FROM DIRECT ACTION TO TERRORISM:
CANADIAN RADICAL RIGHT NARRATIVES AND COUNTER-NARRATIVES AT A TIME OF VOLATILITY
The CARR-Hedayah Radical Right Counter Narratives Project is a year-long project between CARR and Hedayah that is funded by the EU STRIVE programme. It is designed to create one of the first comprehensive online toolkits for practitioners and civil society engaged in radical right extremist counter narrative campaigns. It uses online research to map narratives in nine countries and regions (Australia, Canada, Germany, Hungary, New Zealand, Norway, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the United States), proposes counter narratives for these countries and regions, and advises on how to conduct such campaigns in an effective manner. This country report is one of such outputs.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. William Allchorn is a specialist on anti-Islamic protest movements and radical right social movements in the UK and Western Europe. His PhD thesis mapped political, policing, and local authority responses to the English Defence League in five UK locations. William has recently finished his first academic monograph with Routledge – looking at policy responses to the EDL and Britain First over the past decade. His previous published work has looked at the dynamics of activism within anti-Islam movements and counter-extremism responses towards such groups. William has taught undergraduate courses and given lectures on the radical right in Western Europe; both at the social movement and party political level. The previous consultancy has included delivering counter narrative engagement sessions in the North East of England and putting together a ‘Countering Radical Right Narratives’ educational pack. As of April 2019, William Allchorn is the Associate Director of CARR.

The views expressed in this practical Guide are the opinions of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Hedayah, the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right, or the European Union.
INTRODUCTION

For several years now, radical right extremist\(^1\) groups and their terror potential have been on the radar of Canada’s Security and Intelligence Services.\(^2\) Noted as a growing threat (see Figure 1),\(^3\) after an attack on three police officers in June 2014, another attack on the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City in January 2017 and the recent proscription of Blood and Honour and Combat 18 in June 2019, events all point to how ideologies of older white supremacist groups have been supplemented with anti-Muslim and alt-right sentiment within the more violent parts of this extremist milieu.\(^4\) Indeed, in recent years, the main modus operandi of radical right extremist groups animating the Canadian scene have been direct-action style activism and protest orchestrated by the likes of PEGIDA, Soldiers of Odin (SoO) Canada, La Muete (“The Pack”) and Storm Alliance. In May 2019, for example, SoO Canada were banned from holding events at a Canadian Royal Legion facility, after a directive was issued by the National Command.\(^5\) Moreover, and as shown with groups like PEGIDA, Proud Boys and Church of the Creator, the international synergies and overlaps with other radical right extremists (both south of the Canadian border in the US and through national chapters of international groups) have also been notable, displaying the transnational nature of these movements, both in Canada and internationally.\(^6\)

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1. Here ‘radical right extremism’ is used to describe a broad plethora of cognate paramilitary groups, groupuscules and lone-actor terrorists that could be considered as harbourcing violent nativist, authoritarian and (sometimes) non-violent populist policy ideas (Mudde, Populist Radical Right in Europe, 2007). Radical Right Extremism includes individuals and groups who actively “espouse violence” and “seek the overthrow of liberal democracy” entirely (Eatwell 2003, Ten Theories of the Extreme Right, 14) rather than those who offer “a critique of the constitutional order without any anti-democratic behaviour or intention” (Carter 2005, The Extreme Right in Western Europe: Success or Failure?, 22). Those with such a propensity towards violence and/or anti-system values are historically referred to as the extreme right rather than the radical right, and such individuals and groups range from non-violent anti-Islam groups to a range of formally constituted neo-fascist and neo-Nazi political parties that espouse terrorist action, as well as lone-actor terrorists.


6. Perry, B, Email Correspondence with Author via Email, Leeds, UK.


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FIGURE 1 Canada’s Global Terrorism Index Score, 2010-2018\(^7\)

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6. Perry, B, Email Correspondence with Author via Email, Leeds, UK.

Zooming out a bit and looking at the Canadian radical right scene in general, it is of significant interest how loose and diverse the movement is compared to other national contexts. For example, recent estimates suggest that there are around 130 groups active within Canada’s radical right milieu. Such a multiplicity of groups is linked to a broader lack of commitment to professed ideologies, the short shelf life of most groups (in 2015, one study pegged this at typically no more than a few months) and the high level of turnover of members within (and also between) the various movements. Prior to the rise of more anti-Muslim protest and vigilantism, only the KKK, Church of the Creator, and Aryan Nations/Aryan Guard organizations used to be the most stable actors within this extremist milieu, with these more established radical right groups “staging rallies against antiracists, disseminating xenophobic fliers, and engaging in an array of violent and deadly activities”\(^8\). Of present concern, then, is the inherent instability of Canada’s radical right extremist scene; this instability highlights an existing threat around the possibility of lone-acor perpetrated violence.\(^11\)

This country report therefore focuses on street protest, groupuscule\(^12\) and influencer\(^13\) forms of radical right extremism in Canada at this time of volatility. The first part of this report surveys the activities of 17 key radical right extremist groups and the narratives that they propagate at the present moment. Using these case studies, the second part will then suggest guidance around the use of counter-narratives that can be posed in relation to Canadian radical right extremist narratives. The next section focuses on existing counter-narrative campaigns. Finally, the report concludes with further recommendations for practitioners when conducting campaigns to counteract these messages in the Canadian context as practitioners and policymakers make sense of increased political violence in Canada over recent years.

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\(^10\) Ibid, 820, 828.


\(^12\) Here, ‘Groupuscules’ are defined as tiny, often neo-Nazi, bands of radical right extremists that establish a milieu with reference points that stretch out internationally as well as into the past (Jackson 2014, National Action and National Socialism for the 21st Century, 101).

\(^13\) Here, ‘influencers’ refer to individual radical right activists who cultivate an online presence in order to disseminate nativist, authoritarian and populist messages, and drive followership.
With little in the way of a thriving electoral radical right extremist base, anti-Islam protest vigilante groups, neo-Nazi protest movements and alt-right influencers have revivified radical right extremist activism in Canada over the past half-decade. Commonly focused in the provinces of Quebec, Alberta, and British Columbia, each modality mobilises around a common set of anti-Muslim populist, ethno-nationalist, anti-Semitic and anti-government narratives. Moreover, each movement is increasingly attracting an older, middle-aged cadre of activists attracted to anti-government grievances in particular. Below is a list of radical right extremist groups and organisations that represent Canada’s “loose” and “diverse” radical right extremist scene at the present time (broken down according to organisation type, ideology, and narrative structure).

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15 This was noted by one Canada-based scholar and one Canada-based practitioner consulted for this report (both suggesting that the average age of those joining themselves to radical right extremist groups is increasing (Galloway, B. (February 2020). Comments to Author Via Skype. Leeds, UK & Perry, B. (May 2020) Comments to Author Via Email. Leeds, UK).

