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Commitment to Extremist Ideology: Using Factor Analysis to Move beyond Binary Measures of Extremism

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ABSTRACT

This study article focuses on American far-right (FR) extremists who committed ideologically motivated violent or financial crimes in the United States. We examine three research questions. First, are certain types of FR ideological beliefs associated with different types of criminal behavior? Second, can the various indicators of FR ideology be used to create a scalar measure of commitment to FR ideology? Third, which typology of the FR movement provides the most reliable measure of FR extremism? We use data from the United States Extremist Crime Database to measure indicators of FR ideology in a sample of 305 FRs who committed a financial crime or homicide between 2006 and 2010 in the United States. Conspiratorial, antigovernment, and antitax beliefs were positively associated with risk of financial crimes, while xenophobic, survivalist, and anti–gun control beliefs were positively associated with risk of violent crimes. A factor analysis created a commitment to FR ideology scale and identified four sub-types of FRs: Conspiracy Theorist, Survivalist, Movement Participant, and Proud far-rightist. The factor analysis did not support the prevailing typologies. Importantly though, these typologies were useful in predicting criminal behavior patterns of far rightists. We outline a number of other measurement issues for future research to address.

This article focuses on American far-right (FR) extremists who committed ideologically motivated violent or financial crimes in the United States. We construct a scale to measure these FR offenders' levels of commitment to their ideological beliefs. Our classification of these individuals as FR extremists is based upon behavioral and attitudinal requirements. Behaviorally, each offender had to commit either a financial or a violent crime in the United States between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2010. Attitudinally, the offender had to subscribe to some aspects of the far-right belief system at the time of the crime. Major FR beliefs include conspiracy theories, suspicion of the federal tax system, and the idea that citizens must defend themselves from a tyrannical government.[1] Collectively these beliefs (especially the conspiracy theories) are categorized as extremist because they are "political ideas

that are diametrically opposed to society's core values."[2] Our determination of whether an offender subscribed to each of the specific component of the far-right belief system were based upon their statements (i.e., verbal or written self-admissions), and behaviors (e.g., participating in extremist activities), and how others described them. We expand on these points below in the data and methods section.

This study seeks to answer three research questions. First, we investigate whether certain aspects of the FR belief system are associated with different crime types, that is, violent versus nonviolent (i.e., financial). We reviewed the social science literatures (i.e., criminology, political science, psychology, sociology, etc.) and media reports to identify the key components of American far-right ideology. We then identified indicators to measure each of these far-right beliefs.

Second, we examine to what extent offenders subscribe to the differing ideological beliefs associated with the movement. Prior studies have usually not examined if American FR offenders vary in the specific beliefs adhered to or in the intensity of their commitment to these beliefs. We used exploratory factor analysis to assess the indicators of far-right extremism found in the literature and create a far-right extremism scale.

Third, we determine whether factors identified in the extremism scale correspond with the major far-right typologies described in the literature. Kaplan[3] divides the FR, for instance, into seven categories (Klan, Christian Identity, neo-Nazi, reconstructed traditions/Odinism, idiosyncratic sectarians, single issue constituencies [e.g., tax protestors], and knuckle draggers galore/skinheads); while Durham[4] separates the FR into two sub-categories (the extreme right and the radical right). Barkun's[5] typology divides the FR into four sub-categories (Klan, Christian Identity, neo-Nazi groups, and the agrarian protest movement). It is possible that certain sub-categories are associated with different crime types. The Klan or neo-Nazis, for example, may have higher odds of committing a violent crime, while tax protestors may be more likely to commit financial crimes.

Below, we first briefly review the radicalization literature and describe the common beliefs found in the American far-right movement and the subtypes of the movement. The methods section follows, which describes the sampling technique, data source, operationalization of far-right ideology and the study's statistical analysis techniques. The results are then discussed, with reference to the far-right belief systems and subtypes of the movement found in the literature. We end with a discussion of how these results can contribute to further refinement of this construct.

Literature Review

Important strides have been made to identify pathways that seek to explain why an individual becomes radicalized (i.e., embraces extremist beliefs that support violence).[6] Importantly though, while many of these studies have conceptualized the radicalization process as a spectrum, they have usually only measured radicalization as a binary variable. In quantitative studies, individuals either subscribed to extremist beliefs or they were non-extremists, and persons either committed ideologically motivated crimes or did not. Most of these works, in other words, do not seek to explain variation in specific beliefs adhered to or the intensity of the extremist's commitment to their cause.

This study seeks to begin filling this gap. Here we investigate if the perpetrators of ideologically motivated crime all subscribe to the exact same views or if there is variation in the

specific beliefs adhered to, and if they differed in their level of commitment to the cause. We also examine if the type of beliefs adhered to make an offender more or less likely to commit a violent as opposed to nonviolent (i.e., financial) ideologically motivated crime. We next expand on these points.

Radicalization and Criminal Behavior

There are two contesting theories describing the relationship between radicalization and criminal behavior. According to the conveyor belt theory of terrorism, higher commitment to far-right ideology increases the odds of engaging in criminal behavior. This theory claims that political mobilization is a single dimension that ranges from Activism or "legal behaviors to achieve political ends" to Radicalism or "illegal acts to achieve political change" if legal behaviors fail to result in the desired political change.[7] Alienated individuals are converted into sympathizers, supporters and ultimately, terrorists. However, in a study that used Exploratory Principal Component Analysis, Moskalenko and McCauley[8] found that Radicalism and Activism should be interpreted as two different components or aspects of political mobilization. Moskalenko and McCauley found that it was not extreme views *per se* that increased support for criminal or terroristic behaviors, but the *type* of political beliefs to which one subscribed.[9] Therefore, it is possible that specific types of ideological beliefs, such as antigun control beliefs may be more associated with violence than others, such as antitax beliefs.

This study seeks to fill these gaps. *Our first research question is: Are different ideological beliefs more prevelant among persons who commit violent crimes, as opposed to those who commit financial crimes?* We next briefly review the far-right's extremist belief system so that we can then empirically investigate this issue.

Far-Right Extremist Ideology

Chermak, Freilich, and Shemtob[10] argue that there is no single universally agreed on listing of beliefs to which far-rightists subscribe. Instead, different segments of the far right agree with and/or stress divergent aspects of these beliefs. We previously conducted a thorough literature review of the social sciences and identified over 300 articles that discussed far-right extremism.[11] We paid special attention to pieces that defined or described the FR to identify the key beliefs that past studies have consistently argued characterize the American FR. We concluded that American FR extremists subscribe to aspects of the following ideals. They are:

> fiercely nationalistic (as opposed to universal and international in orientation), anti-global, suspicious of centralized federal authority, reverent of individual liberty (especially their right to own guns, be free of taxes), believe in conspiracy theories that involve a grave threat to national sovereignty and/or personal liberty, believe that one's personal and/or national "way of life" is under attack and is either already lost or that the threat is imminent (sometimes such beliefs are amorphous and vague, but for some the threat is from a specific ethnic, racial, or religious group), and believe in the need to be prepared for an attack by participating in paramilitary preparations, training and survivalism.[12]

We next discuss each of these FR beliefs in more detail.

Extremist Beliefs/Cognitive Radicalization

Belief in Conspiracy Theories

Several authors have noted the importance of conspiracy theories to far-right ideology.[13] The New World Order (NWO) and Zionist Occupied Government (ZOG) are two examples of far-right conspiracy theories that are rejected by the mainstream right. Chermak explains that the NWO is a plan orchestrated by the UN and international bankers, leaders, and organizations to create a global nation and end the sovereignty of the United States.[14] Kaplan describes the ZOG as the belief that both the federal government and predominant culture are controlled by a Jewish conspiracy.[15] Belief in freedom from undue government intervention and the inviolability of constitutional rights are present to a lesser extent among mainstream conservatives. However, mainstream conservations usually limit their activities to the political sphere and do not share far-rightists' beliefs in conspiracy theories. We therefore use belief in conspiracy theories as a key indicator to distinguish FRs from mainstream conservatives.

