

ELEMENTS OF EXTREMISM: DOES ONE SIZE FIT ALL?
THE RHETORIC WITHIN EXTREMIST CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

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Abstract:

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Extremist groups are something that people hear about frequently enough that everyone is familiar with the term. They consist of people and/or groups with an ideology that exceeds the normal, and often, are brought to the attention of the public when they act out in accordance with the extreme beliefs. This paper seeks to examine past the question of *if* a system of beliefs is extreme, and instead targets the question of *how* it came to be that way.

This paper will use the theory of J.M. Berger, who through a historical analysis of one known extremist group, claims his theory to be a “universal process of extremization”. Using two extremist ideologies from vastly different sides of the ideological and political spectrum, the Weathermen and Bronze Age Pervert, my research seeks to test out the “universal” claims of Berger’s theory, as well as determine the future value of such a theory, as a mean of prediction and intervention for future violence for extremist groups.

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Chapter One: The Research Question

Introduction

On August 3, 2019 in El Paso, Texas, 22 people were killed and 24 more were injured in a violent shooting at a local Walmart. The shooter was 21-year-old Patrick Crusius, who just minutes before posted a hate filled manifesto online outlining his reasons for committing such a heinous act. This shooting, and the manifesto left behind, caused many persons to wonder what got Crusius to this point, and more generally caused the public to question what causes people to commit extreme acts. While some were quick to accept the idea that Crusius and other extremists are simply “born that way,” an investigation into Crusius’s online presence demonstrates that a significant number of his beliefs were developed through the influence of others. Crusius cites inspiration, both in his manifesto and on his social media, from people such as KKK leader David Duke and the Christchurch shooter. For a period of time, Crusius’s cover photo on Twitter was even a photo of South Carolina shooter Dylann Roof with his infamous quotation “I had to do it because somebody had to.” While it is clear that Crusius was influenced by others, instead of just being born with his extreme ideas, the question remains as to how he, and other extremists, entered into the realm of the extreme in the first place.

J.M. Berger attempts to answer this question for us, with his “extremist construction of identity” theory. He theorizes, just as we can see through Crusius’s outside influences, that “movements are not born extreme; they evolve that way over time” (Berger 3). He defines extremism as, “A spectrum of beliefs in which an in-group’s success is inseparable from negative acts against an out-group. Negative acts can include verbal attacks and diminishment, discriminatory behavior, or violence” (Berger 6). Berger’s theory is centered around tracking how groups become extreme over time, and he claims that his theory can be used to track the extremist construction. Berger posits that, regardless of the ideology of the group, “extremist

group radicalization represents an identifiable process that can be understood as distinct from the contents of a movement's ideology" (Berger 3). His theory identifies five "elements of extremism": the two-part legitimization demand cycle, linking in supply, automatic thinking, and an urgent need for action, which he claims to be universal elements across extremization of ideologies. Berger uses a sample group, Christian Identity, to track the process through his five identified elements. However, the question remains whether this process is truly universal, across vastly different ideologies, structures, and circumstances.

The Christian Identity movement, Berger's sample group for this theory, is a good example of a group gone extreme. This group is now widespread in white supremacist movements and uses a "Christian ideology" to back up their hateful and extreme message. However, the group did not start out this way. They began in Great Britain in the 19th century, as the British-Israelism movement, and were just a small group of religious people with a historical theory that modern Europeans were "heirs of the Chosen People of Israel" (Berger 10). They believed Europeans were the "lost tribes" that had made their way from Israel to settle in Europe, and "seeded a race of white Europeans" that were the distinct Anglo-Saxon Race (Berger 10). According to the now Christian Identity group, this white race was the, "rightful beneficiaries of covenants with God" (Berger 10). At their origin, while their ideas were obviously posed to prefer the white race, they were not outright hateful of other groups, didn't exclude the Jewish people from their group, and "were probably no more racist or anti-Semitic than the mainstream of Western culture at that time" (Anti-Defamation League). However, as they evolved, so did the caliber of their beliefs and the actions that stemmed from these beliefs.

As the group gained traction, their beliefs evolved and along with the changing culture around them at the time, the group slowly shifted from "religious to racial anti-Semitism" (Berger 18). The group came to exclude more races, especially the Jewish people, from their

definition of chosen people, and at the same time grew a larger following, including a growing base in America. In the US, the idea was further purported that Jewish people were “false” descendants and white Europeans were “true” (ADL). After their anti-semitic turn, the now Christian Identity group continued their message of hate, as they spread through white supremacist groups, including the KKK. By the 1960s, the Christian Identity was a core part of the far right in America, as they “penetrated most of the major extreme-right movements” including neo Nazi groups (ADL). Their hateful message in the 20th and 21st centuries has been the rationale behind violent attacks and domestic terrorism incidents.

Through his examination of the evolution of the Christian Identity movement, a group that has been widely accepted as extremist, Berger tracks out “elements of extremism”. While his theory works well for his example group, Berger’s claims are much broader as he believes the elements he lines out can be identified in all extremist groups, as a “universal process of radicalization” (Berger 3). However, is Berger successful in creating such an approach that really outlines universal elements of extremist construction? It would seem difficult to overcome radical differences among extremist groups, and for the purpose of this paper I will test two vastly different extremist identities, the Weathermen and the Bronze Age Pervert, to test Berger’s universality claim.

One extremist group that differs significantly from Christian Identity in terms of ideology is the Weathermen. While the Weathermen provide a clear example of an extremist identity, their politics and what they fought for puts them at complete odds with Christian Identity, Berger’s example group. These large differences make it seem unlikely that Berger’s theory will really be able to bridge the gap and fit the Weathermen into his “universal” extremist construction. The Weathermen began in the 1960s as a student activist group that turned to extremism. In contrast to the white supremacist views of Christian Identity, the Weathermen movement was born during

the civil rights era, fighting for equality and inclusion. They saw themselves as a part of the “new left” movement, with their eyes recently opened to the injustices occurring across the United States (Burrough 57-58). Made up of mostly young people, the Weathermen was a leftish group protesting in reaction to the American government, and their recent “realization” that “America wasn’t a land of equality. It wasn’t a land of the good and the just and righteous. It was all a lie” (Burrough 57). This movement is starkly contrasted with the goals of Christian Identity, as they fought for the exact opposite. They fought for the idea that white people were the chosen and superior people, while the Weathermen fought to undo this very concept.

The Weathermen began in a time when activism and protesting were not uncommon. They were largely shaped by the culture and climate of the time, where a growing awareness of the injustice happening around them increased their desire to fight back. This is another difference between the Weathermen and Christian Identity. While the latter group used biblical references and history to try and solidify their place, the Weathermen were reacting to the current of activism stirring all around them and were fighting to change history and its outdated norms. The climate was the catalyst for the Weathermen. They started in activism with civil rights, but soon found their new cause for movement, protesting the Vietnam War (Burrough 58). As more and more students gathered in protest, the members grew weary with the slow speed of progress. It was around this time that the Weathermen first got the idea that activism and protesting wasn’t enough to accomplish what they wanted. It was also around this time that the movement began to toy with the concept of “revolutionary” (Burrough 59).

While this concept did not immediately lead to violence, “an intellectual foundation was being laid” (Burrough 59). Over time, as tensions mounted across the nation and even the world, the Weathermen moved closer and closer to extremism. In doing so, they abandoned their “democratic left” origins, backing a more revolutionary stance as they began to, “give up the

sweet life of the democratic left for revolt” (Burrough 60). Members of the group looked to socialist and communist radicals, the opposite of what Christian Identity would even consider role models, for where to go next with their movement. Soon, what was once a student group had transformed into an extremist group, with their first violent bombing in 1968. From there the group continued small bombing attacks until one their bombs exploded early while under construction, destroying a townhome, injuring many members, and causing the group to go underground.

Another extremist identity that will be examined in this paper is the Bronze Age Pervert (BAP), whose many differences from Berger’s sample group include his “out there” rhetoric, his use of social media, and a rejection of religion. Additionally, the BAP is an individual whose actual identity remains unknown, versus a large and well-known group like Christian Identity. All of these differences make it appear that the BAP will be a challenge for Berger’s universal theory to cover. The Bronze Age Pervert is more similar on the political spectrum to the Christian Identity movement. Both are alt-right and white supremacist. However, unlike Christian Identity, which has a long history that developed over an extended period of time, the Bronze Age Pervert is a relatively new extremist. The context and medium of his development are vastly different from that of the Christian Identity movement. While their group developed over the course of a century, the Bronze Age pervert has popped up recently. His move to extremism is part of the general alt-right reaction to leftish politics in the age of Donald Trump. Unlike the Christian Identity, who have a historical foundation that goes back to the 19th century, the Pervert popped up in the span of a few years and has made his presence known ever since.

Twitter is his primary medium of communication, although his real identity is hidden. He is very active on the social media site, and it is that very account that brought him to the attention

of the masses. This is another key difference in his extremist construction. Unlike the Christian Identity movement, which developed slowly and gained attention through its message and events, the Bronze Age Pervert used Twitter, and has hidden behind the veil of the internet. While he has over 28 thousand followers, no one knows who he really is (or if he is one or more persons.) This veil over BAP allows him to live a “double life” as he can post whatever outrageous things he wants online and in his book, while being able to go about his daily life unknown. This type of hidden identity is very different from Christian Identity, who didn’t establish themselves in the age of the internet, and therefore had to construct their identity without the ability to separate their personal and daily lives from it. Although seemingly similar in the message and ideology, Berger’s example group and the Bronze Age Pervert’s context and medium of the identity construction make up huge differences that would seem difficult to cover both under Berger’s “universal” extremist identity theory.

Also, unlike the Christian Identity movement, whose name points to religion as a core belief, The Bronze Age Pervert is less concerned with religion. The Christian Identity movement, while they have strayed from mainstream religion, still point to religion and texts like the Bible to back their message and ideology. However, the Bronze Age Pervert approaches his ideology from a very different angle. It is even in the name, as he approaches his cause and spreads his message in a more “out-there” and provocative way. The “Pervert’s” Twitter bio is “aspiring nudist bodybuilder. Free speech and anti-xenoestrogen activist. " He clearly is straying away from the religious angle into something else. Instead of the classic biblical texts used by the Christian Identity movement, he uses ideas such as nudity and provocation to get people’s attention. The BAP’s vastly different messages and strategies create a key separation between him and Christian Identity, even if he does use them to portray a similar ideology.

Obviously, the question with these groups isn't if they are extreme, but instead how they got to be that way. This is the very question Berger aims to answer with his extremist construction of identity. However, as explained above these groups have vast differences that make it seem unlikely that they all became extreme in similar or even related ways. They are all over the political spectrum, as well as the fact that they vary in the context and climate in which their extremist identity was constructed.

This thesis will analyze each of the two ideologies, Weathermen and BAP, through one specific manifesto per group to see if Berger's elements of extremism can be identified within each manifesto, as the manifestos chosen are the best example of the group's ideology and rhetoric. This is different from Berger's approach in his examination of his sample group, Christian Identity, as he looks at their progression over time and through various texts and sources, a more historical analysis. In contrast, as my paper will focus on one manifesto per group, it is less historical and more of a rhetorical analysis of a singular point in time. However, to demonstrate progression and extremization processes, this analytic approach will work from the assumption that people are not born as hard-wired extremists. Berger demonstrates that Christian Identity was not born in the extreme form it exists today, and that appears to be true for the extremist groups that have a history available to study. Look at someone like Patrick Crusius, who clearly was influenced by others, and the Weathermen who started out as a student protest group. Even the most infamous examples of extremism, such as the People's Temple Cult, which resulted in the Jonestown Massacre, started out as a church in Indiana involved in civil rights issues, and only became extreme as they continued to progress over time. These groups provide us with the assumption used for this paper, that groups are not born extreme. If they were born extreme, there would be no reason to track their journey into extremism, they would just already be that way, and there would be no progression to track. The manifestos analyzed in the paper

provide us with a sort of check in point. We assume groups don't start extreme, and these manifestos demonstrate the extremist ideology, so from there we can make the assumption that progression had to occur. These texts provide us a sort of end point and using the assumption that the group didn't start out that way, we can intuit that progress occurred in the period from the start to when the manifesto was created.

Additionally, even for groups that do not have a clear history to study, as with the BAP, using the underlying assumption that people are not born into extremist ideologies, we can also track progress within the text itself. Small escalations within the manifest itself, as the text progresses, can serve as a sort of analogy for the historical progress that we are unable to track due to the anonymity of the BAP and his history. This textual progression analogy, paired with the intuited progress leading up to the creation of the manifesto, makes a rhetorical analysis of a singular text an effective strategy for analyzing and testing out Berger's theory, even if he went about his own analysis in a slightly different way.