**FIGURE 2** Overview of Canada's Radical Right Extremist Groups

( *Horizontal Axis: Mainstreamness of Narratives*, **Vertical Axis: Incidence of Violence** )

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**TABLE 1: Overview of Canada Radical Right Extremist Narratives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTREMIST NARRATIVE</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Establishment Sentiment</td>
<td>Here, ‘Anti-Establishment Sentiment’ is defined as a sustained critique of political, media and business elites, often dressed up in conspiratorial language.</td>
<td>“We seek to help fellow Canadians in need… with a ‘no one left behind’ motto.” (Storm Alliance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Multicultural Sentiment</td>
<td>Here, ‘Anti-Multicultural Sentiment’ is defined as a sustained critique of policies seen as promoting ethnic diversity and inter-cultural understanding.</td>
<td>“Multiculturalism – A Case of Multiple Personality Disorder.” (CAFE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Muslim Populism</td>
<td>Here, ‘Anti-Muslim Populism’ is defined as a fusion of anti-Muslim hatred and populist forms of nationalism, including tropes around Islamisation and negative depictions of Islam.</td>
<td>“PEGIDA is AGAINST allowing parallel societies in our midst, such as Sharia law, Sharia police, etc.” (PEGIDA Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Semitism</td>
<td>Here, ‘Anti-Semitism’ is defined as expressions of anti-Jewish sentiment, including anti-Zionist positions.</td>
<td>“Even the Europeanized Jews are now in charge of the mild racists (cowardly bigots), if you judge those President Trump and cuckservative sites like Briebart [sic].” (Nationalist Party of Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autochtonism</td>
<td>Here, ‘Autochtonism’ is defined as a desire (either real or imagined) of being native to a region (Merriam-Webster, <em>Autochthonism</em>, 2020, online at: <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/autochthonism">https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/autochthonism</a>).</td>
<td>“We believe in the self-determination of peoples, in their independence and their right to be in the majority on their lands.” (Atalante Québec)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chauvinism</td>
<td>Here, ‘Chauvinism’ is defined as actual or performative forms of violent masculinity, often in connection with ideas of virility and racial purity.</td>
<td>“We’re a brotherhood… A man who runs a women’s gang, or the opposite, does not work.” (Northern Guard)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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17 Here, ‘mainstreamness’ can be measured by the adoption of moderate narratives (usually involving a broad issue agenda, anti-establishment populism and electoralism) compared to clearly extreme, esoteric positions and modus operandi (e.g. street activism and terrorism) taken by fringe groups (De Lange, Akkerman and Rooduijn, *Right-Wing Popular Parties in Western Europe*, 2016).
18 Here, ‘violence’ is measured as part of the narrative logic within a group and its mode of activism. Whilst EDL and DFLA activists have been prone to violence and violent rhetoric, the dominant trend within these groups has been toward non-violent forms of rhetoric and activism, whilst in more Neo-Nazi groups (e.g. National Action, Order of the 9 Angles and Misanthropic Division), there has been more overt trends of violent activism, perpetrated on outsiders and group members.
| Civilisationism | Here, ‘Civilisationism’ is defined as an allegiance to a set of norms beyond the nation state where the Judeo-Christian ‘West’ is privileged over the (often essentialised) Muslim ‘East’ (Brubaker, *Beyond Nation*, 2017, online at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01419870.2017.1204700). | “PEGIDA is FOR preserving and protecting our Christian-Judeo based culture.” (PEGIDA Canada) |
| Ethno-Nationalism | Here, ‘Ethno-Nationalism’ is defined as the unanimity of the nation and a (white) ethnic in-group, with immigration by non-white groups seen as an endangerment of this monist ideal. | “Between the allowing illegal aliens in this country and giving them the ability to vote and drive, […] and demonising everything anything that has to do with European culture […] we as Soldiers of Odin realize that it is time to take back our streets, provinces and country.” (SoO Canada) |
| Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory | Here, the ‘Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory’ refers to the writings of Renéau Camus and the belief in a demographic replacement of native Europeans by non-European migrants, deemed to be facilitated by ruling elites. | “We can see the demographic replacement of Old Stock Canadians happening before our eyes. We’re one of the last generations of men and women who can change the tides, and that’s exactly what we intend on doing.” (ID Canada) |
| Identitarianism | According to José Pedro Zúquete (*The Identitarians*, 2018), Identitarians are a “quickly growing ethno-cultural transnational movement that, in diverse forms, originated in France and Italy and has spread into southern, central, and northern Europe [as well as North America].” | “732 [A.D.] Generation Identitaire.” (An excerpt from a banner unfurled in 2012 by Quebec Identitariats name-sake in Poitiers, France, referring to the year in which the Frankish king Charles Martel turned back the invading Moors.) |
| Islamophobia | Here, ‘Islamophobia’ is defined as “anti-Muslim hatred […] motivated by hostility or bias towards people perceived to be Muslim.” (Feldman & Allehorn, *Working Definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred*, 2019, online at: https://www.radicalrightanalysis.com/2019/05/15/a-working-definition-of-anti-muslim-hatred-summary/) | “Bonne appétit.” (A note left by Québec Identitaire on pigs head outside of the Quebec City mosque in June 2016.) |
| Militarism | Here, ‘Militarism’ is defined as the pursuit of “maintaining a strong military organization in aggressive preparedness for [a real or imagined] war.” (Collins, *Militarism*, 2020, online at: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/militarism.) | “You cannot have our Life our Liberty or our Property without a fight. We are the Last Line of Defence.” (III%ers) |
| Neo-Fascism | Here, ‘neo-fascism’ is used to describe an ultra-nationalist ideology that adheres to the concept of palpability, or the idea that the nation is reborn after a time of moral decadence and decay (Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 1991). | “What we want is to create the new Nation, the new society. In short, a new social order which would not be based on material gains, but on the sense of sacrifice, heroism, honor and the common good.” (Atalante Québec) |
| Neo-Nazism | Here, ‘neo-Nazism’ is defined as the adherence to the ideology of national socialism post-Hitler, including rejections of left liberalism and right-wing conservatism. | “We are Guardians of the White Aryan Race, and as guardians we focus our lives and efforts towards fighting for the freedoms, future and survival of our children and beautiful people.” (Aryan Guard) |
| Neo-Paganism | Here, ‘Neo-Paganism’ is defined as a secular religion that rejects Christianity for the worship of Hitler and Norse Gods. | “I pluck the beard of your Christian “god”, And hack open his worm-eaten skull.” (Church of the Creator) |
| Pro-Gun Sentiments | Here, ‘Pro-Gun Sentiment’ is seen as strident views in favour of gun ownership and limited government interference in the affairs of gun owners. | “We love our guns.” (Proud Boys Canada) |
| Ultra-Nationalism | Here, ‘Ultra-Nationalism’ refers to an extreme loyalty or devotion to the nation, which is usually at the exclusion of others (Collins, *Ultra-Nationalism*, 2019, online at: https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/ultranationalism). | “It is also the goal of the Blood and Honour movement to unite those people with a legitimate interest in securing the future of our European cultural identity under one common banner.” (Blood & Honour Canada) |
| Vigilantism | Here, ‘Vigilantism’ is defined as a set of tactics involving direct action stunts and street patrols that are designed to intimidate and ‘Other’ minority populations. | “We are the eyes and ears of the police in places that the police cannot always be.” (SoO Canada) |
| White Supremacism | Here, ‘White Supremacism’ is defined as a belief in white dominance over people of other backgrounds. It is often connected to beliefs about ‘white endangerment’ and ‘white genocide’ conspiracy theories. | “No longer will we be silent as the Canadian government treats Whites as second class citizens. The Heritage Front opposes anti-White Employment “Equity.”” (Heritage Front) |

### VIOLENT AND EXTREME RADICAL RIGHT GROUPS IN CANADA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ATALANTE-QUEBEC</strong></th>
<th><strong>ARYAN GUARD</strong></th>
<th><strong>CHURCH OF THE CREATOR</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEADER</strong></td>
<td>Raphael Lévesque</td>
<td>Kyle McKee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEMBERSHIP</strong></td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDEOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>Ultra-Nationalism</td>
<td>Neo-Nazism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neo-Fascism</td>
<td>Anti-Semitism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Autochonism</td>
<td>White Supremacism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formed in Quebec in 2016, Atalante says it advocates an “identity policy for community, sports, cultural and intellectual purposes.” Its members parade regularly in the streets of Quebec, in particular to call for the “remigration” of Quebec’s cultural communities, that is, the return of immigrants to their countries of origin.