Xenophobic Beliefs

Many FRs such as Christian Identity adherents, Klan and Neo-Nazi group members believe in White supremacy (i.e., the White/Aryan race is superior to other races who are often viewed as dangerous enemies).[16] White supremacists may also oppose race mixing in schools, communities, or relationships.[17] Blee notes that most people subscribe to a certain level of racist beliefs.[18] However, Blee argues that racist groups transform everyday racism into *extraordinary racism*, an "ideology that interprets and gives meaning to a wide variety of phenomena that seem unconnected to race, ranging from the global economy and the growth of media monopolies to more immediate personal issues such as the quality of family life, city services, and medical care."[19]

Not all segments of the far right, however, are racist or White supremacist.[20] Dobratz and Shanks-Meile[21] note that while some FRs subscribe to White supremacist beliefs; others claim to be White separatists who believe that the Aryan race should have a separate economic and cultural life apart from other racial groups. Other authors maintain that some far-right militia groups accept non-White members.[22] Some FRs considers racial minorities to be a minor concern and instead are anti-Semitic. However, other researchers of the FR have argued that members of racist groups (i.e., the Klans, skinhead, and neo-Nazi groups) are more concerned with the threat posed by minorities and are socialized into anti-Semitism and belief in the ZOG by movement leaders.[23] Thus, we used extreme racism (antiracial/ethnic minority beliefs) and/or anti-Semitism (and anti-other religious minorities' beliefs) as an indicator of FR ideology.

Antigovernment Beliefs

Another feature of the FR is their rejection of the legitimacy of state and federal government.[24] Barkun argues that the highest government authority recognized by FR antigovernment Patriot and Militia groups is the county, and the only legal law enforcement officer recognized by the movement is the sheriff.[25] Durham notes that members of the Patriot movement also consider the government to be tyrannical and the courts to be illegitimate.[26] They may even create alternative courts, called common law courts, to obtain what they

deem to be justice.[27] This fear and suspicion of government authority is closely tied to a deep-seated belief that the American government is actively trying to inhibit American liberties and belief in elaborate government conspiracies.

Antitax Beliefs

Another distinguishing feature of the far right from mainstream conservative movements is the belief that federal taxes are illegitimate.[28] Common tax protestor arguments are that the 16th Amendment was not correctly ratified, which means federal tax laws are unconstitutional; the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) does not have the authority to enforce the Internal Revenue Code; only non-resident aliens and people residing in the District of Columbia are subject to taxation, and wages of citizens are non-taxable.[29] Hence, the antitax movement is also linked to belief in conspiracy theories and antigovernment sentiments.

Survivalist Beliefs

The belief of survivalism or being prepared to defend oneself against a tyrannical federal government is also common to certain segments of the American far-right movement.[30] Pitcavage argues that there is a tradition of para-militarism in the far-right movement.[31] This tradition, combined with the belief that the American public has been misled about the legitimacy of the government contributed to the rise of the militia movement in the 1990s, which is a sub-section of the far right.[32] Survivalist training by militia groups involves weapons training, target practice, intelligence gathering training, and explosives training, which is usually provided by war veterans.[33]

Anti-Gun Control Beliefs

Many FR also consider gun control to be an important issue.[34] This belief is closely linked to cherished Patriot values of freedom, disdain for constitutional amendments, and the need to be prepared to confront the evil deeds of a tyrannical government or the inevitable race war. Within the militia movement, anti-gun control beliefs are grounded in their fears about a federal government conspiracy to institute a police state and the need to be prepared to stop such an outcome or that the government is in league with the New World Order.[35] Thus, anti-gun control beliefs are tied both to antigovernment beliefs and beliefs in elaborate conspiracy theories.

Extremist Behavior/Behavioral Radicalization

Participation in Movement Activities

Simi and Futrell assert that socialization into far-right ideology occurs in free or movement spaces, whereby unconventional values are given the freedom to develop and can be nurtured in an arena unchecked by political correctness.[36] *Movement spaces* are physical or virtual spaces, in which members of a socially unaccepted group are allowed to meet, interact and build cohesiveness. These interactions provide extremists with the support required to "nurture oppositional identities that challenge prevailing social arrangements and cultural norms."[37] Thus, movement or free spaces facilitate socialization in extremist ideology and

increase bonds with other extremists in the group, thereby increasing the individual's commitment to extremism.[38]

We used participation in far-right themed family activities (e.g., parties with Neo-Nazi symbols, or Ku Klux Klan [KKK] imagery, such as a burning cross) and far-right social activities (congresses, parties, browsing hate sites, and social gatherings with extremist friends) to capture commitment to the movement and the socialization element of free or movement spaces.[39] We recognize that conflating participation in movement activities and participation in movement themed family events could introduce measurement error into the commitment to extremism scale. The former involves a conscious effort, while the latter may be motivated by ties to family or friends, rather than the movement. However, since pictures in media were used as evidence for participation in movement activates, it was impossible to distinguish movement themes family events from participation in movement activities.

Movement-Related Tattoos

Several authors argue that racist tattoos are signs of a movement novice, and more politically aware members are more subtle in displaying their racist beliefs and tend to mix racist symbols with conventional attire (e.g., pins, ambiguous tattoos, earrings).[40] In contrast, Hamm argues that each tattoo must be earned in skinhead groups by a demonstration of their commitment to the group and its ideals.[41] As such, the tattoo may demonstrate commitment to the cause of the group, rather than indicate personal feelings/beliefs about race. In any event, skinheads form part of the recruitment base for other right-wing extremist groups or may eventually join other right-wing extremist groups.[42] Based on Hamm's argument, tattoos were included as an indicator of right-wing extremism, but not as an indicator of xenophobic beliefs. In light of Blee[43] and Simi and Futrell's[44] assertion that racist tattoos are signs of movement novices, we also decided to investigate if there a relationship between tattoos and commitment by using the Cronbach reliability measure. We discuss this point further below.

Based on the above themes/beliefs found in the literature on the American far-right movement, we used the following as indicators of commitment to far-right ideology: conspiratorial beliefs, xenophobia, the presence of movement-related tattoos, antigovernment beliefs, survivalist beliefs, anti–gun control beliefs, and participation in movement activities. Finally, it seemed logical that self-claim, that is, verbal or written identification with the movement be included as evidence of commitment to far-right ideology. These indicators of FR extremist ideology are summarized in Appendix 1.

Our second research question is: Can the indicators of FR extremism identified in the above studies be used to create a scalar measure of commitment to far-right ideology? The next section presents a framework for analyzing sub-types of extremist beliefs in the far-right movement, which can be used to interpret the scalar measure of commitment to far-right ideology. A reliable scale should correspond to sub-types in the movement (i.e., describe the wider population of FR extremists not included in the study).

Far-Right Typologies: Subtypes in the Far-Right Movement

Scholars have disaggregated the American far-right into various typologies.[45] We focus on three of the most prominent of these typologies. Kaplan's leading typology of the FR encompasses seven sub-types: Klan, Christian Identity, neo-Nazi, reconstructed traditions/

Odinism, idiosyncratic sectarians, single issue constituencies (e.g., tax protestors), and knuckle draggers galore/skinheads.[46] Klan members traditionally engage in racist violence. However, racist violence by Klan groups has been declining largely due to the result of infiltration by government informants.[47]

Christian Identity adherents subscribe to White supremacist beliefs and are anti-Semitic. Drawing on British Israelism, Christian Identity asserts that Whites are descendants of Adam and Eve and are the true Lost Tribes of Israel.[48] Further, Christian Identity adherents believe in the two seeds doctrine that Jews are the children of Eve and Satan.[49] Similar to Christian Identity groups, neo-Nazi groups are xenophobic. Some neo-Nazi groups dream of overthrowing the ZOG and creating a new order.[50]

Kaplan classifies reconstructed traditions/Odinism as the fourth sub-type of the American FR. He describes Odinism as "an imaginative blend of ritual magic, ceremonial forms of fraternal fellowship, and an ideological flexibility which allows for a remarkable degree of syncretism in adopting elements of other White supremacist appeals—Nazism and, remarkably, Christian Identity."[51]

According to Kaplan, the fifth sub-type among the American FR is idiosyncratic sectarians (e.g., the Church of the Creator and Survivalists). Survivalists and Militia members are associated with complex conspiracy theories, antigovernment beliefs and an intense need to be prepared to defend their rights (especially to own guns or be free from unconstitutional federal taxes) and liberty.[52] Finally, the seventh FR sub-type is skinheads or "knuckle draggers galore." They are extremely racist, generally engage in opportunistic violence against racial minorities, and commit crimes with other group members.[53]

Barkun's[54] typology includes Kaplan's[55] initial three subtypes (Klan, Christian Identity, and neo-Nazi groups, described previously) and identifies a fourth subtype: agrarian protest movement, which attributes the decline of socioeconomic status (SES) among farmers to an international Jewish conspiracy. In contrast, Durham[56] separates the American far-right into two sub-sets: the extreme right and the radical right. The extreme right includes groups that define enemy racially (e.g., WAR, National Alliance, World Church of the Creator, Aryan Nation) and the radical right includes groups obsessed with conspiracies (e.g., Patriot Movement and Militias).