Berger makes a broad claim, that this paper is intended to test. Despite the universal claims of Berger's theory, extremist groups are so varied that it seems unlikely they all came to be extreme in the same way. So, is Berger's extremist construction of identity theory really universal in a way that one size really does fit all? Or do the extremist groups examined in this paper have too many variations from Berger's sample group, Christian Identity, making their process of extremization too different to fall under Berger's theory?

Chapter Two: Introducing the “Universal” Theory

The Theory: JM Berger

J.M. Berger’s theory will be the basis of analysis for this paper. The goal of Berger’s theory, as previously outlined, is to predict a “universal” path to constructing extremist identity that is independent of the group’s specific ideology. He offers his analysis and theory as a means of understanding such a process in hopes that it can be used to counter this process of extremization. In constructing his theory, and as a result of potentially understanding how these groups came to be, Berger emphasizes the importance of understanding what extremist ideology is. Expanding from previous definitions of ideology as a whole, Berger defines extremist ideology as, “the set of justifications that legitimizes an in-group, which is primarily expressed through texts, including both the written and spoken word” (Berger 7). Here he sets up his theory, centered around the identity of the in-group that is the group that goes extreme, and uses the idea of “justification” and “legitimization” as key players in the process that turns an ideology extreme. Berger makes the distinction on what type of “legitimacy” this theory is talking about, as it is a word that can be applied to a large variety of meanings, and as a result, could be twisted to mean or portray something other than intended. In the context of his theory, Berger defines legitimization as “the conclusion that a particular collective identity group may rightfully be defined, maintained and/or protected” (Berger 3). Here he is saying that it all boils down to the in-group’s desire to be taken seriously, have a set place, and as they become extreme, they continuously try to justify their legitimacy.

In setting up his theory, he makes the definitional difference between “extremism” and “violent extremism,” in that, while extremism *can* be violent, saying something is extremism doesn’t inherently mean that it is violent. He does resolve to say that sometimes extremism does result in violence, but it isn’t necessary for an extremist classification. Instead, he says

extremism is when “A spectrum of beliefs in which an in-group’s success is inseparable from negative acts against an out-group” (Berger 6). These “negative acts” can, but do not have to be, violent. Berger includes things such as “verbal attacks and diminishment, discriminatory behavior” in his scope of negative acts (Berger 6). When a group’s negative acts turn violent, he classifies the group, not only as extreme, but as violent extremists.

This classification is important for this specific analysis, as all of the groups included have not specifically been linked to violence. While his sample group of Christian Identity, as well as the Weathermen, a group to be analyzed in the paper, have been directly linked to violent acts, not all groups are as clear cut. There is no direct violence associated with the Bronze Age Pervert, even though the alt-right and white supremacist links are often caught up in acts of violence. In the groups that may not directly be linked to physical violence against the out-group, however, the threat of violence is still imminent due to the nature of the extremism that already exists. Within each extremist ideology lies the dangerous possibility of becoming violent. This is where Berger’s theory becomes very important, and if it is actually universal we should be able to use it to try and predict if the negative thought or actions may turn to violence. Such a predictive test can be used with an ideology such as the Bronze Age Pervert, where unlike the other groups, we do not know the identity of the writer, what acts he may already be connected to, or the violence that may or may not be brewing in the future. Even if a group may seem “extreme” in the claims they make, Berger's theory, if proven universal, can be used to predict where this extremism may lead.

As Berger also said in his definition of extremist ideology, these justifications are primarily expressed through texts, both written and spoken. This is where rhetoric is important, as it is all about the study of words and how they express a specific goal of argumentation. Here the goal of these texts is to prove the legitimacy of the in-group. Berger argues that the rhetoric

that expresses extremist construction of identity is universal. This paper will analyze the texts or “manifestos” of various extremist ideologies on both sides of the political spectrum to examine their varied processes of justification through their rhetoric. The real test of his theory’s usefulness as a means of understanding, prediction, and prevention will be to see if his “universal elements” and the rhetoric that they are manifested through are found beyond Christian Identity, his sample group for his analysis, and in the justification texts of the groups to be analyzed.

For each extremist group to be analyzed, one text/manifesto has been selected as a means of representing their extremist identity, and the rhetoric they use as a means of justifying it. For the Weathermen, the “new left” group of the late 1960s and 1970s, I will use their manifesto *You Don’t Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows* as a means of analysis. While the Weathermen published multiple texts and manifestos throughout their active period, this specific manifesto represents their ideology well because of the time it was published. It was published at the height of their active phase, just before they brought their ideology into real action. Other manifestos were published either much earlier, before their beliefs were fully developed or after, once the group had started to encounter problems and they went “underground.” This manifesto hits the sweet spot in terms of the ideological claims, as well as the action that followed from it. This text is a perfect example of beliefs brought to life, and they used this manifesto as a backing for many of their actions to follow.

The text to represent the Bronze Age pervert is his self-published manifesto, titled *The Bronze Age Mindset*. This text consists of a prologue and four parts and sets out to save us from “a great ugliness” which he means to be pretty much all of the current state of affairs. He longs for a return to the “Bronze Age” an age that was often referred to and pined after by Nazi supporters during the time of Hitler, and he criticizes those that led us away from such an age. He claims that this text will “expose the grim shadow of a movement that is hidden behind

events of our time” (BAP 5). This text is a proper representation of the Bronze Age Pervert’s extremist ideology because it is where he outlines his beliefs, and other than his Twitter posts which are much more scattered, it is his only text source, as his identity is unknown.

These two texts represent well two groups on opposing sides of the ideological and political spectrum. My analysis will test for evidence of Berger’s claimed “universal elements of extremism” including: legitimization demand cycle, linking in supply, automatic thinking, and an urgent need for action within these two texts, to both see if his theory is as universal as it claims to be, as well as if it can be used to predict and prevent further acts of extremism, including violence. If Berger’s theory had such abilities, it would be very important, especially with ideologies such as the Bronze Age Pervert, who is currently active, and we do not know what he is capable of or planning to do with his ideas in the future.

Element One and Two: Legitimization Demand Cycle

Berger’s first two elements of extremism make up the legitimization demand cycle. For the purpose of this paper, I will combine the first two elements into one section, as they fit together well for analysis of a singular text per group. This first element of the section focuses on Berger’s described cycle, where the bold ideological claims increase the demand to legitimize, and this need to legitimize increases the boldness of the ideological claims, a cycle that continues to accelerate into extremism as the group develops. Berger describes this first of the two demand cycle elements as, “Adherents demand legitimacy and support their demands with an ideological justification. The new justification can serve as the basis for a subsequent escalation of demand, which then leads to a need for new justifications. If unchecked, this cycle becomes a destructive spiral culminating in a violent prescription to protect the in-group identity from a perceived existential outgroup threat” (Berger 45). The demand for legitimacy and demands for justification of the group feed into each other. As the group’s ideological identity grows, so does

their need to justify it, and as their means for justification grows, so does their ideology, a vicious cycle. As Berger says, when this is left “unchecked,” it can cycle to something much worse than simply strong beliefs or a strong collective group.

A huge part of how an ideology is constructed is based on the definitions and dynamics of the in and out group (Berger 46). Berger outlines “parameters of identity” that are crucial to defining a group’s ideology, “the construction of an in-group identity is an obvious prerequisite to the development of an identity-based extremist movement” and answers to the same questions are needed in order to define who is the outgroup (46-47). Because in and out groups are core to a group’s ideology, they are key to identifying and defining this first element. As the cycle continues, the group answers more of the parameter questions, both for themselves and the outgroup, and their ideology grows into something more definite. However, as their description gets more defined, they need more justification to back it -- the legitimacy demand cycle at work. Also, as the cycle continues, the divide between in and out becomes more crucial to the ideology of the group, “Until the success of the in-group is tied to the detriment of an out-group, an identity collective is not meaningfully extreme” (46). As a group becomes more immersed in their own ingroup identity, they are further distanced from the out. All of their ingroup ideological questions are personal and direct, while their outgroup answers are distanced, “Ingroup members directly experience their own beliefs and practices in the most intimate way possible, while they often (but not always) learn about the beliefs and practices of out-group members from second-hand sources” (48). As they feel the increased pressure to justify their in/out group ideology due to the demand cycle, they take justification from more of a distance, leading to less of an understanding and more of a divide, once again allowing bolder assertions to be made and feeding into the cycle. Eventually the divide will be so great that the detriment of the outgroup is the central and demanding definition of the ingroup.

Berger's analysis shows us the presence of the demand cycle in the Christian Identity group. The racial aspect of the group, while now at the core, didn't start out that way. The group was founded with an emphasis on a shared history derived from shared beliefs, most importantly the idea that they were "the lost tribes of Israel" (Berger 10). While they believed the "Anglo" race was deserving of the biblical covenants, they didn't inherently exclude the Jewish people. In fact, "most early British Israelists did not frame Jews as an enemy out-group" (13). Instead, the early group ideas were that Jewish people would instead eventually assimilate and join British Israelists (now Christian Identity). However, "The expansion of the in-group correlated to an expansion of the out-group" (48) as the racial aspect to their ideology and its implications became increasingly important for subsequent generations of the group (47). The ideology shifted from simply shared beliefs of their group, to ideas of racial purity and impurity which fueled the development of a further disenfranchised out group, evidence of the developing ideology due the demand cycle (47).

The second element that makes up the legitimacy demand cycle deals with factors that further accelerate the cycle. Berger describes how challenges to the ideological claims of the group can speed up the cycle, increasing the speed at which the ideological claims, especially claims about the in and out groups, turn bold and extreme. Berger describes this second element in his text as, "Frequent direct challenges to the legitimacy of the in-group or ideology can accelerate this escalation, when ideologues feel pressure to respond with the development of new and more assertive justifications" (Berger 45). The challenges put on the group's ideology and their justification can accelerate the cycle, as with each challenge the group gets more assertive.

In his analysis, Berger demonstrates how the legitimization demand cycle was further fueled by challenges to the group, including the various world wars, the creation of Israel as a Jewish state, and the continued "refusal" so to speak of the Jewish people to assimilate to British

Israelist beliefs (31). Increased pressure from the continuation of the out-group combined with the cultural tide of anti-Semitism fueled the group into more and more assertive justifications of ideology. Soon, “The disenfranchisement of Jews became a denial of the Jewish role in Christian history and escalated into a literal denial that Jews were human” (48). The group felt the need to further justify their claims to legitimacy, and one of the main ways they did this was by invalidating the outgroup to the point where they were portrayed as a dangerous threat from whom the ingroup had to protect themselves. As the group’s cycle of legitimacy demand continued unchecked into the realm of extremism, “the perceived out-group threat reached existential and cosmic proportions” (49). Berger’s tracking of Christian Identity’s ideological evolution clearly demonstrates the dangerous nature of the cycle and how it leads a group into the extreme. However, the question remains as to whether this demand cycle is present and identifiable in other groups established as extreme.

Berger separated the two elements in his text, but for the purpose of this paper it works better to combine the two together into the legitimacy demand cycle, because he analyzed one group over an extended period of time and multiple texts and this analysis will be focused on one text per group. These elements pair well together when examining a singular text, because in order to find aspects of where a group was challenged and as a result the process was accelerated, means that the demand cycle was there in the first place, *i.e.*, killing two birds with one stone.

Element 3: Linking in Supply

As a result of the legitimacy demand cycle, the group is left with bold ideological assertions that need to be backed up. This leads to Berger’s third element, linking in supply. The more a group includes in its ideological claims, the more supply that is needed in order to attempt to back up what they claim. Berger describes this third element as, “demand for

justifications increases, additional supply is required. When the movement's canonical sources are not adequate to the challenge, it may turn to non-canonical, derivative or entirely independent sources" (45). The previous elements had to do with the increasing scope of the ideology and as well as the assertive claims and beliefs about the defined groups. However, this element is more focused on where the group gets their information. The demand cycle renders their original supply of sources insufficient, and they move to more creative and "out-there" sources to feed the supply. Berger's idea of linkages explains how these groups add to their supply, "Elements of group identity are presented in texts by ideologues and propagandists by linking concepts" (8). The more demands and assertions a group makes, the more they need to rely on linkages in order to back up their ideology.

While the group may start out with a small arrangement of texts and sources, Berger explains that as the demand cycle progresses they need to make the move to link in supply to back up their claims. At first a group may use a historical perspective that originates from within their ideology, but this can only supply their ideological justification for so long as the demand cycle accelerates. Eventually the group will need to get more creative with their supply and they do this through linking more "out there" concepts, "An example would be an ideological argument that draws connections between a conspiracy theory, a scriptural reference, a folkloric tradition and a real historical event, representing the bundled product simply as 'history'" (8). The group moves from referencing one specific text to combining a variety of loosely connected ideas and then uses the link they created between these sources as a supply to back their ideological claims, with the goal of continued justification.