Their activities include but are not limited to ‘flyering’, banner drops, participating in anti-immigrant rallies (alongside SoO Quebec), and providing food to the homeless in Quebec. Perhaps of most concern are Atalante’s links to intimidation and violent forms of activism. In May 2018, for example, Atalante activists stormed the Montreal offices of Vice magazine and cited unfavourable coverage by one of its journalists, tossing leaflets and clown noses around the online news magazine offices. Moreover, Atalante Montreal organizer Shawn Beauchais-MacDonald was among a number of Canadian radical right extremists involved in violence at the 2017 Charlottesville ‘Unite the Right’ rally, to an extent to which some Quebec-based anti-fascist groups allege a connection between his presence and the death of counter-protestor Heather Heyer. At the time of writing in January 2020, Atalante Quebec has 6,725 Facebook, 180 Twitter, and 57 Instagram followers.

**VIOLENT AND EXTREME RADICAL RIGHT GROUPS IN CANADA**

**ATALANTE-QUEBEC**

**LEADER**
Raphaël Lévesque

**MEMBERSHIP**
Unknown

**IDEOLOGY**
Ultra-Nationalism
Neo-Fascism
Autochonism

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**BLOOD AND HONOUR**

**LEADER**
Kyle McKee

**MEMBERSHIP**
Unknown (100 est.)

**IDEOLOGY**
Neo-Nazism
Anti-Semitism
White Supremacism

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**DESCRIPTION**

Ultra-Nationalism:
“Only the Nation can synthesize between a territory, a people, its culture, its history and its national conscience.”

-An excerpt from Atalante’s Home Page.

Neo-Fascism:
“What we want is to create the new Nation, the new society. In short, a new social order which would not be based on material gains, but on the sense of sacrifice, heroism, honor and the common good.”

-An excerpt from Atalante’s Mission Statement.

Autochonism:
“We believe in the self-determination of peoples, in their independence and their right to be in the majority on their lands.”

-An excerpt from Atalante’s website Home Page.  

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**NOTES**


24 Atalante Website, ‘Accueil’ Home Page, online at: http://www.atalantequebec.com/?fbclid=IwAR1ZivCkBxt76903G2dZLC8FfJEj2HsRzPuEU0Pk2faHd32NvGWRvOzSK80.


 Founded in 2006 in Calgary by a young neo-Nazi, Kyle McKee, protests in 2007, 2008, and 2009 as well as an accusation of pipe bombing have firmly placed the Aryan Guard on Canada’s radical right extremist map. Coming to prominence initially for its anti-immigration “flyer campaign” in early 2007, the group quickly became the most notorious neo-Nazi group in Canada following their first White Pride March that took place in downtown Calgary in August of that year. Using White Pride CDs to recruit youth and becoming more visible through their public marches, more than 40 Aryan Guard supporters turned up again with flags in downtown Calgary proclaiming “White Pride Worldwide.” Finally, on 21st March 2009, the group held its last publicly recorded rally in Calgary, at which 60 Aryan Guard members violently confronted a group of 400 counter protestors. After a pipe bomb was planted outside the home of a rival gang member, an arrest warrant for Kyle McKee was issued and he was later deemed guilty of the possession of bomb marking materials (though not of planting the bomb itself). After this accusation and subsequent legal action, the group later renamed itself ‘Blood and Honour’ before ultimate proscription in June 2019.

Neo-Nazism:
“We are Guardians of the White Aryan Race, and as guardians we focus our lives and efforts towards fighting for the freedoms, future and survival of our children and beautiful people.”

-A excerpt from Aryan Guard Canada’s ‘Mission Statement’ Page.

Anti-Semitism:
“Kill Jews.”

-Words tattooed on the shins of Aryan Guard Canada’s leader, Kyle McKee.

White Supremacism:
“Our agenda is simple - the 14 Words: We must secure the existence of our people and a future for White children.”

-A excerpt from Aryan Guard Canada’s ‘Mission Statement’ Page, which quotes a phrase that is popular among white supremacists globally.

Founded in the US among white supremacists in 1973 by Ben Klassen, the Canadian branch of the Church of the Creator has seen a fusion with the white power music scene in the country. Formed by the founder of the white supremacist band, RaHoWa, George Burdi became the leader of the Canadian chapter, and he in turn pushed the white power scene across the country as a critique of Christianity. Moreover, in the early 1990’s Burdi organized Church of the Creator paramilitary training with a former member of the Canadian Forces Airborne Regiment. In 1993 six homes belonging to members of the Church of the Creator were raided, guns seized and three members of the group were arrested. Such violent potential was tipped in the same year at the same time three Church of the Creator members violently kidnapped a young activist from rival Canadian neo-Nazi group, Heritage Front on suspicion of stealing the group’s computer containing lists of activists and names of other neo-Nazis in the Canadian military. Arrested in 1997 for non-payment of taxes, Burdi exited the movement. Today, the Creativity Movement still exists in Canada but on a smaller scale, where its Toronto chapter features links to a number of international radical right extremist groups, including the British National Party (BNP), and American Creativity groups.

Neo-Nazism:
“...might was right when German troops, Poured down through Paris way, It’s the gospel of the ancient world. And the logic of today:”

-Lyrics from RaHoWA song, named ‘Might is Right’.

Neo-Paganism:
“I pluck the beard of your Christian “god”, And hack open his worm-eaten skull...”

-Lyrics from RaHoWA song, named ‘God is Dead’.

White Supremacism:
“Our race is our religion, it’s our reason and our creed; No cowards linger in our ranks, no weaklings make us bleed.”

-Lyrics from RaHoWA song, named ‘Red HoWa’.

Neo-Nazism:
“...might was right when German troops, Poured down through Paris way, It’s the gospel of the ancient world. And the logic of today:”

-Lyrics from RaHoWA song, named ‘Might is Right’.

Neo-Paganism:
“I pluck the beard of your Christian “god”, And hack open his worm-eaten skull...”

-Lyrics from RaHoWA song, named ‘God is Dead’.

White Supremacism:
“Our race is our religion, it’s our reason and our creed; No cowards linger in our ranks, no weaklings make us bleed.”