Kaplan's typology would suggest that the indicators of commitment to FR extremist ideology would form a 7-factor scale. In contrast, Barkun's typology suggests a 4-factor scale and Durham's typology predicts a 2-factor scale.

Therefore, the study's third research question is: Will the commitment to the far-right ideology scale proposed in the previous section support one of the existing typologies of the far-right movement? Conversely, will the scale support an alternative typology of the far-right movement? The next section describes the data source, variables and statistical techniques used to create the commitment to FR ideology scale and create a typology of the far-right movement.

Methods

Data Source

This study used (individual) offender-level data from the open source United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB).[57] The ECDB tracks violent and financial crimes committed by extremists in the United States since 1990[58] and it has proved to be a valid source of data on

fatal ideologically motivated attacks.[59] Again, our inclusion criteria for this study were based on both behavioral and attitudinal requirements. Behaviorally, each offender had to commit either a financial or a violent crime in the United States between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2010. At least one offender must also have been indicted for this crime in one of the 50 states or at the federal level. Attitudinally, at least one offender had to subscribe to some aspects of the far-right belief system (outlined above) at the time of the crime. Our determination of whether an offender subscribed to each of the specific components of the far-right belief system were based on their statements (i.e., verbal or written self-admissions), and behaviors (e.g., participating in extremist activities), and how others described them.

Sample, Data Coding, and Verification Process

We first extracted the sample of offenders from the ECDB. Again, to have been included in this study, the homicide and at least a portion of the financial scheme must have occurred during 2006 to 2010. This period was selected (1) to allow for a sufficiently large sample size to ensure a reasonable degree of statistical power, (2) to minimize the effects of social factors excluded from the study, and (3) to exclude pending trials/cases.

The sample consisted of FRs charged with a homicide ($n = 142$) or financial scheme ($n = 103$), and non-FR co-offenders charged with a homicide ($n = 27$) or financial scheme ($n = 33$; see Table 1). Members of far-right groups and persons with at least one pro-extremist indicator were coded as FRs. Non-extremists (i.e., persons who no pro-extremist indicators) who offended with an extremist co-offender were coded as "zero" for each of the 10 indicators of *commitment to far-right ideology*. The variable *crime committed* was coded as $0 =$ financial crime and $1 =$ homicide (see Table 2 for codebook).

Scalar Measure of Commitment to Extremism

Commitment to right-wing extremism drew on: (1) the unique ideology common to the far-right (conspiratorial, xenophobic, antigovernment, antitax, survivalist, and anti-gun control beliefs); (2) participation in far-rightist sub-cultural activities (e.g., attended movement activities, wrote or disseminated movement materials, wrote letters to the editor); and (3) self-identification as a far-rightist. We conducted a content analysis of the search files for each person in the sample to identify evidence of key indictors used to measure far-right extremist beliefs (see Appendix 1 for summary of indicators). When such evidence was found, the indictor for that person was coded as "1." If no evidence of the indicator was found, the indicator for that person was coded as "0."[60] Significantly, evidence was used for one indicator only to avoid double counting. For example, the presence of a swastika tattoo was coded as "1" for movement-related tattoo and "0" for evidence of general hate beliefs. The codebook is presented in Table 2.

Table 1. Sample of crimes and suspects charged with a homicide or financial crime during the period 2006 to 2010.

Type of crime	Number of DFRs suspects indicted	Number of non-extremist indicted	Total number of suspects
Financial	103	33	136
Homicide	142	27	169
Total	245	60	305

Table 2. Codebook.

Variables	Description of variable
Commitment to FR ideology Conspiratorial beliefs	Did the individual hold conspiratorial beliefs? 0 = No evidence of conspiratorial beliefs, 1 = any evidence of conspiratorial beliefs
Xenophobic beliefs	Did the individual hold xenophobic beliefs? 0 = No evidence of xenophobic beliefs, 1 = any evidence of xenophobic beliefs
Antigovernment beliefs	Did the individual hold antigovernment beliefs? 0 = No evidence of antigovernment beliefs, 1 = any evidence of antigovernment beliefs
Antitax beliefs	Did the individual hold antitax beliefs? 0 = No evidence of antitax beliefs, 1 = any evidence of antitax beliefs
Survivalist beliefs	Did the individual hold survivalist beliefs? 0 = No evidence of survivalist beliefs, 1 = any evidence of survivalist belief
Anti-gun control beliefs	Did the individual hold anti-gun control beliefs? 0 = No evidence of anti-gun control beliefs, 1 = any evidence of anti-gun control beliefs
Participation in movement activity	Did the individual participate in movement activities? 0 = No evidence of participation in movement activities, any evidence of participation in at least 1 movement activity
Movement-related tattoo	Did the individual have a movement-related tattoo? 0 = No evidence of movement-related tattoo, 1 = any evidence of movement-related tattoo
Self-claim Self-denial	Did the individual claim to be a far-rightist? 0 = No evidence of self-claim, 1 = any evidence of self-claim Did the individual deny being a far-rightist? 0 = No evidence of self-denial, 1 = any evidence of self-denial
Type of crime committed	What crime did the individual commit? 0 = financial scheme, 1 = homicide

Commitment to extremism was conceptualized as a latent variable, that is, multiple indicators were used to capture this construct. When there are many facets to a construct or latent variable, Field[61] suggests using a factor analysis to (1) understand the structure of the latent variable (e.g., intelligence, personality traits or beliefs), (2) create a more reliable instrument/ questionnaire to measure the latent variable, and (3) reduce the data to a more manageable level. In other words, factor analysis can be used to determine which indicators identified in the literature are statistically significant measures of the commitment to extremism construct.

A principal axis factor analysis was selected because this is appropriate for a sample of far-rightists, a sample of possible indicators of FR extremism (other indicators found in the literature, e.g., belief in Odinism, Christian Identity, and types of xenophobic beliefs are not measured in this study) and for creating an initial scale. A principal axis factor analysis involves estimating the communalities between the indicators listed in Table 2, and replacing the diagonals of the correlation matrix with the estimated communalities.[62] The eigenvectors and eigenvalues of the correlation matrix are then computed to determine the substantive importance of the factors and how many factors to retain.[63]

There are several methods to determine how many factors to extract from a factor analysis. Factors with an eigenvalue > 1[64] or eigenvalue > 0.7[65] are a good first step. Another technique to determine the number of factors to extract from a factor analysis is to use a "scree plot." The number of inflexion points (abrupt changes in the slope of the graph) in a scree plot can be used to determine the number of factors to extract from a factor analysis. Therefore, if a scree plot has 5 points of inflexion or the scree

plot changes slopes 6 times, 6 factors should be extracted. A third method is to examine the residuals for the reproduced correlations: lower residuals indicate that the correct number of factors is extracted.

After a decision was made on the number of factors to extract, each individual's scores were tallied for each factor identified to determine his/her overall commitment to extremism score.[66] Although the factor analysis empirically creates a scale, it is considered to be the first step in designing a valid and reliable scale.[67] Since the study's commitment to extremism scale has not been previously tested, factor analysis is an appropriate technique to create an initial scale. The results of the commitment to extremism scale are presented next. Finally, our scale treated high numbers of indicators as representing a high level of ideological commitment to FR ideology. We recognize that it could be argued that an offender may have the same level of commitment but rather subscribes to a version of FR ideology that includes or blends these specific indicators. Our view is that an individual who endorses five FR beliefs is more committed to FR ideology than one who endorses three beliefs. If all these beliefs are subscribed to with the same intensity, the former individual ultimately supports more aspects of the overall FR belief system.

Results

Distribution of FR Extremist Indicators by Type of Crime Committed

The study consisted of 305 FR extremists ($n = 245$; 80.33 percent) and their non-extremist co-offenders ($n = 60$; 19.67 percent) who committed a financial scheme or homicide during the 5-year period, 2006 to 2010. The most frequently held FR beliefs held by the sample were antigovernment beliefs (33.77 percent), conspiratorial beliefs (29.51 percent), and general hate beliefs (25.90 percent; see Table 3). Close to 20 percent of the sample identified as FR or claimed to belong to the movement.

