

**THE FUNCTIONS OF WHITE NATIONALISM ONLINE: A  
CONTENT ANALYSIS OF WHITE NATIONALIST THEMATIC  
DISCOURSE SURROUNDING THE EVE CARSON HOMICIDE**

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## (ABSTRACT)

*Extant literature on White Nationalism illustrate the myriad of social issues members of this racist extremist group presently recognize as threatening the continuation of the white race and the preservation of white heritage (Swain 2002). One of these threats includes the high incidences of black-on-white violent crime within the United States. The March 2008 murder of UNC student body president Eve Carson, a 22 year-old white woman, by two young black males elicited heated discussion among White Nationalists. This paper analyzes, via content analysis, the thematic discourse surrounding Carson's homicide among White Nationalists on two popular White Nationalist websites. Functionalist theory guides this investigation in the attempt to illustrate how White Nationalists use scientific theories of criminality and government crime statistics as tools for justifying their racist beliefs. Also, this study intended to answer whether or not Carson's murder prompted an increase in online membership on the two websites used for the analysis. Moreover, this study sought to unearth thematic discourse which involved attacking whites who do not subscribe to White Nationalism; Eve Carson as either a sacred or profane symbol of whiteness; criticism of government policies, media, and the criminal justice system; evoking fear within the White Nationalist community; and calls for white solidarity and action. This analysis suggests that White Nationalists primarily used Carson's death as an opportunity to attack whites who do not subscribe to White Nationalist beliefs.*

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The recent homicide of a young, white female University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) student captivated the nation's attention in early 2008. In the early morning hours of March 5th, two young black males purportedly kidnapped twenty-two year old UNC student body president Eve Marie Carson. Her bullet-ridden body was found lying in a street near her apartment later that same morning. The alleged suspects were subsequently arrested and charged with first-degree murder. At present, both remain incarcerated and are awaiting trial in Chapel Hill's Orange County Jail Complex.

Carson's homicide received comprehensive media attention in the weeks following her murder. The case attracted the interest of local and regional news outlets as well as chief national news organizations. Accordingly, news media reported on the enormous amount of grief exhibited by members of the university and the Chapel Hill community. Yet, one emotion was not captured by news cameras or evident in interviews with Carson's friends, family, or fellow Tarheels. News media failed to capture anger or outrage over her murder by the white community. In addition, there were no white community leaders visible, nor were there organized protests focusing specifically on the loss of a white at the hands of a black offender. This lack of media coverage was seen as problematic by the White Nationalist community.

The absence of white public outcry and racial solidarity with regard to black-on-white violent crime is perplexing given that the information compiled by federal government agencies indicate that black males are disproportionately more likely to commit acts of interracial violence in comparison to their white male counterparts ("Expanded Homicide Data Table 5" FBI, 2007).

However, government crime data is misleading given that it fails to consider the total population of whites and blacks in its analysis (see my discussion of *The Phenomenon of Black Crime* in the next chapter). While public outcry and organized protests by the white community were absent in media coverage after Carson's homicide, heated reaction to her murder was palpable in the White Nationalist community. More specifically, outrage was blatantly apparent in White Nationalist online discussion forums.

White Nationalism is a political ideology, a social movement, and according to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), is an active hate group presently operating within the United States. White Nationalists champion white supremacist/separatist ideologies, centering their dogma on the supposed inferiority of nonwhites ("Active U.S. Hate Groups: SPLC 2009). According to the SPLC (2009), groups espousing White Nationalist ideologies include the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Confederates, neo-Nazis, and Christian Identity. Groups vary from those that use racial slurs and advocate violence to others that expound themselves as resolute, non-violent groups and utilize the "language of academia" ("Active U.S. Hate Groups: SPLC 2009). These groups' racial attitudes render them taboo in mainstream society; thus, they tend to be suspicious and critical of those who do not sympathize with their ideology. Obviously, this distrust has made it difficult for academicians who wish to infiltrate these groups for research purposes; accordingly, sociological research has been scant. This observation is troubling given that the number of U.S. hate groups has been on the rise since 2000 ("Intelligence Report: The Year in Hate": SPLC 2009).

White Nationalists, like a myriad of other groups, utilize the Internet as a method of communication that facilitates discussion amongst group members. The Internet makes possible

dialogue of virtually any subject matter, and White Nationalists made use of this medium in the days, weeks, and months following Carson's homicide to discuss the individuals involved and circumstances surrounding this case.