Berger uses Christian Identity to demonstrate linking in supply, as they moved to linking increasingly "out-there" concepts to create sources to supply their increasing ideological demands. The original beliefs and ideas were rooted in an established text, the Bible. British

Israelists offered up a new interpretation of the existing text, saying that “the nation of Israel described in the Bible has been misunderstood by mainstream scholars as an exclusively Jewish state” and that instead “the lost tribes of Israel migrated to the British Isles and survive today as Anglo-Saxons, constituting a separate nation and a semi-distinct race from the tribe of Judah, whose descendants are modern-day Jews” (11). This interpretation, while obviously different from the mainstream, is rooted in an established text. However, as the ideology of the group grew so too did the tensions between in and out groups. The claims grew more assertive, extreme, and required linkages to an additional, and more questionable supply.

Examples of the new supply include the group’s increasing tendency to reference the text *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, published in the early 1900s and full of conspiracy theories against the Jewish people. This text is centered around the theory of “Jewish influence over society” and links this influence to pretty much all the bad things that have happened or will in the future (19). The inclusion of these ideas into British Israelism demonstrates their need to link to exterior supply, since, while the ideas were used within the group, the text itself was not created by the group. However, the strange linkages did not stop with one conspiracy. Group members also moved to “new interpretations” of Biblical texts that had, “been excluded from the canonical bible for various reasons, including questions about their authenticity” (22). As the need for a supply surpassed the authenticated Biblical sources, the group had to link in less reputable ones, still trying to legitimize their increasingly extremist ideology.

Extremization led Christian Identity down a path of questionable linkages, including the linking of Judaism and Communism (26), as well as Jewish descent and satanic offspring, something they picked up from *When?*, a dystopian novel about the “end times” (32). The group grasped for supply in new interpretations of other religions texts, including Hindu and Egyptian mythology (38). Eventually they even made links to UFO theory. The text *Faith of our Fathers*

by William Gale references UFO sightings, space battles, and “a war in outer space between the angels of God and Satan’s army of 200 million” to back up their ideas of race and anti-Semitism (40). Berger clearly demonstrates a shift in the linking done by the group, in order to keep up with the continuous demand for justification sources, “this process took the form of the syncretic inclusion of folklore at first, then apocryphal scriptures, followed by conspiracy theories, and eventually expanding to absorb UFO cults and New Age philosophy” (45). While it is obvious that linking in supply was a key part of Christian Identity’s radicalization process, additional groups and the sources referenced in their texts need to be analyzed in order to determine the “universality” of the element of extremism.

Element 4: Automatic Thinking

As the number of linkages increases due to the legitimacy demand cycle, the type of thinking invoked by the statements of the increasing extremist group also changes. This moves us into the fourth element, automatic thinking, as people are encouraged to critically think less, and instead just accept the conclusions spoon fed to them by the texts. Berger describes this as a change from “deliberate thinking” as he states, “As ideological texts evolve and mutate into more extreme forms, target audiences are encouraged to do less deliberative thinking and more automatic thinking. Previously litigated arguments are bundled into high-level constructs, reducing complex ideas (such as British Israelist genealogies) to simplified assertions of fact, sometimes attributed to scholarly origin” (Berger 45). The extremist group is now not only changing the type of ideas they give to their followers and the links to their ideology, but they are also changing the way they want their followers to think about these increasingly extremist ideas.

Berger references Dr. Haroro Ingram, another researcher on extremist groups, whose theory of thinking systems explains, “the mind is characterized by two systems of thinking”

(Berger 8). The first system is the “automatic system,” which is characterized as effortless, associative, intuitive, and “operates automatically and quickly, with little or no effort and no sense of voluntary control” (Berger 8). In contrast, the second system is the “deliberative system” which is described as reflective, based on reasoning, and “allocates attention to the effortful mental activities that demand it” (Berger 8). The differences between these two types of thinking systems are obvious, and Berger uses Ingram’s ideas in order to characterize the change that occurs when a group goes extreme. He believes that an aspect of groups gone extreme, like Christian Identity, is a shift from “a focus on pseudo-scholarly argumentation to bald assertion” (Berger 51). However, this shift is often disguised within the movement, so that the followers do not necessarily realize they are being trained to think automatically as opposed to deliberately, “By presenting many such constructs in sequence, ideologues can lead audiences to believe they are engaging in deliberative thought, when they are actually experiencing a sequence of automatic responses” (Berger 45). This makes the assertions even more dangerous, because not only are the claims bolder, and the thinking more automatic, but the audience believes they came to those conclusions themselves, even though they didn’t engage in deliberative thinking. Because the followers believe they came up with the conclusion themselves, they actually feel stronger about it, even if it is a farce: “if audience members feel they have worked to reach a conclusion, they may be more confident about that conclusion—even when the conclusion is not objectively provable” (Berger 51). As a group inches deeper into the demand cycle and the extremism that follows from it, automatic thinking increases. “As beliefs become more extreme, the value of deliberation declines” (Berger 53). With a strong backing of followers who are tricked into believing increasingly bold claims due to automatic thinking, the group moves into the dangerous realm of the extreme.

Berger demonstrates the shift from to automatic thinking that occurred in Christian Identity. Although their ideas were radical, Berger claims that early British Israelist texts were, “extremely deliberative in focus” (Berger 51). They were concerned with building the case for the lost but rightful “Anglo-Saxton identity” and “approach it using the trappings of scholarship. Evidence is marshaled, arguments are advanced, and counter-arguments are entertained” (Berger 51). Even if you strongly disagree with what they are saying, they are at least using reasoning to back up their beliefs.

However, Berger demonstrates that as the group evolved, this type of reasoning dwindled into the automatic thinking system. In the 1940s the group shifted, according to Berger, as the group started to rely on fiction, a marker of automatic thinking. The dystopian end times novel *When?* was published by the group, and Berger explains how this work of fiction perfectly demonstrates the automatic thinking shift and how it is disguised. Berger explains how the novel references the “massive body of “scholarship” that had been produced throughout the 70 years the movement had been alive (Berger 51). However, “The “proofs” laboriously devised by earlier authors were carefully cited and catalogued, but few of them were explicated” (Berger 51). By referencing previous arguments within the text, *When?* creates the illusion of deliberative thinking. However, because the sources are only used as a force to make a claim, and not a mode of actual reasoning that the audience members can use to draw their own conclusions, it “creates a simulation of deliberative thought” (Berger 51). Berger notes that *When?* and the group’s move to rely on fiction is a huge shift in the reasoning strategies, as “most fiction inherently provokes automatic reactions from readers” (Berger 51). As the group continued to progress, their reliance on disguised automatic reasoning only increased. Berger sees this as a result and cause of extremization. It is clear, as shown by Berger, that this type of

thinking shift was a big element in Christian Identity's move into the extreme. However, this element must be found in other groups for it to be considered one of the "universal elements of extremism."

Element 5: Urgent Need For Action

Berger's fifth element, an urgent need for action, can be seen as a sort of accumulating effect of all the other elements. As the group's ideology becomes more extreme, with it the in/out group conflict and threat are escalated, and everything becomes more urgent. The group begins to see its action/extremist solution as the only way out, and this often includes action against the perceived threat of the out group. As an extremist's ideology is furthered, the in group and out group dynamics are rooted in history, and the group uses this history to further the idea that this conflict always has and will continue to be an issue, "The perceived history provides "evidence" that the conflict is unmitigable and reflective of a deeper and more intrinsic clash" (Berger 50). As the group progresses deeper into its extremist beliefs, the perceived threat and eventual dangerous clash becomes less a part of the "unknowable (but likely distant) future" and more urgent and in the present (Berger 50).

Berger describes his fifth element, "As the ideology is elaborated, a distortion of temporal scales is required to fully describe both the in-group and the out-group identities. This produces a sort of Doppler Effect – as adherents rush from an increasingly expansive history toward an increasingly compressed timeline for a near-future upheaval of the world order, imbuing the out-group threat with an apocalyptic sense of urgency" (Berger 45). While Berger clarifies in- and out-group conflict, and disagreements alone are not descriptive of extremism (as groups clash all the time) such an urgent need for action associated with the threat is a sign of something more than routine disagreement (Berger 49).

This shifted and increasingly urgent time scale has a dangerous result, “in a sense of urgent instability that can provoke powerful automatic responses, such as fear and aggression” (Berger 50). Eventually, the group’s ideology and its members will come to accept the time scale that “eschatological events are literally imminent,” leading them to have an “apocalyptic time” mentality. Berger explains the drastic and extreme effects that can come of this, including, “normal restrictions on behavior (such as taboos against violence) may be loosened or entirely removed” (Berger 50). The threat has become so urgent and rooted in the now that the ideology is now linked to protecting themselves from the threat, which allows the group to justify hate and violence against the out group, a clear marker of an extremist group.

To outline this urgent need for action, Berger again uses Christian Identity. First, the group centered its conflict in a long and almost ever-present historical timeline, “the in-group’s conflict with the out-group is dated to pre-history – ‘possibly millions of years’” (Berger 50). Soon the group used their constructed and deep-rooted historical conflict to justify a present and on-going threat by the out group, as “an apocalyptic current entered the British Israelist stream” (Berger 50). The group then was fueled by more perceived threats of modern times, all leading to new time scale of the threat, “Fueled by and centered on World War II, the start of the Cold War and the establishment of Jewish Israel, the onset of prophetic times was not set in the distant future; it was happening now and imminently” (Berger 50). Berger explains how these current events caused an ideological change. Suddenly the time scales shifted, and the apocalyptic threat the group had become fixated on was no longer far away, but happening any day now, allowing the justification of more extreme behavior towards the perceived threat. While such a sense of urgency logically connects to the extremist changes of Christian Identity, the question remains whether this time scale change is universal, or unique to the one ideology that Berger outlines, as all of the groups to be examined have different histories and different conflicts at their core.

Chapter Three: The Weathermen

The Weathermen and Elements One and Two

While Berger successfully identified his elements with the Christian Identity extremist group, this alone is not proof of a “universal theory of extremism.” The Weathermen represent a well-established extremist group that resorted to violence as a means to achieving their goal. Their manifesto, *You Don't Need a Weatherman to Know Which Way the Wind Blows*, while just a singular text and not tracking their historical progression, provides a means in which to analyze their group's rhetoric for evidence that Berger's process did occur, including the legitimization demand cycle outlined in Berger's first two elements.

Starting from the very first few lines, the Weathermen outline assertions that seem to be evidence of a far progressed demand cycle. They claim, “the main struggle going on in the world today is between US imperialism and the national liberation struggles against it” (Weathermen 1). Their ideology has progressed to the point where they assert that their struggle is not only a struggle of the “world,” but it is in fact the “main” one. This claim alone shows us how far their ideological reasoning has progressed from their early days. This claim does not stand alone in the manifesto, and the group repeats and rephrases bold assertions about the size of the imperial problem throughout the text. They claim, “Imperialism is always the issue” and that the fundamental nature of imperialism contains “systematic oppression” (Weathermen 14). These are not small claims, and The Weathermen's words throughout the text demonstrate the nature of how their ideology has escalated. As Berger claims, “movements are not born extreme; they evolve that way over time” (Berger 3). The Weathermen didn't start out their group by saying that their ideology was the main problem in the entire world. Such an escalation strongly suggests that a demand cycle escalated their assertions, Berger's first element (Berger 45). In outlining their ideological backing in such an assertive way, the Weathermen create an us-

versus-them idea that sets the tone for their outlining of in and out groups. These groups are crucial to defining their movement.

On the same page as the bold claim of ideology, the Weathermen also assert negative things about the US “imperialist state” as a means to justify their ideological claims. They frame the United States as the out-group or the “them” that we should all fight against. The text reads, “We are within the heartland of a worldwide monster” that has “enslaved masses within its borders” as well as the fact that it “channels wealth, based on the labor and resources of the rest of the world” (Weathermen 1). In just a few lines, the text has already set up the United States as a monster that is hurting basically everyone in the world. That is not a small claim to make, and again provides strong evidence for the presence of Berger’s demand cycle. The Weathermen likely reached this strong view through a cycle of increasingly extreme assertions, each stronger than the last. The rest of the first page continues to define US imperialism as harming the rest of the world, especially the poor and vulnerable, further framing the US as the “them” everyone should oppose, as well as defining them as a clear threat.

A few pages later, the Weathermen get even more direct and bold in their claims against the US, “It sets itself against the people of the whole world”, a direct “us v them” statement (Weathermen 6). In this phrase, the Weathermen also take part in another aspect of Berger’s demand cycle. By framing the ideology as the US versus the entire world, the in group is drastically expanded as a result of the increasingly extreme assertions.