-Lyrics from RaHoWA song, named ‘Red HoWa’.
Founded in 1989 by four former members of the neo-Nazi Nationalist Party of Canada, Heritage Front was a key part of Canada’s white nationalist subcultural milieu until it was disbanded in 2005. Engaged in maintaining a telephone propaganda line, organising white power music concerts and other white supremacist cultural events, the group offered a platform for prominent radical right extremist ideologues and Holocaust Deniers in Canada, including Thomas Merasty and David Irving. More worrying for law enforcement and public officials, however, was the trail of violence left behind by the organisation, with riots and violent assaults frequently following its music events. In 1993, for example, a riot broke out on Parliament Hill in Ottawa after a concert by George Burdi’s rock band, RaHoWa (code for “Racial Holy War”). In the same year, a Heritage Front ‘hanger-on’, attacked a 45-year-old Tamil refugee in Toronto, which left the victim brain damaged and partially paralysed. After an attack on an Anti-Racist Action headquarters in 1993 and the ensuing legal action, the group’s founding leader was forced to step down and subsequently entered into abeyance after the largely unsuccessful leadership of fellow neo-Nazi, Marc Lemire.47

Neo-Nazism: “I remember as a child, my one brother David showing me books on the topic of the Third Reich. I saw a strong, loyal and faithful country, built with strong, loyal and faithful families.”

“A excerpt from Heritage Front’s December 1997 Newsletter.48

Anti-Semitism: “We do not consider Jewish people to be Euro-Canadians, because they are not descended from Europe”

“An excerpt from Heritage Front website ‘HOME’ page.”

White Supremacism: “No longer will we be silent as the Canadian government treats Whites as second class citizens. The Heritage Front opposes anti-White Employment ‘Equity’”

“An excerpt from Heritage Front website ‘HOMEPAGE’.”

Blood and Honour

Formed in late 2009 after the collapse of Aryan Guard, Blood and Honour (B&H) emerged onto Canada’s radical right extremist scene around the time of the imprisonment of its leader, Kyle McKee. Performing several rallies and white power rock concerts throughout the late 2000s and early 2010s, it was famed for its violent activities while taking to the streets, putting up pro-white flyers, fighting with antifascists, and attempting to intimidate minorities. Indeed, police referred to McKee as a “micro-führer” with the group organising an annual white pride march in its native Calgary. Despite a relatively large attendance at such marches (100 in 2011), its activities started to tail off in the mid-2010s as a result of increasing arrests and police clampdowns on the movement. The final major setback for the group was the Canadian Government’s decision to place the group on a list of proscribed terrorist entities in June 2019, the government citing the group’s involvement in domestic violent actions and murders (as well as other such acts in countries outside of North America) as key determinants for the decision. Disrupting the effectiveness of such bands, several agencies pointed out at the time that the group still had an online presence with its own website and profile on VK, a Russian social media site popular among radical right extremism. In addition, practitioners in Canada have noted a displacement effect, post-ban, which has seen a shift of activists from B&H to various neo-völkisch and racist skinhead groups, including Azastra Folk Assembly and Canadian Hammerskins (who have a page on the international Hammerskins website).50

Neo-Nazism: “NSDAP [Swastika] & ‘Waffen SS”

“Words tattooed on the chest of Aryan Guard Canada’s leader, Kyle McKee.57

Ultra-Nationalism: “It is also the goal of the Blood and Honour movement to unite those people who have a legitimate interest in securing the future of our European cultural identity under one common banner.”

“An excerpt of statement on Blood & Honour Canada’s HOMEPAGE.”
Non-Violent & Extreme Radical Right Groups in Canada

**PEGIDA CANADA**
- **Leader:** Jean-François Asgard
- **Membership:** 30-40 (est.)
- **Ideology:** Anti-Muslim Populism, Eurabia Conspiracy Theories, Civilisationism

**SOLDIERS OF ODIN (SOD) CANADA**
- **Leader:** Joel Angott
- **Membership:** Unknown
- **Ideology:** Anti-Muslim Populism, Ethno-Nationalism, Chauvinism

**STORM ALLIANCE**
- **Leader:** David Tregget
- **Membership:** 60-70
- **Ideology:** Ultra-Nationalism, Identitarianism, Anti-Establishment Sentiments

**NORTHERN GUARD**
- **Leader:** Nick Gallant
- **Membership:** Unknown
- **Ideology:** Ultra-Nationalism, Vigilantism, Anti-Establishment

**LA MEUTE III%ERS QUÉBEC IDENTITAIRE**
- **Leaders:** Patrick Beaudry, Eric Corvus, Sylvain Maikan
- **Membership:** 150-200 (est.)
- **Ideology:** Anti-Muslim Populism, Militarism, Pro-Gun Sentiments

**11%ERS**
- **Leader:** Kazimir Nowlin
- **Membership:** Unknown
- **Ideology:** Anti-Muslim Populism, Ethno-Nationalism, Anti-Establishment Sentiments

**QUÉBEC IDENTITAIRE**
- **Leader:** Unknown
- **Membership:** Less than 5-10 (est.)
- **Ideology:** Ethno-Nationalism, Anti-Muslim Populism, Identitarianism
FORMED IN JANUARY 2015 “by citizens concerned about the increasing Islamization of our western cultures” after the Charlie Hebdo attacks, PEGIDA Canada (based on the same German acronym standing for “Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West”) claims to have five chapters in Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and New Brunswick. Whilst early national demonstrations were largely unsuccessful, the persistence, frequency and online followership of the protest group has been sizeable when compared with a number of other international chapters of the protest organisation which entered into abeyance shortly after formation. Organising monthly protests in Ontario on a similar basis to its root organisation in Dresden, Germany, small groups of activists have been the norm, with demonstrators largely outnumbered by a large anti-fascist presence. More of concern has been calls for action by the group in November 2015 for its activists to target mosques. This led to the German chapter of PEGIDA disassociating itself from the Canadian chapter, despite also drawing on themes of the incompatibility of Islam with Western values. The group has a sizeable online presence, which as of January 2020, stands at over 38,400 Facebook, 1,293 Twitter, 290 Gab, and 38 VK follows.

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

Anti-Muslim Populism:
“PEGIDA is AGAINST allowing parallel societies in our midst, such as Sharia law, Sharia police, etc.”

-A excerpt from PEGIDA Canada’s founding principles.

Eurabia Conspiracy Theories:
“Islam [is] becoming entrenched in our legal system.”

A post by PEGIDA Canada on the alt-tech platform Gab.

Civilisationism:
“PEGIDA is FOR preserving and protecting our Christian-Judeo based culture.”

-A excerpt from PEGIDA Canada’s founding principles page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOLDIERS OF ODIN (S0O) CANADA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEADER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MEMBERSHIP</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IDEOLOGY</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Narrative Examples**

- **Anti-Muslim Populism:**
  
  "We don't care if Muslims are here. That's not what we're saying. We're not saying stop immigration. That's nothing to do with what we're saying at all. But Shariah law is scary stuff."
  
  - An excerpt from speech by President of Hamilton's Soldiers of Odin, Russ Bingham, branch on 28th March 2017.

- **Ethno-Nationalism:**
  
  "Between the [sic] allowing of illegal aliens into this country and giving them the ability to vote and drive, [...] and demonizing anything that has to do with European culture [...] we as Soldiers of Odin realize that it is time to take back our streets, provinces, and country."
  
  - An excerpt from Soldiers of Odin Canada Bylaws.

- **Vigilantism:**
  
  "We are the eyes and ears of the police in places that the police cannot always be."
  
  - An excerpt from Soldiers of Odin Canada Bylaws.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STORM ALLIANCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEADER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MEMBERSHIP</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDEOLOGY</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Narrative Examples**

- **Ultra-Nationalism:**
  
  "Our sole mission is to preserve the rights of the people and Canadian culture."
  