The study at hand is a descriptive content analysis and case study of White Nationalist thematic discourse surrounding Eve Carson's homicide as it pertains to black crime and white victimization. Functionalist theory is utilized in order to explore the ways in which White Nationalists' employ the Internet, specifically online discussion forums, to justify their beliefs regarding black male criminality via the use of biological theories of crime and government crime statistics. Additionally, this study seeks to determine whether Eve Carson's homicide resulted in an increase in White Nationalist websites. Lastly, this thesis seeks to uncover White Nationalist thematic discourse surrounding her murder. Contemporary research on white racial activists with regard to black-on-white violent crime is scant in extant sociological and criminological literature, and this study will provide much needed insight into how one of the most under-studied subcultures in the United States utilizes online discussion forums to promote, solidify, and justify its movement and ideology.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

The first section of this literature review reflects on the extant sociological research on White Nationalism. Information is provided on the numerous White Nationalist groups, the movement's philosophy and ideology, and social issues of interest to its members. A discussion on race and crime follows, with a review of literature focusing on black crime, scientific racism, biological theories of crime, and the use of science as a tool for White Nationalists in justifying their ideology. The next section reviews the tools that White Nationalists utilize in the propagation of its movement and ideology and also promote group solidarity. The following two sections of this literature review afford insight into the two websites analyzed and the theory of White Nationalist online conduct. Finally, a brief overview of the known events leading up to Carson's homicide is discussed.

#### **2.1 Contemporary White Nationalism**

Contemporary White Nationalism emerged during the latter half of the 1990s and from the initial white supremacy movement (Swain 2002; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). Not unlike the traditional Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and other organizations on the "racist right", White Nationalism promotes a sense of white ethnic pride and European-American group awareness by "celebrating the intellectual, artistic, scientific, and political achievements of white people throughout human history" (Swain 2002:3). Unlike white racial organizations of the past, the new White Nationalism rejects the use of violence and intimidation; instead, it is a movement of dialogue, opinion, argument, and ideas (Swain 2002). Ideally, White Nationalists desire separate institutions for whites and, more importantly, a separate white nation or homeland (Swain 2002).

*White Nationalism* is an umbrella term used to describe the ethnic ideologies of white racialists and separatists from numerous white supremacist and separatist organizations. There are several white racist organizations that subscribe to the tenets of the White Nationalist ideology, such as the KKK, Neo-Nazis, Neo-Confederates, Racist Skinheads, and the Christian Identity movement. To varying degrees, members of groups such as these espouse the beliefs of White Nationalist philosophy. Moreover, just as conventional political ideologies have a range of differing perspectives on any number of issues, there are liberal, moderate, conservative, and radical-thinking White Nationalists.

While White Nationalism is an ideology and not an organized group, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) declares that White Nationalism is a type of hate group currently operating within the United States (“Active U.S. Hate Groups”, SPLC, 2007). At the same time, the SPLC also considers Black Separatists groups, such as the Nation of Islam, to be a type of hate group. As with white separatists, black separatists oppose integration and interracial marriage and also seek separate institutions and ideally a separate nation. Black separatist philosophy is strongly anti-white and anti-Semitic (SPLC 2007). The SPLC (2007) states that even though black racism in this country is partly a response to historical institutions of white racism, it stresses that “racism must be exposed in all its forms.” In addition, the SPLC puts forward that “white groups espousing beliefs similar to Black Separatists would be considered clearly racist. The same criterion should be applied to all groups regardless of their color” (“Active U.S. Hate Groups: Black Separatist” SPLC 2007).

Predictably, White Nationalists argue that white victims of black crime are consistently overshadowed by black victims of white transgressions. This double standard, they claim, is

enabled by the liberal Jewish-controlled news media (“Jews-media”), which publicly emphasizes the tragedy of the black victim at the hands of whites, yet for the most part ignores the plight of white victims at the hands of blacks (Daniels 1997). This notion is even more perplexing given that crime statistics clearly yield alarming interracial offense and victimization rates. Given the historic oppression of blacks by whites, many whites may feel a sense of white guilt.

Furthermore, any attempt at organized public dissent by whites at perceived racial injustice could be considered politically incorrect.

Members of White Nationalist groups reject multiculturalism and abhor the growing rate of the non-white population in the United States (Swain 2002). According to many White Nationalists, non-whites are considered to be morally and intellectually inferior to whites, and the perceived high rate of violent crime committed by non-whites is believed to be the result of genetic predisposition (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). In the light of the high rate of black crime, White Nationalism devolves to historic and modern scientific theories of genetic predisposition to explain this phenomenon. Hence, White Nationalists believe that the innate criminality of non-whites cannot be remedied by means of rehabilitation and thus call for extreme punishment of non-whites who engage in violent acts.