As Berger explains in his first two elements of extremism, as a group’s ideology becomes increasingly extreme through the demand cycle, the in and out groups expand, as well as they become more rigid and opposed (Berger 45-46). The Weathermen’s manifesto dedicates two full pages of their text to defining the in-group, and as a result, the out-group they stand against, which Berger sees as crucial to an extremist ideology (Berger 46). While, as referenced above,

the Weathermen see this as a US versus the world issue, they believe their core in-group to be those in the working class, as they believe that group to be hit hard by imperialism. However, the Weathermen explain, “Most of the population is of the working class,” again expanding their in-group (Weathermen 9). In the pages dedicated to the in-group definition, the Weathermen separate the working class into “most oppressed” and “upper strata” sections of the working class. However, they ultimately state that both groups “are for the revolution and against imperialism” sealing them into the Weathermen’s in-group definition (Weathermen 10). Pushed by ideology through the increasing demand cycle, the Weathermen end up defining their in-group to include a majority of the population.

Just as Berger outlines in his description of the legitimization demand cycle, the expansion of the Weathermen’s in-group is interconnected to the expansion of the out-group. In the pages dedicated to their grouping of society, the Weathermen define more groups, “middle strata” and “*petit bourgeoisie*” which they describe as being more privileged and therefore more linked to US imperialism (Weathermen 10). In regard to the middle strata, the Weathermen are outright when explaining that this group, “are enemies of the revolution” a clear indication that they are now considered a part of the out-group (Weathermen 10). The *petit bourgeois*, on a slightly different note, are seen as less directly tied to the imperialist elite, although any hope the Weathermen see with this group is in those who chose to leave it. “Their class interests are generally more for it [imperialism] than overthrowing it, and it will be the deserters from their class who are with us” (Weathermen 10). By including class definitions to define where the citizens of the US, and the rest of the world, fall, the Weathermen are more clearly defining both what makes up the in/out groups and who are included in them. This increased rigidity between the two groups closely mirrors the ideological changes that Berger outlines in the cycle resulting

from his first two elements. Just like with Christian Identity, as an ideology struggles to meet its demand, the in and out groups become more assertive along with the ideological demands.

The Weathermen's move to define the groups expands beyond just where each class falls, as it also increases the scale of the problem caused by the out-group. Obviously, as they tell us over and over again, the Weathermen see American Imperialism as the issue at the core of their ideological struggle and they use it to define who lies in which group. However, as their ideological demands are ramped up in a cycle of demand, the concept of where they claim the problem lies also gets bolder. They claim that the problem of imperialism, "extends beyond the particular repressive institution to the society and the state as a whole" (Weathermen 11). In this way, the Weathermen are framing the issue as something that has leaked into the entirety of American society. They are no longer just fighting against "the man" so to speak, but instead against all of American society and the bad they believe it stands for. They claim that rebellion comes from "a refusal to be socialized into American society" starting from the youth and extending into all people (Weathermen 11). They have expanded their in and out-group ideology so that most every person and aspect of life is included in their ideological struggle. A simple decision of going to school, obeying the police, and what to do for one's job are now included in their ideology as a way of determining who is aligned with their cause. Their increasingly bold assertions have made it nearly impossible to stay neutral from their cause, a clear sign of their extreme nature, which seems to be directly related to Berger's demand cycle.

The Weathermen's texts provide sprinkles of evidence that challenges to the in-group may have accelerated their extreme ideological demands, a key aspect of Berger's demand cycle. They explain how current conditions are making the problem of their in-group and the oppressed people of the world even worse, "the conditions of all workers are worsened through rising taxes, inflations and the fall of real wages, and speedup" (Weathermen 7). However, the Weathermen

describe these problems as having the opposite of a deterring effect on their cause: “this deterioration pushed people to fight harder” (Weathermen 7). These challenges to the in-group and their cause are only pushing them to fight harder for change and, as a result, as they fight harder, their claims become bolder, and their ideology moves more into the extreme. The “oppression” of their in-group pushes people, “to rebel and fight for reforms” (Weathermen 7). To do this they need to clearly define their ideology, as well as find a way to legitimize their claims, hence the increasing nature of extremism in their ideological assertions, another indicator that Berger’s legitimization demand cycle took place within the Weathermen’s group.

The Weathermen and Element Three

The increasingly bold ideological claims that the Weathermen made in their text calls for a supply to back their demands. The claim that their issue was at the forefront of a worldwide struggle cannot simply stand alone. Instead they move to other sources and linkages, in order to try to justify their movement. This move is reflected in Berger’s third element of linking in supply, as he explains that an increase in the bold claims a group makes is connected to a move towards linking in other exterior sources in order to create a “supply” to back up their claims and gain legitimacy. The Weathermen look to the rest of the world, both in social movements, problems, and oppressed peoples in an attempt to link their movement to the good, and the defined out-group to the bad.

The Weathermen were originally founded out of Students for Democratic Society (SDS) with a heavy emphasis on activism and the goal of forming a “new left”. However, as their movement progressed out of simple student activism and into what they frame as “the main struggle going on in the world today” they need a new supply to back their claims (Weathermen 1). Such a claim requires the group to move to link in a new supply in order to convince people that this is really the case. They begin their linkages to a new supply almost immediately in the

text. The first line of the text frames the issue as “between the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America and the imperialists headed by the United States” (Weathermen 1). Not only is this a worldwide struggle, but the Weathermen are calling out specific locations worldwide to link the problems of these locations to the problems caused by imperialism. This link increases the scope of the problem. By placing the issue in specific places, people then link the problems that they know to occur in those locations and connect it back to the perceived evils of US imperialism. The linkages continue, as the Weathermen continue to relate US imperialism to the problems of the entire world. They claim, “the relative affluence existing in the United States is directly dependent upon the labor and natural resources of the Vietnamese, the Angolans, the Bolivians, and the rest of the peoples of the third world” (Weathermen 1). Here, the Weathermen are linking the idea of US wealth to the detriment of almost all of the poor persons in the third-world. They draw out this juxtaposing link by calling out specific aspects of US wealth including, “United Airlines Astrojets, all of the Holidays Inns” and specific things like, “your television set, car and wardrobe” (Weathermen 1). The contrast of wealth and affluence in the US and poverty in the third-world is used as evidence that the disparity proves theft – a damaging link. The contrasting image of US wealth and third-world poverty creates the mental image of the US as an oppressor nation, attempting to back up their bold claims about the worldwide importance of their cause.

Not only do the Weathermen link the problems of the world with the out-group (US Imperialism) but they also include linkages in their text attempting to align the interests of the world, especially the oppressed and third world people, with the interests of their movement and its in-group. When discussing their movement and the revolution they link to it, the Weathermen define “the workers and oppressed people of the colonies of Asia, African and Latin America” as the “vanguard” of their cause (Weathermen 6). For the purpose of their text, the Weathermen

define vanguard as “the section of the people who are in the forefront of the struggle and whose class interests and needs define the terms and tasks of the revolution” (Weathermen 6). The Weathermen are framing the people of the third world as a part of the in-group, and additionally, they are actually making the claim that the interests of the in-group are defined by the struggles of the most oppressed people. In other words, their movement is to fight for these oppressed people. By linking their cause to the interests of the most oppressed, the Weathermen attempt to use this link to justify their cause. The Weathermen continue this process of linking supply on the next couple of pages, making the claim that, “The Vietnamese (and the Uruguayans and the Rhodesians) and the black and Third World peoples in this country will continue to set the terms for class struggle in America” (Weathermen 8-9). The Weathermen continue to link their in-group and ideological struggle to the struggle of other parts of the world and other peoples. By linking it to other groups, especially those in third-world situations, they attempt to give their movement justification. Fighting for themselves is one thing but fighting to solve the world’s problems is another (and grander) goal. The Weathermen continue by saying their struggle is, “a revolutionary movement which sides with the struggles of the Third World people” and later on that their movement will form an “International Liberation Army” (Weathermen 11 & 23). The Weathermen attempt to expand their supply to back up their ideological claims by linking themselves with the idea that their cause will “liberate” or, in other words, save the world. Such a strong link is used in an attempt to justify their increasingly bold claims. After all, from a purely rhetorical perspective, it is hard to oppose someone who claims to be saving the world.

The Weathermen also add in additional supply by linking their ideology to existing social movements, in order to give legitimacy to their movement. One of the main groups the Weathermen attempts to link their ideology to is the Black Liberation movement. The Weathermen define Black people as a “colony of people oppressed by imperialism” that lies

within the United States (Weathermen 2). Right off the bat, the Weathermen are attempting to link the oppression and poor treatment of black people to the problem caused by their out-group. Black Liberation, at this point in time, is an established movement with a history of repression and unequal treatment that gives the cause legitimacy. By linking their movement to such a cause, the Weathermen are attempting to reach out for additional supply in order to legitimize their own ideological demands. In an attempt to do so, the Weathermen make a (somewhat odd) pop culture reference to show how their movement is aligned with Black Liberation, “Chuck Berry, Elvis, the Temptations brought us closer to the ‘people’s culture’ of Black America” (Weathermen 12). The Weathermen are attempting to connect their interests with Black Liberation and are using their cultural references in order to try and converge their movements. They also make multiple references to the Black Panther groups, including citing a quote from Huey P. Newton, one of its co-founders, all in an attempt to link their ideology in order to increase their supply and to gain legitimacy.

The Weathermen also make multiple references to the idea that their ideology and “revolution” will solve the problems set forth in the Black Liberation movement. The text includes an entire section titled “Black Liberation Means Revolution” attempting to link the goals of Black Liberation with the solution proposed by the Weathermen (Weathermen 4-5). If the solution proposed by the text is backed up by existing and legitimate social movements, it will give them additional supply to draw from in order to gain legitimacy.

Throughout this text, the Weathermen continue to draw from additional linkages of supply in order to meet their increasing ideological demands for legitimacy. They call upon other social movements, including the youth movement and the women’s movement, in order to increase the problems linked to their cause. The more movements they link in, the greater the claim to legitimacy. They claim that for the Youth, “Imperialism oppressed him by jailing him”

linking the repression of children in society and in school to the problems of Imperialism (Weathermen 15). Children have always been viewed as a vulnerable group that needs protection, and by linking the problems of the youngest and most vulnerable people to the out-group the Weathermen are fighting against, it increases the supply the group can pull from to gain legitimacy. The Weathermen also call upon the women's movement in their ideology, saying that imperialism places women only in the traditional "role" as "the wife-mother" (Weathermen 17). The text is blaming the repression and limitation of the role of women at the time on Imperialism, once again linking these problems to their ideological cause. They call on women to break free of the bounds of imperialism and say that doing so will "make women sympathetic to revolution" (Weathermen 17). By linking social movements and causes to their ideology, the Weathermen attempt to use this new supply to build their cause. The more problems imperialism causes, the more supply they have to draw from.

In addition to social movements, the Weathermen link in additional supply through examples of revolutionaries and other social theories. They refer to revolutionary models in Cuba, Lin Piao (leader of the red army in communist China), and they claim that they, "Look to Mao, Che [sic], the Panthers, the Third World, for our models, for motion" (Weathermen 12). The Weathermen have an ideological legitimacy demand so large that they link in as much additional supply as possible to pull from. The text quotes from the Communist Manifesto and makes multiple references to Marxism. Towards the end of the text, the Weathermen attempt to link all of this additional supply into one (their) movement, "we're one multi issue movement" (Weathermen 17). This increase in supply from external sources demonstrates evidence of Berger's third element, in which additional supply is needed to try and justify the increasing ideological claims made in the demand cycle of elements one and two.

The Weathermen and Element 4

As the Weathermen's claims move into the extreme, and they reach towards more "out there" linkages in order to supply their demand, the tone of the reasoning also shifts from their original voice upon the group's founding. This text calls for more trust, taking things as fact, and less actual reasoning. The Weathermen spend less time fully making arguments, and instead shift towards stating their beliefs and arguments as facts that already have been proven. This tone of reasoning is reflective of Berger's fourth element of extremism, the shift from deliberate to automatic thinking. Automatic thinking moves away from the deliberate realm, which lays out the reasoning and requires logical thinking and reflection. Instead, the Weathermen use automatic thinking within this text, encouraging their readers to accept what is told of them, without doing the reasoning themselves.

The Weathermen's shift towards the automatic realm is seen in various forms throughout their text. The first is their increasing tendency to state their values and beliefs as facts. They no longer state their ideology as something that they believe, but instead make claims that their view of the world is an objective truth. This move can be seen from the very first line of the text, as they claim their issue is "the principal contradiction in the contemporary world" (Weathermen 1). They state this like it is an absolute truth and offer no reasoning to support this claim. Instead it is put forth as a fact to start off with, and this encourages readers of the text to accept its fact status without doing any reasoning. The Weathermen have done the reasoning for you, and now they just want their readers to accept the conclusions.