The results supported the first research question. Consistent with Moskalenko and McCauley's[68] findings on the importance of type of extremist beliefs, differences by crime committed were found for most indicators of FR extremism. Persons with tax protest beliefs (Kaplan's subtype 6) and beliefs consistent with the Patriot Movement were more likely to commit a financial crime (compared to a homicide). Evidence of conspiratorial ($\chi^2 (1) = 68.923$, $p < .001$), antigovernment ($\chi^2 (1) = 64.895$, $p < .001$) and antitax beliefs ($\chi^2 (1) = 83.545$, $p < .001$) were also more frequently found among persons who committed a financial crime. Persons who committed a financial crime were also more likely to participate in movement activities ($\chi^2 (1) = 5.147$, $p < .001$).

Other indicators of FR extremism were more common among perpetrators of homicide compared to perpetrators of financial crimes. While one element of Durham's[69] hypothesized radical right (the Patriot Movement) had a higher risk of committing a financial crime, the other element (the Militia Movement) had a higher risk of committing a homicide. Evidence of survivalist beliefs ($\chi^2 (1) = 3.942$, $p < .05$) and anti–gun control beliefs ($\chi^2 (1) = 4.091$, $p < .05$) were more prevalent among persons who committed a homicide than a financial crime. Individuals with beliefs suggestive of neo-Nazi, Klan, or skinhead ideology (Kaplan's subtype 1, 3, and 7),[70] also had a higher risk of committing a homicide. Durham's[71] hypothesized extreme right, that is, persons who subscribe to general hate beliefs based on race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, were more likely to commit a homicide ($\chi^2 (1) =$

80.995, $p < .001$). Movement-related tattoos were also more common among persons who committed a homicide (χ^2 (1) = 40.283, $p < .001$). Finally, persons who denied any affiliation with the FR were also more likely to commit a homicide (χ^2 (1) = 3.942, $p < .05$). It was possible that denial of far-rightist beliefs was a legal strategy to avoid a hate crime sentencing enhancement, since these individuals were sufficiently involved with far-rightists to perpetrate a group homicide or hate crime.

The data were positively skewed: most persons subscribed to between 1–3 indicators of FR extremism and only 12 persons subscribed to 5 or more indicators. Overall, persons who committed a financial crime subscribed to more FR beliefs ($M = 1.93$; $SD = 1.53$) compared to those who committed a homicide ($M = 1.28$; $SD = 1.48$). This difference was statistically significant ($t(303) = -3.71$, $p < .001$). Importantly, unlike the conveyor belt theory of radicalization and political mobilization, more extreme beliefs were not associated with violent crimes. This could be due to the inclusion of non-extremists in the study, who may have skewed the average commitment levels among perpetrators of financial crimes and homicides.[72] Instead, the differences in criminal behavior by ideology type described earlier in this section supports Moskalenko and McCauley's[73] assertion that compared to the strength of extremist beliefs, the *type* of extremist beliefs to which one subscribes is a more accurate predictor of criminal behavior among extremists.

The next section addresses the second research question: Can the indicators of FR extremism identified in the above studies be used to create a scalar measure of commitment to far-right ideology and describe the creation of the commitment to extremism scale? Initial analysis utilized all the indicators of FR extremism described in the literature review and are listed in Table 2. Tests were then conducted to identify the most reliable model that successfully fit the data. The initial factor analysis solution is presented below. The final solution based on the Cronbach's alpha reliability test follows the initial factor analysis.

The Commitment to Extremism Scale

A principal axis factor analysis was conducted on the 10 items with a promax[74] rotation and Kaiser Normalization. The correlation matrix revealed no problems with multicollinearity (i.e., none of the Pearson's r were greater than 0.9). A sample size of 300 or larger is adequate for a stable factor solution.[75] The result of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was acceptable (KMO = 0.648); larger than 0.79 is considered ideal. Six factors fulfilled Jolliffe's criteria (i.e., had eigenvalues > 0.7). The scree plot showed 5 points of inflexion, which indicated that 6 factors should be extracted. The percentages of nonredundant residuals with absolute values greater than 0.05 was 28 percent for the 6 factor scale (less than 50 percent is recommended).

The six factors extracted were: Conspiracy Theorist, Survivalist, Supremacist, Movement Participant, Proud Far-Rightist, and Tax-Protester (see Table 4). Conspiracy Theorists subscribed to conspiratorial and antigovernment beliefs, but were unlikely to have a movement-related tattoo or subscribe to racist beliefs. Conspiracy Theorists in this initial solution came close to describing the Patriot Movement, however, antitax beliefs was not included in this factor. Persons with survivalist beliefs also tended to oppose gun-control regulations, but were unlikely to have racist/general hate beliefs. The Survivalist factor described Militia members. However, unlike the typology hypothesized by Durham,[76] the Patriot Movement and Militia did not form a cohesive factor.

Table 3. Distribution of extremist ideology by crime type.

		Type of crime committed					
		Homicide		Financial n %		All Crime n %	
Indicator of extremist ideology		n	%	n	%	n	%
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds conspiratorial beliefs?	no	152	49.84	63	20.66	215	70.49%
	yes	17	5.57	73	23.93	90	29.51%
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds xenophobic beliefs?	no	91	29.84	135	44.26	226	74.10%
	yes	78	25.57	1	0.33	79	25.90%
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds antigovernment beliefs?	no	145	47.54	57	18.69	202	66.23%
	yes	24	7.87	79	25.90	103	33.77%
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds antitax beliefs?	no	168	55.08	79	25.90	247	80.98%
	yes	1	0.33	57	18.69	58	19.02%
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds survivalist beliefs?	no	159	52.13	134	43.93	293	96.07%
	yes	10	3.28	2	0.66	12	3.93%
Is there any evidence that the suspect is anti-gun control?	no	164	53.77	136	44.59	300	98.36%
	yes	5	1.64	0	0.00	5	1.64%
Is there any evidence that the suspect participated in movement activities?	no	153	50.16	111	36.39	264	86.56%
	yes	16	5.25	25	8.20	41	13.44%
Did the suspect claim to be a far-rightist?	no	136	44.59	109	35.74	245	80.33%
	yes	33	10.82	27	8.85	60	19.67%
Did the suspect deny s/he was a far-rightist?	no	159	52.13	134	43.93	293	96.07%
	yes	10	3.28	2	0.66	12	3.93%
Does the suspect have a movement-related tattoo?	no	126	41.31	136	44.59	262	85.90%
	yes	43	14.10	0	0.00	43	14.10%
Total		169	55.41	136	44.59	305	100.00

Those who subscribed to racist/general hate beliefs, termed Supremacists, also tended to have at least one movement-related tattoo. This factor included the xenophobic/anti-Semitic beliefs found in all of Barkun's subtypes (Klan, Christian Identity, neo-Nazi, and agrarian protest movement).[77] This factor also described Kaplan's[78] subtypes 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7 (Klan, neo-Nazi, reconstructed tradition/Odinism, idiosyncratic sectarian, and skinhead), but without the element of conspiratorial beliefs he hypothesized. The merging of all Barkun's[79] subtypes and many of Kaplan's[80] subtypes into one factor suggests that criminal behavior patterns (since everyone in the sample was indicted of a crime) may be similar among these individuals, despite that fact that they may self-identify with different aspects of the FR movement.

Movement Participants appeared to be committed to their colleagues in the movement, rather than any specific sub-type of FR ideology. It is possible that these individuals were at an early stage in their radicalization and may subscribe to different extremist beliefs at a later stage in their radicalization. Proud FR identified with the movement, but did not subscribe to any specific indicators of FR ideology. Again, these may be individuals at the onset of their radicalization life-cycle. Further analysis using primary data or longitudinal data is necessary to identify where the Movement Participant and Proud FR factors fit in the overall radicalization life-cycle.

The final factor, Tax-Protesters, appeared to have just one hot-button issue: taxes. This factor was similar to Kaplan's[81] sjxth subtype, single issue constituencies, but without the

Table 4. Initial commitment to ideology scale.