The most efficient manner in which White Nationalists voice their contempt of black crime is via online forums. Two of the most prominent White Nationalist websites are [www.stormfront.org](http://www.stormfront.org), (herein after cited as *Stormfront*) and [www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com](http://www.vanguardnewsnetwork.com) (herein after cited as *Vanguard*) established in 1995 and 2000, respectively (Swain 2002). Theoretically, online forums afford White Nationalists a platform on which they construct a public voice for a white victim wronged by a black offender. In addition, online forums afford a

haven whereby scientific literature and symbolic rituals of objectification serve to provoke atavistic, animalistic, and savage perceptions of the black criminal. These websites also provide the means for white community solidarity and is an effective tool for the recruitment of new members.

## **2.2 The Phenomenon of Black Crime**

The phenomenon of race and crime in the United States has been a sensitive topic of discussion in academia for decades (Hawkins 1983). Perhaps the most extensively debated issue within this discourse revolves around the different theoretical explanations as to why blacks are excessively more likely than whites to engage in violent criminal conduct. Hawkins (1995) posits that the most accepted theories have emphasized social structural characteristics, such as poverty, inequality and social disorganization, and also social processes (i.e. differential association and social control). Statistically, government data demonstrate that blacks are disproportionately more likely than whites to engage in violent crime. Historically, Levin (2005) argues that there has been a positive correlation between race and violent crime in every study undertaken to explore this relationship. Moreover, Hawkins (1983) states that most studies conclude that homicide victims and offenders are more likely to be southern, poor, and undereducated blacks.

With regard to homicide offenders, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2007) states that young black males aged 14 to 24 constitute approximately one percent of the nation's population yet has the highest homicide offending rates of any racial group. FBI data for 1992 reveal that blacks were nine times more likely than whites to have committed a homicide (Levin 2005).

Overall, crime statistics yield that blacks are disproportionately more likely than whites to engage in violent crime.

It is widely accepted that the majority of violent crime in this country is intraracial. However, with regard to interracial violent crime rates, blacks are astronomically more likely than whites to commit interracial homicide. For instance, Levin (2005) argues that FBI data from 1992 yields that blacks killed twenty-two times as many whites as whites did blacks. Government data signify that in 2005 nearly nine percent of all homicides involved a black offender and a white victim, while only approximately three percent of homicides involved a black victim and a white offender (“ Supplementary Homicide Reports: 1976-2005” FBI 2007). According to the 2007 *Uniformed Crime Report*, there were 566 murder cases in which there was a black offender and a white victim, while there were only 245 murder cases in which there was a white offender and a black victim (FBI).

Likewise, the Bureau of Justice Statistics’ (BJS) National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) data for 2006 yields that of the 3,699,360 reported cases of personal crimes of violence where the victim was white, thirteen percent of the offenders were black (480,916) while sixty-nine percent were white. For the same year, there were 719,880 cases of personal crimes of violence where the victim was black; approximately eleven percent of the offenders were white (79,186) while almost seventy-five percent were black. It can be argued, therefore, that while most violent crimes are intraracial, blacks are disproportionately (six times) more likely than whites to commit interracial acts of violence.

These statistics show that there are a disproportionate number of black males who engage in violent crime. However, these data fail to take into account the population of whites versus

blacks in the United States. For instance, in 2007 the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that there were 241,166,890 whites living in the United States, comprising approximately eighty percent of the total U.S. population, compared to 38,756,452 blacks constituting roughly thirteen percent of the population. Put another way, in 2007 there were over six times as many whites as blacks in the United States. Given this information, it is unsurprising that blacks are more likely to kill whites than vice versa simply due to the fact that there are over six times as many whites as blacks; a black individual has a better chance of killing a white individual than a white a black individual. Therefore, using the FBI's interracial crime data and U.S. Census population statistics, it can be concluded that whites are killing a higher percentage of the black population than vice versa. The FBI's failure to include population data results in reporting misleading crime statistics. However, it is no surprise that White Nationalists use such disingenuous information as a tool in order to legitimate their case regarding black male criminality.

