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The Howl of the Lone Wolf

Understanding the Justifications and Targets of Lone Wolf Terrorism



LUNDS
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Master's Thesis SOCM04, Cultural Criminology, 30 credits

Spring 2023

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Abstract

Attacks of mass-harm perpetrated by lone actor terrorists, also known as lone wolves which they are called in this study, have been increasing in the last few decades and has become one of the main national security threats in Sweden. With the increase in attacks, so has the research on this type of terrorism, looking at ideological reasons, target selection and the radicalisation process as well as comparisons to group-based terrorism. There has also been research done on the narratives that these individuals use, both before their attack and after. This thesis aims to build on that knowledge by studying how lone wolves justify their violence and how they present their victims as legit targets. The theoretical framework is based on Lois Presser's underdog narrative, Philip Smith's apocalyptic narrative and Mary Douglas theory on boundaries. This is done by studying eight lone wolf terrorists that are representative of the ideologies they identify with and who have inspired others to commit acts of mass-harm. The analysis shows that the lone wolves use the underdog narrative to create meaning to their violence and that the apocalyptic narrative shows why violence is the only way. In combination with the boundaries that separate the victim, it also gives their targets an active role in the violence. It becomes an apocalyptic underdog story that aim for others to join the fight.

Key words: Lone Wolf, Manifesto, Narrative, Targets, Right-wing, Underdog, Ideology, Social System, Social Order, Crisis, Violence, Mass-harm, Replacement

Popular Science Summary

In this study I explored how right-wing terrorists use narratives to justify their crimes. The terrorists I have focused on are those that commit the act of mass-harm on their own, without connection to organisation or terrorist cells. I am looking at what narratives they are using to present their cause, how they justify their violence and how they are legitimising their victims as deserving of violence. I look at their written statements that they made before the violent act. These kinds of attacks have been increasing over the last two decades and are considered one of the bigger national security threats in Sweden. The lone wolves I have looked at committed their acts in the USA, Slovakia, Germany, and New Zealand. What this study shows is that the terrorists see themselves as the underdog because they are being oppressed by a threat that is trying to destroy their community. The threat is so severe and their enemy so evil that the only way to defend themselves is with violence. This is also a way for them to inspire others to commit their own acts of mass-harm and to join the fight against oppression.

Acknowledgement

THANK YOU to my family for being a constant support and for sharing the weight when I needed it. Thank you for suffering through my monologues and rants as I tried to figure out the problem and for helping me when I could not.

THANK YOU to my supervisor Erik for keeping me on track and always being there with endless ideas. I am beyond grateful for your energy, support, and feedback.

THANK YOU to my classmates for these past years, for interesting discussions and a wonderful time together.

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1. Introduction

A wolf's howl is a social rally call, a hail to hunt or a territorial expression. A wolf on its own cannot take down large prey or a threat so it calls for the pack. Wolves are pack animals because there is strength in numbers. The wolf could act alone but the rate of success will increase with more wolves acting together and so the lone wolf will howl. When a lone individual carries out an attack of mass harm on their own because of ideological or political reasons, without belonging to or receiving orders from an organisation or cell, they can be called a lone wolf (Hamm & Spaaij 2017 p 5). Hamm & Spaaij (2017) also defines the process of becoming a terrorist, which is usually referred to as the radicalisation process, where they embrace extreme views as well as perceive violence as a tool for political or religious purposes in a way that positions violence as the solution. It is usually when personal and political grievances or hardships are combined in a way that creates a crisis which starts the radicalisation process. The lone wolf then searches for someone to blame for these grievances, and they turn to ideologies that support violence to solve the crisis (Hamm & Spaaij 2017). Though the lone wolf chooses to act alone, the radicalisation process does not necessarily happen in a vacuum, and they can be inspired by other extremists or terrorist attacks.

Lone wolves are often seen as weak opportunists because they tend to lack the tactical and strategic means that an organisation or cell can provide. Their choice of targets is generally a combination of ideology and close to their daily routines in order to increase the chances of success (Becker 2014). The attacks are generally indiscriminate and most often directed towards civilians, which are referred to as soft targets, but hard targets, which are more protected, such as politicians or military, can also be attacked (Nilsson 2019). The targets can have symbolic value as a representation of the problem that the lone wolves want to fix, or they can be seen as a part of the problem and therefore no less innocent than the people in power (Roy 2019).

Lone wolf terrorism has become one of the most prominent threats to national security in Sweden during the 2010s and 2020s. The National Centre for Terrorist Threat Assessment (NCT) called religious and right-wing terrorism the biggest threat to Swedish security during 2022 and will be so during 2023 as well and similar predictions can be found in other parts of the world (NCT 2023). While the jihad inspired attacks - which is the most prevalent form of

religious terrorism - have declined in the last few years, both in Sweden and internationally, it is still seen as a prominent threat (NCT 2023) as ISIS's explicit call for Western supporters to carry out "lone wolf" attacks in their home countries is still present (Hamm & Spaaij 2017, p 4). The right-wing inspired attacks are instead increasing over the last few years with three attacks occurring during 2022 in the West (NCT 2023). The nature of a lone wolf can be unpredictable which means that it is difficult to estimate a reliable number of potential lone wolves in the EU or other parts of the world (Kaplan, Löow & Malkki 2014). Had it been easy to do then there would not be much of a problem to detect or prevent them (ibid).

A few things that make it hard to identify potential lone wolves is that while they might howl for others to join the hunt, they tend to avoid sharing details with others about their attack beforehand which makes them hard to identify and monitor (Bekker & de Graaf 2011, p 46). Secondly, they are idiosyncratic. Their backgrounds vary and there is a wide spectrum that their ideologies and motivations can land on. They can also be everything from confused suicidal psychopaths to having dedication and being mentally healthy (Bekker & de Graaf 2011, p 46). To differentiate between these different expressions and visions makes it hard to discover patterns. Likewise, it becomes hard to pick out who intends to commit an attack or is only expressing radical beliefs and hollow threats. Many of them do seek to inspire each other as well.

To inspire others, they also need to share why they commit their crimes and what they stand for, and so they howl their intent to the world. This means that the lone wolf is likely to broadcast their motives, plans or beliefs to others in their lives or online because they want an audience (Gardell 2018; Hamm & Spaaij 2017; Neuman 2012). The audience are those that will acknowledge, validate their actions, or be inspired to join the fight for justice. It is however important for them to be able to control the narrative and make sure their reasons are not misunderstood, ignored, or mislabelled. This sometimes results in sharing their motives and explaining their reasoning to inspire others (Gardell 2018; Hamm & Spaaij 2017). This can happen after the attack, during interrogations and trials. But some are howling even before the attack has happened, for example through written communication that depict their motives, ideologies and who they are targeting. How they present all these aspects, the narrative they build and emotions they are playing on are being studied more and more as lone wolf attacks have increased (c.f: Gardell 2018; Leonard et al 2014; Nilsson 2019, 2022; Presser 2012; Sandberg 2013; Sandberg et al 2014 etc).

The aim of this thesis is to build further on the knowledge of the narratives that lone wolves use to justify their violent acts of mass harm and how they present their targets. In addition, it aims to investigate how the lone wolves legitimise their targets as well as what contributes to their ability to convince others to support their violent actions or commit their own violent acts of mass harm. This will be done with the departure of the following research question:

- How do lone wolves legitimise their violence and their targets before the attack happens?

To operationalise the research question, this study will conduct an in-depth analysis of manifestos written by lone wolves prior to their attacks and look at the narratives and reasons that are given and how they are presented to get support from those that read the manifestos.

2. Previous research

Lone wolves are not a new phenomenon despite its increase of attacks over the last two decades and the research has also increased with it and what follows is an introduction to the radicalisation process that lone wolves go through, the role of ideology and how lone wolves communicate. Lastly there is an introduction to the previous research on target selection.

2.1 Becoming a lone wolf

Hamm & Spaaij (2017), having looked at the radicalisation of lone wolf terrorists notes that when investigating American lone wolf terrorism, notes that it is common that lone wolves integrate various forms of ideologies with personal vendettas as they become radicalised. This results in the belief that violence is considered as the only legit answer to an unjust system. The personal vendetta on its own cannot be the sole basis for their attack, instead there must be an ideology behind it for it to be labelled as terrorism (ibid). While the lone wolf might be thought to be alone and somewhat separated from society, it can usually just be that they at some points were to an extent an integrated individual with a social network that was then exchanged for a new and extremist one where their behaviour tends to change (Gardell 2018; Hamm & Spaaij 2017; Hartleb 2020). Much of this radicalisation happens on the internet, but usually it is just a way for the lone wolves to confirm or strengthen the view that the lone wolf already has to some extent (Simon 2016, p 176). When grievances or struggles then arise, they search for a scapegoat (Hartleb 2020) who they can blame for these struggles as they act as a representation of what the lone wolf sees as the problem (Leonard, Annas, Knoll & Tørrissen 2014, p 418).

What previous research also points out is that on the other hand, while the lone wolf might see it as their duty to act, they are rarely the highly capable terrorist operatives that can strike out of nowhere and only work alone (Schuurman, Bakker, Gill & Bouhana 2017). The majority very often have bad operational security and a tendency to leak their intentions which increases the likelihood that they are detected before the attack takes place (Gardell 2018; Schuurman et al, 2017). Still though, because they do not have to keep in contact with others, they can be harder to detect than a cell or organisation if they are able to keep their plans to themselves (Simon 2016, p 71). As noted by Lindeskilde et al (2019, p 120) lone wolves seem to be characterised by a lack of sophistication in terms of their choice of design - as in as in their course of action or weapons, as well as executing the plan - but also keeping

quiet about their plans. Consequently, argues Nilsson (2019, p 16) lone wolves like Anders Breivik who was capable of the 2011 Oslo and Utøya attacks, should be seen as anomalies instead of the norm and the capabilities of a lone wolf to destabilise a society should not be over exaggerated. However, the broader movements or ideologies that they relate to, might have a stronger potential for affecting society, but the communication between the loner and the group might not be as important (Nilsson 2019, p 17) which will be detailed further later. One thing to note though is that they tend to prefer soft targets which include civilians or groups without sufficient protection (Lindekilde et al 2019; Nilsson 2019). Therefore, the damage they can cause, should their attacks be successful, impact the most vulnerable people and thus investigating the lone wolf still holds value.

2.2 Ideologies

Previous research points out how lone wolf terrorists tend to pull inspiration from beliefs and ideologies where the extremist movements can generate or transmit validation (Hamm & Spaaij 2017, p 150). They are often strongly influenced by communities that can provide ideologies which bring an alternate sense of morality and can justify destroying life or property (Spaaij 2011, p 54). These ideologies of validation tend to frame a particular grievance as an injustice which puts the blame on a group of people, a state, or a government. Lindeskilde et al (2019, p 114) argues that the radicalisation of a lone wolf is just a variation of the process that takes place in a terrorist group.

The type of ideology that a lone wolf belongs to can sometimes be complicated to determine for several reasons. One is that at times there are lone wolves that are more secretive about the ideologies they belong to in order to not incriminate others (Spaaij 2011, p 38). Spaaij (2011) gives the example from influential advocate for right-wing inspired lone wolf strategy Tom Metzger who have stated that “Never utter more than the 5 Words to any agent or representative of ZOG [Zionist Occupation Government]: “I Have Nothing To Say.” There are no exceptions. Anyone who does talk must be shunned from the movement forever.” (Spaaij 2011, p 38). This indicates that there are those in extremist movements that hold secrecy very highly and do not want anyone to talk about their plans or share what they have done with others. But as mentioned above though, there is previous research that points out that it can also be common that they incriminate themselves by wanting to share their achievements or plans (Gardell 2018; Schuurman et al 2017).

