Liberation Front, Twitter post, September 16, 2020, 6:28, p.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1306359249270902787>.

³⁷⁴ PNW YLF, Twitter post, September 13, 2020, 4:49 p.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1305247310637461506>.

³⁷⁵ PNW YLF, Twitter post, September 13, 2020, 3:55 p.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1305233551164502016>.

– **PNW YLF, Twitter post, September 6, 2020:**

“Surveillance is crucial to extending the reach of the police state; not all the violence of policing is physical. Be real fucking conscious about the line between journalism and surveillance, because many of y’all keep crossing it. Stick to journalism, not surveillance.”³⁷⁶

– **Blog post, PNW YLF website, July 23, 2020:**

“Time and time again, the neo-liberal state has offered promises of ‘reform’ with no real action ever taken. The time for discussing reform is over, we need full abolition for our communities to be safe and free from rampant police terror.”³⁷⁷

– **PNW YLF, Twitter post, July 5, 2020:**

“Be like water, keep moving. If you see someone smashing windows, shut the (expletive) up. Walk, don’t run. Hold the front and back lines.”³⁷⁸

³⁷⁶ PNW YLF, Twitter post, September 6, 2020, 11:14 p.m., <https://twitter.com/PNWYLF/status/1302807487242854400>.

³⁷⁷ “July 25th: Call For A Day Of Action In Solidarity With Portland & Against The Federal Invasion,” PNW Youth Liberation Front, July 23, 2020, <https://pnwylf.noblogs.org/post/2020/07/23/july-25th-call-for-a-day-of-action/>.

³⁷⁸ Hal Bernton, “Meet the Youth Liberation Front behind a militant marathon of Portland protests,” *Seattle Times*, July 12, 2020, <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/meet-the-youth-liberation-front-the-militant-group-promoting-a-marathon-of-angry-portland-protests/>.