### **2.3 The History of Scientific Racism**

Science has enjoyed a position of authority in society for hundreds of years with scientists seeking to explain ultimately every aspect of social life. The ideological foundation of White Nationalism regarding race is rooted in historic beliefs and theories of the "Negro". Contemporary racial categorization, born in sixteenth century England, emerged from the "age of exploration, the rise of capitalism, and the rise of science," (Baker 1998:11). Thus, contemporary White Nationalist beliefs vis-à-vis blacks are largely ingrained in historical scientific theories of black inferiority.

Dehumanizing depictions of Africans are as old as Europeans' initial contact with the African continent (Goff, Williams, Eberhardt, and Jackson 2008). These early European

voyagers described Africans as “primitive people who seemed more closely related to apes than to white explorers,” (Goff et al. 2008:292). During this time, however, these observations were not made in order to scientifically or theologically argue that Africans were biologically inferior to white Europeans; instead, they were merely observations. Religious justifications for the inferiority of blacks were utilized during the era of slavery in the New World prior to 1840. Scientific justifications would follow.

Pieterse (1992) argues that the application of science to race developed after 1840 – during the time when slavery was being challenged in America. As stated above, slavery was initially justified by religion, the prevailing philosophy at the time. However, the emergence of science as the dominant philosophy in the West began to challenge the authority of theology. (Baker 1998). In the early twentieth century, religious explanations for slavery gave way to scientific justifications and biological differences between whites and blacks came to dominate racial thinking and discourse. (Baker 1998). As theological theories of race gave way to biological explanations, the grounds for racial hierarchy relied heavily on the “Nego-ape metaphor” (Goff et al 2008:293).

Before contemporary “scientific racism”, there was much speculation within scientific communities that there might be an evolutionary spectrum among primates. For instance, Franz Boa and Charles Darwin theorized that monkeys and apes inhabited the “least evolved end” of this evolutionary spectrum, “continuing through savage and/or deformed anthropoids, and culminating with whites at the other end” (Goff et al. 2008:293). Using this logic, early scientific theorists believed peoples of African descent existed between the “deformed” and the anthropoid on the evolutionary continuum. Between 1750 and 1900, however, scientists began

asserting the “‘fact’ that savages were racially inferior to members of civilized society” (Baker 1998: 13). By this time, widely accepted black stereotypes had found substantiation from the scientific community. Goff et al (2008) contend that such stereotypes included blacks as being inherently lazy, hostile, unintelligent, “hypersexual, and in need of benevolent control” (p. 293). In his attempt to classify the peoples of the world in the late seventeenth century, French physician and traveler Francois Bernier described African blacks as having “thick lips and flat noses,” polished-looking skin, wool-like hair, and teeth “as white as the finest ivory,” (Gossett 1963: 32). It was not until the eighteenth century that efforts were made to seek out scientific and measurable human differences between races.

The black “savage” became tantamount with black Africans by the nineteenth century. Pieterse (1992) argues that, according to white Europeans, the nineteenth century savage was known for his or her “absence, or scarcity, of clothing possessions, attributes of civilization,” (p. 35). The white colonists likened African blacks to apes, and this comparison had a lasting impression on racial thinking for centuries, especially in the postbellum South.

Eighteenth century natural historian George Louis Buffon regarded the white race as the standard and all other races were “exotic variations,” but *not* different species (Gossett 1963: 36). According to Buffon, the “exotic variations” of African blacks was due to extreme heat, which subsequently explained their blackness as a hereditary trait. But Gossett (1963) argues that Buffon went beyond the physically visible differences between blacks and whites due to climate differences: Buffon believed blacks had “little genius” as evidenced by their primitive tribal behavior and their inability to “count past three,” (36). Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, “the father of craniology” did not believe that precise data could be acquired to categorize and



distinguish the races, but did believe it was possible to divide humans into five varieties: Caucasian (light-skinned people from Europe and surrounding area, Mongolian (inhabitants of eastern Asia), Ethiopian (dark-skinned people of Africa), American (Native Americans), and Malay (Pacific Islanders and Australian aborigines) (Gossett 1963: 37; Gould 1996:402). Gould (1996) states that in 1795, Blumenbach chose the term *Caucasian* to describe white Europeans because he believed in “the maximal beauty of people from this small region [Mount Caucasus], and the probability that humans had first been created in this area,” (401).