More generally though, previous research also points out another problem with categorising lone wolves' ideologies which is that the offender often combines their own personal grievances with broader structures of some of the more prevalent extreme ideologies (Spaaij 2011, p 39). What this leads to is that the lone wolf tends to form an individualised ideology that consists of a mixture of broader political, religious, and social aims that feed from personal frustrations or aversions (ibid). Hegghammer (2011) takes the example of the more well-publicised cases where both Breivik and Al Qaeda have a self-image as fighting a civilizational war as part of transnational entities in the form of Europe and the ummah (a transnational community of Muslims). Here Hegghammer (2011) argues that both Breivik and Al Qaeda see their struggles as being a defensive war to survive as well as hate their own governments for their collaboration with the enemy. This suggests that both are manifestations of macro-nationalism which clusters nation-states as being connected through a notion as sharing an identity. In these cases, it would be "the West" or the "ummah" respectively and the extreme macro-nationalists believe that their people are under attack and therefore must step up and defend them (ibid). These individualised ideologies that are influenced by personal vengeance or grievances; they can then be fuelled into action by enablers who inspire them to act on their frustrations by committing violence.

2.3 Communication

Hamm & Spaaij (2017, pp 151-2) notes that there can be indirect enablers which are those the lone wolf uses as examples of inspiration and are usually individuals that represent warrior subcultures. While Nilsson (2019) argues that the communication between the lone wolf and the broader network might not hold much value, there are lone wolves that see themselves as an advisor, as was the case of Breivik (Leonard et al 2014, p 418). He went into long explanations in his manifesto of how one should act in public while preparing their attack to avoid detection. There were instructions of how to hand-sew bulletproof uniforms like the one he wore under his attack as well as how to create a bomb. Previous research also points to the fact that since lone wolves, from both religious and right-wing extremism, tend to consume media and cultural influences, they access these instructions which can include lectures or articles on things like how to create a bomb (Hamm & Spaaij 2017, pp 150-2).

The literature on radicalisation also points out other forms of communication are media such as podcasts, news sites and influencers which are prominent part of far-right propaganda (Nilsson 2019, pp 23-4). These can then be used as strategies to achieve political and societal

changes through a cultural approach that aims to change people's thoughts and feelings. This is done because of the argument that in order to change politics then the culture must be changed and is done through the normalisation and popularisation of the movement's worldviews (Nilsson 2019, p 24). Hamm & Spaaij (2017, p 152) argues that this is in no way only limited to the far-right movement. Several groups and lone wolves were introduced to or inspired by violent jihad through online sermons, instructional articles or YouTube videos. The communication in the form of manifestos that people that commit mass-harm sometimes write is believed to be because they would not bother to reach out unless there is a strong personal meaning for their actions (Leonard et al 2014, p 409). They even tend to spend extra effort just making sure that the manifesto or other form of communication will be reached by others (ibid.). The lone wolves need the recognition of their struggles and heroism, by an audience since revenge is a common and very central motive for their actions (Neuman 2012; Gardell 2018). These sorts of recognitions and acts of heroism can be presented in different ways and will be covered in the next section.

3. Theoretical framework

There are several theories that in combination are needed to build the theoretical framework that can analyse what this study aims to look at, in the sense that what needs to be covered is how the lone wolves justify their violence and why violence is the only way to act.

Furthermore, it is also relevant with a theoretical framework for how they present their targets and how they set the boundaries between themselves and those that they intend to harm.

3.1 Narrative Theory

A narrative (or self-narrative) can be said to be a selective way of telling a life story or a life history through the lived experiences (Presser 2009 p 179). The way that Presser term narrative criminology is how the narrative itself is positioned as a factor for the motivation and accomplishment of crime and criminalisation. People act and motivate others with what is said (Presser 2012, p 5). The importance of narratives lies in that communities and individuals alike tell as well as act based on stories. Furthermore, they thematise the points that connect the personal and collective experience as well as desires and efforts (Presser, 2009, p 178.). When studying the self-narratives then they should be seen as agency which has been conditioned by culture as well as the context it is told in (Sandberg 2013, p 81). By going through identifiable and culturally intelligible causes for an offender's misconduct, it is possible for them to position themselves as less bad (Presser 2009, p 179).

Presser also points out that there is a presence of scepticism about offenders' narratives that stem from the criminological concern about the truth of crime data when the data is provided by an offender whose nature can be presumed to be manipulative. The control over self-narratives allows for a complex character that unfolds and evolves over time which also communicates that there is a possibility for change. Furthermore, they can be seen as attempts to make a coherent and united story of the cultural narratives and discourses which are available (Sandberg 2013, p 81). Someone that conducts moral deviance can then separate themselves from past wrongdoings (Presser 200,9 p 179).

An example of this is from Sandberg (2013, p 81) where he points out how Breivik makes repeated statements about his friendships with Muslims which would help to neutralise any counter arguments that bitterness is the reason for his actions as well as deepening his personal knowledge of what the problems are. When these are combined then they can

strengthen the bigger unified narrative. In addition, his life-story and personal narratives merge with the larger political events related to the cause he is driving, in this case the demographic and cultural changes taking place in Europe. In this way, the life-story he presents can create the symbolic, semiotic, and imaginary universe where the crimes he was about to commit made sense.

In Sandberg's (2013) analysis of Breivik's manifesto he also points out that there are extensive accounts of his life-story, what his self-image looks like as well as the rationale for his actions. Killings can according to Katz (1988, p 12) be an inspired attempt to embody some kind of version of "Good". Which means that they feel righteousness or heroic purpose as they commit the crime. When someone kills because of this moral, an outsider would often see their actions as incomprehensible while the offender would instead often defend the Good. Sandberg (2013, p 80) suggests that to analyse the narrative the killer allows for an understanding of terror and violence. It is in the narratives that it is possible to find the rationale even though it might not be a sufficient cause. There are observed patterns in situations involving killings where the perpetrator has developed a righteous passion for taking a stand to defend respectability (Katz 1988, p 19). The offender will interpret the behaviour of the victim as an attack on an eternal human value and that there must be a last stand in defence of the basic worth (Katz 1988, p 18). They are defending the morality of a social system. If it is possible to understand the nature of these narratives of how the Good plays a role in the motive of a terrorist, then it is possible to counter the narratives which inspire crime as well as terrorism (Sandberg 2013).

3.2 The underdog story

What characterises the underdog story is the difference of material resources between the hero(es) and the foe (Presser 2018, p 90). The protagonist of the story is the hero or heroic group that has gone from impotence to triumph which makes the story of the underdog suited for insurgencies or protest movements (Presser 2018, p 88). Presser shows that the hero must go up against an adversary that possesses more resources, such as weapons and legal power etc. In comparison, the insurgencies lack political standing and are fighting against the status quo.

Every story includes a shift in circumstances; and for a dramatic story this shift is often a radical shift of an arising crisis that could have devastating outcomes. The dramatic flair will

present either the reaction or the action as urgent and necessary. Especially if the action means violence, the apocalyptic narrative is required to be able to bypass cultural restrictions that violence is bound by (Smith 2005, p 27). It focuses on polarisation to invoke motivation and leaves no room for other solutions. Most importantly for an underdog story - the action will always be honourable and morally ordained no matter if the act has a chance of success or not (Presser 2018; Smith 2005). Presser further explains that the crisis that is described in the underdog story does not need to have taken place yet and can even be dubious to happen yet still be presented as impending. Neither does the crisis have to be over by the end of the story and then the hero promises or signals to keep fighting which garners admiration. This also reassures other fighters that there will be success. that there should be no hesitation to act and that they should not doubt their abilities. The underdog story is more about the hero's qualities and less about their tangible achievements (Presser 2018, p 89). The long odds are also an important aspect, as the honour of the trial is what draws one into the fight more than the ease of winning would (Presser 2018, p 91).

Furthermore, Presser argues that to only depict an approaching crisis will not on its own motivate action. How it is narrated will have different consequences for action. Drama happens where there are boundaries and differences, which can be both material ones (small/weak vs big/strong) and moral ones (good vs bad). Smith (2005, p 14) adds that these types of codes allow for categorisation of the world based on moral principles, outlining the features and attributes of the sacred and profane, polluted, and pure, that the narrative can then add the nuance to our understanding of the world. Therefore, we also must understand these boundaries.

3.3 Character polarisation

Mary Douglas (2002, p 42) argues that boundaries in a society have meaning though material representations where the classifying objects as clean or unclean is based on cultural norms and values. Classifying what is clean or unclean proves the presence of a system. Dirt, by definition, is matter out of place which means that "there are two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order" (Douglas 2002, p 42). Dirt is a by-product that includes all elements that have been rejected from the ordered system (Douglas 2002, pp 44-5). The organisation into patterns is however something that we as perceivers are responsible for as it is not a passive process. Instead, it is part of putting the impressions around us into schemas by either accepting or rejecting them into the system. The more readily something

fits into the pattern the easier it is to accept while those that are dissonant tend to be rejected (Douglas 2002 p 46). But the stronger the polarisations are that make one reject the object, the less space there will be for reconciliation (Smith 2005, p 23). When the polarisations become fixed evil must either be permanently excluded or else destroyed.

Social order can be maintained and created through rituals as they reinforce social boundaries between what is acceptable and what is not (Douglas 2002, p 124). Douglas defines social order and social structure as situations where individuals are aware of the range of inclusiveness and that there are demands on their behaviour (Douglas 2002, p 122). To wander beyond those confines would however bring a power that the society they left behind could not access. Leaving the formal structures and becoming a part of the margins is however a big risk to their lives but could also get them to evolve. The rituals are a way of keeping this transitioning between society and the margins under control (Douglas 2002, pp 117-9). However, Douglas repeatedly comes back to the danger that rituals can present to the order of society, especially when they contain symbols and practices that hold strong meaning. All attributions of danger and power help to communicate and create social forms.

Douglas (2002, p 117) argues that disorder can spoil the set patterns, but it is also capable of providing the material for pattern. When there is order there are implications of restriction to the limited selection of all possible relations. Disorder is instead unlimited, without pattern or sets. Therefore, disorder cannot be discarded either and so it holds both danger and power.

Furthermore, Douglas divides societal positioning into two classifications (2002, pp 122-4) those that are endangered and those that endanger. There are powers that are used for the good of the social structure as they protect society from those that want to do harm but the use of these powers. The other classification of power is those that are a danger to society and those that use this power are malefactors who should be hunted by the good men. Smith (2005, p 21) points out the importance in exploring these polarisations, especially in relation to how “evil” is being presented and the powers that are assigned to them. The image of “evil” seems to have more consequences for the narrative than the image of the “good” because it elicits strong moral feelings. How strong the polarisation is; depends on the intensity of the conflict and level of ambiguity between sacred and profane assigned to the characters. But to create such Douglas (2002, pp 122-3) suggests that those that hold office positions in the explicit end of the structure are those credited with consciously controlled

powers while those that are less defined in their role have an uncontrolled power that is a threat to those in charge. Those that are in between the two groups might then be wielding the power on behalf of one group. These classifications are however not unconnected; where the social system has a recognised position of authority than those in power have controlled and approved power that can bless and curse. If the social system instead holds ambiguous roles, then the people in power hold uncontrolled and dangerous powers. Hence, when approaching the manifestos and stories of the lone wolves we need to attend to not just the communicated cause, but also how the antagonists and protagonists are defined, characterised, and placed against each other.

4. Methodology

The following section will go through why manifestos were chosen for this thesis and introducing the different lone wolves that have been included, their crimes and their ideologies. I will then discuss the criterion for selection of data and how I conducted the coding and the analysis. Lastly, I will discuss the ethical considerations.