Stating opinions as facts is a trend that continues throughout the text and is especially prevalent when the Weathermen are dealing with opposing ideas. When discussing their linkage of Weathermen to Black Liberation, the text briefly discusses other approaches to this link. However, instead of allowing the readers to come to a conclusion on which approach is best

based on the facts, the Weathermen decide for the readers. The text explains that the other approach, “is not legitimate” and instead “it is necessary” to take the approach recommended by the Weathermen (Weathermen 3). This move is repeated when discussing their “strategy for winning” as they push for an international approach and claim that any other proposed strategy “is incorrect” (Weathermen 8). There is no possible way in which they have dealt with all other options, but in spite of that, they make the claim that anything different from their ideas is simply wrong. Labeling opposing ideas as wrong without drawing out supporting reasons encourages readers to accept the text’s conclusions without effort or reasoning, a sure sign of automatic thinking. The prevalence of stating opinions as facts can be seen through the simple phrases the Weathermen include over and over again. They use the word “must” twenty-eight times, more than one per page, “need” twenty-one times, and the “have to” phrase over a dozen times. There is a clear pattern here, as the Weathermen push their ideas onto the readers like they are already established and objective facts.

On a similar note to stating opinions as facts, the Weathermen also make bold assertions throughout their text, without providing information or evidence to back up these claims. Without evidence, the audience is unable to determine for themselves if they follow the logic leading to the conclusion of the bold claim. Instead, they are forced into an automatic form of quick, effortless thinking where the bold claim is meant to automatically register as already backed up. The Weathermen have done the reasoning, so their readers don’t have to. This strategy comes to light when discussing what will happen if Imperialism is defeated. The Weathermen claim, “when imperialism is defeated in the US, it will be replaced by socialism - nothing else” (Weathermen 5). Instead of talking about why this would be the case, the text baldly claims that talk of something else is “crazy,” thus moving away from reasoning and into intuitive and immediate thinking. This pushes their readers closer to the goal of having them

simply accept what is said in the text. The Weathermen also claim that “revolutionaries around the world are in general agreement” about what strategy works best for defeating imperialism (Weathermen 6). Unsurprisingly, the strategy all revolutionaries apparently agree on is the one the Weathermen back, although there is zero evidence offered to demonstrate the “general agreement” they claim. This type of bold claim, while unproved in the text, is also difficult to disprove. The readers don’t have the resources to determine what the general consensus of the revolutionaries around the world is, and the Weathermen use this and their authoritative voice in the text to get the readers to take their claims as true, without need for reasoning or evidence.

Often, the Weathermen’s bold and unsupported claims take the form of empty statements. Statements like these, superficially appear to have significant meaning, but in reality they actually hold little information or value. When attempting to link their movement with Black Liberation, the Weathermen claim, “real interests of masses of oppressed whites in this country lie with the black liberation struggle” (Weathermen 5). While this sounds great, the “real interests” are never listed or explained. Including this phrase allows the readers to feel like they’ve done some reasoning for themselves. The Weathermen connect the interests and leave the impression that the two movements are linked. However, the Weathermen never actually explained what interests align or how; they just included an empty phrase to disguise their automatic reasoning under the mask of deliberation. This empty idea of interests is a pattern throughout the text, attempting to disguise the automatic nature of the Weathermen’s linkages.

Another move the Weathermen use in order to have their ideas accepted via automatic thinking is their use of manipulative reasoning and wording. They often phrase their points in ways that frame those who disagree with the ideas as not just wrong, but bad, unintelligent, and even morally flawed people. When discussing the Weathermen’s link to Black Liberation, the text offers three approaches to the link and the revolution associated with their ideology.

However, it is very clear which approach the Weathermen see as correct, “any white who does not follow this third path is objectively following one of the other two (or both) and is objectively racist” (Weathermen 5). Instead of using the text to explain why they believe the third approach to be best, they claim that going against their approach means you are a racist. They use the phrase “objectively racist” to frame this idea like it is proven and not up for discussion. If you disagree with the Weathermen, you are a racist, so you better just accept their ideas. This trend of manipulation continues as the text discusses their solution of revolution, claiming “someone not for revolution is not for actually defeating imperialism” (Weathermen 6). Again, instead of using the text to explain why revolution is the best solution, they use this space to tell the readers that not agreeing with their revolutionary plan doesn’t mean that you simply disagree with this specific approach, but it means that you support the same imperialism that is stealing from the oppressed and third-world people. Again, the signs are clear, the reader is threatened that failure to accept their ideas completely is equivalent to evil, encouraging quick, automatic thinking throughout the text.

The Weathermen also stress the idea of group unity, using phrases like “it is clear to the movement” and using “we” over 100 times in the document. Their repetition of group emphasis shows their readers it is necessary that “we” move as a whole, accepting all the ideas in the text completely and without second thought. However, they also want to make it seem as if the readers are joining the movement and coming to the conclusion that ideology is correct on their own. The text says, “people don’t join revolutions just because revolutionaries tell them to” (Weathermen 14). This phrase implies that acceptance of the ideas pushed on the readers through automatic thinking was actually deliberate. The Weathermen are trying to get their followers to believe they came to their own conclusions, even though the conclusions are mandated in the text, providing evidence of both automatic thinking and an attempt to disguise it.

The Weathermen and Element 5

The Weathermen's bold ideological claims, now linked to external sources, ground their in and out group conflict in a historical context. The text connects their cause with conflicts and problems throughout history, without an end in sight. This historical and somewhat ever-present conflict leads the group towards a radical "end times" solution of revolution. They no longer see any way around the ideological problem other than burning the entire system to the ground, a sure sign of extremism, and reflective of Berger's fifth element, an urgent need for action. The Weathermen call, with urgency, for readers of their text to join their revolution. No other solution, according to the text, will be able to eliminate the conflict and the continuous oppression that stems from it.

The urgent need for a revolution is repeated again and again in the text, starting on the early pages of the work, "the goal is destruction of US imperialism and the achievement of a classless world" (Weathermen 2). This quote sets the tone early, that the Weathermen have an urgent and extreme solution, and they are serious about it. They are out to "destroy" the problem instead of reasoning or compromising with it. Also, the phrase "classless world" implies that this solution will extend beyond the US and into the entire world, about as extreme a reach as a solution can get. The idea that this solution will be worldwide is repeated in the text, saying "'throwing it out' means not from one colony, but all of them, throwing it out of the world" (Weathermen 6). The Weathermen have framed their problem and escalated their ideology to a place where nothing other than complete destruction and removal of the current system is an option. For this to work, it needs to be destroyed everywhere. The Weathermen now see the out-group threat with the "apocalyptic sense of urgency" that Berger describes in his urgent action element. The threat is so large and looming that it must be destroyed. In fact, the group is so certain of the immense threat that they discuss the, "impossibility of anything but an

international strategy for winning” (Weathermen 8). Because of the increasingly extreme ideological claims and large amount of links to other problems in the world, the Weathermen have no choice but to frame this as a worldwide problem, where the only effective solution is worldwide destruction.

In addition to the international nature of the struggle, the Weathermen also make it clear that their “revolution” is nothing close to a compromise, “Our task is not to avoid or end repression; that always can be done by pulling back” and instead they want a real revolution (Weathermen 21). The text is very clear about what is meant by their revolution, “A revolution is a war; when the Movement in this country can defend itself militarily against total repression it will be part of revolutionary war” (Weathermen 21). These statements are far more extreme than the founding ideas of SDS as they are now calling their solution “war,” and they are quick to highlight their differences from “the traditional revisionist” (Weathermen 22). Because of the way their ideological claims have accelerated, to the Weathermen, there really isn’t any other choice but to “smash the state power of the imperialists” through their proposed revolution (Weathermen 13).

In calling for an international revolutionary war solution, reflective of Berger’s apocalyptic description in his fifth element that calls for action, the Weathermen are not shy about expanding on what they want done through their revolution. The text explains that to win the revolution, the in-group will not win, “until their [out-group’s] total strength and every resource they can bring to bear has been smashed” (Weathermen 8). This revolution, in the eyes of the Weathermen, is very real and they clearly acknowledge how extreme their solution is. The text also describes the revolution as “militant,” acknowledging the possibility of violence within their solution, a clear indicator of Berger’s fifth element of extremism, as their “end times”

solution is able to justify violent acts in defense of the perceived outgroup threat (Weathermen 13).

The Weathermen's text uses their linkages to the Youth Movement as an example for what they want to accomplish with revolution. They describe the current education system as having, "jail like schools" and say that, "We don't want teachers to be more kindly cops; we want to smash cops, and build a new life" (Weathermen 12). Two things are clear with this example. The first is that their solution is completely opposed to reforms -- they want to "burn down the schools" (Weathermen 12). The second is that they are not shying away from strong, and possibly violent language when describing their revolution. The sentiment of smashing law enforcement and burning things down is quite extreme, but the Weathermen's ideology has gotten them to the place where this is the solution they crave.

In addition to calling for an extreme revolution, the Weathermen, in their text, developed a sense of urgency to go along with their solution. The text says, "we need to make it clear from the very beginning we are about revolution" (Weathermen 14). Revolution is no longer an abstract concept, but instead at the core of their ideology and something they urgently want others to know. Their urgency also is apparent in the discussion of their movement's links to Black Liberation. The text takes pains to describe how the two movement's interests align, and then describes how this urgently calls for a revolutionary solution, "the genocidal oppression of black people must be ended, and does not allow any leisure time to wait" (Weathermen 5). The Weathermen see the problems caused by the out-group threat to be too big to wait on. They must act now, and their action includes an international war like revolution. Their urgency is also reflected in their connection to the Youth Movement. When describing building a "revolutionary youth movement" the text claims, "we should begin to apply this summer" (Weathermen 13). The call to action is no longer in the unseen future, but it is now, and the text is giving a specific

and upcoming timeline for action, clear evidence of the “sense of urgency” Berger discusses in his fifth element.

From what is historically known of the Weathermen’s group, this textual preference for a revolutionary solution and the expressed sense of urgency was an accurate indicator of their coming actions. In October of 1969, just four months after the publication of this manifesto, the Weathermen participated in “Days of Rage” a protest turned riot as they destroyed property in upper class neighborhoods to demonstrate their cause, leading to city damage as well as the arrest of many participants. When the group discovered a “police informant” within their group during the protests, he was severely beaten (Days of Rage 78-80). In addition, days before the Days of Rage riots, the Weathermen conducted their first bombing of Haymarket Police Statue in Chicago. These actions directly following the publication of the Weathermen’s manifesto demonstrate the reality of the revolutionary urgency that the Weathermen expressed in their text. Just as Berger describes in his fifth element, the perceived urgency of the threat against them allowed the Weathermen to suspend normal restriction on behavior and move into the violent extreme.

The Weathermen’s manifesto is filled with evidence of Berger’s elements of extremism, and is drastically more extreme than their starting point, furthering the assumption that groups are not born extreme. As the group progressed to the point they are at in this manifesto, Berger’s elements developed within their writing. The existence of Berger’s elements within the work of the Weathermen is strong evidence of the wide umbrella of ideology that can fit within Berger’s theory. However, evidence of Berger’s elements may cover the left side of the ideological spectrum, but there are many other variations that would make Berger’s theory seem unfitting. The Weathermen are a known group who are already linked to violent acts. Will Berger’s theory still fit when applied to a more unknown, and out-there ideology?

Chapter Four: The Bronze Age Pervert

The BAP and Elements One and Two

To test out the universal nature of Berger's elements, I will also analyze the Bronze Age Pervert's manifesto, a text on the opposite side of the political and ideological spectrum from the Weathermen. Again, while this analysis is limited to one text, versus Berger's overarching analysis, the BAP's only published manifesto, *The Bronze Age Mindset*, outlines his beliefs and claims, therefore providing a good means to look for signs of extremism and a potential threat or danger to come from this anonymous ideology.

Throughout the BAP's entire text, he is very clear as to what he believes is his ideological ideal, or ideal state of living. He calls this the "Bronze Age Mindset" and it is no coincidence that it is the title of his text, as he believes it portrays the absolute ideal state. His absolute and strong ideological claims present evidence of Berger's first elements, the legitimization demand cycle, as his claims appear much stronger than simply an idea someone is born with. He claims, "The Bronze Age Mindset is one of complete power and freedom" (BAP 129). Through his text he calls on ideals of ancient Greeks and other peoples who lived the ideal state during the Bronze Age, and pines to return to such a way of life. He claims that living by the Bronze Age Mindset will "promote nature, beauty, physical fitness, the preservation of high traditions" and that such a state is "a healthy alternative to the eternal rule of ugliness in our time" (BAP 184). Here, the BAP is contrasting his ideological ideal with what he calls the modern "ugliness." He believes it to be ugly because it goes against his ideals, the "natural order" of how things should be.