Item	Rotated factor loadings					
	Conspiracy theorist	Survivalist	Supremacist	Movement participant	Proud far-rightist	Tax-protester
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds antigovernment beliefs?	**.943**	−.056	−.003	.032	−.041	−.101
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds conspiratorial beliefs?	**.748**	.071	−.006	−.061	.024	.217
Is there any evidence that the suspect is anti-gun control?	−.021	**.873**	.112	−.048	−.164	.124
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds survivalist beliefs?	.024	**.748**	−.132	.057	.196	−.174
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds xenophobic beliefs?	.059	.027	**.677**	.153	−.022	−.156
Does the suspect have a movement-related tattoo?	−.023	−.026	**.595**	−.162	.144	.038
Did the suspect deny s/he was a far-rightist?	−.117	−.005	.188	.139	−.035	.049
Is there any evidence that the suspect participated in movement activities?	−.001	−.001	.073	**.698**	.012	.107
Did the suspect claim to be a far-rightist (e.g., White supremacist/tax protester)?	−.018	−.003	.072	.011	**.579**	.096
Is there any evidence that the suspect is a tax-protester?	.133	−.019	−.076	.107	.087	**.679**
Eigenvalues	2.709	1.797	1.364	.964	.839	.770
Weight of factor	27.089%	17.969%	13.639%	9.636%	8.387%	7.703%
Cronbach's α	.849	.737	.566			
Variance explained by Scale						84.423%
Model Cronbach's α						.515

Note: Eigenvalues are factor loadings or the variance in the data explained by the factor. Weight of factor, commonly reported as "% of variance," tells us to what extent or how well the factor explains the construct or latent variable being measured. A factor with a higher weight is a better predictor or measure of the latent variable, e.g. both tax-protesters and conspiracy theorists may also be far-rightists, but it is more likely that a far-rightist selected at random would be a Conspiracy theorist than a Tax-protester.

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of reliability. This can be computed for both the overall scale that measures the latent variable (i.e., the Model Cronbach's alpha) or for a factor in the scale, provided the factor comprises is at least 2 items. Cronbach's alpha no lower than .5 is acceptable in primarily research and greater than .7 is acceptable for more established latent variable scales, such as IQ tests. The overall predictive power of the scale or variance explained by the scale is obtained by summing the weight of the factors.

beliefs in elaborate conspiracy theories. Together these factors explained 84.42 percent of the variance in commitment to extremism. The items that clustered into the 6 factors are depicted in Table 4, along with their factor loadings (Eigenvalues).

Two factors, Conspiracy Theorist and Survivalist, had high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha >$ 0.7). Supremacists had a low reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.57$). This might have been due to the conflicting account of tattoos as a source of commitment to FR ideology found in the literature. Reliability measures could not be calculated for Movement Participants, Proud FRs and Tax-Protesters as only one item was used to create each of those factors (at least two items are needed to calculate Cronbach's α). Few (28 percent) non-redundant residuals had absolute values greater than 0.05.

The percentage of variance for each factor provided a measure to assess the relative importance of the indicators to overall commitment to extremism. As expected, general conspiratorial beliefs, and antigovernment beliefs carried the most weight, and measured one overarching aspect of the commitment to extremism construct. When combined, these indicators formed the Conspiracy Theorist factor and explained 27 percent of the variance in individuals' commitment to extremism. Survivalist beliefs and anti-gun control beliefs also

measured one aspect of commitment to extremism (i.e., formed a cohesive factor, Survivalist). This factor explained close to 18 percent of the variance in commitment to extremism. People who subscribed to general hate (antiminority, anti-lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender [LGBT], anti-Semitic) beliefs also tended to have tattoos. These two indicators were used to create the Supremacist factor, which explained approximately 14 percent of the variance in commitment to extremism. Participation in movement activities (9.636 percent), identifying as a far-rightist (8.387 percent) and antitax beliefs (7.703 percent) also predicted some of the variance in commitment to extremism (see 'Weight of Factor' in Table 4 for details).

Cronbach's alpha for the initial factor solution was .512, which was adequate for preliminary analysis, but indicated that the scale was not very reliable (i.e., may not be replicated in successive samples). The reliability assessment (Cronbach's alpha if item is deleted, in Statistical Package for Social Sciences [SPSS]) revealed that racist beliefs, tattoos, and associating with FRs while denying subscribing to FR beliefs did not significantly improve the model. These variables were dropped from the analysis, which resulted in a 4-factor scale: Conspiracy Theorist, Survivalist, Proud FR, and Movement Participant.

The scale is presented in Table 5, which lists factors in order of their relative contribution to the overall scale. The Conspiracy Theorist factor had the highest weight: it explained 36 percent of the variance in the scale. Survivalist explained close to 23 percent of the variance in the scale. Proud FR explained almost 15 percent of the variance in the scale and Movement Participant explained approximately 11 percent of the variance in the scale. Together, the 4 factors explained 84.92 percent of the variance in commitment to extremism, which was admittedly not much of an improvement compared to the initial 6-factor scale (84.42 percent). The Cronbach's alpha for this final scale was .69, which indicated that the scale was a more reliable measure of commitment to FR extremism compared to the initial 6-factor scale.

Interestingly, the Tax-Protester factor merged with the Conspiracy Theorist factor in the more reliable 4-factor scale. It is possible that some persons who claimed to be tax protesters

Table 5. Final commitment to ideology scale.

Item	Conspiracy theorist	Survivalist	Proud far-rightist	Movement participant
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds conspiratorial beliefs?	**1.000**	.111	.013	−.155
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds antigovernment beliefs?	**.726**	.044	−.189	.285
Is there any evidence that the suspect is a tax-protester?	**.485**	−.207	.351	.138
Is there any evidence that the suspect holds survivalist beliefs?	−.039	**.979**	.150	.074
Is there any evidence that the suspect is anti gun-control?	.108	**.660**	−.045	−.090
Did the suspect claim to be a far-rightist?	−.052	.140	**.442**	.116
Is there any evidence that the suspect participated in movement activities?	.033	−.034	.298	**.421**
Eigenvalues	2.554	1.579	1.019	.792
Weight of factor	36.485%	22.562%	14.561%	11.315%
Cronbach's α	.807	.737		
Variance explained by				84.923%
Scale				.690
Model Cronbach's α				

were motivated by financial gains and others also held beliefs in conspiracy theories and antigovernment beliefs. That is, there were two types of tax protesters, which is why this indicator loaded differently on the 6-factor and 4-factor scales.

Finally, the more reliable 4-factor solution excluded evidence of tattoos and xenophobic beliefs. The indictors retained in this last factor solution—conspiratorial beliefs, antigovernment beliefs, antitax beliefs, survivalist beliefs, anti-gun control beliefs, self-identification and participation in movement activities—align with Durham's subtype, the radical right.[82] Juxtaposed with the exclusion of tattoos and xenophobic beliefs, this last factor solution suggests that Durham's typology, the extreme right and the radical right, may be the most useful in explaining criminal behavior amongst FRs, that is, there should be two FR extremism scales to individually assess the radical right and extreme right. This is explored further in the next section.

Interpreting the Commitment to Ideology Factors: Subtypes in the American FR Movement

Factors in the commitment to extremism scale can also be conceptualized as sub-types among the FR movement. Here we examined Kaplan, Barkun, and Durham's deferring typologies.[83] We conducted factor analyses using the FR indicators from these typologies. We summarize these results in Table 6, and describe them below.

Kaplan's typology of the FR includes Klan, Christian Identity, neo-Nazi, reconstructed traditions/Odinism, idiosyncratic sectarians, single issue constituencies (e.g., tax protestors) and knuckle draggers galore/skinheads. We used racist beliefs, antigovernment beliefs, conspiratorial beliefs, survivalist beliefs, anti-gun control beliefs, antitax beliefs, participation in movement activities, and movement-related tattoos to assess Kaplan's typology. Factors extracted included Conspiracy Theorist, Survivalist, Supremacist, Movement Participant,

Table 6. Comparison of FR typologies.

Theorist	Predicted typology	Extracted factors	Eigenvalues	Weight of factor	Cronbach's α	Variance explained by scale	Model Cronbach's α
Kaplan (1995a)	Klan	Conspiracy Theorist	2.656	33.21%	0.849	87.07%	0.484
	Christian Identity	Survivalist	1.737	21.72%	0.737		
	Neo-Nazi	Supremacist	1.182	14.78%	0.566		
	Reconstructed	Movement	0.796	9.95%	N/A		
	traditions/Odinism	Participant	0.594	7.424	N/A		
	Idiosyncratic Sectarians	Tax protester					
	Single Issue Constituencies						
	Skinhead						
Barkun (1989)	Klan	Active	2.333	33.33%	0.708	72.41%	0.418
	Christian Identity	Conspiracy Theorist	1.613	23.05%	0.737		
	Neo-Nazi	Survivalist	1.122	16.03%	0.566		
	Agrarian	Supremacist					
	Protest						
	Movement						
Durham (2003)	Extreme Right	Antitax Conspiracy Theorist	2.536	36.22%	0.807	75.80%	0.405
	Radical Right	Survivalist	1.725	24.79%	0.737		
		Supremacist	1.035	14.78%	0.566		

and Tax Protester. Although Kaplan theorized that antigovernment and conspiratorial beliefs are common among the FR, this loaded as a separate factor, Conspiracy Theorist, which accounted for 33 percent of the variance in commitment to FR extremism. Idiosyncratic sectarians also loaded on factor 2, Survivalist, which explained 22 percent of the variance in the scale. Klan, Neo-Nazi, idiosyncratic sectarians and skinheads loaded on the 3rd factor, Supremacist. Thus, some idiosyncratic sectarians appeared to be concerned with race, while others were concerned with the need to be prepared. Factor 4, Tax Protester, describes Single issues constituencies. Reconstructed traditions/Odinism was not assessed by this study. The scale predicted 87 percent of FR extremism among the sample, but was not reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .484$).