4.1 The data

The choice to use manifestos is because they match the theoretical framework that I am using and because they are a public statement of standpoints that the author takes (Nilsson 2019, p 27). It is common for the type of manifesto that is used here, to be a puzzle of propaganda, legitimization of ideologies and tactical suggestions (ibid). Narrative theory focuses on the role that narratives have in shaping individuals' understanding of themselves and their action, as well as how it affects others (Presser 2012). The manifestos allow me to examine these kinds of legitimations for their violence through the storyline that they write because they talk about what is important for them to communicate and spread (Leonard et al 2014; Presser 2012; Sandberg 2013), such as their own history, their turning points and ideologies that are common points to look at in a narrative analysis. It is furthermore a way to see how they are conditioned by culture and context (Sandberg 2013, p 81) and how they communicate to and for their communities (Presser 2009). The manifestos also define what it is that the lone wolves are fighting for to justify their violence as righteous and in protection of what they see as the good (Presser 2018; Katz 1988).

The application of underdog theory by Lois Presser (2018) also supports using manifestos because of the self-presentation as oppressed and threatened which is why violence is necessary to defend themselves against a perceived crisis. I am also able to see how they position themselves towards the crisis and how they present their enemy as a legit threat through the manifestos. Additionally, because of how much lone wolf has on defining the target and legitimising the target in the manifesto, it is also a rich material for me to understand the boundaries that they set to separate themselves from their enemy which allows the application of both Mary Douglas' (2002) theory of boundary making and Philip Smith's (2005) character polarisation. Boundaries are socially constructed divisions that define what is considered acceptable or unacceptable (Douglas 2002). By exploring the manifestos, I can analyse how the lone wolves define and reinforce boundaries between themselves and their victims, justifying their violence within their ideological frameworks.

The premise for inclusion was that (1) the author is a lone wolf actor (2) that the manifesto could be found on open sources. Firstly, the focus on lone wolf actors suits as a good protagonist in the chosen theories where they are fighting a stronger and more dominant enemy and find it important to control the narrative by writing these manifestos (Presser 2018; Leonard et al 2014) Additionally, because of the increase in attacks that has been pointed out by previous research (c.f Hamm & Spaaij 2018; NCT 2023; Simon 2016 etc).

For the second criteria, the availability of manifestos through open sources was a way to strengthen the transparency of the thesis and accessibility. It allowed me to access the primary sources and compare them to other versions to be more certain that it was the correct manifesto. Had the manifestos been collected from closed forums that were harder to access it would not mean that it was more certain to be a correct version, but it would weaken the transparency and make it harder for others to cross-check the findings in my analysis. The selection process and the authentication process will be discussed in more detail further down.

Furthermore, when possible, I chose manifestos that predates the act for which the lone wolf had committed since it would allow for an understanding of premeditated narratives and justifications. All manifestos except Kaczynski's predated the attacks. This temporal aspect allowed me to examine their ideological and motivational frameworks as they were at the time of the attack. This way they were not influenced by the certain contextual aspects that narratives form from (Sandberg 2013, p 81). These contextual aspects could be for example public reactions or possible trauma from committing mass-harm. It would not be a post-attack construction of justifications and reasoning but instead what they perceived as what was driving factors for deciding to commit the violence. This temporal element contributes to a comprehensive understanding of how the lone wolves present their victims as legitimate targets and justify their violence.

The material that will be analysed are eight manifestos written by eight different lone wolves: Theodore Kaczynski (Unabomber). Dylann Roof, Brenton Tarrant, John Earnest, Patrick Crusius, Tobias Rathjen, Payton Gendron and Juraj Krajčík. The manifestos vary in length and layout; Brenton Tarrant's is 74 pages with pictures and text; Patrick Crusius' is 5 pages of text; Theodore Kaczynski's is 63 pages of text; John Earnest's is 6 pages of text; Payton

Gendron's is 180 pages of text and pictures; Dylan Roof's is 5 pages of text; Juraj Krajčák's is 65 pages of text and pictures and Tobias Rathjen's is 24 pages with text and pictures.

Theodore Kaczynski was responsible for mail bombs sent out to people that he saw as part of the technological advances and industrialisation (Spaaij 2011, p 41). During 1978-1995 he mailed or planted 16 mail bombs which resulted in three deaths and wounding 23 in different regions of the USA. His early targets were often universities and airlines, which gave him the nickname Unabomber, UN for university and the A for airlines. His ideology was based on Anarchism with elements of Luddism. Luddism is an ideology generally appointed to those that oppose the use of technology. His manifesto explains the dangers of technological and industrial advancements as a threat to human autonomy and freedom (Simon 2016, p 71). He also takes a stand against "leftism" as anti-individualistic and condemning its pro-collectivistic approach (Spaaij 2011, p 41). In 1995 he threatened to continue his attacks unless his manifesto was published in the newspapers (Simon 2016, p 71). The Washington Post and The New York Times ended up publishing his manifesto and the sharing of the writings was ultimately what led to his arrest. He was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, with one of his delusional beliefs being that modern technology was controlling him (Simon 2016, p 72).

Dylann Roof was an American shooter that went into Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina in the USA where he killed 9 people in 2015. He was captured a few hours later by police. It was discovered that he had a website called The Last Rhodesian where he posed with weapons and published his manifesto and hate towards African-Americans (Kaati et al, 2019). His aim with the attack was to trigger a race war and he has been hailed as a hero by groups on the internet. It built a sub-culture where people called for others to commit violent crimes and to "do a Dylann Roof".

Brenton Tarrant is an Australian shooter that killed 51 Muslims and injured 40 others in two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. He uploaded a 74 page manifesto to the forum 8chan before starting his attack, which he live-streamed in a first-person shooter point of view where people could see the attack from his point of view (Nilsson 2019, p 28). In his manifesto he sees himself as an Ethno-nationalist and Eco-fascist. He presents the theory of The White Replacement theory in his manifesto, arguing that a mass invasion of Muslims, who he calls invaders, are aiming to replace the white race and culture (Nilsson 2019, pp 28-

9). He defined strongly with his ties to Europe and that the white race is to be connected to Europe by culture and race.

John Earnest aimed to kill as many Jews as possible when he attacked a synagogue in California in the USA in 2019. He killed one and injured three others (Nilsson 2019, p 34). He sympathises with the conspiracy theory that there is a Jewish elite in control of government, media, and other public institutions (Zionist Occupation Government or ZOG) that aim to control and oppress the white race, which is the majority of his focus in his manifesto. There are also several references to the importance of the Christian identity for him in his manifesto (Nilsson 2019, pp 34-6). Like with Tarrant, there is also a strong sense of belonging to a European ethnicity as a definition of what it means to be white.

Patrick Crusius targeted Hispanics during a shooting in El Paso, Texas in the US where he shot 23 people and injured over two dozen (Killough & Yan 2023). He says early on in his manifesto (p 1) that he agrees with Brenton Tarrant and that his attack is a defence to the Hispanic invasion in Texas. In the manifesto he argues that the Democratic Party and corporations are allowing Hispanics to invade Texas to make the state a democratic stronghold that would ensure that the democratic party would take control over the elections. The manifesto also describes the way that he thinks the corporations are importing immigrants to fill up low paying jobs that they continuously must do because the children of the immigrants take higher paying jobs which in turn then makes it harder for natives to get jobs (p 2). In addition, the corporations are also destroying the environment (p 4).

Tobias Rathjen shot and killed nine people in Hanau, Germany and then went home and shot his mum and himself in 2020. His manifesto shows signs of delusional thoughts (Cohen & Pelzer 2020) of a secret service that is surveilling people's private homes and can read and control people's thoughts. Rathjen shifts from both being a target to this secret service and being chosen by them. He also has xenophobic thoughts about non-German groups, and mostly mentioned countries in north Africa and Islam as a religion as especially destructive and criminal (ibid).

Payton Gendron shot and killed 10 black people and wounded 3 more in Buffalo, New York in the US in 2022 (Morales, Levenson, Ly & Elamroussi 2023). His ideology is also linked to radical nationalism and white supremacy. A large portion of his manifesto is aimed at

outlining the differences between black and white people on a biological and cultural level. The manifesto also has references to the ZOG conspiracy theory, and he argues that both groups need to be dealt with (p 7). Large parts of his manifesto are a direct copy-paste or built on arguments from Tarrant's manifesto and he states that Tarrant was a big inspiration for him to act (p 8). He pleaded guilty and was sentenced for domestic terrorism and murder (Morales, Levenson, Ly & Elamroussi 2023).

Juraj Krajčík killed two people and injured one in a shooting in a gay bar in Bratislava in Slovakia in 2022. His manifesto is built around the ZOG conspiracy theory as a threat to the white race and culture and there are elements of white supremacy. For him the Jewish elite is using other groups (immigrants, feminists, and LGBTQ+) to push their propaganda and to control and oppress the white race. His body was found by police, and it was determined that he died by suicide.

4.2 Selection

These manifestos have been selected based on that they are representative of the broader ideology that they belong to and on accessibility through open forums. In addition, the definition used for lone wolf mentioned in the introduction as someone who carries out an attack of mass harm on their own, without belonging to or receiving orders from an organisation or cell (Hamm & Spaaij 2017, p 5) was also guiding in selecting the data. Some were also chosen because they were referenced by other lone wolves as being an inspiration or that they were supporting their actions, which was the case of Patrick Crusius, who was referenced in both Payton Gendron's and Juraj Krajčík's manifestos. There were however no criteria for belonging to a certain ideology but most of the manifestos that I could access came from right-wing inspired lone wolves, mainly those that identify with ethnonationalism and white supremacy. Kaczynski is the only one to deviate from this as he identifies with Anarchism and Luddism as mentioned earlier.

There is an obvious exclusion of Breivik's manifesto in the data collection despite its 1500 (in)famous status. I chose to exclude this given its extensive nature and because it has been given significant attention in contemporary studies since the 2011 attacks in Norway. Multiple comprehensive studies and investigations have been made on both his actions and the manifesto (c.f: Berntzen & Sandberg 2014; Hegghammer 2011, Leonard et al 2014; Sandberg 2013; Sandberg et al 2014 etc). Though the manifesto has been influential for other

lone wolves, for example Brenton Tarrant, these previous studies cover many of the aspect that I also aim to explore. Sandberg (2013) also concluded that there were several different narratives within this one manifesto, and that there are several paragraphs in Breivik's manifesto that were copied from Theodore Kaczynski's manifesto. Furthermore, Breivik's case is referenced in the analysis in relation to what previous research has found by studying his manifesto and how it related to the findings of this study. Of course, the same could be argued for Kaczynski's manifesto since it has also been studied several times, but this included the studies that have been done over several decades and, as mentioned, his manifesto was a basis for some arguments that Breivik used. It also allowed for the inclusion of another ideology that would allow for the analysis to cover similarities and differences in the narratives.

All except Kaczynski's were published by the authors on online platforms or on forums except for the one written by Ted Kaczynski. Parts of this one was originally published in The New York Times and The Washington Post in 1995. It was published in its entirety on the internet page of The Washington Post, which is where I accessed it from. To have it in pdf format it was copy-pasted from The Washington Post webpage into a word document and saved as a pdf. To avoid confusion, I instead reference paragraph numbers for quotes taken from his manifesto, since he did mark each paragraph by number. The word amount still corresponds with that of the original though. Therefore, this one is certainly an authentic version. Regarding the other that were authored by Tarrant, Earnest, Gendron, Crusius, Krajčik, Rathjen and Roof, they have been collected through a Google search of "[full name] manifesto pdf", which means that there is a slight issue about the verification of these as the real version that each person authored. To verify the authentication of these, they have been compared to versions that can be found on other digital forums as well as how they have been referenced in previous research and how news media referenced them (Nilsson 2019).