Nineteenth century Swiss naturalist Louis Agassiz hypothesized that races were created as separate species (Gould 1996). This hypothesis, polygeny, posits that if human beings were created as separate species, they therefore have different and innate values. Thus, blacks were believed to occupy the bottom rung of an “objective” racial hierarchy based on “scientific fact,” (Gould 1996:75) As proof that blacks are inferior, Agassiz was quoted as saying that “there has never been a regulated society of black men developed on that continent [Africa]. Does not this indicate in this race a peculiar apathy, a peculiar indifference to the advantages afforded by civilized society?” (Gould 1996: 79). As a result, Agassiz therefore suggested that whites should be trained in “mind-work” since they are biologically capable, while blacks should be relegated to “hand-work” since they are not. Hence, by the twentieth century, scientists had begun to incorporate racial differences in science, forming classifications and hierarchies of races. Biological explanations of criminality followed this trend.

## **2.4 Biological Determinism and Black Intelligence**

By the end of the twentieth century, the study of race as a “science” became outdated and regarded as a “pseudoscience” (Pieterse 1992:50). This may be true for the majority of

Americans, but to White Nationalists, the subject of biological determinism and race is still very much alive and relevant. Biological determinism is but one tool that White Nationalists use to argue the innate inferiority of blacks, and racism is deeply rooted in this model (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). Levin (2005) defines biological determinism as “the thesis that social phenomena are functions of biological variables only, so that, in particular, race differences depend on biology alone, to the exclusion of the environment,” (p. 144). According to Gould (1996), biological determinism is the theory that “shared behavioral norms, and the social and economic differences between groups – primarily races, classes, and sexes – arise from inherited, inborn distinctions and that society, in this sense, is an accurate reflection of biology,” (p. 52). In essence, biological determinism can be regarded as a biological theory of evolution relying heavily on the work of Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and Lombroso.

This theory can be an effective tool for groups in power. Gould argued that according to biological determinism Whites are the powerful elite in the United States and this is an extension of the way nature intended it to be (53). Any major shift or change in this dynamic must “inflict an enormous cost – psychological for individuals or economic for society – in forcing people into unnatural arrangements,” (Gould 1996: 53). Therefore, those who subscribe to biological determinism believe that nature intended for the white race to be superior to blacks and use this as a scientific justification for their belief in Black inferiority; especially with regard to what they perceive as blacks’ poorer intelligence.

As stated above, science is but one tool White Nationalists use to both legitimate their ideology and to recruit new members into the group. Many public figures within the White Nationalist movement speak about the innate inferiority of blacks in hopes of recruiting new

members. Tom Metzger, the White Nationalist founder of the White Aryan Resistance, uses biological determinism as a way of defending his belief that whites are naturally superior to blacks. He is quoted as saying "...Natural selection, racism and territorialism are as natural as the rising sun, and these forces cannot be defeated anymore than humans could stand in the path of a tornado," (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997: 95). Since black inferiority is "natural" according to White Nationalists, then logically environmental factors have little to no effect on intelligence.

The dismissal of environmental factors by White Nationalists with relation to intelligence is exemplified by a brochure (n.d.a.) published by the American Front, a white power organization. In it, the organization published "Some Facts about Blacks" in which they argue a strong connection of physical traits with intelligence (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997: 95). When confronted with the question "But haven't blacks been victims of oppression? Isn't this why most blacks are living in such poor economic and social conditions today?" the organization's response suggests that it is the natural inferiority of blacks that explains their present "poor economic and social conditions," not the environment (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997: 95-96).

The crux of biological determinism in White Nationalist discourse is rooted in I.Q. and mental capacity. The hereditarian theory of I.Q. was developed in the United States, with H.H. Goddard bringing Alfred Binet's I.Q. scale to American from France and reifying its scores as innate intelligence (Gould 1996: 187). Using Binet's tests, Goddard (unlike Binet) saw I.Q. scores as a measure of a single, innate entity and used these scores to "recognize limits, segregate, and curtail breeding to prevent further deterioration of an endangered American stock,

threatened by immigration from without and by prolific reproduction of its feeble-minded within,” (Gould 1996: 189). Goddard believed that evolution is best seen as a unilinear progress, and that I.Q. scores ascending from primitive to advanced is the best way of ordering variation within the human species (Gould 1996: 189).

## **2.5 White Nationalist Groups and Ideologies**

America is comprised of over three hundred million individuals with different backgrounds, races, ethnicities, religions, and values. In a nation with so many different individuals, it is not surprising to find that racism is alive and well in our society. Political correctness surrounding discourse on racial and ethnic issues has become almost expected of Americans, and certainly one who publicly and overtly behaves in ways that are counter to this prospect can expect to be ridiculed and even exiled from mainstream society. Therefore, subcultures form in which those who share socially nonstandard values, beliefs, and ideologies find refuge and feel a sense of belonging to those who are like themselves.