The BAP uses claims of nature and natural ways to feed into his ideological claims of the ideal and the opposite modern state, providing further evidence of the presence of Berger's legitimization demand cycle, as the BAP's bold ideological claims call for justification. In his

text, the BAP claims that “the fundamental fact of nature is inequality” and that there is a “real ladder of life, the true hierarchy of biological types” (BAP 41-42). The BAP uses his natural order to justify his ideological claims. He saw the Bronze Age as a time that followed the “natural order,” which included some people being superior to others, and he claims, “the Bronze Age mindset... was to be worshipped like a god!” (BAP 140). However, for such a mindset, or godlike worship and complete freedom for some, to be achieved means that inequality must exist. There are those who worship and those who are worshipped. However, the BAP feeds his demand cycle by saying this is the way things SHOULD be because it is a “fundamental fact of nature” and opposition to the natural way would only lead to bad things. Through his text, the BAP makes bold claims about the ideal state of living and the natural state, feeding into his demand cycle as his ideology continues to escalate.

The Bronze Age Pervert continues to escalate his claims in order to legitimize his ideology by listing the ills caused by a modern society that actively goes against his “natural order.” From the very start it is clear that the BAP dislikes the modern society he is living in, and in the first couple of pages he tells us that the goal of his text is to “expose the grim shadow of a movement that is hidden behind events of our time” and that he will do this by “draw[ing] back the iron curtain on this Iron Prison and show you where it is you really live” (BAP 5). It is clear from the start that the ideological problem he is fighting against is the modern way of life, as he sets up the binary between now and then, with the modern state causing what he calls “the great evils of civilization” (BAP 75). He uses this to back his ideological claim that the Bronze Age and the natural order it brings will fix everything.

A large portion of the text is dedicated to exposing and explaining the evils caused by what he sees as the ideological problem -- the modern state – and its opposition to the fundamentals of nature. When discussing the “free and natural state” of his ideal, the BAP claims

that it was civilization that stood in the way as it “forbad this condition and plunged the majority of humans into a semi-permanent repressive or depressive frame” (BAP 37). He even goes as far to say that because of civilization “a majority of mankind suffered terribly” (BAP 37). It is hard to defend something that makes people depressed and suffer terribly, and the BAP uses this strategy to back his ideological claims. The BAP calls our modern way of life “the modern zoo” that wants us to be “weak and isolated” (BAP 130). It is hurting us, making us weaker, and even taking away “true manliness” (BAP 66). He claims the Bronze Age offers relief from the suffering, making it appear more like an ideal compared to the negatives he attributes to our current way of life.

The modern state, according to the text, is also hurting our young. The BAP states that the ways of modern and settled life “break the youths from early age” (BAP 109). One of the ways this is done, in addition to all the causes already listed, is through the modern education system. The BAP’s text states that the, “entire purpose of modern education is to suppress that enthusiasm and make you second guess yourself” (BAP 86). The problems caused by going against the fundamental order of nature and the BAP’s ideology have seeped into every crack of our lives, and now it is hurting even the young and vulnerable. The stronger his ideology gets, the more problems that the opposite must cause. Thus, the BAP’s demand for justification matches closely with Berger’s predicted demand cycle.

Another key aspect of the BAP’s ideology comes with who is in the in-group and who is out. From the start he made it clear that there is a hierarchy, and some are naturally better than others. However, as the text progresses, the BAP gets very clear about who exactly he believes is in the in-group deserving of the “complete freedom” and who he believes to be the out-group, causing all the ills of the modern world.

The text begins by defining the in-group as following the ideals of the “stone age men ” of the Bronze Age. These were men who lived in the freedom that the BAP pines for, who had “superhuman strength,” were “worshipped by the people,” and had “life and force” (BAP 7). The BAP believes these characteristics are lacking in the modern world. However, he does believe, as a result of the “hierarchy of nature” that some men are capable of achieving this ideal state. This is a specific group of men, the in-group, that are naturally superior and therefore capable of the Bronze Age Mindset. He explains this idea as a “distinction between the master races and rest” using the concept that master races are just naturally set up to strive for better conditions. His ideal is that while the “rest”, or the non-in-group men, could adapt to lower life conditions, such as slavery, “there is no “adaptation” to slavery for some types of life” (BAP 21). According to the BAP the “master races” are not meant for the “dreadful gravity of this turgid world” and instead can rise above the rest (BAP 190).

Later in his text, the BAP clues the readers in to who he would include in his in-group of master races. When discussing the gods “that surely exist but remain hidden” the BAP describes them as the ideal forms of life and having “the most beautiful bodies” (BAP 31). The BAP believes this beautiful body type to be reflected in Greek art, evidence of what he thinks the superior man resembles. Ancient Greek art depicts a very specific type of man. It depicts a European-appearing, white, and muscular young man. The BAP also goes on to explain that this ideal man and ideal body “is not something you will develop” but instead something that is gifted by biology, further expanding on his natural hierarchy claims (BAP 42). The BAP further defines his ideal man/in-group by claiming that many of the gods, whom he already claimed are the ideal form, “had fair hair and blue or grey eyes” and refers to them as “a blonde race” (BAP 78). The BAP is getting more direct and specific in his in-group claims as he moves into specific attributes that have the effect of excluding a large number of people. This “blonde race” as the

“master race” makes it pretty clear BAP is referring to the white European race as his in-group, worthy ideal freedom. And, if this idea wasn’t clear enough from his physical description of the gods, the BAP also claims a “real man” was someone found in “Aryan cultures” (BAP 59). The BAP is being very direct here with his call to Aryan cultures. He believes that “Europe stands out from the morass that the rest of the world has been stuck in” (BAP 133). He sees these blond, European, Aryan, godlike men as making up the master race, a strong reflection of a white supremacist belief system. He wants his readers to know exactly who he thinks is naturally deserving and able to achieve the Bronze Age mindset.

As the BAP further defines his ideology by outlining his in-group, he also sets up an out-group, one excluded from the ideal. This process of definition fits Berger’s demand cycle theory, in that the expansion and definition of the in-group is directly correlated with a similar action on the side of the out-group (Berger 48). The BAP, through this text, spends considerable time outlining who belongs in the inferior outgroup, and the harm that those in the out-groups are causing as they cause the sickness of our modern civilization.

Because his in-group is so specific and his ideological problem is the whole of modern society, the BAP’s out-group is very expansive. He describes his out-group in direct contrast with his in-group, just as he describes his ideological ideal as the binary opposite of modern life. This idea of free life versus suffering is embedded in his out-group description. When discussing the ideal form of man and beautiful bodies, the text contrasts that form directly with the forms often present in modern life, “Contrary to this exists the flesh we see on the obese and in general the lassitude” (BAP 31). The BAP is very clear on his feelings towards the ideological problem, which leads into his negative feelings towards the out-group, those who are the root of the problem and reflection of the modern decay.

One of the BAP's most disliked groups is the political left, which he often refers to as the "Bug-man." He sees them as a direct cause for many of the modern problems, as well as standing deliberately in the way of the natural order that the Bronze Age Mindset would bring. He claims early on that the left, "wanted nothing more than to hide the truth about human nature" (BAP 13). The text claims not only that the left causes problems, but that they are doing so intentionally, making them a clear out-group for the BAP's ideological cause. Throughout the text, the BAP refers to the left as "they" clearly marking them as distinct from the "us" that he idealizes. He wants his readers to clearly understand that this group is bad and should not be included in "our" ideological fight. He believes we should instead fight against "them" and their "blabbering that lacks reality" (BAP 46). The BAP sets up the political left as those who are hiding the truth from us and telling us lies, a clear part of the out-group that is contributing the ills of the modern world as, "the Bug-man seeks to bury beauty under a morass of ubiquitous ugliness and garbage" (BAP 192).

As the text continues, the BAP also expands his out-group to include all modern women. Regardless of their origin or race, the BAP is clear that he doesn't believe that women could be a part of his "master race" in-group. He claims that the modern world, in efforts to become equal, which the BAP obviously sees as against nature, has turned into a "matriarchy" that is hurting the whole world, especially the ingroup. He claims these "matriarchal" communities "suppress true manhood and youth" and therefore are obstructing what the BAP believes to be the in-group's deserved status (BAP 84). The BAP feels very strongly about the role of women in the destruction of his ideological ideal and makes a very bold claim that "everything you hate about modern life and that makes it into an Iron Prison... represents a return of the endless sallow night of matriarchy" (BAP 106). The text is as direct as possible—the role of women in the modern

world is a direct cause for everything that “you,” the ingroup, dislikes, a clear indicator that they are out-group.

In addition to women and the left, the BAP also includes other religions and cultures that he sees as distinct from his in-group. He is very negative towards the Jewish people, as he claims that their way of thinking “approaches mental deficiency” and that they have “a hatred also for beauty”, adding them to his ever-expanding outgroup (BAP 53). The BAP continues to add to his outgroup as he also calls out the rest of the non “blond race” world, including all of Asia and Africa. He claims, “the African and also the Arab were too stupid” to be a part of his Bronze Age Mindset, obviously marking them as his believed inferiors. He also claims he “would rather ally with the leftish hipster than with China" (BAP 77). The BAP already spends a large portion of his text explaining his dislike and what he sees as immoral and destructive qualities of the left. By placing China as a whole beneath the “Bug-man” left he establishes them as even worse, and definitely included in the out-group. The BAP also claims Asia and the rest of the “nonwhite world” are causing ills including being “the sources of the most obvious pollution” and a place where “animal cruelty and abuse is exceedingly common” (BAP 80-81). Through his description of inferiority and destruction, the BAP places basically every non “blond race” person into his expansive out-group.

Because the BAP is so specific with his “natural order” and “master race” claims, he needs a clearly defined in and out group to pair with his increasingly bold ideology. As his ideology progresses, there is increased demand to justify it, which leads to a larger in/out group as demonstrated above, as well as an increased divide between the two, a move that is outlined in Berger's legitimization demand cycle. The BAP encourages the in-group to stay separate from their out-group inferiors, as he claims that “they [outgroup] have interests alien to yours” and that the in-group should “keep eyes on the prize” (BAP 136 & 188). By emphasizing the

differences as well as the importance of focusing solely on the in-group goal, the BAP discourages contact and communication between the two, binary, groups. This distance further escalates the ideology and the divide as the demand cycle continues.

It is also clear throughout the BAP's text, that he has experienced threats to his ideology, which have escalated his claims, making up the second aspect of the demand cycle. Despite his claims about the inferiority of women, women's rights have increased throughout the timeline of history, a threat to his ideological claims. In response to this threat, the BAP claims that with, "the liberation of women in the 19th century, the West has given itself an infection" (BAP 163). By acknowledging the liberation of women, but also calling it an infection, the BAP is attempting to deter the threat. Yes, women have made progress, but he claims this progress is actually against the natural order, and has made the world a poorer place, "It took one hundred years of women in public life for them to almost totally destroy a civilization" (BAP 166). He is making the claim that in the time women have had more power, they not only harmed, but actually almost completely destroyed the civilization they were acting within, trying to make the point that giving to women was a mistake.

The BAP continues to try and emphasize his ideological threat, by further explaining that increased power and respect for people that he claims to be part of the out-group have increased problems for the in-group. He claims that modern democracies, which according to his text, "have been hijacked by a stupid and corrupt elite" (BAP 170) are harming the in-group as they try "to subject the best to the rule of heaps of biological refuse" (BAP 129). He wants to reframe the threat as an ideological justification. These people may appear to be in power or even equal, but he wants his readers to see that this modern state has done nothing but cause the real "master race" harm. This is further evidence of Berger's demand cycle, as the second aspect includes an escalation due to external threats to the internal ideology. By addressing and trying to amplify

these threats, the BAP's ideology continues to escalate into extremism, Berger's demand cycle at work.

The BAP and Element Three

The BAP is at the point in his ideological claims where they are extreme enough to need a supply to back them up. This analysis is different from Berger's sample analysis of Christian identity because Christian Identity had a larger supply of known internal sources to start out with and the BAP, because he is new and unknown, only has this text and his Twitter account. However, the BAP's single text alone provides us with good means to identify external sources used, and the BAP does not shy away from making bold ideological claims simply for lack of internal supply. Making claims about a natural hierarchy, an ideal state, and the terrible problems of modern society at such a fervent level, as well as his claims about his in and out group characteristics, have escalated through the demand cycle to a point that cause the BAP to reach for outward supply, evidence of Berger's linking in supply element of extremism.