Originally, my aim was to compare the communications from right-wing and religious motivated lone wolves to compare their different justifications for committing mass harm and for their target selection. However, because religious terrorists (jihad in this case) tend to communicate with videos (Roy 2017), these were hard to locate on open forums that are easily accessible and the few that I did find were not in English, nor could I find any full transcripts of the video that could give me the data for the analysis. When the videos were too difficult to access however, the focus shifted more towards manifestos and the manifestos I

could access within my temporal criteria and accessibility criteria, were written by right-wing inspired lone wolves. Despite this, ideology was never a criterion for selection of data. Because of the risk assessments pointing to religious terrorism as a big threat I did not want to exclude this completely. Therefore, while the focus and the aim of the thesis is to understand the narratives of the lone wolves, there will be complimentary additions of religious terrorism where interesting comparisons could be made in the narratives. The material for jihad terrorism is collected from Olivier Roy's book *Jihad & Death* (2017).

4.3 Coding and analysis

As noted in the theory section, narrative theory, the underdog story by Lois Presser (2018) and the apocalyptic narrative by Philip Smith (2005) was used to create the codes regarding the justifications of violence.

The first step in analysing and coding the material was noting the structuring of the manifestos. There was a recurring segment of self-interviewing in many of the manifestos where the lone wolves ask a series of questions that they then answer. Some questions are recurring in several manifestos, and some are more unique. Why they chose the specific group was recurring as well as why they chose to carry out an attack were some of the recurring questions. On the other hand, only Earnest asked himself the question "Are you insane/crazy?" (para 57) in his manifesto which no one else touched upon. The self-interviews were the part I started coding and analysing first. It allowed me to understand the questions that they found important enough to clarify by asking the exact question and being able to answer it. In many of the manifestos these questions included why they did not trust democracy, which ideology, or political standpoint they represented and why they had committed the crime. They also answered questions such as who inspired them to act and what they wanted others that agreed with them to do. These questions were where I could look at how they told their life story and lived experiences to make a coherent story of the cultural narratives around them (Presser 2009; Sandberg 2013). They often also write directly towards their supporters in these segments and therefore I could also explore how they motivate each other (Presser 2012, p 5). I especially took note when there were topics or reasoning that was recurring or similar between the manifestos, such as shared target groups, ideology, or phrases because it indicated how they thematise the points that are personal and collective experiences, efforts, and desires (Presser 2009, p 178). The self-interviews were also where the first justifications for their violence showed up even though most went into

further detail in other parts of the structure as well, depending on the length of the manifesto. Some of these questions they answered very shortly but went into further details in other parts of the manifesto. There was also a question about their targeted group. This segment, not just for answering the question but their presentation of the target group and how they legitimised them as targets, was most often given a large amount of space in the text and therefore became a large part of my focus for the next step of analysing and coding.

When looking at how they legitimised their targets, I focused more on what they were writing instead of how they wrote it. There was some contrast to how they presented it which I took note of though I chose to give this less attention in the analysis compared to what was being said. This too was coded into themes regarding the topic, with the basis of Smith's (2005) take on character polarisation between the good and the evil, Douglas' (2002) concept of the endangered and those endangering as well as Presser's (2018) underdog story. This was regarding the White identity, as this was the theme for all manifestos except Kaczynski's manifesto. The White race was considered the good and the endangered, while the group that the lone wolves were targeting were the evil and the ones endangering. I was able to see both how they defined their own group that they identified with, which was the white race and culture (excluding Kaczynski). It also brought out themes regarding how they defined their target group, or the one that they saw as the one responsible for the threat to their own group. While there were differences in who they saw as the threat and how they were a threat, there were themes that were recurring, regarding the groups place in society as well as how they defined their own group and so these were coded.

When I was looking into the narratives that they were telling, I started in Labov (1972, p 363) model of which parts that are included in an adequate narrative which is the following:

1. Abstract (summary of story)
2. Orientation (Background/context)
3. Complicating action (problem to be solved)
4. Evaluation (significance)
5. Resolution (solution of problem)
6. Coda (cure to end of story/return to present).

While conducting the analysis I was able to include both the complicating action and the resolution aspect of the model in the manifestos. The other parts of the model were also present to some extent, but I found them to be less relevant, both to the research question but

also the authors of the manifestos as they rarely spent much time on this compared to the time they spent on the problem and the resolution they see. The problem that they wanted to solve and the resolution to the problem took up the most focus and so also became the focus of the analysis. The structure of the manifestos differs, and different parts take up different amounts of space.

The complicating action was often a presentation of how they saw the social order in the present but that there was something wrong with it. The focus became on how they presented the problem and what they perceived it as, and this also included the different time aspects that they saw since some saw the problem as present while others saw it as an imminent one. The emerging model that I found was instead that they presented a view on how the social order is in the present, which included themes such as the crisis and who they as individuals are. For them as individuals I focused on how they presented themselves and their role in the crisis. I looked for turning points that they brought up in relation to how they presented the sequences that led up to the action as to understand how they saw their role in the crisis as well as how they understand what led them to commit mass-harm (Copeland, 2019, p 142). Furthermore, the model included an idea of what the ideal social order was and should be, what they wanted to achieve with their act as well as in the future. Lastly, and a big part of the manifestos in most cases, what they should do to get there. Of course, because of the harmful nature of the attacks and the motives that the lone wolves had, there are some ethical considerations that must be mentioned.

4.4 Ethical considerations

The integrity of the individual must be always considered (Kaati, Cohen & Akrami 2019). Consent by these individuals to use their manifestos have not been given. However, the texts were created for the public domain and published on social platforms (Nilsson 2019). Still, to ensure proper handling, the analysis in this study is only based on data that consists of manifestos that have been shared on public sites. The ethics around spreading the racist and violent ideas of these individuals by studying and quoting their works are also a point to be ethically considered since it would contribute to spreading their ideas (Nilsson 2019). The importance of studying this for the sake of understanding the actions and motives of these individuals can justify this (ibid). Still, I do in no way aim to glorify or legitimise their actions or beliefs through this study.

All manifestos have been collected from sites that did not require a login or membership. Any other information about the individual or the incidents are taken from public sources such as previous research or investigate news outlets which are not primary sources, but care was taken to select based on legitimacy of the source. Background information that is used for the analysis to build understanding for the person's reasoning is only taken from the manifesto of the person and is therefore only information that they have willingly shared. The legitimacy of their telling is not questioned as it is part of the analysis of how they want to retell what they perceived happened and because they have included this because it was important to them (Presser, 2009).

5. Analysis

This analysis is structured in three main parts that describe the narrative that all manifestos to some degree follow where they break down their thoughts into defining what the present-day social order looks like, which is titled 'Today'. In this part it is about defining the problem that the lone wolves want to solve with their violence and when this problem in society will arrive. It concludes with a self-presentation of the lone wolves to explore where they see themselves in this crisis and what their role is. Next part is titled 'Identifying the goal'. This part dives into what the lone wolves see as an ideal social order, how they want the system to work. It is a shorter chapter, but it was also usually what the lone wolves dedicated the least space to in the manifestos. Lastly the final part is titled 'Achieving the goal' and will explore how the path to that ideal will look like, how to think when committing the attack and the role of the victim. This includes looking at how they chose their target, how they present their target as being a legit one.

5.1 Today

Presser (2018, p 88) points out the importance of radical shift in circumstances for the story to have drama. The drama drives (re)action, and if the shift is then also a crisis with a devastating outcome, then it will spur further action more readily. But it must be so severe and have a foe so evil that violence is justifiable, or people will not be willing to break the cultural restriction that controls violence (Smith 2005, p 27). The crisis that the terrorist argue is most recurringly the replacement or genocide of the white race. Their justification or motives for committing violent acts to combat this crisis are not always necessarily their own but instead plagiarised from other manifestos or sources, either word by word or with some modifications to fit their context. Lone wolves do tend to create their own ideology with inspiration from other ideologies or by puzzling together pieces (Spaaij 2011). While they act alone and do not belong to any larger network that can destabilise society (Nilsson 2019) they are still influenced by each other and are able to spread their views in a way that lays the basis for the ideologies and motivations of another lone wolf. The risk is therefore that some of them could have the operational and strategic skills to cause large scale harm, as for example Breivik who used several paragraphs from Kacynski's manifesto in his own (Sandberg 2013, p 70).

This shows that even plagiarised parts of the motives of lone wolves are important to understand since the parts also contribute to the legitimation of violence and the target. In this thesis, the most obvious case of this is seen in Gendron's manifesto. Many of his arguments and justification are taken directly or partly from Tarrant's manifesto, even though they ended up targeting different groups. This is a context related reason though. Tarrant committed his crime in New Zealand where the growing presence of Muslims was, according to him, the threat to the white race. Gendron operated in the USA instead where black people were a bigger threat according to him, but the same reason for their chosen groups is given in their manifestos. While the antagonists in these cases are different groups, they are presented in a similar way as the malefactors that the protagonist needs to protect his people from (Douglas 2002). Krajčák likewise references several of the other lone wolves in this study as well as others and quotes their arguments in his own text. This will be explored further down below. But it does show that there are similarities but also differences to how they present the crisis that is pushing them to act. It takes a few different shades and so does who they think belongs to the white race as well as when they argue will be responsible for the replacement which is what will be discussed in this part of the analysis.

5.1.1 What is the crisis?

Within the narrative of these manifestos a world elite of Jews or immigration are the main threats that the lone wolves present as how the white race will be replaced. When it comes to an elite of Jews, or ZOG (Zionist occupation government) as it is generally referred to, Krajčák paints the crisis as:

A world populated by obedient consumers, who will work, consume and not rise up. Who will produce profit for the "chosen ones" at the top. White people will be subjugated, atomized, degenerated or eradicated. We will work, we will do advanced work that niggers and assorted shitskins can not do, but we will never do anything to resist their tyranny (Krajčák pp 3-4)

This is according to him the goal that the Jewish elite has for white people, and it shows why there has to be action from the lone wolf as the protagonist so that this will not happen. Krajčák sees the white race as superior, smarter, and dominant in all ways, and to him the Jewish elite aim to use the white race to slave under them because Whites can do things that no other race or culture can. Earnest, who attacked a synagogue in the USA, has a similar

ideology and his crisis also takes a similar approach where the Jews are in control over everything and are controlling and using the white race while also causing all the harm in the world.

A large part of why immigration is threatening the white race is related to the number of immigrants present in what they see as white countries. The lone wolves also argue that the low birth rates among white people and an individualistic ideology in white countries will contribute to the replacement. This will also be possible because of the strong family and cultural values that other groups have. Tarrant writes in his manifest (and Gendron copy-pastes the same paragraph in his):

Mass immigration will disenfranchise us, subvert our nations, destroy our communities, destroy our ethnic ties, destroy our cultures, destroy our peoples. Long before low fertility levels ever could. Thus, before we deal with the fertility rates, we must deal with both the invaders within our lands and the invaders that seek to enter our lands. We must crush immigration and deport those invaders already living on our soil. It is not just a matter of our prosperity, but the very survival of our people. (Tarrant, p 4)

This quote presents the outcome of the crisis that is immigration according to Tarrant, who went after what he saw as the biggest group of immigrants (or invaders as he calls them), which was Muslims according to him. Gendron has the same argument in his manifesto, but he targeted black people because he saw them as having all the characteristics that are present in the quote. This quote does break down the causality that they see between immigration and the crisis. For them, the immigrants take an active role to undermine and replace the white race and culture through numbers and strong values which will end in the extinction of the white race and culture. It drives the dramatic aspect of the narrative that is meant to show why action is the only way forward, because survival is at stake. It also brings the apocalyptic narrative to the forefront because Tarrant frames it as a fight for survival and for the good which is an important narrative in sustaining people's willingness to fight (Smith 2010, p 28). If they do not fight then immigrants will destroy White nations, ethnic ties, and culture. The lone wolves as the protagonists fight for the white race and white culture, and for them to have dominance and homogeneity in white countries. But how do they define what and who is white?