In the United States, members of white racialist or supremacist “hate groups” such as the KKK, National Socialists (Neo-Nazis), Christian Identity, and skinheads, all subscribe to the larger White Nationalist ideology to varying degrees (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). Hate groups, as suggested by Adams and Roscigno (2005), are marginalized groups but remain an active and dangerous aspect of American society. The SPLC argues that White Nationalist organizations, as well as their black counterparts, are indeed examples of hate groups, yet White Nationalism is better defined as an ideology or philosophy rather than a group.

White Nationalism is an ideology as well as a social movement. An ideology, as defined by Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997) is “a set of ideas that describe, explain, and justify the ends and means of political action” (89). In other words, an ideology is an integrated belief system. Ideologies can either maintain the status quo or promote change; however, when advocating change they are attached to social movements (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997:90). Social movements, as described by Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997:90), are “organized efforts to promote or resist change in society that rely, at least in part, on non-institutionalized forms of political action.” Thus, White Nationalism can be regarded as both an ideology and social movement. Naturally, an understanding White Nationalist ideology is essential to understanding the movement.

The crux of White Nationalist ideology is stated on *Stormfront*. As declared on this website, White Nationalism is the idea that whites, as a group, need to create a separate nation in order to defend the white race. White Nationalists *claim* that the white race is *not* superior to other races and it is not their intention to dominate members of other races (*Stormfront*). White Nationalists believe that the concept of “racial nationalism” captures their core beliefs in racial self-determination and self-preservation better than any supremacist label; therefore, they do not label themselves “white supremacists,” (Swain 2002:16). Swain (2002) describes the group as embracing the compelling expression of “national self-determination” and “national self-assertion” in order to protect their “God-given natural right” to their distinctive cultural, political, and genetic identity as white Europeans (16).

Within White Nationalist discourse, the very meaning of “whiteness” and the re-articulation of “whiteness” is central to its ideology (Daniels 1997:8). With regard to nonwhites, White

Nationalists believe that “black and brown peoples of the world...are morally and intellectually inferior to whites and Asians,” and, thus, the more plentiful and powerful they become, the more American society will deteriorate (Swain 2002:17). The rise of multiculturalism, affirmative action policies, increased immigration, miscegenation, and identity politics pursued by nonwhites threaten their cherished European identity (Swain 2002:16-17). Whites are interested in maintaining their majority status in society and believe that a separate white nation is attainable within the next twenty years (*Stormfront*). Therefore, White Nationalists reject the supremacist label and instead prefer to be called racialists.

White Nationalists, however, are not uniform in their beliefs and values. As with political ideologies, members of these groups may be radical, conservative, liberal, or moderate in their beliefs. For example, as put forth by *KKK.com*, some of the major goals of this organization are to reaffirm that “America was founded” as a white Christian nation, immediately cease all foreign aid, stop illegal immigration, abolish anti-gun laws and “encourage every adult to own a weapon, promote love and appreciation of white culture, drug test potential welfare recipients, repeal the Federal Reserve Act, outlaw abortion unless the mother’s life is at risk or the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, support the death penalty for those convicted of molestation and rape, support a national law against the practice of homosexuality, prevent government interference in child rearing, and support state sovereignty resolutions. Interestingly, some of these “goals” sound similar to the goals of the Republican Party in the United States.

In contrast, the National Socialist website *AmericanNaziParty.com* describes their platform as campaigning for a healthy environment, the welfare of children, and “freedom of belief

without fear of System persecution.” The term “Neo-nazi” refers to an organization that typically uses Nazi symbolism, refers to themselves as Nazi or National Socialist, and shows high regard for Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). In addition, the self-described two most pertinent issues within the National Socialism (American Nazi Party) are the “Struggle for Aryan Racial Survival” and “Social Justice for White Working Class people throughout our land” (*AmericanNaziParty.com*).

Racist Skinheads is another organization under the wider umbrella of White Nationalism. According to SPLC (2009b), Racist Skinheads is a violent faction commonly referred to as the “shock troops.” Members of this group are very discernible due to their style of dress: shaved heads, black Doc Martens boots, jeans with suspenders, and a assortment of racist tattoos (SPLC 2009b). The Queer Skinhead Brotherhood, one small sect within the Skinhead Movement, represents gay skinheads who “support the scene, the music, and each other, and respect that you don’t have to be straight to claim the Skin” (<http://www.io.com/~qsb/main.html>). Obviously, members of this sect differ remarkably from the KKK organization regarding their stance on homosexuality.