  - An excerpt from Storm Alliance's Facebook Group.

- **Identitarianism:**
  
  "We aim to protect and save the Canadian values that have helped shape Canada into the wonderful Country it is today."
  
  - An excerpt from Storm Alliance's Facebook Group.

- **Anti-Establishment Sentiments:**
  
  "We seek to help fellow Canadians in need [...] with a no one left behind' motto."
  
  - An excerpt from Storm Alliance's Facebook Group.

---

**Notes:**


68 Bridge Team Initiative, 'Factsheet: Soldiers of Odin', Bridge Website, 9 March 2019. online at: https://bridgeproject.ca/research/featsheet-soldiers-of-odin/.

69 Bridge Team Initiative, 'Soldiers of Odin, Facebook page includes posts such as there it “No Maple Leaf in Islam” and “we will not change our laws, traditions and culture to suit Islam.”', online at: https://bridgeproject.ca/research/featsheet-soldiers-of-odin/.

70 Ibid.


72 Ibid.

73 Engaged in direct-action stunts reminiscent of identitarian movements in Europe, in May 2018 Storm Alliance organised a rally at Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle border to highlight movements of asylum seekers at the US-Canadian border. Moreover, the group has been known to take its direct action stunts directly to policymakers. For example, one pair of Storm Alliance activists were recently arrested for calling for the Canadian Prime Minister to be "shot in the forehead." Moreover, another set of activists attended a town hall event put on by the Prime Minister in Quebec City, with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police standing between Storm Alliance activists and the main audience. Whilst small (with only 1,439 Facebook followers), the violent nature of their rhetoric and direct action modus operandi should concern policymakers.


78 Ibid.

79 Storm Alliance, 'About this Group', Public Facebook Group, online at: https://www.facebook.com/groups/327944747605034/about/#_=_.
Formed in May 2017, the Northern Guard is a male-only extremist group that claims to “defend [Canada] against its internal enemies.” Primarily active in Eastern Canada, the group was a direct result of a split within the Quebec chapter of the 3%ers and its subsequent collapse. In 2018, it merged with the National Guard to form the Northern Guard. The group has largely operated covertly, using messaging apps to propagate anti-Muslim and white supremacist ideologies.

In a comment posted on the Northern Guard’s closed Facebook group page, a member stated: “I’d be running them n******s the f**k over if I was there.” This comment exemplifies the group’s extreme racism and anti-Muslim sentiment.

**Anti-Muslim Populism:** “Islam is misogynist, homophobic, racist, and anti-Semitism and violent.”

**Identitarianism:** “The Pack is made up of patriots who want to keep the gains that have made their country and their nation a reference on a global level, such as their culture (Canadian and Quebeccois) and their way of life […] La Meute does not believe in Canadian multiculturalism.”

**Anti-Establishment Sentiments:** “The pack is a citizen group that campaigns for the defense of freedom of expression and democracy.”

**NARRATIVE EXAMPLES**

- An excerpt from ‘About Us’ Page of Northern Guard’s (now defunct) website.
- An excerpt from founding statement posted on La Meute’s website homepage.

**DESCRIPTION**

- Founded in September 2015 in French-speaking Quebec, La Meute (or “the Wolf Pack” in French) was started by two ex-members of the Canadian Armed Forces, Eric Vienne and Patrick Beaudry, and adheres to fairly strict anti-Islam and anti-immigrant views.
- Engaged in a number of protests and political actions against Quebec’s Liberal Party, La Meute’s main form of activism has been political campaigning, with specific campaigns against hate speech (i.e. Quebec’s Bill 59) and for a bill banning face coverings (i.e. Quebec’s Bill 62).
- Forming just after the election of Justin Trudeau, it has included recruitment, its online following blossomed. For example, La Meute purportedly boasting a membership of more than 40,000 people for its own secret Facebook group. Investigative reports have suggested, however, that this is overinflated.
- Moreover, it is the content of posts on such groups that has gained most attention, with numerous references to the Muslim people of Montreal as a “paedophile” and “rapist.”
- In April 2020, La Meute was suspended from Facebook for their continued incitement of violence and the promotion of hate. The group has since rebranded as Le Riche.
Formed in March 2016 and named after the popular American myth that three percent of the population fought the War of Independence, the III%ers are perhaps the most concerning group on the Canadian radical right extremist scene at the present moment. Heavily armed and ready for "war" on Canadian soil, III%ers have attended a number of radical right rallies and engaged in their own military-style trainings, and acted as a "security detail" for a controversial anti-Islam speaker, with the group seeing themselves as the "guardians of Canada." Largely concentrated in Alberta, Ontario and Quebec, investigations a year after the formation of the group found a rapid escalation from virulently anti-Islam posturing online to the offline monitoring of mosques, claims of buying land (reminiscent of other radical right extremist groups founding their own ethno-states), and plans for creating smoke and flash bombs. While the group's voluntarism and attendance at rallies is reminiscent of other Canadian radical right extremist groups, so-called 'threepers' are unique to Canada in being a "prepper" militia-style survivalist group, whose standing orders deliberately incite violence. The Three Percenters are the Canadian chapter of a similar but more established US-based anti-government militia group who attended the 2017 'Unite the Right' Rally.
### Proud Boys (Canada)

**Leader:** Unknown  
**Membership:** Under 30.

**Ideology:**  
- Ethno-Nationalism  
- Chauvinism  
- Pro-Gun Sentiments

**Narrative Examples**  
- **Ethno-Nationalism:** “We are western chauvinists who refuse to apologize for creating the modern world.”  
- **Chauvinism:** “We venerate the housewife.”
- **Pro-Gun Sentiments:** “We love our guns.”

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**Description**  
Founded in 2017 as a Canadian chapter of the US-based group, Proud Boys Canada has been a marginal presence in the offline space since its founding when compared to its US-based parent group. Its main manifestation was to disrupt an indigenous Mi’kmaq Canada Day gathering in Halifax, Nova Scotia in July 2017, with five men wearing black polo shirts with yellow piping claiming to be members of a “Western chauvinist” organisation. After the event, it was found that the five were Canadian Forces members and were subsequently removed from duties and training. Four of the five resumed their duties under probation at the end of August 2017. The fifth member left the Forces of his own accord. No charges were laid against them. This development (again) shows a worrying overlap between radical right extremists and the military in Canada. It should also be noted that Proud Boys founder Gavin McInnes is of Canadian extraction.

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### ID Canada

**Leader:** Unknown  
**Membership:**  
1,809  
(1,400 Twitter, 261 Gab, 148 YouTube)

**Ideology:**  
- Identitarianism  
- Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory  
- Ethno-Nationalism

**Narrative Examples**  
- **Identitarianism:** “Identitarians discern themselves in terms of ancestors, people and nation.”
- **Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory:** “We can see the demographic replacement of Old Stock Canadians happening before our eyes. We’re one of the last generations of men and women who can change the tides, and that’s exactly what we intend on doing.”
- **Ethno-Nationalism:** “Our campaigns and energy aspire to nothing less than a rediscovery and renewed love for our nation and its founding people.”