As has been pointed out in previous research (Sandberg 2012; Hegghammer 2011; Spaaij 2012), a common narrative that is pushed by extremists is to justify the violence as fighting a war for the survival of what they see as a very distinctive race or culture. The lone wolves' individual definition of white race and culture varies somewhat and are at times contradictory or abstract. Dylann Roof - who was responsible for the shooting in a church in the USA where he targeted black people because he saw them as lesser than white - writes that he thinks white culture is world culture in the sense that it has been adopted by everyone in the world and it creates an ideal that white culture is not special or unique (p 3). Unlike many of the others in this study though, he sees the majority of American and European Jews as white, but he finds it problematic that they identify as a minority. Meanwhile, Tarrant argues:

Australia, just like the rest of the colonies of Europe, is simply an off-shoot of the European people. A finger on the hand of the body of Europe. The origins of my language is European, my culture is European, my political beliefs are European, my philosophical beliefs are European, my identity is European and, most importantly, my blood (Tarrant, p 18)

If the country has been a colony to Europe, then it is an extension of what it is to be European and therefore is included in the white race and it is about being white by culture and blood. This is why Tarrant sees Australia and New Zealand as belonging to the European race that is the cornerstone for white identity, it is not about borders connecting it to Europe but that it has once belonged to Europe and is therefore connected. This does raise the question if all colonies that have ever belonged to Europe would be included but they do seem to be more selective to countries that are racially white as well. Gendron shows more of this selectivity when arguing for how the USA is connected to Europe:

The United States now belongs to Whites because removing Whites from all of the United States is impossible. They are simply rooted too deeply into the land. The same thing applies with other White countries that are not in Europe. (Tarrant, p 8)

With this quote it shows to be more than just the colony of Europe rationale that Tarrant's quote showed. Instead, it is also about the presence of a substantial number of white people that is required and that would give them the right to call the country a white country. This

also shows a bit clearer on how they select which countries that are white, and which are not within the previous colonies of Europe. Moving on to Krajčik - who was responsible for the Bratislava shooting in a gay club, and who believes in a Jewish elite oppressing whites - he goes in another direction though and argues that the USA is one of the major villains, along with Russia as being a stronghold for the Jew driven elite and Jewish culture. Though he does express the most hate towards the elites of the states that he sees as the villain and not necessarily the part of the population that could be included in his criterion for what is the white race.

That there are these differences in opinions is however not uncommon for lone wolf terrorism even though they still relate to more established and broad ideologies (Spaaij 2011, p 39). Kaczynski, who mailed bombs to people he saw as responsible for technological advances, also warned of a crisis that could threaten human life. He was not focused on any specific group of mankind. Instead, he argues that:

The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race. They have greatly increased the life-expectancy of those of us who live in “advanced” countries, but they have destabilized society, have made life unfulfilling, have subjected human beings to indignities, have led to widespread psychological suffering (in the Third World to physical suffering as well) and have inflicted severe damage on the natural world. (Kaczynski, para 1)

To Kaczynski there is already a great deal of damage that has been caused on society by technological advancements, people, and nature and that it will continue to get worse unless it is stopped. These ideologies are relevant to what kind of a crisis that the lone wolves are using to justify their violent acts and to rally others into doing the same. It once again builds on the apocalyptic narrative where the stakes are so high that violent actions that mean sacrificing human lives are worth it (Smith 2005). Kaczynski sees the threat to humans and nature as something that is already damaging too much that letting it evolve further would be catastrophic because it will destabilise society. The comparison he draws between the advanced and third world countries further pushes the urgency because he makes it a relevant problem for everyone and not just those that live in more technologically advanced countries.

A part in creating the drama in the underdog story is to be outnumbered against the oppressor, even in a future that has not yet come to be, and it does not matter who has the objective power (Presser 2018, p 90). One reason for this is the perceived density of the antagonist as being large. Tarrant, who committed the Christchurch shooting in two mosques in New Zealand and Gendron, who shot black people at a Tops Market in the US, argue that it has to do with the low birth rates of the white race and a much higher one among their target group, which according to them will result in a replacement of the white race. For Crusius - who shot at Hispanics at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas - it is about an importation of Hispanics as a way for Democrats to earn power in Texas that would then lead to constant national power for the Democratic party. But many of the lone wolves also put some of this blame on the white race because of diminished family values and focus on individualism that the West is focusing on is detrimental to the destruction of the white race. Meanwhile they argue that their targeted group have much stronger family values and that they have a higher birth rate that will eventually take over the weakened white race.

However, it is not only the density of the population that is pointed out as a problem, but also because the replacement is by groups that are seen as inferior to the white race and culture that still inherent some aspects that make them a threat. Tarrant for example writes:

They were an obvious, visible and large group of invaders, from a culture with higher fertility rates, higher social trust and strong, robust traditions that seek to occupy my peoples lands and ethnically replace my own people. (p 10).

Here he explains all the characteristics in his target group that he thinks that the white race is lacking but are strong in the target group, which will consequently lead to the replacement and genocide of the white race. It also proves that he sees this as an active villain, they do not simply happen to have this and are just by accident taking over. It is their goal to do this, and they can succeed because they have all these powerful characteristics and the numbers to do it. This does however create somewhat of a paradox in their argument. Presser (2018, p 90) has as mentioned pointed to this aspect as well, that those that objectively are in power can argue for a future where they might not be is a plausible narrative for material contrasts between them and their foe. The paradox remains though; how can a dominant race such as how the lone wolves perceive the white race to be, risk to be terminated or replaced by an inferior race that they perceive as subhuman?

Tarrant also argues that it is the fault of European men for letting this happen and that it will be up to strong European men to fix this (p 30). The same is relevant for Earnest and Krajčík, who argue for an elite made up of Jews that are in control and wield all the dangerous power in the social system (Douglas, 2002). The Jews are using their propaganda and power over social institutions and media to threaten the social order that the lone wolves want, where the White race is the superior and dominant race. To Krajčík and Earnest the control and enslavement of the White race is because the white race is the biggest threat to the elite and the social system that the Jews want to create. The paradox remains even now though, how is it that the elite is capable of having this power if the white race is supposed to be superior. Krajčík argues that it is because it has been going on for decades, though he gives no explanation to how it started. What he points to is that they have control over the media and can control people - even the white people that have not yet realised the truth - through propaganda. So, while the white race is superior, they are standing against a foe with more material power such as the public that they can hide behind, control over institutions and media, that they can protect themselves with against the lone wolves that are trying to protect the white race (Presser 2018). Whether the lone wolves think that this is already happening or if it is about to happen varies.

5.1.2 The immediacy of the crisis

The lone wolves in this study showcase a view on the social order being in disorder, either as being threatened or as wrong because there is something unclean in the present system (Douglas 2002, p 44). This is similar to the finding in the case of the lone wolf that Presser (2012 p 15) studied where she notes that for the individual lone wolf, a reason for them to commit harm was because the lone wolf saw that the proper social order had been upset. There it was about that the idyllic past was different from the unhappy and incompetent present (Presser 2012, p 15). The lone wolves differ somewhat in their thinking on how they see the time aspect. Kaczynski sees an imminent threat that has already started but where technology has not yet created the peak of the crisis. He writes that:

Furthermore, if the system survives, the consequences will be inevitable: There is no way of reforming or modifying the system so as to prevent it from depriving people of dignity and autonomy [...] But the bigger the system grows

the more disastrous the results of its breakdown will be, so if it is to break down it had best break down sooner rather than later. (Kaczynski, para 2 -3)

Here he is entertaining both the thought of technology surviving and of breaking down as to show how bad it can be, but that there is hope for it to break down and that that too will be tough but it would be better for it to happen now than when it has grown too strong. He is also looking back to a more idyllic past where the technological advances did not threaten the autonomy of humans. Roof likewise also reminisces to the time of segregation in America because he saw it as a good way to protect white people in the sense that they could not be harmed by black people or be brought down to the same level as them (p 2). Krajčák and Earnest are talking about a threat that is already here.

Every Jew is responsible for the meticulously planned genocide of the European race. [...] Their crimes are endless. For lying and deceiving the public through their exorbitant role in news media; for using usury and banks to enslave nations in debt and control all finances [...] for their role in starting wars on a foundation of lies [...] for pushing degenerate propaganda in the form of entertainment; for their role in feminism which has enslaved women in sin [...] for their role in voting for and funding politicians and organizations who use mass immigration to displace the European race; for their large role in every slave trade for the past two-thousand years; for promoting race mixing; for their cruel and bloody history of genocidal behavior (Earnest, para 7).

Here Earnest breaks down all the different ways that the Jews are in charge in order to showcase exactly how bad it already is and to show the extent of the control that the Jews have. Furthermore, it shows the destructiveness of the Jews, that they want nothing more than to harm and control the European race. Earnest brings up all the dark parts of history and puts the blame on the Jews, that they are directly responsible for all of it. It is a way to prove how villainous and evil the enemy really is in order to strengthen the polarisation to themselves as the protagonist who is just doing the right thing by fighting back against this oppression (Smith 2005, p 21). According to Earnest, and Krajčák this elite of Jews are also using other groups of peoples, as well as control media and propaganda to weaken and control the white race. It is the sole aim that the Jews have and has been for the last two thousand years to

displace and destroy the White race. There is no other choice left but to use violence to fight this oppression before it gets worst, which Krajčák touches on:

The longer this goes on, the longer we wait before trying to stop this, the weaker we will be when the time comes to do something - and if we wait for too long, we will be too outnumbered, too politically diluted, too atomized to do anything (Krajčák, p 3)

Krajčák is seeing a potential future here of what would happen if they do not start to fight back against their oppressor. He repeatedly notes "if we wait too long" then the battle is already lost. It once again pushes on both the underdog narrative, the sense that there is a future where they could be outnumbered (Presser 2018) but also the apocalyptic narrative in the sense that it is about survival of the race and that their foe is so evil that it cannot be allowed to continue to exist (Smith 2005, p 27). Rathjen likewise sees the problem as already being present in Germany because he defines all non-German groups, but especially the Muslims as being destructive and that they need to be eradicated in order to solve the problem. He also warns of the secret service that is also already present in society and is able to control people. Though he shifts from seeing himself as chosen by them as well as being chosen to fight them so it is somewhat unclear as to the place that he sees this secret service to have and if there is a relation to his targeted group. Tarrant, Gendron and Crusius are leaning more to an emerging threat from their targeted group.

The best time to attack was yesterday, the next best time is today. Everyday that goes by without an attack, hundreds of more non-whites immigrate to White countries and spawn children. Waiting any longer will only make it more difficult to get non-whites out later on.

Similar to what Krajčák is arguing, the immediacy not tomorrow but yesterday or today. But even though the worst possible scenario might not be there just yet, they are still pushing for the need to act now and that, like with Krajčák, it is important that people act now while it is still possible to stop them. To them, the replacement and threat to the white race has begun but it is not yet at its critical point, there is a worse social order in the future that will happen. It is up to them to fight back against this crisis. But previous research has found that lone wolves in general are not highly capable operatives with operational and strategic skills that allow them to commit extensive and complicated attacks (Schuurman et al 2017). The lone

wolves in this study succeeded in attacking but how capable they see themselves as being can also be seen in how they present themselves in the manifestos.

5.1.3 Self-presentation

In all the manifestos, except Kaczynski's and Rathjen's, the protagonist is presenting themselves as part of the average population, and it is recurring that they bring this up in relation to the fact that it proves that anyone can act and that they should act. But it also seems like it is somewhat of a personal grievance to them because they are not holding this very high that they were normal. It is very dismissive in the way that they are brushing past the fact that they were just like anyone else. They mention some kind of future that they could have and in a sense that they are sacrificing. Though there is also a tone of dismay towards the people who choose to have an ignorant life instead of fighting this war against impending crisis. Kaczynski never mentions anything related to his personal past in the manifesto while Rathjen takes the opposite approach to all the others. He goes far back in his personal story, saying that he remembers the day he was born and early days from his past where he noticed that he was being watched. Rathjen ended up shooting at a hookah cafe in Hanau, Germany and then killed his mother and himself. He describes himself as special and extremely aware of things that no one else seems to understand. For example, there is a secret service that monitors people's privacy through cameras and by reading their thoughts. How this secret service plays into this racial ideology of non-German groups and Islam being destructive and bad, is somewhat unclear and the part about the secret service is more there to warn people that it is happening (Cohen & Pretzel 2020, p 1). He sees himself as both being a target of this secret service and chosen by them to do certain things.