One of the more prominent external links that the BAP uses in his text is the concept of animal behavior. To justify his claims on the idea of a natural order or hierarchy of life, the BAP links in the concept of higher and lower forms of life in animals and nature. He contrasts yeast to higher capable animals and tells us, "that there are two kinds of life, and yeast is different from higher life" (BAP 29). He then goes on to say that the "lower forms of life" like yeast are "very simple" (BAP 50). By doing so he demonstrates a phenomenon in nature to link the concept to back his ideology. It is obvious that there are different life forms out there, and he wants us to use this example and apply it to the human species.

He also further links animal behavior to back this idea by using the behavior of bees and ants in a hive, as he claims they have an "inborn nature as worker or warrior or queen" (BAP

73). The BAP wants to demonstrate that his idea of inborn roles is natural and attempts to use this as a link to create a supply. He wants us to see this as something “natural” and therefore something that should also be a part of human behavior.

The text also uses the animal behavior link to attempt to back the BAP’s ideological problem statements. He makes many bold claims about the problems caused by modern society and tries to back this up with a supply of animal behavior. The text states that, “the most noble animals refuse to breed in captivity” and that many animals “choose death when trapped” (BAP 11). This example of animals disliking captivity is an attempt to link in supply to support his ideological ideas that the “modern zoo” is hurting noble people just like it does noble animals. He even claims that he saw a jaguar kept in captivity at a zoo, and it felt “a noble and persistent sadness” because it was kept in a state of captivity (BAP 21). His idea is that higher people are built for a higher life, and by linking in some animal’s dislike for its captive state, he is trying to use animal behavior to supply his demand. He wants the reader to use his links to question our current state. He is asking the rhetorical question, if noble animals shouldn’t be kept captive then why should noble people?

The BAP also uses his animal behavior link to try and supply his other idea, that the Bronze Age Mindset is the ideal state because it fulfills the natural order; our natural urges to have freedom and for the superior to conquer and rule. The BAP once again turns to his beloved animals, showing us that animals too have inherent urges and knowledge. He links in the concept of an animal's “inherent intelligence” in knowing how to do specific tasks, such as a spider building a web, a carrier pigeon knowing the way home, a mouse collecting the right amount of food for winter, and the migration of birds (BAP 15-16). He says that animals know how to do things because it is “in their blood” and attempts to link this in as supply. His idea of it being “in their blood” connects to his ideological claims that his “master race” in-group inherently desires

conquest and belongs at the top. Just as he claims a dog in a city apartment “will start to try to dig through the floor” to fulfil its inherent desires, he wants to link this to the in-group in their current conditions, and how their natural desires oppose anything other than the Bronze Age Mindset (BAP 62).

In addition to animal behavior, the BAP also turns to other biological and scientific links in order to try and supply his increasingly extreme ideology. Throughout the text, the BAP attempts to link in scientific ideas to back up his ideology. He claims that he wants us, “to see history from the view of life and biology” and uses various scientific ideas in an attempt to link in a supply (BAP 146). One of the ideas that he uses is the power of hormones, saying that, “hormones hold the key to the meaning of life” (BAP 28). The BAP links in the idea of hormonal control, trying to come from a scientific perspective in order to gain legitimacy. He tells us that hormones, “govern all cycles” and because of this control and the different hormones in the bodies of the different sexes, the “female is under greater stress due to the demands” (BAP 30). Here the BAP is attempting to use scientific theories of hormones, bending the ideas to back up his ideological claims about women in the out-group. He is telling us that women are naturally under greater stress due to hormones, and he wants us to think that because it is “science” it is something we hold no control over. If these differences are out of our control, then they must, according to the BAP, reflect the natural condition that women are inferior and therefore out-group material.

The BAP also attempts to pull in other scientific ideas such as Darwin's theory of evolutionary biology, and the idea of rigor mortis, all in vague ways, to try and connect his own theories to the more credible discipline of science. Now that the demand cycle elevated his claims, his original materials alone are no longer enough as he seeks legitimacy, evidence of Berger's linking in supply element.

Moving away from science, BAP also extended his supply to other fields of study, including philosophy. His manifesto is filled with references and paragraphs of ideas from many different philosophers. One of the BAP's favorite philosophers to pull supply from is Nietzsche, and it seems like every couple of pages contains a connection to Nietzsche's ideas, attempting to link them to the BAP's own ideology. The text pulls Nietzsche's ideas and paraphrases them in ways that fit to and support his ideas of in and out group mentality, as well as the ideological problem. For example, the BAP claims that, "Nietzsche said manliness is the first requirement of the philosopher" and even that "Nietzsche says, noble people do not endure slavery" (BAP 54 & 20). He uses these paraphrased beliefs of the philosopher to back up his ideas of what constitutes the "master race" and the in group. It is very rare that the text actually directly quotes any of the philosophers. The BAP paraphrases so he can take their ideas out of context and bend them to try to supply his extreme ideas. In addition to filling the text with vague Nietzsche references, the BAP fills up the pages with paraphrased ideas of many more philosophers and thinkers including Schopenhauer, Marx, Hegel, Heraclitus, Freud, Buddha, and Aristotle. All of these people are known and published. The BAP uses his vague paraphrasing of their ideas to link these more credible authors to his own ideology. He is attempting to link all of their work, in order to vastly expand his supply to meet the increasing demand for justification caused by the demand cycle of Berger's first two elements.

As the BAP's ideas progress, his linking of supply continues to get more creative. While he began adding on external supply through established fields of study like science and philosophy, he eventually moved into less credible links such as fiction and folklore. When discussing his idea that the ideological problem is historically rooted, in that this conflict and suppression has happened before, he calls on "stories of vampires, kobold, cryptid humanoids, and many others" (BAP 52). He claims that these fictional stores are evidence that these conflicts

have occurred in the past as the monsters in the stories “refer to these degenerate stragglers that prey on us and terrorize us” (BAP 52). In other words, these vampires are evidence of the people left behind due to the conflict, the inferior people who want to “prey on us” in order to get their power back and return to a corrupt world. While it seems to be a majority opinion that these folklore tales are not reflective of reality, the BAP is taking advantage of the fact that they are well known. He is linking these known stories into his supply by claiming that they are based on reality and what people have gone through in the past. Even if the stories aren’t actually true, which he acknowledges, the idea that they are a reflection of his ideology and the “truth” he is giving us, adds to his external supply. The BAP also uses stories from Greek mythology as a demonstration of men “who knew how to really let loose, who weren’t held back by petty inhibitions” (BAP 121). Even though these stories are just that, stories or myths, the BAP is linking them into his growing supply to back up his ideas on the Bronze Age Mentality. He wants to show us how these “great men ” in the stories lived as a justification for what he believes to be the ideal life.

Continuing on his trend of linking in fiction, the BAP also references multiple fictional films and novels as a link to his ideas. He claims that they demonstrate his ideas in action, even if they are not based on true events. When discussing his ideas of natural hierarchy, or what he also calls “the hidden order” as it is hidden behind the disorder of modern times, he claims that the horror-fiction author H.P. Lovecraft “knew it was true” and this was reflected in Lovecraft’s work. While this author is known to write fiction, the BAP is still using him as supply, linking his work in and claiming that it is based on the author’s knowledge of the truths hidden from us. Again, the BAP is bending the ideas of others to justify his own, as he has no quotes or sources to back his link that his ideological ideas were the inspiration for Lovecraft’s work. The BAP’s fictional links are scattered throughout his text as he claims that multiple films also represent his

ideas, including a movie titled *The Beach*, which he claims offers “a good parody of such a society” that is reflective of the critiques he has of our society (BAP 109).

The BAP even attempts to supply his ideas through famous Hollywood actors, such as when discussing his idea that the out-group/inferior people are trying to oppress “us” he claims that “Larry David understands this problem” (BAP 90). This is yet another example of a paraphrased link, as he bends the external supply and claims that it can be used as a source to justify and validate the truth of his ideological claims. As the demand cycle continues to escalate the BAP’s claims more into the realm of extreme, the text is filled with evidence that the BAP is linking in increasingly unorthodox supply as his ideology reaches a point that gets difficult to back up with a traditional sense of internal supply. The BAP’s grasping for new supply is reflective of Berger’s linking in supply element, as Berger explains that the demand cycle creates a need for additional supply, one that is often difficult to meet, therefore explaining the BAP’s move into additional fields of study and fictional stories (Berger 45).

The BAP and Element Four

Signaled by the BAP’s move to link in an increasingly eccentric supply and an ideology that continues to get more extreme in its claims, the BAP’s text is also full of a type of thinking that encourages readers to accept what they are given, without reasoning to back up or justify the extreme ideas the text is providing. This type of automatic thinking is evidence of Berger’s third element, as the extremist text no longer asks the readers to come to their own conclusions. The automatic thinking system the text is meant to trigger is evident from the first few lines, as the BAP tells us, “I have hardly anything to say to those who aren’t like me, still less do I care about convincing” (BAP 4). Right off the bat it is evident that this book won’t provide us with extensive reasoning, allowing us to come to our own conclusions. Instead, he basically just tells us how it is, and he only wants to deal with people who share his own ideas. However, the

automatic nature is hidden, as he claims that it is directed to people who are already like him, so if people finish the book with his ideas in their heads, they will believe that this thinking was there because they are part of his in-group, and therefore the BAP's ideas are their own.

The BAP's text has a trend of targeting towards his in-group with statements about what "we" think. For example, when discussing his ideas of the natural order, the BAP claims that he would have to do further reasoning "only to convince the boneheads" but that it isn't necessary because "we understand right away" (BAP 17). Here he is making it clear that if you are to be part of the in-group, then you must have already accepted the conclusions about the natural order, as he desires an automatic response without needing more reasoning to come to a conclusion. Those who are reading the text and have a desire to be part of the in-group and reap the benefits the BAP describes, thus will come to accept the "we" ideas the BAP discusses as their own. Additionally, as discussed in context of linking in supply, the BAP also links in ideas of famous philosophers and claims that "they think" or "they agree" and therefore these famous minds are a part of his in-group "we". This link disguises automatic thinking as deliberate thinking. Even though other sources were referenced, it was only to enforce the need to accept the ideas quickly and be a part of the in-group.

In creating his automatic thinking mentality, the BAP also includes what "you" think. The text uses this method to invoke automatic thinking when discussing the ideological problem of the poor conditions due to modern society. The BAP claims, "*you* see that suffering exceeds pleasure or happiness in this world" and that the poor state of the average man is something "one can't deny" (BAP 94, 125). This strategy includes the reader/the "you" in the in-group and makes it appear as though the reader has come to this conclusion on their own, when in reality it is just another statement the BAP spoon fed to his readers.

In addition to these statements tricking the readers into believing their automatic thinking is a conclusion they've already come to on their own, the phrasing also sets up the BAP's ideological ideas as fact statements, something "one cannot deny." This phrasing of beliefs as facts is a pattern in the manifesto, and evidence of the automatic reasoning the BAP seeks. An example comes from one of the BAP's sections on natural order and how higher life acts differently, as he claims that "it is obvious that such behaviors" are things that came about that can't be learned and instead are "inborn" (BAP 16). While these ideas are clearly the BAP's beliefs, he presents them as established facts, attempting to get the readers to accept them without much effort. He also repeats this manipulation by claiming that his ideal state of life "is the natural condition of the mind and intellect" (BAP 36). Again, he is framing his ideological claims as facts, avoiding the need for readers to deliberate on their own. He wants his followers to think that the wonderful BAP did the work for them, and all they have to do now is just accept it.

The appearance that the BAP has done the tough logical work, so his followers don't have to do their own, is also seen throughout the text in the big, yet empty statements he often makes. The BAP often references "real meaning" or "true understanding" a phrase that ordinarily would require unpacking, and then he leaves it untouched, leaving the sentence empty of the meaning it appears to have. For example, the BAP mentions one of Nietzsche's works as something to read, "if you want to understand the true problem of our time" (BAP 63). However, the issue with this statement is that the BAP never defines what he means by "true problem" and although it sounds like an impressive discovery, without naming it the phrase has no meaning. Also, the BAP says that to understand it his followers should read the work and that he "won't dwell on it" (BAP 63). So, although the statement sounds like a huge discovery, in reality the BAP makes an empty with only an illusion of meaning.

The BAP again leaves a statement empty of meaning as he claims that open and free space is the “only way to really understand something” (BAP 65). While the real way to gain understanding again appears to be a significant and reasoned conclusion, it is hollow of actual substance. He doesn’t explain how free space gets us understanding, or even how real understanding is different from the understanding we think we have. The reality of these bold assertions is that they give the appearance of providing remarkable insights supported by reason and philosophical pedigree. Yet, the statements are empty of meaning, lack any supporting logic or reasoning, and serve only to reinforce his ideology. These statements are instead meant to trigger automatic reasoning and acceptance because the readers think they demonstrated reasoning through the seemingly powerful statements the BAP provides.