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**Description**  
Starting in 2014 under the name of Generation ID Canada, ID Canada set itself up in 2018 “as a response to Canada’s decaying identity, increased third-world immigration and the prevalence of anti-European sentiments in this country.” Mainly engaged in publicity stunts and ‘postering’ campaigns, the group has attracted international notoriety when donations by the Christchurch attacker were linked to European chapters of the group. Claiming to have over nine chapters in several Canadian provinces, it is reckoned that the group only has a handful of members in one or two major centres across Canada. Indeed, their most prominent actions have been a publicity stunt in Toronto in January 2019 involving the unfurling of a banner reading “Defend Your Freedoms, Defend Your Identity”, and campaigning for white nationalist Faith Goldy’s 2018 Mayoral bid.

### Footnotes

116 Ibid.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid.
119 These figures were collected from ID Canada social media accounts on 10 January 2020.
123 ID Canada, ‘ID Canada: Defend Your Freedoms, Defend Your Identity’, YouTube, 27 March 2019, online at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sn5jphM9so](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sn5jphM9so).
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
Founded in 1977 by Don Andrews (born Vilim Zlomislic), the Nationalist Party of Canada aims to promote the “maintenance of European Heritage and Culture in Canada.” From 1977 to 1985, the party published the Nationalist Report, which ceased publication when Andrews and Party Secretary Robert Smith were convicted under the Criminal Code for promoting hatred. In 1986, Andrews and Smith endorsed Holocaust denier Jim Keegstra’s bid to lead the Social Credit Party of Canada. Key campaigns over the years have included a European Heritage Week and the replacement of worn-out Canadian flags as well as contesting elections in Toronto. On the latter count, the party has had a relatively small impact, securing less than one percent of votes cast. 2006 was the last year the party ran for elected office.

**Ethno-Nationalism:**
“As for God, if one exists, then God blessed the white race with its racists, who are for the poor and against anti-white self-loathers.”

-An excerpt from Don Andrews article on Nationalist Party homepage.

**Anti-Semitism:**
“Even the Europeanized Jews are now in charge of the mild racists (cowardly big-ots), if you judge those President Trump and cuckservative sites like Briebart [sic].”

-An excerpt from Don Andrews article on Nationalist Party homepage.

**Anti-Multicultural Sentiment:**
“That's our new multicult [sic] Toronto, with criminals, taking over a major Canadian city, like cities in the US now in their grip.”

-An excerpt from Don Andrews article on Nationalist Party homepage.
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR FREE EXPRESSION

LEADER
Paul Fromm

MEMBERSHIP
Unknown

IDEOLOGY
White Supremacism
Anti-Multiculturalism
Great Replacement
Conspiracy Theory

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

Ant-Multiculturalism:
“Multiculturalism – A Case of Multiple Personality Disorder.”

Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory:
“Sci, You Think Norway is Part of the ‘Free World’: Moslems Invade but ‘Security’ Police Arrest & Deport White Nationalist Author.”

YELLOW VESTS CANADA

LEADERS
Tyler Malenfant
Charles Russell
Kelly Kamaledine

MEMBERSHIP
102,245
(102,390 Facebook, 768 Twitter, 87 Instagram)

IDEOLOGY
Ethno-Nationalism:
“Calling his own people white nationalist as if it’s Sin is saying he is a superficial racist.”

Islamophobia:
“We are Canadian Patriots who refuse to allow this country to walk down the path of Tyranny.”

IDENTITARIANISM:
“our country’s politicians […] have the audacity to sell out OUR country’s sovereignty over to the Globalist UN and their Tyrannical policies.”

DESCRIPTION

Started in 1981, the Canadian Association for Free Expression (CAFE) styles itself as being “dedicated to Free Speech, Immigration Reform, and Restoring Political Sanity.”135 Started in Ontario, CAFE publishes its Free Speech Monitor10 times a year. Mainly a defence vehicle for characters on the Canadian and international extremist radical right, CAFE have previously campaigned for the release of Holocaust deniers Ernst Zundel and David Irving, and private citizen Brad Love who faced charges for racially-motivated criminal harassment.136 Moreover, on 23 November 2007, Ontario Superior Court Justice Monique Mètivier ruled that Fromm and CAFE had libelled a human rights lawyer, Richard Warman, and ordered them to pay $30,000 in damages and to post full retractions within ten days on all the websites on which the defamatory comments were posted. Judging from recent postings on CAFE’s website, there are worrying overlaps between the group’s narratives and that of the radical right, with articles warning of Muslim invasion and cultural Marxism among other familiar targets.137


137 ‘Multiculturalism – A Case of Multiple Personality Disorder.’ - An excerpt from an article on CAFE’s website complaining at the removal of a poster – reading read “Diversity = White Genocide.”

YELLOW VESTS CANADA

DESCRIPTION

Ernst Zundel sentenced to 5 years for Holocaust denial138


MEMBERSHIP
110,245
(102,390 Facebook, 768 Twitter, 87 Instagram)

IDEOLOGY
Ethno-Nationalism:
“Calling his own people white nationalist as if it’s Sin is saying he is a superficial racist.”

Islamophobia:
“We are Canadian Patriots who refuse to allow this country to walk down the path of Tyranny.”

IDENTITARIANISM:
“our country’s politicians […] have the audacity to sell out OUR country’s sovereignty over to the Globalist UN and their Tyrannical policies.”

NARRATIVE EXAMPLES

- Anti-Muslim Populism: “So, now protesting the genocide of our own people is seen by the thought police as ‘hate.’”

- Anti-Multiculturalism: “Multiculturalism – A Case of Multiple Personality Disorder.”

- Great Replacement Conspiracy Theory: “Sci, You Think Norway is Part of the ‘Free World’: Moslems Invade but ‘Security’ Police Arrest & Deport White Nationalist Author.”

- Ethno-Nationalism: “Calling his own people white nationalist as if it’s Sin is saying he is a superficial racist.”

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- Identitarianism: “our country’s politicians […] have the audacity to sell out OUR country’s sovereignty over to the Globalist UN and their Tyrannical policies.”

- Anti-Muslim Populism: “So, now protesting the genocide of our own people is seen by the thought police as ‘hate.’”

138 This is based on figures collected from Yellow Vests Canada Social Media accounts in January 2020.

139 “So, You Think Norway is Part of the ‘Free World’: Moslems Invade but ‘Security’ Police Arrest & Deport White Nationalist Author.” - An excerpt from an article on CAFE’s website complaining at the removal of a poster – reading read “Diversity = White Genocide.”
With a loose and organisationally unstable movement of protest movements, groupuscules and influencers, radical right activism in Canada paints a worrying picture in terms of violent extremism perpetrated by the groups themselves and solo actors. While they disseminate violent rhetoric on core ethno-nationalist, traditionalist and anti-Semitic concerns, which is, similar to comparable groups across the globe, it is interesting to note more extreme forms of anti-Muslim and anti-government sentiment present as well. Added to this, we have identitarian groups and their conspiratorial narratives around a great replacement joining the fold over the past five years.

Drawing upon the above extremist actor profiles in Canada, these narratives can perhaps be helpfully condensed into the following country-specific positions:

1. **Ethno-Nationalist Narrative:** Majority ethnic identities are under threat from Asian migration and indigenous Canadians, elites are complicit in a ‘white genocide’, and all this will invariably end in a ‘race war’ or a ‘great replacement’ of Canadian-born whites.