Regardless of how the lone wolves present themselves, they all identify a crisis that is threatening them, and they point to the need to act and the immediacy of it. In most cases, they are rejecting a present social order and want to change it into something else. The lone wolves do not recognise authority as a part of their social system and since that social order holds ambiguous roles in how the lone wolves want the reality to be then those that are in control wield dangerous powers (Douglas 2002). The antagonist threatens the social order that the lone wolves want to build because they are working to undermine the white race instead of towards the same goal as the lone wolves. It furthers the idea that the lone wolves need to act to fight this injustice and to protect those that are endangered.

When there is radical evil endangering the race, then there has to be a certain power granted to those that are righteous, that will fight for what is good, but it means that there is no space for compromises or maintaining of the order (Douglas 2002; Smith 2005). Smith writes that “events are seen as unequivocally world-historical, and as in need of heroic interventions, for the object of struggle is the future destiny of the planet or civilization.” (2005, p 27) and it is a very fitting way of describing the tone that the lone wolves take to rally others to the cause. Nilsson (2019) references the lone terrorists as a type of ethno-soldiers. War is generally synonymous with violence and therefore it is pushed for at the greatest extent but there are mentions of other ways to stop the crisis that is not only related to violence. Still, they do hold violence as the most efficient way to change the social order.

“[...] many of our best men and women will lose their lives [...] The White race may lose an arm or a leg in this war, but we will survive, if we simply fight for our existence” (Krajčák, p 4) “The war will not be easy, the death toll will assuredly be high”. (Tarrant, p 73; Gendron, p 179)

These are a few of the examples from the manifestos where they are indeed referencing the crisis as a war as a way of building drama. The statements are written with a very dramatic tone, in the sense that there are sacrifices that have to be made, that there are losses to the war. But Krajčák is also pushing for how high the stakes really are in order for these sacrifices to be worth it since they are fighting for the survival of the White race. By painting the violence as righteous and morally correct through the point of fighting for survival, actions it allows for them to engage as well as exploit the symbolic value that force has (Katz 1988, p 321). It allows them to show that they mean it (ibid.). References to such a war can be found repeatedly through several of the manifestos as reasons for why they have chosen violence to get what they want.

5.2 Identifying the goal

Surprisingly enough, there is a rather limited space in the manifestos dedicated to what it is that the lone wolves explicitly want. It is there, and it is an important part of their narrative because it is hard to rally troops into committing mass-harm without a clear goal to achieve. But only a few of them mention an ideal future.

Everyone except Kaczynski - who wants the technological and industrial evolution to regress backwards - are advocating for what they call diversity, but in the sense of separation of races. Tarrant writes:

No, the attack was not an attack on diversity, but an attack in the name of diversity. To ensure diverse peoples remain diverse, separate, unique, undiluted in unrestrained in cultural or ethnic expression and autonomy [...] In my mind a rainbow is only beautiful to due its variety of colours, mix the colours together and you destroy them all and they are gone forever and the end result is far from anything beautiful. (p 14)

That Tarrant wants races and people to be separated as the way that the rainbow is beautiful because the colours of it are distinct, it breaks down to that he has no problem with other races or groups, as long as they are not infringing on White territory or mixing with white people. Most of them take the standpoint that other groups that are inside of what they determine are white countries simply matter out of place, they are unclean inside the social order that the lone wolves desire and must therefore be separated (Douglas 2002, p 44). It is about a physical separation to them, if their target group, such as the Muslims or Hispanics could be kept in their "own" countries, where they belong, then the lone wolves say that they have no problem with the group. They want separation where white people are the only ones in white countries, Hispanics stay in Hispanic countries and Muslims stay in Muslim countries etc. That way, they cannot replace the white race or culture either. It also solves another problem that many see as even worse, those that convert into the religion (Islam in the case of Tarrant) since this means to turn your back on your race and culture and choose a more inferior group than your own as well as supporting the evil enemy. To have relationships and children with other races is also defined as a major crime in the manifestos because it would contaminate and water down the genetics and values of what it is to be white. In this case they become anomalies instead (Douglas 2002, p 38). This goes into the aspect that it is common for the lone wolves to see their targeted group, or any other classification outside of the white race, as being subhuman. The differences are too great for them to be considered equal with the standard that they hold white people to.

Some of the lone wolves take this further though and instead of wanting physical separation between the groups, their ideal future would instead be to eradicate their target group

completely. Kaczynski is somewhat in this group, though for him it is about stopping the technological and industrial advancements, he does not want it to be a part of society. It is not the people he attacked that he wants to eradicate, they are simply a representation of the phenomenon of technology. It is more the phenomenon that he wants to destroy. For Rathjen, who committed the attack in Hanau as well as killed himself and his mother, he says that if he could press a button and make all the other groups disappear then he would, without a doubt. The same is relevant for Earnest, Krajčák and Gendron regarding Jews. All of them believe in the theory of ZOG and that there is a Jewish elite that aims to harm and control the white race. They see this race as so innately evil that they cannot be allowed to exist in any form, anywhere because of the power they have and the destruction they cause. Earnest asks himself in the self-interview if he hates all Jews, to which he replies: “I hate anyone who seeks the destruction of my race. Every Jew currently alive plays a part in the destruction of my race. Does that answer your question?” (Earnest, para 61). To Earnest there are no innocent Jews, instead they are all a part of the oppression of whites and must therefore be destroyed.

In this sense, Earnest, Krajčák and Gendron lean more into the apocalyptic narrative that makes it more justified to use violence, because to them there is no compromise (Smith 2005, p 27; Presser 2018). Those of the lone wolves that are okay with only separating the groups does indirectly show that the enemy is not so dangerous as to require its complete eradication, only relocation. That is not to say that they cannot justify their violence as the only solution, they see violence as the only way to achieve the goal of relocation because the targeted group will not leave on their own. In addition, many of them, Tarrant especially, have still managed to convince others to commit violence because he shows that the stakes are high enough.

5.3 Achieving the goal

Kaczynski wrote in his manifesto that without the violence he committed then no one would be willing to publish his manifesto and that even if they did, it would not have been read by a lot of people. What he concludes is the following: “In order to get our message before the public with some chance of making a lasting impression, we’ve had to kill people.” (para 96).

For people to pay any kind of attention to the message that Kaczynski wanted to spread, killing was the only way of doing so. The act of killing to bring attention to the cause is not

mentioned by the others in this data as a justification for their violence. They are likely to not have thought about it that way because many of them phrase their attack to fight back. Tarrant asks himself the question if the attack will not just vilify his ideology to which he responds: “No, people will forget my motivations quickly and only remember the attack itself.” (p 22). The violence is the message.

Kaczynski does point out a rather important thing. None of the other manifestos would have gotten the same kind of attention had it not been for the violence they committed, probably not even from each other. It is recurring that there is disdain for those that choose to not act and only complain about the crisis. Had any of these lone wolves chosen to only publish their manifestos without the act, they might have been disregarded because of their peaceful choice, even by the audience that supported them. It is the violence that gives them their voice. Whether this is realised or not is not clear in any of the other manifestos, at least it is not mentioned, or it might not be something they want to recognise as true. Granted, Kaczynski says it is because his writings would be lost in the media onslaught. Earnest and Krajčičik argue that it would be because the media is controlled by a Jewish elite that would twist the narrative and motives. The manifestos allow for them to control the telling of what is happening, where they are able to tell the truth about why they did it and what is happening in society, and it cannot be warped by an elite that is fighting against their cause. The violence for all the others is because it is the only way to fight the war. That is not to say that the manifestos are not important to them though, because even though some of them say that their manifestos were rushed, they have still spent the time to write them and making sure that it would reach people (Leonard et al 2014, p 409). It is also a way for them to show that their act and their motives were righteous.

5.3.1 Righteousness

In the self-interviews that are a common part of the manifestos many of the lone wolves answer some variation of the question about how they can see violence as the solution. Earnest writes that he is willing to sacrifice his own comfort for the survival of his race. Tarrant writes and Gendron copy-pastes the same statement: “Would you rather do the killing, or leave it to your children? Your grandchildren?” (p 22 and p 12 respectively). The way they argue that they are doing it for future generations, and specifically to children does take away from the sense of immediacy of the crisis that the lone wolves have established in their manifestos. If future generations are going to exist, then is the crisis of the destruction of

the white race as imminent as they make it seem? The arguments for the lone wolves doing the killing so that their children or grandchildren do not have to is a way to make the violence more righteous and justified because of the label that children have as innocent and in need of protection from horrors. Presser (2018, p 88) points out that it is an important part of the story of the underdog that no matter what argument they present or how successful the action is, it is honourable and morally appointed. By arguing that they are killing and causing harm so that their children or grandchildren do not have to, it plays into the righteousness, because it is rarely argued that doing something for your children is not the righteous thing to do. The lone wolves do however make a difference between the innocence of their own children compared to the children of the targets. Furthermore, Rathjen and Roof argue that the destruction and crimes that their targets are responsible for needs to be stopped. Kaczynski argues that the continuation of the industrial-technological society will threaten human freedom and at the largest level for all of them, it is about the survival of people that they perceive to be threatened, which once again shows that they are using arguments that make their actions seem like the right thing to do. So, while they present themselves as average people, they do present their motives as faultless.

They also see each other's motives and actions as faultless, as can be seen in how they honour each other in the different manifestos. This has been seen in previous research as well (c.f Hamm & Spaaij 2017; Nilsson 2019), the status of saints within the bigger community. Krajčák manifesto references Earnest, Tarrant, Crusius and Gendron as people that have influenced and inspired him to act, and he has given all of them the title of Saints. Krajčák explains what pushed him to act by writing: "Saint Gendron gave me the final nudge, allowing me to overcome my own indecision" (Krajčák, p 12). While it is only one of the examples of where he refers to someone as Saint, the quote also shows the way that they inspire each other to act. This is why the communication through manifestos where the lone wolves can spread their ideas to others are an important form of communication to look at to better understand the relation between the lone wolf and the broader community.

Furthermore, it is never really specified by any of them if it is solely for the fact that they acted, or that they present it as being a sacrifice, or that they do it so that their children would not have to. It does seem like the act alone, that they are taking a stand for the Good and are fighting for it, is enough for the community (Katz 1988, p 12). The Good is the moral heroic purpose that a person can feel they are acting on when they commit a violent crime, because

they see it as fighting against a perceived injustice. Considering that many of them show a disdain for those that do not act, it is possible that just acting is enough and that the morality of it is just embedded in that.

5.3.2 Fame and misrecognition

Tarrant explicitly says that he did not do this for fame but to fight against evil, but that is not to say that there might not still be a desire for an audience considering he filmed the attack and shared his motives publicly. In the case of the lone wolf David Adkisson that Presser (2012, p 11) studied in relation to this, she found that he wanted to have his 15 minutes of fame and to say that he had made a mark this does seem to correspond to what the manifestos say as well. When Tarrant conduct his self-interview and asks himself if he is doing it for the fame, he writes that:

No, carrying out an attack for fame would be laughable. After all who can remember the name of the attackers in the September 11 attack in New York? How about the attack on the pentagon? The attackers in the plane that crashed into the field on the same day? I will be forgotten quickly. Which I do not mind. After all I am a private and mostly introverted person. But the aftershock from my actions will ripple for years to come, driving political and social discourse, creating the atmosphere of fear and change that is required.