Barkun describes the subtypes in the American FR (Klan, Christian identity, neo-Nazi, and Agrarian protest movement) as the "'white supremacist constellation'—a set of ideologically related groups linked by a variety of formal and informal connections."[84] He notes that these subtypes are not mutually exclusive and share beliefs in identity theology, racial superiority, a worldwide Jewish conspiracy, Nazism, a millenarian (an imminent end of the world) view of history. Furthermore, not only is the movement highly critical of the federal government, they also believe they can overthrow the government. To this end, these groups tend to have a paramilitary structure and stockpile weapons.[85]

Conspiratorial beliefs, xenophobic beliefs, antigovernment beliefs, survivalist beliefs, anti–gun control beliefs, movement-related tattoos, and participation in movement activities were used to assess Barkun's typology. This resulted in a 3-factor solution, Active Conspiracy Theorist, Survivalist, and Supremacist. Active Conspiracy Theorists were active in the movement, concerned with conspiracy theories and held antigovernment beliefs. Survivalists were concerned with being prepared to face adversity, violently if needed. The third factor, Supremacist, included individuals with xenophobic beliefs and a tendency to get tattoos to reflect those beliefs. None of Barkun's subtypes were clearly apparent in the factor analysis, although elements of Klan, neo-Nazi and Agrarian protest movements were found in all three factors. This might suggests that the factor analysis accurately captured the complexity of Barkun's "white supremacist constellation," but the variance explained by the scale (72 percent) and the reliability of the scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .418$), suggest that crucial indicators of FR extremism are missing from the model or not accurately captured with the current research design.

For Durham, the FR is divided into the extreme right and the radical right.[86] The extreme right is characterized by racist, antigovernment and conspiratorial beliefs, especially belief in the ZOG. The radical right, however, rejects race-centered politics, but also tends to ascribe to antigovernment, antitax and conspiratorial beliefs. Ideologies and practices associated with FR groups identified by Durham—such as xenophobic beliefs, antigovernment beliefs, movement-related tattoos, survivalist beliefs, anti-gun control beliefs, conspiratorial beliefs, and antitax beliefs—were used to assess Durham's typology. This factor analysis resulted in a 3-factor solution: Antitax Conspiracy Theorist, Survivalist, and Supremacist. The Antitax Conspiracy Theorist factor captured the radical right, while the Survivalist and Supremacist factors captured the extreme right. This scale was moderately successful at assessing committing to extremism (76 percent), but was less reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .405$) than Kaplan's and Barkun's typologies.[87]

We summarize these results in Table 6. None of the typologies created a reliable scale, which may have been due to measurement error. We found much of the evidence used for the indicators in court documents. As a legal strategy, persons on trial for homicides or hate

crimes may not have expressed their views in court at the behest of their defense attorneys. Since the default for absence of evidence of any indictor of ideology was coded as "0," anti-government and conspiratorial beliefs among persons with White supremacist beliefs would not have been measured in this study. Further, Christian Identity, reconstructed traditions and Odinism were not included as indicators in this study, which would limit the study's generalizability to Kaplan and Barkun's typologies.[88]

Discussion

This study examined three research questions: (1) Are different types of FR ideological beliefs associated with different types of criminal behavior? (2) Can the indicators of FR ideology be used to create a scalar measure of commitment to far-right ideology? (3) Which typology of the far-right movement provides the most reliable measure of FR extremism?

We found that different FR beliefs were associated with different criminal behaviors. Persons who held xenophobic, survivalist, or anti-gun control beliefs were more likely to commit a homicide than a financial crime. No individual with a movement-related tattoo committed a financial crime. Interestingly, persons who denied any link to the movement were also more likely to commit a homicide. However, this must be evaluated with caution since the primary source for RF ideology was court documents and persons who committed a homicide may have been trying to avoid a hate crime sentencing enhancement.

Far rightists who subscribed to conspiratorial, antigovernment, and antitax beliefs had a higher risk of committing a financial crime. Far rightists active in the movement also had a higher risk of committing a financial crime. These results indicate that different law enforcement and government agencies may make the most effective use of their resources by focusing their efforts on persons with specific beliefs, rather than on all extremists.

The factor analysis revealed that the 10 indicators designed to measure FR extremism created a reliable measure of far-right extremism. Few FRs subscribed to all FR beliefs. Most FRs in the sample subscribed to only two or three indicators of FR extremism. Further, subscribing to certain FR indicators (e.g., antitax and antigovernment beliefs) was negatively correlated with other indicators (e.g., general hate beliefs). Although members of the FR move between groups and interact at conventions and other social events,[89] those in this sample did not all subscribe to the same ideological beliefs. It is possible that social bonds among the sub-types in the movement may be stronger than ideological bonds.

Overall, the distribution of the commitment to extremism scale was positively skewed, which indicated that most far-rightists involved in financial crimes or homicide scored low on the commitment to extremism scale. Thus, support was not found for the conveyor belt theory of terrorism. Indeed, the mean score for the sample was less than 2 out of a maximum score of 10. Given that the scale was valid and that dropping any of the four factors resulted in a less valid scale, the low average score for persons sampled suggested that far-rightists who engage in criminal behavior may not be the most extreme in the movement. This supported Moskalenko and McCauley's findings that Radicalism and Activism should be interpreted as two different aspects of political mobilization, rather than as a single radicalization scale.[90]

It is also possible that commitment to extremism explains a small portion of criminal offending behaviors. Future research should explore this issue. One possibility is to use our commitment scale with other independent variables identified by McCauley and Moskalenko and others[91] (e.g., strain, friendship ties to the movement, or feelings of persecution)

and other leading theorists to analyze violent and financial offending behavior of FRs. Another possibility is to move beyond a cross-sectional research design and instead use a life-course approach to analyze patterns of offending behavior over time; patterns that may be influenced by factors other than extremist ideology.

The factors extracted from our analysis revealed several ideology sub-types. However, the factors did not necessarily correspond to self-identification, as several types of FR extremist groups may load into 1 factor, provided they share similar beliefs. In the final scale, persons who believed in conspiracy theories also tended to have antigovernment beliefs and antitax beliefs, which we labeled Conspiracy Theorist. This factor described members of the Patriot Movement.[92] Surprisingly, the militia movement, which Durham[93] considers a sub-set of the Patriot Movement, did not load similarly to the Patriots. Instead, they formed a distinct factor, Survivalist. According to Durham,[94] members of the militia movement are characterized by conspiratorial beliefs, antigovernment beliefs, antitax beliefs, survivalist beliefs and anti–gun control beliefs. This finding of two distinct factors for the Patriot and militia movements suggests that the links between the two may be social, rather than ideological.

Persons who held general hate beliefs also tended to have racist tattoos and loaded highly on the Supremacist factor. Participation in movement actives did not appear to provide socialization into far-right extremism, since Conspiracy Theorists, Survivalists, and Supremacists tended to score low on (i.e., be negatively correlated with) participation in movement activities. A more likely explanation for the lack of correlation between participation in movement activities and all the other indicators was that this factor represented persons new to the far-right movement. As the individual progresses in their search for meaning in the world of complex conspiracy theories and antigovernment ideology, the individual's beliefs may load highly on different factors. Consequently, this factor analysis may reflect only a snapshot in time. Indeed, the use of cross-sectional data suggests that the patterns of beliefs revealed in this factor analysis may not be consistent over a person's lifetime. Further analysis using longitudinal research designs would be necessary to answer this research question.