Another way the BAP’s text encourages automatic thinking is by discrediting other ideas that could possibly conflict with his own. This is a huge part of his text, and he sets the tone for the entire book by beginning the first section by asking his readers, “What if you’ve been misled about what is life?” (BAP 10). This question sets the tone for the BAP’s multiple claims that anyone who is teaching you ideas in conflict with his own, is wrong and leading you astray. He discredits those in the field of science and technology who disagree with his ideas by saying that medical literature “is confused” because it is “corrupted by money, career, and other interest of all kinds of life” and that the scientific literature also “remains contradictory” and the data is “much too sparse” (BAP 27-28). By setting up medicine and science as something that is both corrupt and lacking in data, the BAP is trying to discredit possible opposition for his readers, clearing the way for their complete and automatic acceptance of the Bronze Age Mindset instead.

The BAP extends his strategy of discrediting opposition to target the reader's own mind and intuition. In the early pages of the text, the BAP claims that “your lying mind” will cause

you to back away from the ideal way of life (BAP 6). By setting up the idea that our own minds are also lying to you, the BAP can fight any opposition or conflict the readers may come to on their own. He claims that the natural way of life may be hard to accept for some of us, not because it isn't the right way, but because, "it's hard to hear this call of instinct today, because you're taught to distrust it" (BAP 120). If the readers can't trust anything they know that opposes the BAP's ideas, even if it's something that they learned on their own, then they are more inclined to move to accept the BAP's ideas. The BAP sets himself up as the only authority that can be trusted, and he wants readers to move away from deliberate reasoning and their own conclusions because their own minds can't be trusted.

The manipulation continues, as the BAP establishes that not only can you trust absolutely nothing other than his ideas, but also if you don't accept his ideas then he associates you with negative traits. He connects those who disagree with inferior people, as he claims that only "heavily medicated nihilists are likely to deny" his ideas (BAP 94). So now, not only are readers misled, but they become part of the out-group and thus inferior if they don't accept his conclusions. The BAP repeats this tactic later on, as he describes his beliefs of the poor condition of today and then says, "no real man would ever accept the legitimacy of such an entity" (BAP 128). Basically, if you accept life as it is, instead of his ideas of the ideal state of life, then you are not a real man, and therefore definitely part of the inferior out-group. These statements target the readers who desire to be a part of the BAP's "master race" and push them into automatic acceptance of the ideology associated with it. The BAP uses his manipulation and tricks to set up his text up as one that calls for automatic thinking, even if the readers do not realize this is how they came to accept the BAP's ideas while reading, an indication of Berger's fourth element of extremism focused on this very move into the automatic realm.

The BAP and Element Five

The BAP's ideological claims, now linked to many external sources and discussed as facts, clearly identifies an out-group problem that creates a threat to the in-group. As the BAP's out-group problem becomes more and more extreme, the threat increases to something that is now urgent, evidence of Berger's fifth element, an urgent need for action. As demonstrated earlier, the BAP links in evidence from many different sources, and as a result he roots his in/out group ideological conflict in history. He claims we should, "look to the past to understand what is possible" (BAP 130). As he links in many historical sources in an attempt to justify his perceived ideological problem, he further roots his struggle as something that has persisted throughout history, and therefore isn't going away. The BAP claims his struggle is evidence of "cycles" in history, with the idea that this problem has been around before (BAP 51). As the BAP roots his problem and out-group threat into a vast and ever-present history, he increases the urgency of the threat. If this is something that has been around for so long, as the BAP claims, then it is more than a small issue that will go away without action.

The BAP also amps up the urgency of his out-group threat by laying out his perceived implications, should our current situation continue. He claims that "mass annihilations" will take place if our situation remains the same, that it "will exceed in scale and cruelty anything that had yet happened in history" and he even compares it to a "living hell" (BAP 71). It is clear that the threat the BAP describes is, in his eyes, extreme. This exceeds simple in/out group disagreement, as the out-group will try to ruin the in-group, taking away their "spark of life" (BAP 94).

As the BAP is increasing the severity of his ideological threat, he also discusses what a solution to it would be. Just as with the rest of his statements, the BAP's idea of a solution is very extreme, claiming in order to fight the oppressive out-group and return to his ideal state of being we must take extreme measures, "it can't recover without the most terrible convulsions

and the most thorough purgative measures” (BAP 163). This solution goes beyond a conversation, and no compromise is possible in the BAP’s eyes -- it is all or nothing. He often links his idea of a solution to the Bronze Age, explaining our need for “the primal freedom of the Bronze Age” including the way of life of men at that time who, “get their living by their spears and by risking their blood” (BAP 125). This connection to the Bronze Age demonstrates the BAP’s link to a violent way of life. According to his solution, the deserving men must fight, violently, to get back what is theirs. The way the BAP sets up his threat demonstrates his belief in a need for action to return to his ideal. But for his ideal way of life, or natural order, to be “born again” requires, “cleansing and barbarism” (BAP 131). Just as Berger explains in his theory, as the threat increases, the in-group suspends everyday rules and is able to justify violence as a reaction against their perceived threat. The text is filled with references to a violent and extreme solution, as through the BAP’s ideological perspective, there is no other way to eliminate the problem and get back to his beloved Bronze Age.

Additionally, as the BAP combines his increased threat with his violent solution, he shifts up the time scale, calling on members of his in-group to act now. This is again connected with Berger’s fifth element, as the threat has now become such a rooted problem that action against it is urgent. The BAP’s perceived conflict is no longer just something he discusses abstractly, but something that he wants his followers to put into action, and soon. He calls on his in-group readers to, “work now instead”, an obvious call to action in the urgent present (BAP 171). The new timescale of action is repeated throughout, as he claims, addressing his followers directly, “in your own life you can break their power and ascend to a chaos of joy and destruction” and then goes on to say that he can “already see” this action and future taking place (BAP 113). By rooting his call for action directly in his followers’ lives, right now, it is clear that he is calling for an urgent need for action, just as Berger outlines in his final element of extremism.

The BAP further emphasizes the urgency of his threat and action, as he continues to directly address his in-group. When discussing the story of Alcibiades, and how such a man used violence and barbarism to get what he “deserved”, the BAP claims that “there must be someone as colorful as Alcibiades among you” (BAP 115). By directly addressing his in-group/“you” he is calling them to step up and take action just as men of the past did, in a violent way. If followers capable of such action are among us now, then their violent action is imminent. This direct call to his followers is a pattern throughout the text, as the BAP continues to emphasize that action needs to be taken in the now. He says to his group, “the spirit of the bronze Age pirate can exist in our age... You have no excuse” (BAP 157). Here he both explains that his solution is possible now and pushes his followers to take the possible action. If there is no excuse, then everyone in his in-group should enact his solution.

From the text it is clear that Berger’s fifth element is reflected. The BAP rooted his threat in history, escalating it to a point where action, in the now, is urgently needed. Although he is clearly calling upon his in-group to take action, we do not know what, if any, action has actually been taken. The BAP is an anonymous figure, so the only way to know of his actions is through the claims he makes in his self-published manifesto, and his online presence. There are no physical or known actions to link him to. However, it is clear from the BAP’s manifesto that he has escalated into the extreme realm, and even though we cannot link known violence to his ideology, there was a definite call for violent action, which is potentially dangerous.

The BAP’s escalation can be concluded from the assumption that he would have gladly described extreme acts he committed prior to authoring his manifesto, but did not. Additionally, his other similarities to other known extreme groups, supports the reasonable conclusion that BAP was not born extreme. Using the starting point of not extreme, and using the BAP’s manifesto as an end point, we can intuit that there is a history of escalation, even if it is unknown

to us, because the end point of the manifesto is clearly extreme, as shown through the presence of all five of Berger's elements. Additionally, within the text itself there is some evidence of the escalation of Berger's elements as the text progresses, which can be used as an analogy for the BAP's unknown historical progression.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

My method of rhetorical analysis for the Bronze Age Pervert and the Weathermen demonstrates evidence of all of Berger's elements of extremism in the two vastly different groups. At the start of my research, it seemed unlikely that Berger's theory would stretch to all of my groups to be examined, given such key differences between both my groups, and Berger's sample. However, despite the perceived difficulty, my analysis appears to validate Berger's theory. While I did just research two groups, I set them as far apart as possible in an attempt to cover a wide range of ideological and structural changes. For the purpose of this research, Berger's theory passed the universal test, although there is much more research on this topic that could be done. The Weathermen demonstrate strong evidence of all five of Berger's elements, and it is easy to determine their progression as their history and origins are well known. The Bronze Age Pervert, while also demonstrating strong evidence of all of Berger's elements, was a bit more difficult due to his anonymity. However, by using the reasonable assumption that people are not just born extreme, paired with the BAP's escalation within the individual text I examined, it is clear that the BAP also escalated into the extreme, and it can be tracked using Berger's theory and elements. Given the evidence of all five of Berger's elements, the two-part legitimization demand cycle, linking in supply, automatic thinking, and an urgent need for action, within groups with key ideological and structural differences, my research backs up Berger's universal claims.

Berger's theory is successful within the groups tested out in this paper, but it would be too far to claim with absolute certainty that this theory is one hundred percent universal. My research was set up to best test out as many differences as I could, including the simple left versus right ideology, all the way to the smaller factors that defined the ideologies, including group versus individual, known identity versus unknown, and even the media their ideas were

established on, as the Weathermen and Christian Identity became extreme long before it was possible to become extreme in the online form that the BAP is known for. To strengthen both Berger's theory, and my findings, more research could be done into more groups, as well as a deeper dive into any of the already studied groups. The goal of my paper was to find evidence of the elements within the two ideologies; however, intensive study could go into each individual element within a single ideology, as I found too much evidence and too many quotations to include all of them in my analysis.

Despite the additional possibilities to gain more insight into Berger's theory, within the bounds of my research, Berger's theory stands strong as a universal tracker of escalation into the extreme. This universal type of measure could have significant impacts on further research of extremist groups, including earlier detection and limitation of violence before the group goes too far. This is one of the reasons I selected the Bronze Age Pervert for my research, as there are no known acts of violence currently linked to him. While this could be due simply to his anonymity, it could also mean that I caught his extremist rhetoric before it spiraled into violent behavior. For the Weathermen, and many other extremist groups, this means of intervention through Berger's theory is much too late. These groups have already "peaked" and now are just studied as a demonstration for the extreme. Even Berger's sample group, while still around, has long ago entered the realm of the extreme, and was already linked to many violent acts for many years before Berger began his study. However, it is interesting to think about what could be different if Berger's theory was around and applied to such infamous groups before they committed their extremist violent acts. If someone had detected concerning rhetoric from The People's Temple cult, before they left the country and before such a massacre was planned, many lives could have been saved. The same goes for Patrick Crusius, if his manifesto had been published and Berger was applied before his shooting occurred, many lives could have been spared.

Although it is impossible to undo the past, and the Jonestown massacre, El Paso Shooting, and many other tragic events due to extremist ideology have already taken place, it is not too late to stop the next one. Berger's theory offers us a way, if applied before the violence takes place, to let us know when an ideology is getting extreme, before it is too late. This could be very valuable for an ideology such as the Bronze Age Pervert. His manifesto, *The Bronze Age Mindset*, which was used as an analysis for his ideology, was only published in 2018. This is very recent and offers an opportunity to use Berger's theory and catch him early, before more damage is done. However, this would require more research into the identity of the BAP, as not much can be done about stopping him until we know where to find him. Nevertheless, evidence of Berger's elements in a modern ideology that is evolving in the now offers exciting insights into the study of extremism, and the possibility of stopping extremist harm before it is done. It is clear that the BAP's ideology contains elements of extremism that very well could lead to violence, and this same type of detection could be applied to other ideologies and people of concern. While such a process would require more analysis, my research demonstrates that Berger's theory is a possible avenue to detect extremist ideology, and that if the identity of the ideology is known, it may very well be possible that it can be stopped before anyone gets hurt.

Overall, my research into the field of Berger's extremism has demonstrated the vast possibilities of a strong theory like Berger's. Not only can it be used as a history analysis, looking back to figure out what happened and why, like Berger did with *Christian Identity*, but it also can be used for rhetorical analysis of what's happening now. Berger's theory offers us a promising universal perspective into the minds of the extreme, potentially letting us know both how these groups got there, as well as a potential means of intervention, before the ideology goes too far, and hopefully before any real harm can be done.

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Biography

Kelly Keglovits was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma on May 26, 1998. She remained in Tulsa, until moving to Austin, Texas to attend the University of Texas at Austin. There she studied in the college of liberal arts, with a double major in Plan II Honors, and Rhetoric and Writing. After college, Kelly plans to attend Duke Law School, with a goal of pursuing public interest law related to gender equality after she graduates.