Tarrant is pointing to the differences between the act and the person behind it here, saying that it is the act that is important because that is what people will remember while no one cares for those that committed it. The person does not leave the same impression as the destruction and violence of the act itself. For Tarrant, he writes that he is okay with this, the act was not for fame for himself but instead for the statement that the crime would send. It is the act that would achieve immortality and not the person behind it. He does contradict this somewhat at a later stage when saying that he sees himself receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts. This is also somewhat recurring, the notion that at a later stage they will be either freed from their punishments, or praised for their actions as the world recognises the good, they did. Gendron also writes: "If we do rise up against the replacers, I expect that I will be let out and honored amongst my people." (p 9). Most of them accept that death is however a possibility as they might be shot but few of them have stated that as a goal. Instead, most of them want to survive to be able to continue the fight and if they are caught;

to be a liability to state expenses that are put into the prison system that they become a part of.

This is a big difference to that of the religious terrorists. Roy (2017, p 48) points out the suicidal terrorism that has become a part of jihad terrorist attacks. Here it is instead that a hero who is blown up while leading an attack will be remembered. It is now the norm that the perpetrator dies. Combined with pessimistic ideals about the end of time coming closer, means that they must start thinking of their own salvation and can therefore not focus on creating a better society (Roy 2017, p 15). The lone wolves that have written these manifestos instead take a different approach, they see a crisis happening and take it upon themselves to fight back against it and the recognition of the public can come later. There are two aspects here that also fit into the underdog story; the time aspect and the misrecognition by the public, they are important aspects as to how the lone wolves can justify their violence as the right thing to do and both aspects will be explored below.

Many of them do not see their attack as the end or that it will be a quick fix. They want to be an inspiration and a fore-runner for more attacks (Presser 2012, p 11) and the fight is as important as the success (Presser 2018, p 91). Many of them do make it very clear that while there is an urgency to act now, the end goal might not be reached until much later. Much of this has to do with the fact that it will take time for the public to recognise what they have known all this time. Krajčák, who sees a Zionist Occupation Government as the threat to the white race, tells those that want to fight this that:

Don't appeal to the masses from the start - appeal to your own side. The people receptive to the redpill. They are the ones that matter, they are the ones that fight, they are the ones that you convince to fight. The masses, the ordinary people, they will remain on the side that is currently the dominant power, until it becomes impossible or dangerous to do so, until the current dominant power can no longer provide their basic needs. Then they will decide if they are our enemy, or if they switch their loyalties to us. (Krajčák, p 14)

It is another way to create drama to the underdog story, the notion that the act that the lone wolves commit is not recognised by the public (Presser 2018, p 100). The lone wolves, however, know the truth and because they are fighting for this truth, their actions are

righteous and therefore they will one day be rewarded. The quote from Krajčák also shows that their numbers are not important, it is about the cause and then the recognition will come later when the current dominant power cannot give the public what they need, and the public will then fight on alongside the lone wolves. Instead, he wants those that support him and the cause to focus on their own side and to build numbers and strength until their side is powerful enough to sway the masses onto their side and away from the current social power. It gives them a certain kind of power that the general public cannot access because they have not yet seen the truth (Douglas 2002, p 120). This too plays into the risk that they are willing to take, by stepping in the margins of general society and not conforming to what the elite wants them to think, they have evolved into something stronger (Douglas 2002, p 120). Even though they do see the recognition as less important compared to the cause, it is common for lone wolves to seek an audience that is willing to listen or see what they are doing to fight for the cause and again, as seen in the quote by Krajčák above, they want people to support them and what they want to achieve (Gardell 2018; Hamm & Spaaij 2017). Otherwise, they would not spend the time to write their manifesto or to livestream their attacks as for example Tarrant did when he attacked the mosques in the Christchurch shootings unless it is important for this to be shared with a bigger audience.

5.3.3 Community

When addressing their supportive audience their story conforms to the underdog story. They lean into many of the aspects that Presser (2018) points out, the impending crisis that requires them to step up into the role of the hero to fight against the oppression they are faced with. They disregard the present social order because they see a future where they will be outnumbered against a foe that is seeking to destroy them despite being a superior race and culture (Douglas 2002; Presser 2018). They urge and inspire others to join them to fight the big evil because the trial that they are facing is righteous. Krajčák does however address the fact that they should not present themselves as underdogs, while still having many of those aspects in his own justifications. But when responding to those that would argue that they should not use violence because it makes them lose the moral high ground he writes:

Ultimately, this narrative comes from a position of victimhood. The people who use this argument do not actually care about victory, but they care about being perceived as the underdog, as the victims. They want Whites to stay in a position of weakness,

because this allows them to pity party; to bemoan just how oppressed they are under the boot of a vastly more powerful foe. (Krajčák p 17)

While disregarding the position as a victim, it also proves that there is a disdain for those that may agree with him but will not commit violent acts to help the cause. As he writes that those that do not act are those that want to be oppressed so that they can complain about their victimhood but not do anything to change their position as the victim. Krajčák values action because that is what will get them results and anything else will not be enough.

Moreover, many of the lone wolves are also very tactical in explaining how they plan to go through with their attack and how someone should prepare but they also play on peoples' emotions. They play on their pride and their anger, either through statistics or on crimes that have taken place towards white people in order to prove that there is a crisis. But as seen above, Krajčák, and many of the others also show that victimhood is seen as a weakness. The intensity of feelings that the story provides will then match the intensity of the mission and fight (Presser 2018, p 93). The violent nature of terrorism and their references to the warrior subculture is also prominent. It allows for a model for problem-solving for whatever frustration they might face in their own "average" life and the violence is as necessary as it is transformative for the individual and the community (Hamm & Spaaij 2017, p 53).

Though the lone wolf commits their crime alone, and that it has been argued that the communication between lone wolves and the bigger community they draw inspiration from is not important (Nilsson, 2019), there are recurring references in the manifestos that they do inspire and drive each other, and that they are not alone. "The total number of people in these organisations is in the millions, the total number of groups in the thousands". (Tarrant, p 12 & Gendron p 5). "First individually, men of action just like those before me, who will walk the path alone. Then in the dozens, men who seek to smash ZOG, will walk the same path. Then by the hundreds, [...] Then thousands" (Krajčák pp 64-5). Presser (2012, p 5) argues that what is said will influence our own actions as much as the others and there is previous research that points to that even lone wolf terrorism has community in it (Hamm & Spaaij 2017). Since many of them have written that they spent a lot of time on the internet to find out the truth, it is plausible that they have indeed been able to see the bigger community that to varying extent have similar ideologies. There is also an element to not being alone in the underdog story, just as joining with others and to see themselves as front-runners (Presser

2018, p 97). The underdog story allows for building a collective identity as well as solidarity even when they act alone.

5.3.4 Justifiable target


While most of the analysis up until this point has been about justifying their violence, there is another important factor into creating a narrative that is convincing others that their act was righteous and that is that the target was a legit one. The crisis is a legit reason to act, and the target groups of the lone wolves are directly related to the crisis and therefore a legit target. They are important to the lone wolves, seen in how much focus that each lone wolf spends to define the group, show their crimes and how they should be dealt with.

Gendron, Earnest, Crusius and Krajčák views that the ones responsible for the threat there are both an antagonistic group and a villain where antagonists hold the internal power while the villain has the external power (Douglas 2002, p 122). The antagonistic group represents the internal power that is the threat to the existence of the white race while the villain, who is in control, represents the external power because they are responsible for the oppression of the white race. The antagonistic group, which are either the Hispanic, the blacks or the non-white groups, are just a tool that is being utilised by the villain, which is either to Crusius the corporates and democratic party, or it is the Jews according to Gendron, Earnest and Krajčák. Despite this, only Earnest attacked his chosen villain by attacking a synagogue in the USA, the others went after the antagonist. Additionally, this is where most of them bring up the difference between hard and soft targets but argue that there is no shame in selecting soft targets. Previous research has pointed out that it is most common for terrorists to attack soft targets (c.f. Hamm & Spaaij 2017; Nilsson 2019; Spaaij 2011). Gendron defines the difference between a soft and hard target in his manifesto as:

Both are the problem, and I would like to address the concept of hard and soft targets here. Hard targets are people with strong political powers, such as president's, prime ministers, judge's, media producers, and military leaders. Soft targets include the everyday man, with low, weak political power. To cleanse an area, both must be removed, one cannot only attack the blacks of Buffalo and expect the zog-bot government to fall as well, just as one cannot attack the zog-bot government and expect the blacks to fall. Both have to be addressed, I am simply attacking one at a time. (Gendron, p 12).

How to select targets and the status of the target as soft or hard is mentioned in some of the other manifestos as well. The choice between who to target, depending on the impact of their action and the likelihood of success is used to explain why they chose the ones they did and not another one. For the lone wolf this is usually because of their limited operational skill and the tools that they can access since they do not have a cell or group behind them that can help with strategic elements necessary for a more protected target. The lone wolves argue that the hard targets will have the most influence on the cause in the sense that when targeting people with power, the removal of them will have a greater effect and damage the order in the targeted group and therefore they want those to be attacked as well. Krajčik also points out that a large group of soft targets can also have a similar desired effect, referencing to how Gendron, who targeted black people in a Tops Market in the US, was able to damage the feeling of safety of a group by targeting them which also counts as a wanted outcome. It shows the common trait in terrorism of wanting to spread fear in groups in order to drive an agenda. While explaining his plan of attack Krajčik has the following picture in his manifesto (p 60).

	Value		
Density	Low value, low density	Medium value, low density	High value, low density
	Low value, medium density	Medium value, medium density	High value, medium density
	Low value, high density	Medium value, high density	High value, high density

Most difficult 

The picture is to show how the amount of targets one can take on and the status of the target as soft, medium or hard target, will have a different reaction. Krajčik (p 59) explains the picture to evaluate the targets regarding value, which means how much of an impact it has on the mission to take down the Jewish elite that he wants to target. The low value targets have a small impact on the crisis on both a micro- and macro-scale. Medium value does have some impact on the local area where the attack takes place. The high value targets have a large impact on the crisis on a macro-level because it targets people with power. When he defines

the different levels of density, low density is about locations where targets are dispersed among non-targets. Medium density are the locations where hitting non-targets can be easily avoided. High density is then what he calls “free-fire zones” where the amount of targets are unlimited and those that are non-target can be seen as collateral damage. The red line he explains is there to explain the difficulty of completing the attack successfully. The top left corner holds the lowest difficulty while the bottom right corner is the hardest to succeed with because of security measures. Krajčik ended up attacking a LGBTQ+ bar in Bratislava which he gave as an example of a low value but high-density target and argued that attacking this type of a target would, according to him, ensure that at least someone got what they deserved. Furthermore, Krajčik touches on how one should think when selecting the target:

The main thing that one must know, is how to select targets to ensure that the operation has its desired impact. First, the goal of the operation should be selected. Then, targets should be selected from a pool of potential ones collected ahead of time. Targets should make sense. Targets should all serve some purpose in the grand scheme of things. Intimidation of racial enemies? Removal of top ZOG figureheads? Destruction of communities of racial enemies? Killing of low-level activists to break their command structure? It’s up to you. (p 60).

When they are breaking down different parts of the tactical thinking behind the attack in a type of how-to, the way that Krajčik does here, where he recommends to others on how to think such as that the targets need to have a purpose to the crisis or that there has to be a goal with the operation is not uncommon for manifestos written by lone wolves (Hamm & Spaaij 2017; Leonard et al 2014; Sandberg 2013). It is also recurring that they are talking about what weapons they are using and alternatives that might be more efficient, as well as talking about their chosen location for the attack.