Although little supporting evidence was found for Kaplan, Barkun, and Durham's typologies[95] when FR criminal behavior was ignored, the typologies were useful in explaining criminal behavior patterns of far rightists. Hate related groups and members of Durham's extreme right were more prone to committing homicides, while tax protesters and persons with conspiratorial beliefs had a higher risk of engaging in financial crimes. None of the three typologies resulted in reliable scales: Cronbach's α was less than .5 when Kaplan, Barkun, and Durham's typologies were assessed. However, the factor analyses used to assess these typologies suffered from several limitations. Only one measure was used to capture xenophobic beliefs. This study did not distinguish between different sources of hate, such as anti-Semitic, anti-Black, Christian Identity, and revisionist beliefs. Another limitation of the indicators was the exclusion of religious beliefs, which Kaplan and Barkun argue is crucial to understanding the FR. Further, the use of legal strategies would have influenced evidence of extremist ideology of defendants in court documents. Finally, the literature suggests that these typologies may be more closely aligned to self-identity (rather than criminal behavior) amongst far-rightists. It would be useful to test these typologies among a wider sample of far-rightists: those who engage in illegal behaviors and those who lead law abiding lives.

Conclusion

In sum, the use of factor-analyses resulted in an empirically sound measure of commitment to FR extremism that moves beyond current binary measures of extremism. Since the scale was found to be valid (it explained close to 85 percent of the variance in commitment to extremism and had a Cronbach's α of .69), the next logical step is to assess: (1) the relative weights of the four factors outlined in Table 5 and (2) the reliability of the scale on other samples of far-rightists. It would be useful to analyze indicators using a larger sample and item response theory (IRT), also called latent trait theory. IRT can be used to identify a latent trait, such as commitment to extremism, when the items are binary (1 / 0) in nature and multiple items are required to assess the latent trait. IRT provides a true score of the test subject's attitude, i.e., consistent measure, which takes tiredness and random error into account. The subsequent scale would have a higher degree of reliability and more precise commitment to extremism scores could be obtained to determine whether these results can be generalized to other samples (i.e., cross-validation).

The sample was limited to the American FR movement. Another possible avenue for research is extending this analysis to FR movements in other countries. This would allow the researcher to determine whether the American FR is unique or whether they share similar characteristics with far-rightists in other countries. If the factors identified in the current study are applicable to other countries it may be possible to design an international FR scale to assess far-right ideology. It is also likely that far-right beliefs are influenced by historical and social factors in specific countries, in which case country specific indicators and scales would provide more appropriate tools for analyzing commitment to far-right extremism.

This technique should also be extended to different types of extremist ideology, for example, far-left, eco-rights, animal-rights and Al Qaeda and associated movements. It is possible that different extremist ideologies would form unique factors that will load onto one overall extremism scale. It is also possible that different types of extremist beliefs would form unique scales (e.g., a far-right scale, eco-terrorist scale). Researchers should attempt to create indicators for those types of extremist beliefs and run a factor analysis. If the subsequent factor analysis shows a poor model fit (i.e., the percent variance explained by the factor analysis is small), indicators for the different types of extremist ideologies should be assessed as individual scales. Finally, the links between the scales and criminal behavior should be assessed to avoid criminalizing beliefs, thereby further isolating far rightists from others who may lead them to question their worldviews.

Notes

1. Joshua D. Freilich, Steven M. Chermak, and David Caspi, "Critical Events in the Life Trajectories of Domestic Extremist White Supremacist Groups: A Case Study Analysis of Four Violent Organizations," *Criminology and Public Policy* 8 (2009), pp. 497–530; Joshua D. Freilich, Nelson A. Pichardo Almanzar, and Craig J. Rivera, "How Social Movement Organizations Explicitly and Implicitly Promote Deviant Behavior: The Case of the Militia Movement," *Justice Quarterly* 16 (1999), pp. 655–683.

2. See Peter Neumann, "The Trouble with Radicalization," *International Affairs* 89 (2013), pp. 873–893, at p. 874; see also Jeffrey Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7 (1995), pp. 44–95.

3. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America."

4. Martin Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15 (2003), pp. 96–111.

5. Michael Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 1 (1989), pp. 409–434.

6. Robert Agnew, "A General Strain Theory of Terrorism," *Theoretical Criminology* 14 (2010), pp. 131–153; Edwin Bakker, *Jihadi Terrorists in Europe, Their Characteristics and the Circumstances in Which They Joined the Jihad: An Exploratory Study* (The Hague: Clingendael Institute, 2006); Kathleen M. Blee, *Inside Organized Racism: Women in the Hate Movement* (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002); Randy Borum, "Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 4 (2011), pp. 7–36; Randy Borum, "Radicalization into Violent Extremism II: A Review of Conceptual Models and Empirical Research," *Journal of Strategic Security* 4 (2011), pp. 37–62; Laura Dugan and Joseph Young, "Allow Extremist Participation in the Policy-Making Process," in N. Frost, J. Freilich, and T. Clear, eds., *Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice Policy: Policy Proposals From the American Society of Criminology Conference* (Belmont, CA: Cengage/Wadsworth, 2009); Raphael S. Ezekiel, *The Racist Mind: Portraits of American Neo-Nazis and Klansman* (New York: Penguin Books USA, 1995); Mark S. Hamm, *American Skinheads: The Criminology and Control of Hate Crime* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1993); Mark Jurgensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Nasra Hasan, "Letter from Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers," *The New Yorker* (November 19, 2001), pp. 36–41; Jeffrey Kaplan, "Absolute Rescue: Absolutism, Defensive Action and the Resort to Force," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7 (1995), pp. 128–163; Alan Krueger, *What Makes a Terrorist*? (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko, *Friction: How Radicalization Happens to Them and Us* (New York: Oxford University Press 2011); John Monahan, "The Individual Risk Assessment of Terrorism," *Psychology, Public Policy and Law* 18 (2012), pp. 167–205; Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Jerrold, M. Post, Ehud Sprinzak, and Laurita M. Denny, "The Terrorists in their Own Words: Interviews with 35 Incarcerated Middle Eastern Terrorists," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15 (2003), pp. 171–184; Mitchell Silber and Arvin Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat* (New York: NYPD Intelligence Division, 2007); Pete Simi and Robert Futrell, *American Swastika: Inside the White Power Movement's Hidden Spaces of Hate* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010).

7. See Zeyno Baran, "Fighting the War of Ideas," *Foreign Affairs* 84 (2005), pp. 68–78; Sophia Moskalenko and Clark McCauley, "Measuring Political Mobilization: The Distinction Between Activism and Radicalism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21 (2009), pp. 239–260.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Steven M. Chermak, Joshua D. Freilich, and Zackary Shemtob, "Law Enforcement Training and the Domestic Far-Right," *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 36 (2009), pp. 1305–1322.

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14. Steven M. Chermak, *Searching for a Demon: the Media Construction of the Militia Movement* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 2002).

15. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America" and "Leaderless Resistance."

16. James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990); Hamm, *American Skinheads*. See also note 13.

17. Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile, "The Strategy of White Separatism"; Pete Simi, "Why Study White Supremacist Terror? A Research Note," *Deviant Behavior* 31 (2010), pp. 251–273; Simi and Futrell, *American Swastika*.

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33. Kimmel and Ferber, "'White Men Are this Nation.'"

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36. Simi and Futrell, *American Swastika*; Robert Futrell and Pete Simi, "Free Spaces, Collective Identity, and the Persistence of U.S. White Power Activism," *Social Problems* 51 (2004), pp. 16–42; Barbara Perry and Randy Blazak, "Places for Races: The White Supremacist Movement Imagines U.S. Geography," *Journal of Hate Studies* 8 (2010), pp. 29–51.

37. Simi and Futrell, *American Swastika*, p. 3.

38. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*; Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*; McCauley and Moskalenko, *Friction*; Simi and Futrell, *American Swastika*; Futrell and Simi, "Free Spaces, Collective Identity, and the Persistence of U.S. White Power Activism"; Perry and Blazak, "Places for Races."

39. Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile, "The Strategy of White Separatism;" Simi and Futrell, *American Swastika*.

40. Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*; Simi and Futrell, *American Swastika*.

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50. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America."

51. Ibid., p. 60.

52. Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements"; Chermak, *Searching for a Demon*; Durham, "Preparing for Armageddon"; Kimmel and Ferber, "'White Men Are this Nation.'"

53. Hamm, *American Skinheads*; *Kaplan*, "Right Wing Violence in North America"; Ehud Sprinzak, "Right-Wing Terrorism in a comparative Perspective: The Case of Split Delegitimization," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7 (1995), pp. 17–43.

54. Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements,"

55. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America."