2. **Anti-Semitic Narrative:** Native citizens feel powerless amidst the forces of globalisation, Canadian Jews are part of a globalist corporate media and banking elite, and we must get rid of this non-European people group.

3. **Anti-Muslim Populist Narrative:** National & cultural identities are under threat because of Islam, cultural Marxist elites have been complicit, and all this will end in ‘clash of civilisations’.

4. **Anti-Government Narrative:** Canada’s federal government has too much power, especially in Ottawa. Since their role is to ostensibly to keep ‘the people’ down, we need to rise up against them and impose a new “strong state.”

5. **‘Traditional Values’ Narrative:** Canadian society is under threat of moral collapse due to a movement away from heteronormative familial and sexual relations, we need to restore or preserve values and practices that are part of the idealized historical heritage of the nation or ethnic community.

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148 This was noted by one practitioner (Galloway, February 2020) engaged with the Canadian radical right scene as a strong emerging narrative, with Canada’s current Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, a particular target of some groups’ grievances.

PART TWO
RADICAL RIGHT
COUNTER-NARRATIVES
AND COUNTER-NARRATIVE CAMPAIGNS IN CANADA

TAPPING INTO ANTI-MUSLIM POPULIST,
ETHNO-NATIONALIST, ANTI-SEMITIC,
TRADITIONALIST AND
ANTI-GOVERNMENT NARRATIVES

If attempting to construct counter-narratives in order to disrupt, delegitimise and/or devalue the appeal of the above narratives, it is useful to identify what we can call 'entry points' within the structure of extremist narratives in order to unpick their veracity, authenticity and believability. Such radical right counter-narratives can be done by breaking down such narratives into their orientation (i.e. who, what, where, how & when), action (i.e. evaluation of orientation) and resolution (i.e. prescribed course of action). Whilst it might be unprofitable to contest the factual veracity of the orientation statement (see p. 6 of the RRCN Expert Workshop Report), both the action and solution sections of the narrative might be more profitably contested. The rationale behind such a technique is that radical right extremists tend to do most harm in how they interpret and offer solutions to what is happening ‘out there’, and how they frame reality. Opinions are also a softer target than facts, and this maps onto how extremists use grievances to add their own ideological ‘twist’ on real world events. Therefore disputing the action and resolution statement are more profitable as it means practitioners are disputing the ideological interpretation of the truth (or factual reality) presented, rather than the reality itself. Below are some key counter-narratives that could be deployed by Canadian practitioners to respond to these messages, and include the following:

1. Ethno-Nationalist Counter-Narrative: Highlight the positive contribution of Asian migrants and Aboriginals to the country’s livelihood and past, acknowledge prejudice but fostering more open viewpoints and a less formulaic or rigid conception of migrants.

2. Anti-semitic Counter-Narrative: Scapegoating others for our problems is a very easy thing to do. If Western governments were run by an elite faction of Jewish people, why are there not more Jewish ministers in Government? Nothing in the above argument logically leads to the conclusion that non-Jewish people are being side-lined. It is more likely for the Jewish population to be marginalised than vice versa.

3. Anti-Muslim Populist Counter-Narrative: Highlight the positive contribution of Muslims to the country’s livelihood, acknowledge prejudice but fostering more open viewpoints and a less formulaic or rigid conception of Islam.

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150 This is a simplified version of a similar schema, laid out in: Labov, W., & Waletzky, J., ‘Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience’, Journal of Narrative & Lifes History, 7(1–4), 1997, 5–38, online at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/jnlh.7.02nar
4. Anti-Government Counter-Narrative: Emphasise democratic legitimacy of domestic institutions. Talk of efficiencies and benefits of the current representative system as well as risks of extra-parliamentary activism.

5. ‘Traditional Values’ Counter-Narrative: Stress positive contribution by feminists and LGBT movement to the life of the nation (e.g. greater equality, tolerance and inclusion of diverse viewpoints). Reduce threat perception by stressing allegiances in thought and not division.

Turning from radical right narratives and counter-narratives toward counter-narrative campaigns, we can see that there have been several attempts. These are usually community-based actions with some pockets of best practice emerging in the areas of law enforcement and at government level. Below is a snapshot of some notable recent counter-narrative initiatives which (according to one recent report) necessarily target radical right extremists and potential recruits “where they live.”

A second project of note was Extreme Dialogue, a counter-narrative project launched in 2015 by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Combining multimedia educational resources with short documentary films, the aim of the project was to develop students’ critical thinking skills and resilience to radicalisation, explore shared values, and challenge various types of extremist propaganda and ideologies. The films told the personal stories of people who have been affected by violent extremism and include testimony from former members of extreme groups as well as survivors. Extreme Dialogue began in Canada in 2015, and was also launched in the UK, Germany, and Hungary in 2016 with new films and resources featuring the stories of people from those three countries.

One independent assessment of the initiative showed (whilst extensive press and online dissemination saw successful exposure and coverage) the project was less successful in converting this exposure and coverage into continuing levels of engagement beyond the one-week launch period. Indeed, once paid-for advertising had worn off, the impact was not sustained, as unpaid and organic reach and engagement dropped off. In fairness, however, some of this misfortune was attributable to the platforms selected for the launch of the project videos themselves. As the same report argues, some platforms prohibited targeting advertisements at under 18s. Such an obstacle emphasises the need for those conducting these campaigns to take advantage of technical advertising support offered by technology platforms as well as the need for informal actors to be involved in the organisation of counter-narrative initiatives.

A third, more targeted initiative launched in the same year in the UK, USA, and Canada was the Institute for Strategic Dialogue’s (ISD) One-to-One programme. A small-scale pilot programme in collaboration with Curtin University, the project used ten former extremists (including five former far-right extremists from North America) to send a direct message to try and start a dialogue and sow initial seeds of doubt around the validity of extremist groups and narratives with 160 individuals considered at risk or already expressing sympathies for extremist organisations. Besides using former extremists, one of the innovations of the project was using highly tailored matching of intervention providers with recipients, for example by focusing on the age, ideology and gender of recipients. A prototype of a larger Counter Conversations project by ISD, it was also highly successful in engaging individuals compared with standard email marketing campaigns. (For example, over 60% of messages lead to contact and discussion of their extremist beliefs.) Again, the main barriers to successful contact and intervention were technological difficulties, with 42 of the 154 profiles identified taken down by Facebook through the course of the project. This again stresses the need for counter-narrative campaign providers to work closely with online platforms when designing and executing their interventions (in order to avoid unintended consequences and counter-productive outcomes).

FIGURE 3 Age Range of Twitter Users from the Extreme Dialogue Dashboard

FIGURE 4 Types of Engagement

FIGURE 5 Facebook Profiles Removed
The fourth reported counter-narrative interventions that we can report on in Canada was a community-based initiative started by students at Simon Fraser University, called Voices Against Extremism (VAE). Launched in September 2016 and backed by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the VAE counter-narrative campaign was aimed at challenging extremist beliefs while simultaneously promoting awareness and education about the issues of extremism impact the community. To this end, the students responsible for VAE decided to build their counter-narrative campaign around the public at an art gallery event. Moreover, VAE students engaged with nearly over 160,000 individuals exposed to the campaign’s content. Furthermore, VAE students engaged with a little attempt to measure how the concepts of humanization, education, respect, and empowerment might combine views for the short and long form versions of the video and its impact, the overall reach of the video’s core message.