White Nationalism is best regarded not as a social movement or an organization, but as an umbrella term used to reference all of the White supremacist, separatist, and racist organizations, and their respective philosophies, values, and attitudes. And, as with other ideologies, White Nationalist ideologies and commitment to beliefs will undoubtedly vary with each member.

## **2.6 Social Issues of Interest to White Nationalists**

White Nationalists are concerned with protecting the white race from the perceived threat that nonwhites and liberal politics pose. Swain (2002) contends that there are seven conditions that “threaten to fuel the growth of this new racial consciousness movement” (2). One condition is the growing presence of legal and illegal nonwhite immigrants, which could result in whites soon becoming a racial minority. Structural changes in the global economy also threaten to fuel the growth of the movement in that high-paying production jobs are declining, resulting in white unskilled workers being forced to compete with legal and illegal immigrants for low-wage jobs. Also, race-based affirmative action policies are seen as unfair, and many whites are resentful and question the constitutionality of these laws. Other conditions that may promote the rise of the movement include the high black-on-white violent crimes rates, the growing acceptance and promotion of multiculturalism in America, the rising expectations of racial and ethnic minorities, and the increasing growth in the number of households connected to the Internet, which will “provide a means for like-minded people to consolidate their strength, share ideas, and mobilize their resources for political action” (Swain 2002:2). White Nationalists therefore believe that the economic, legal, and social prosperity of the white race is being threatened. How do members of this movement plan to remedy their precarious situation? The answer is physical racial separation.

The rise in the non-white population is not an unreasonable threat to White Nationalists. The fact that demographic trends project European Americans will gradually become a minority over the next twenty to thirty years is viewed with dismay. David Duke, a former Klansman and now a self-proclaimed White Nationalist warns “Our children...will live in an America where alien cultures...will dominate us. This alien influx is a disaster for our country, our people, our families (quoted in Swain 2002:17).



As noted above, White Nationalists are interested in the preservation and continuance of the White race in the United States, a presence they feel is being threatened by both whites and nonwhites. In seeking to form a separate nation, White Nationalists will attempt to avoid what they perceive as exploitation via racial preference schemes in employment, university admissions, government contracting, and small business loans. In addition, according to *Stormfront*, whites have been denied rights of free speech and due process with regard to discrepancies in criminal punishment. White Nationalists maintain that they are not aggressive or violent as evidenced by thirty years of white “flight” (moving away from cities and towns with increasing minority populations to more White-dominated areas); aggressors, they argue, do not flee.

Reverberating the ideas and explanations of White Nationalism on *Stormfront*, Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997), like Swain (2002), discuss the recognition of dramatic changes that have occurred in American society, especially since the 1960s Civil Rights era. They argue that even though segregation still exists in this country, the overarching legal structure of segregation is no longer in place. Likewise, the degree of separation espoused by White Nationalists is mainly a strictly white homeland and white government. They feel that the best hope for the continuance of the white race is to withdraw from a society that is so morally reprehensible and dangerous to them. Since mainstream society came to reject blatant racism by whites, many White Nationalists have tried to emphasize their love for their white race instead of hate for nonwhites. Some in the movement rejected societal values and images so much that they cast off their white rejecters (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997).

White Nationalists therefore embrace the concept of separatism and thus argue for total separation. Proponents of separatism wish to take part in both the physical and spiritual racial

purification of countries which have traditionally been considered “White lands in Modern Times” and also aim to “purge this entire land area of every non-white person, gene, idea and influence,” (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 2006:54). These individuals yearn for the races to be separate and therefore would attempt to realize this goal by creating a separate white nation (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997:2). While advocating separatism does not necessarily translate into the belief that one race is superior to another, separateness would afford each group the maintenance of its own culture and autonomy (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997:2). Therefore, being self-described as *racialist* is different from being *racist* or a *supremacist*; the term *racialist* is used as a way to stress their love and support of their own race in a non-discriminatory way. Therefore, racialists reject multiculturalism and assimilation. Many whites regard themselves as belonging to white racialist groups advocating the need for whites to assert or regain their power in a nation that has become too multicultural.

Even though White Nationalists claim that they do not espouse supremacist rhetoric, there remains dialogue within the movement that contradicts this claim; especially discourse surrounding biological differences with regard to intelligence. Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997) argue that the overall expression of traditional biological bigotry has declined; however, it does still exist (91).