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57. Recent studies have relied on the ECDB to examine the evolution of domestic extremist groups (Joshua D. Freilich, Steven M. Chermak, and David Caspi, "Critical Events in the Life Trajectories of Domestic Extremist White Supremacist Groups: A Case Study Analysis of Four Violent

Organizations," *Criminology and Public Policy* 8 (2009), pp. 497–530), differences between violent and nonviolent extremist groups (Steven M. Chermak, Joshua D. Freilich and Michael Suttmoeller, "The Organizational Dynamics of Far-Right Hate Groups in the United States: Comparing Violent to Non-Violent Organizations," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 36 (2013), pp. 193–218), comparisons between far-right homicides and "regular" non-extremist homicides (Jeff Gruenewald and William A. Pridemore, "A Comparison of Ideologically-Motivated Homicides from the New Extremist Crime Database and Homicides from the Supplementary Homicides Reports using Multiple Imputation by Chained Equations to Handle Missing Values," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 28 (2012), pp. 141–162), fatal attacks against the police (Joshua D. Freilich and Steven M. Chermak, "Preventing Deadly Encounters between Law Enforcement and American far-Rightists," *Crime Prevention Studies* 25 (2009), pp. 141–172), lone wolf attacks (Jeff Gruenewald, Steven M. Chermak, and Joshua D. Freilich, "Distinguishing 'Loner' Attacks from Other Domestic Extremist Violence: A Comparison of Far-Right Homicide Incident and Offender Characteristics," *Criminology and Public Policy* 12 (2013), pp. 65–91; Jeff Gruenewald, Steven M. Chermak, and Joshua D. Freilich, "Lone Wolves and Far-Right Terrorism in the United States," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 36 (2013), pp. 1005–1024), ideologically motivated homicide victimization (William Parkin, and Joshua D. Freilich. "Routine Activities and Right-Wing Extremists: An Empirical Comparison of the Victims of Ideologically and Non-Ideologically Motivated Homicides Committed by American Far-Rightists," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27 (2015), pp. 182–203), and county-level variation in the location of extremist attacks (Steven M. Chermak, and Jeff Gruenewald, "Laying the Foundation for the Criminological Examination of Right-Wing, Left-Wing, and Al Qaeda Inspired Extremism in the United States," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27 (2015), pp. 133–159; Joshua D. Freilich, Amy Adamczyk, Steven M. Chermak, Katherine Boyd and William S. Parkin, "Investigating the Applicability of Macro-Level Criminology Theory to Terrorism: A County-Level Analysis," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 31 (2015), pp. 383–411).

58. The ECDB's incident identification and coding is a multi-stage process (Joshua D. Freilich, Steven M. Chermak, Roberta Belli, Jeff Gruenewald, and William S. Parkin, "Introducing the United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB)," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 26 (2014), pp. 372–384). First, open-source publications (e.g., the FBI, GTD, and Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Report) and databases are used to identify cases that could fit the inclusion criteria. Additional incidents are identified in online newspaper articles. After potential incidents are identified, we systematically search more than 30 open-source search engines and databases to collect all publically available information on the crimes. In addition, for this study criminal history records of individuals in the sample were obtained from a pay-per-view website, BeenVerified. com. Criminal history records were used to determine the presence of racist tattoos. A coder read all the documents, verified that the incident met the inclusion criteria, conducted additional open-source searches, and coded each incident and scheme. The ECDB uses various sources to infer subjects' commitment to far-rightist ideology, and the reliability of these sources is ranked to maximize validity and accuracy of this variable. Further, protocols exist to ensure inter-rater reliability between coders, to minimize selectivity bias and reduce missing cases. These data were cleaned and verified for this study. The information obtained from the updated searches and criminal history records was then entered into an Excel file and exported into SPSS for analysis.

59. Steven M. Chermak, Joshua D. Freilich, William S. Parkin, and Jim P. Lynch, "American Terrorism and Extremist Crime Data Sources and Selectivity Bias: An Investigation Focusing on Homicide Events Committed by Far-Right Extremists," *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 28 (2012), pp. 191–218.

60. An indicator was only coded as "1" or present if evidence of it was reported in the open-source materials. As Parkin and Freilich explain, this coding decision means that the default response for all indicators was NOT present, that is, "0," unless the open-sources contained evidence that that it was present, "1." This is necessary when working with open-source materials because in many cases a negative response is unlikely to be reported, especially in a journalistic source. Since each indicator was searched for and then coded using the same open-source materials, it could be argued that the likelihood of missing data was the same across indicators (Parkin and Freilich, "Routine Activities and Right-Wing Extremists").

61. Andy Field, *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*, 4th Edition (London, UK: Sage Publications, 2013).
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Kaiser's recommendation cited by Field, *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*.
65. Jolliffe's recommendation cited by Field, *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*.
66. The formula used in SPSS calculate individual commitment score was conspiratorial beliefs + xeno-phobic beliefs + anti-government beliefs + anti-tax beliefs + survivalist beliefs + anti-gun control beliefs + participation in movement activity + movement-related tattoo + self-claim - self-denial.
67. Field, *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*.
68. Moskalenko and McCauley, "Measuring Political Mobilization."
69. Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11."
70. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America."
71. Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11."
72. Longitudinal data is required to verify the conveyor belt theory of radicalization among the FR (i.e., determine whether non-extremist collaborators differ in *type* or are at an earlier stage of their radicalization).
73. Moskalenko and McCauley, "Measuring Political Mobilization."
74. A promax rotation is a type of oblique rotation and allows factors to be correlated, which is common in the social sciences. Promax is a fast procedure, suitable to larger data sets, Field *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*.
75. Ibid.
76. Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11."
77. Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements."
78. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America."
79. Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements."
80. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America."
81. Ibid.
82. Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11."
83. Ibid.; Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America"; Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements."
84. Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements."
85. Barkun, in "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements," argues that religious beliefs motivate political and violent activism by the White supremacist movement. Religious beliefs could not be reliably measured with secondary open source data and was thus excluded from the analysis.
86. Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11."
87. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America" and Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements."
88. Ibid.
89. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*; Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*; Chermak, *Searching for a Demon*; Ezekiel, *The Racist Mind*; Simi and Futrell, *American Swastika*.
90. Moskalenko and McCauley, "Measuring Political Mobilization."
91. McCauley and Moskalenko, *Friction*; Mark Jurgensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2003).
92. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness*.
93. Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11."
94. Ibid.
95. Kaplan, "Right Wing Violence in North America"; Barkun, "Millenarian Aspects of 'White Supremacist' Movements"; Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11."
96. See Freilich et al., "Surveying American State Police Agencies about Terrorism Threats, Terrorism Sources, and Terrorism Definitions," p. 372.

Appendix 1. Summary of indicators for commitment to FR ideology.[96]

Indicator	Explanation of indicator
Conspiratorial beliefs	"Believe in conspiracy theories that involve a grave threat to national sovereignty and/or personal liberty and a belief that one's personal and/or national 'way of life' is under attack and is either already lost or that the threat is imminent," for example, Belief in New World Order or ZOG; demonizing the UN; Social Security Number and IDs used to track people; foreign troops in United States; the economy was controlled by America's enemies; end times was near; two seedlines—Jews are the offspring of Satan; Creativity: Catholicism denounced as a "cult-religion" and it was the holy responsibility of each generation to fight for the white race
Xenophobic beliefs	"But for some the threat is from a specific ethnic, racial, or religious group," for example, believe children should have been home schooled to avoid race mixing; violently opposed to mixed marriages/relations; racial segregation; United States was a White nation; refer to imprisoned White supremacists as "prisoners of war"; restriction of immigration to White Europeans; hate/bias comments or statements by perpetrator on or before crime; hate/bias material left at crime scene; presence of xenophobic clothing, zines, and music.
Antigovernment beliefs	"Suspicious of centralized federal authority," for example, excessive erosion of civil liberties; government violates the Constitution and excessively legislates citizens lives; plain text interpretation of law and belief in common law courts.
Antitax beliefs	"Reverent of individual liberty…be free of taxes," for example, 16th Amendment not ratified; federal tax was voluntary; wages and tips were not income; only foreign source of income was taxable; an individual was not a person according to the IRC; only federal employees were subject to federal tax; the IRS was a private corporation
Survivalist beliefs	"A belief in the need to be prepared for an attack either by participating in paramilitary preparations, training and survivalism," for example, stockpiling weapons, medical supplies, and food and weapons training necessary.
Anti-gun control beliefs	"Reverent of individual liberty… especially their right to own guns," Right to bear arms not limited by legislation.
Participation in movement activity	For example, operated hate site, wrote or disseminated extremist books/essays/letters to the editor, organized or attended movement activities, recruited others
Movement-related tattoo	For example, swastika, 666, or other references to Hitler
Self-claim	For example, I am a far-rightist/tax-protester/Patriot
Self-denial	For example, I am not an extremist, member or far-right