Despite this reach, a number of limitations can be noted about this intervention, which targeted both radical right and extreme Islamist ideologies. Firstly, and due to the condensed period of implementation, little is known about the empirical impact of the campaign upon those who engaged with the videos and the extent to which it changed recipients’ attitudes or behaviours. Secondly, it should be noted that reports at the time of the initiative suggested that a majority of individuals involved in offline engagements for the project tended to be people already knowledgeable about the problematic nature of extremism and to some degree active in stopping it. For example, a 2017 article by Logan Macnair and Richard Frank found that attendees at the art gallery event were from law-enforcement, academic, and community-leader backgrounds. Finally, and relatively, there was also little attempt to measure how the concepts of humanization, education, respect, and empowerment might manifest in those encountering campaign materials, perhaps pointing to a lost measurement opportunity on the part of its creators. All this being said, however, the group of students did remarkably well to reach a wider audience given the time and budget restraints imposed on them, using everyday experiences in an effective way to authentically express how extremism affects individuals, professionals, and wider communities.

Another student-led counter-narrative initiative used to combat radical right extremism in the wake of a terror attack in Edmonton, Alberta in 2017 was provided by students at the University of Alberta. Targeting those vulnerable to far-right propaganda, the six-minute video (entered into Facebook’s 2017 ‘Peer-to-Peer: Global Digital Challenge’ project) takes the viewer through the process of an individual being groomed into radicalisation as a result of the attack and their realisation of the simplistic and binary narratives of radical right extremists. It then leaves the viewer with the question of “Who do you want to be?”. Using such a question allowed the viewer to make up their mind after sowing a seed of doubt. Providing an example of an alternative narrative, it shows the positive response of minority community members, policy officials, as well as the broader Canadian public by focusing on the development of critical thinking and information literacy skills, and encouraging dialogue about how hatred towards minorities is develop in everyday life through social media. One project that has gained particular traction is the ‘Landscape of Hate’ Project that aims to promote a dialogue about how to deal with anti-minority hatred through panel discussions, debates, art expositions and performances. Since its launch in 2017, the project has put on six events globally, with a wide mixture of artists, researchers, and former extremists taking part. While not specifically focused towards radical right groups themselves, the ‘Landscape of Hate’ Project does spell out the creative potential of using multiple messengers when presenting ethno-nationalist counter-narratives, presenting a plurality of viewpoints and therefore breaking down simplistic binary narratives of ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ that radical right extremists frequently perpetuate.

Another community-based project that has tried to take a more creative arts-based and research-led approach to counter-narratives is Concordia University’s SOMEONE (SoCial Media EducatiON Every day) initiative. Launched in April 2016, it is a web-based portal of multimedia materials aimed at preventing hate speech against ethnic minorities and building resilience towards extremism. The materials are targeted at youth, school and community members, policy officials, as well as the broader Canadian public by focusing on the development of critical thinking and information literacy skills, and encouraging dialogue about how hatred towards minorities is developed in everyday life through social media. One project that has gained particular traction is the ‘Landscape of Hate’ Project that aims to promote a dialogue about how to deal with anti-minority hatred through panel discussions, debates, art expositions and performances. Since its launch in 2017, the project has put on six events globally, with a wide mixture of artists, researchers, and former extremists taking part. While not specifically focused towards radical right groups themselves, the ‘Landscape of Hate’ Project does spell out the creative potential of using multiple messengers when presenting ethno-nationalist counter-narratives, presenting a plurality of viewpoints and therefore breaking down simplistic binary narratives of ‘Us’ versus ‘Them’ that radical right extremists frequently perpetuate.
One final, recent initiative that focuses more on the personal life histories of former radical right extremists in the Canadian context is ‘Ctrl+Alt+Del-Hate’ (2019). Designed as an e-magazine and part of the www.lightuponlight online ecosystem, the magazines are designed to “provide positive alternatives for those susceptible to or engaged in radical movements.” Including testimonies of former violent extremists, survivors of extremist violence and researchers, the magazine also attempts to “prevent interest in extremist ideologies and movements and to provide positive alternatives for those susceptible to or engaged in radical movements.” In its first issue of November 2019, for example, the magazine included features with Americans, Canadian and UK based former radical right extremists (including Brad Galloway of Volksfront and Jeff Schoep of the National Socialist Movement) as well as a hate crime survivor, Hope Hyder. A largely textual outfit, it will be interesting to see how far the reach of the campaign stretches, considering the viral nature of video-based content on the internet.

In response to such volatile circumstances, practitioners would be advised to find ways to interdict spaces and places populated by radical right activists in Canada (both in the online and offline space) using targeted counter-narrative campaigns focusing on the ideological specificities of groups themselves but also the more eclectic grievances voiced by individuals in the online space. Here, it is important to note that several seminal programmes have already attempted to distribute radical right extremist counter-narratives in the Canadian context already. By building Canada-specific counter-narratives into and on top of the Extreme Dialogue, One-to-One and Ctrl+Alt+Del-Hate initiatives, it might be possible to disrupt and de-legitimise anti-Muslim populist, ethno-nationalist, anti-government and strong-state narratives that permeate online echo chambers and filter bubbles. Moreover, by rolling such programmes out at scale in the offline space, it might be possible to inure civil society against the harms of radical right extremism (especially in the diverse contexts of Toronto and Vancouver).

Going forward, therefore, such campaigns need to learn the technological barriers presented by online interventions. Moreover, and when it comes to counter-narratives themselves, it will involve:

1. Highlighting the positive contribution of Asian migrants and Aboriginals to a country’s livelihood and to the Canadian nation in the past.
2. Eliminating scapegoating rhetoric in the public sphere, especially when it comes to Jewish and Muslim minorities targeted in radical right extremist campaigns.
3. Emphasising the democratic legitimacy of domestic institutions, and pointing out opportunities for aggrieved citizens to get re-involved in deliberative processes.
4. Stressing the positive contribution by feminists and LGBT movement to the life of the nation, and how such communities have increased the pool of rights for all.

This report has tracked Canadian radical right extremist narratives and counter-narratives at a time of increased volatility within the radical right extremist milieu in Canada. Moving from street-based activism into more direct action, vigilant forms of political violence, this report has uncovered the scope of violent lone actor potential within an aging movement that has recently transformed from blood-and-soil racism and into a more coded form of cultural nationalism. It has also highlighted several groups (e.g. Three Percenters, Atalante & Northern Guard) whose narratives paint a concerning threat picture both in terms of potential and actual radicalisation of citizens. Added on to this, we have found specific anti-Muslim populist, ethno-nationalist, anti-government and strong-state narratives that have a deep resonance in the Canadian context, suggesting a wider pool of support than the radical right extremist groups themselves.

By building on the good practice shown before and recognising the emerging lone-actor threat, Canada will stand a better chance of building resilience and sensitising itself to solo actors that might be at risk of engaging of autodidactic radicalisation in the online space.

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

At the time of writing in early 2020, anti-pipeline protests were seen as key flashpoint for far-right activism, particularly through the mobilisation of anti-minority and anti-government grievances. See Gormley, S., ‘Could Canada soon face a vigilante problem?’, Maclean’s, 25 February 2020, online at: macleans.ca/opinion/could-canada-soon-face-a-vigilante-problem/.

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175 Ibid.
176 Ibid.
177 Ibid.
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