As with the retelling of their personal story, this part also differs in length and detail between the different manifestos, but it usually comes with the message that people that plan their own attack should use what works and disregard what does not. Since they take inspiration from each other and aim to inspire others and be front-runners then recounting their preparation plays into it (Presser 2012; Sandberg 2013). The hyper-detail into the choices of weapon and lengthy discussions that for example Gendron goes into is likely to also play into some of the hyper-masculinity aspects and warrior subculture that is common for the ethno-nationalist

inspired ideologies and that is also a contributing reason why men are overrepresented in lone wolf terrorism (Hamm & Spaaij 2017 p 53; Simon 2016, p 119).

5.3.5 The role of the target

Going back to what has been mentioned in another theme, about the importance of explicit authority in a system that allows for wielding of power. Douglas argues that “Some powers are exerted on behalf of the social structure; they protect society from malefactors against whom their danger is directed” (2002, p 123). In the eyes of the lone wolves, they are standing up for a social structure that they think is the right one but that is being endangered by a villain. This gives them the moral high ground and they are allowed to stand up for the good (Douglas 2002; Presser 2018). For those of the lone wolves that see a Jewish elite in control of society, they perceive what Douglas calls a well-articulated society, but where the distribution of power is wrong and the ones in power, the malefactor, are seeking to harm the white race. Furthermore, the present elite is using the powers of controlling the “masses” which are either people of colour, immigrants, or the LGBTQ+ community to protect their social order where they are able to have control over the white race. They are also using these groups to instil propaganda and politics into the white people that have not yet seen the truth and are too brainwashed to realise what is happening. While these groups are not seen as the radical evil in the same sense as the elite, they are still seen as a part of the threat and as such, a legit target.

Because the groups that are used by the elite still wield an unconscious power they are also endangering the social structure that the lone wolves want to protect, and as such, they have to be dealt with too (Douglas 2002, p 123). Krajčák explains how this system would work:

They dilute our power by importing or empowering millions of shitskin hordes who then act as the ethnic equivalent of strikebreakers, by being deliberately inserted into White-majority areas with their importation enforced by laws that prohibit “discrimination”. They weaken us with propaganda that pushes degenerate ideologies and lifestyles like transgenderism, “sexual liberation”, faggotry and others. They control us with measures like the jew-created and dangerous “COVID-19 vaccines”, just to figure out how many people are willing to resist and how many people are not willing to, so they can tailor their moves accordingly. (Krajčák, p 2)

Here Krajčák explains that there are groups such as immigrants that are used in order for the Jews to outnumber the White race and to strengthen the Jews' hold on power. They are also using these groups to manipulate White people with propaganda to corrupt the minds of white people to accept these groups. Furthermore, the Jews are also blaming other factors, in this case the vaccines for Covid to map out the population they are trying to control. Hence there is a difference to some of the lone wolves between who is an antagonist and who is the evil villain in their narrative, but the villain is the one in charge of everything. The antagonist is there to create an obstacle and to those of the lone wolves that argue for the presence of both, they see the blacks or immigrants for example as a tool that the elite uses to get what they want as well as to gain numbers and being the first line of defence in the war. The lone wolves claim that these groups act like an airbag against the attacks of the lone wolves, they take the brunt of the force which means less injury to the machinery of the elite. The elite is the villain in the sense that they have malicious intent, they want to enslave and control the white race, they are the true representation of evil that cannot be allowed to exist (Smith 2005).

No one is innocent which is a take that is very similar to that of religious terrorists in how they see their targets (Roy 2017) To religious terrorists that attack the West, all Western peoples take part in their governments' actions and have an active role in their perceived wrongdoings, which are often connected to a avenging the ummah or aggressions made by the West in the Middle East (Roy 2017, pp 45-8). Likewise with the right-wing lone wolves, who believe that it is not just the people in power but that all jews are responsible for the oppression of the white race and aim to destroy it, even down to children because they too will one day grow up to continue the oppression. The difference is however that the religious terrorists rarely focus on one specific group as their target, instead they attack public spaces and do not discriminate between victims (Roy 2017, p 22). Their goal is to create fear amongst everyone, and their targets are symbolic more than directed (Roy 2017, p 11). In comparison, the lone wolves spend their manifestos explaining the targeting of one specific group. Even when they cover several groups or express hatred for other groups except their main target, they are specific and with who is designated as evil and that those are the ones to attack.

In the same way that lone wolf terrorism has been on the rise in the last years, so has the rise of nationalist political parties. Not to say that either of them did not exist before, nor that they are connected. But it should somewhat diminish the legitimacy of the arguments that there is an elite out to replace and destroy the white race in “white countries”. Granted, the impending crisis in the underdog story does not have to be real for them to create the narrative of impending doom (Presser 2018). But considering this spread of nationalism among political parties, this somewhat weakens the apocalyptic narrative. The apocalyptic narrative requires the highest of stakes and polarisation, but it makes it sensitive to deflation if it is possible to show those that have been labelled as the villain or unclean does not live up to those labels (Smith 2005, p 27). This is not a likely threat to those that share the ideology that the lone wolves are advocating, but it could limit the ability to convince others to see their truth as legit.

What can be seen in the manifestos, however, is that the lone wolves disregard the present authority, no matter how articulate and explicit it is. Tarrant, who sees the Muslims as the threat to society, disregards democracy to solve the crisis, even with politicians who would be labelled as nationalists or anti-immigration. He endorses voting for radicals on both parts of the political spectrum (left to right) but only in a sense as to destabilise. For the lone wolves that argue for a Jewish led elite, there is also a sense of disregarding democracy as useless but furthermore, everyone that has power in the elite is considered an enemy. Very few seem to hold a belief that a white politician is part of their cause. They are not culturally white which is also a major aspect to the line that separates white people from everyone else. Here it does not seem to matter where this person in power is from, what their political stance is, they are simply sympathisers to the Jews, or they are a part of the Jewish elite.

While it so far has been about the lone wolves that see the difference between a villain and an antagonist and have chosen to attack the antagonist, there are also lone wolves that ended up attacking their villain. Tarrant and Roof did attack their perceived villains as they spent their manifestos focusing on how Muslims and black people respectively are the threat to the white race and culture and how they are responsible for this crisis. The Muslims and the blacks are presented as the villains and are also the ones targeted. Although Nilsson (2022, p 222) argues that Tarrant’s manifesto show indications of a discursive convergence of both the anti-Muslim and the anti-Jewish conspirational discourse, similar to that of Gendron, Earnest and Krajčák where the invasion of Islamic forces are controlled by Jews, but this is not a very

obvious indication in Tarrant's manifesto. The indication of a global and corporate run press, education system and anti-white media that is in control of the democracy in countries which renders democratic solutions impossible (p 20) is there and so there are obvious similarities (Renton & Gidley 2017, p 5). However, all focus in the manifesto is on Muslims as the invaders and responsible for the replacement and genocide. The convergent discourse of the anti-Muslim and anti-Jew discourse exists, as seen in Gendron, Earnest and Krajčák's manifestos and the danger of that discourse because of its genocidal imperative is significant (Nilsson 2022, p 222).

This connection between Western antisemitism and Islamophobia that is spreading through society shows that somehow there is something that make the Nazi Jewish enemy and the present Western Muslim enemy demand the highest security measures and that is not only opinion of lone wolves but of the political structures (Renton & Gidley 2017, p 5). This racism in society is used by the lone wolves to further their cause. Tarrant answers a self-asked question about choosing to target Muslims: "Historical, societal, and statistical reasons. They are the most despised group of invaders in the West, attacking them receives the greatest level of support." (Tarrant, p 21) Likewise, previous research on the Swedish lone wolf Peter Mangs, points to the same exploitation of societal racism, as he knew that by targeting people that looked like immigrants, it would not be prioritised as highly by the police and it would consequently add fire to the tension between immigrants and other groups (Gardell 2018).

For the lone wolf's violence to have meaning, there must be something they are fighting for, a crisis so big that there can be no compromises (Presser 2018). The lone wolves have seen a truth by realising what is about to happen and because they are for the survival of an oppressed group, they are righteous and have the moral right to use violence to defend and fight for their race. To add to the drama, the public does not recognise their struggle, they do not see what the lone wolf is fighting for. The underdog narrative gives meaning to the violence, but there also must be a meaning to the victim and therefore it has to go further than the underdog narrative into an apocalyptic narrative where they are not just facing a crisis, but also an enemy that is evil enough that there is no other option but to destroy them. There are clear lines between the evil and those that are good, boundaries that designate the evil as being unclean, it does not fit in the system (Douglas 2002; Smith 2005).

6. Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to investigate how lone wolves justify their violent attacks of mass-harm before the act is committed and how they present the victim's role in this violence that makes them a legit target to attack. This has been done to understand how they can influence others to commit crimes and how they see their own role in this violence. The analysis has been conducted using eight different manifestos from eight lone wolves that have committed acts of mass-harm. To the lone wolves there are three things to take from the manifestos, that there is a crisis that needs to be solved and therefore it is legitimised that they are using violence to act but they are facing an enemy that is strong and numerically dominant. This leads to an underdog narrative.

The crisis is related to a threat against the groups that the lone wolves want to protect, which in all cases except Theodore Kaczynski has to do with protecting the white race from replacement or genocide by either immigrant or ZOG (Zionist Occupation Government). In Kaczynski's view it is instead technological and industrial advances that are threatening the autonomy of humans and must therefore be stopped and reversed. This crisis that they are facing is in all cases threatening the survival of their race because there is a threat aiming to destroy it. All the lone wolves take a different approach as to what exactly the crisis is, how it will happen, when it will happen and who will be responsible. It is in line with what previous research has found; that lone wolves tend to create their own ideologies inspired by the broader and more established ones (Hamm & Spaaij 2017). There are still some common grounds though. The aim of the villain to take over what the lone wolves (except Kaczynski) designate as white countries and to either control, replace or destroy the white race and white culture. This will be done by outnumbering the white race, by using their stronger family values and control over media and state institutions to eliminate or enslave white people.

This is why it is important that they act. The crisis is so threatening and severe that there is no choice but to react with violence because it is about the survival of what the lone wolves see as the superior and dominant race (Presser, 2018). They want a social order there is no dirt in the system (Douglas 2002) meaning that everyone that they do not perceive as belonging to the white race should be separated and contained to their "own" countries. The white race should be the only race in designated white countries, which is generally considered to be countries that is or has been connected to Europe. At the moment the white race are being

oppressed in their own countries and the lone wolves have to fight back against this so that the white race can instead have its rightful place as the superior race. They are not committing violence for their own selfish reasons; they are doing it for the survival of something bigger. The lone wolves are sacrificing their own future so that their children and grandchildren will not have to do the same. This makes it a righteous fight and violence is the only way to truly get the results. But in order to break the cultural constraints that society has on violence, they have to show that they are going up against an enemy that is so purely evil that there is no other option than to eradicate it completely.

Because of the harm that the threat is planning to cause to those that the lone wolves want to protect, they must use violence to fight back. In the underdog narrative, the enemy is more powerful and outnumbers the protagonist (Presser 2018). That is the drama that the lone wolves are building in their manifestos as well. It gives meaning to the violence. But the lone wolves also need to legitimise their victims as evil villains that make them into an enemy they must destroy. They do this through character polarisation that describes their targets as the villain or antagonist that is so purely evil and that wants to cause severe harm to those that the lone wolves argue they want to protect (Douglas 2002, Smith 2005). Their targets take on a very active role in many of the manifestos, where they are seen as a part of the oppression that the lone wolves are fighting by simply belonging to the targeted group. Many of the lone wolves see no differences between innocent or guilty enemies, instead they are all actively oppressing them. In conclusion, the underdog narrative gives the violence meaning through the crisis while the character polarisation and role of the victim as evil and as an active oppressor, is how the lone wolves legitimises their victims as valid targets.

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