## **2.7 White Guilt and the Double Standard**

Racial identification, defined as “one’s sense of belonging to a racial or ethnic group”, factors in shaping important outcomes such as personal beliefs and within-group behavior (Knowles and Peng 2005:223). White identity, as argued by Knowles and Peng (2005), impacts whites’ cognizance of race privilege, recognition of the role of white racism in creating

inequality, and ability to grapple with the structural dimensions of racism. White guilt is a noteworthy feeling among a portion of the white community in the United States.

*White guilt*, which emerged in the 1960s, describes the distinctive anxieties experienced by whites as a racial group (Swim and Miller 1999). These anxieties stem from a consciousness of an “ill-gotten” gain in concert with an “inevitable gratitude” individuals feel for being white rather than black in America (Swim and Miller 1999:501). Collective or group guilt is a self-focused emotion and studies have shown that “self-focused belief in the existence of white privilege” has been positively related to collective guilt among whites (Powell, Branscombe, and Schmitt 2005:509). In addition, Powell et al. (2005) assert that previous studies demonstrate that whites who are seen as perpetrators of inequity actually increases collective guilt. It is also argued that merely belonging to the white race is sufficient enough to provoke feelings of white guilt because “every white benefits from racism at the expense of blacks” (Steele 1990 quoted in Swim and Miller 1999:501). Presently, whites who do feel guilt or shame in their elevated social and economic status compared to that of blacks in this country fear that others will perceive whites negatively (Swim and Miller 1999). There is no question that structured racial inequality exists today and this inequality has increased whites’ overall life chances at economic and social success; however, some whites feel blameworthy about this perceived unfair advantage and feel shame as a result of recognizing their perceived past and present participation in a racist society (Swim and Miller 1999).

One possible reason as to why anger was not a publicly prominent emotion in response to Carson’s murder involves the differences in racial community cohesion of whites and blacks. For instance, in the event that a black victim dies at the hands of a white suspect, there is a very transparent and salient cohesion among members of the black community. Local and national

black community leaders publicly speak out on white-on-black violent crime and are also at times quick to call the racially violent incident a hate crime. Leaders within the black community also are steadfast in giving the black victim and family a public voice. In the case of Carson's homicide, however, all of these aspects of white community solidarity and activism were lacking.

White silence concerning the absence of white public outcry surrounding black-on-white crime is but one of the consequences of white guilt. As evidenced by the lack of white public reaction regarding the Eve Carson homicide, Whites seem hesitant to freely address any issue of perceived racial injustice, particularly the high rate of white victims of interracial crime. Reasons for this silence appear to have a great deal to do with historical wrongdoings against blacks. One could argue that because of white guilt, whites feel as if they are not justified in overtly addressing perceived instances of white racial inequality by blacks. Whites do not have the right to be angry. In an editorial piece in the Wall Street Journal, Shelby Steele (2006) writes "Today, the White west...lives in a kind of secular penitence in which the slightest echo of past sins brings down withering condemnation. There is now a cloud over White skin where there once was unquestioned authority."

White Nationalists are acutely aware of the "double standard" – the informal acceptability of blacks to publicly display discontent at perceived instances of racial injustice and the political incorrectness of whites who do the same. White Nationalist discussion forums are saturated with news stories that serve to exemplify this double standard, two of which will be discussed.

In December of 2006, six black teenagers were charged with beating a white student at Jena High School in Jena, Louisiana. Black students were offended when two white students hanged nooses in a tree in the schoolyard. It is alleged that the nooses were taken out of context and were hanged as a prank aimed at their fellow white friends who were members of the school's rodeo team (Franklin 2007). Subsequently, violence erupted at the school. Franklin (2007) reports that the white student was struck in the head by one of the six black students, knocked unconscious, and lay on the ground while the black students kicked him with the majority of the blows hitting the defenseless student on the head. It is also reported by Franklin (2007) that several of the black perpetrators had prior criminal records, one having at least four violent crime arrests prior to the attack. On September 20, 2007, over 15,000 protestors marched on Jena in what was called the largest Civil Rights demonstration in years (Newman 2007). Protestors, along with high-profile members of the National Organization for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) organized and publicly called for the release of the six black youths who were being held at the Jena detention center. No one outside of the White Nationalist movement publicly fought for Justin Barker, the white victim in this case. White Nationalists argue that the media paid little or no attention to the injustice and violence afforded to him.

More relevant to the Carson homicide and the double standard is the case of Channon Christian and Chris Newsom, two young white Tennesseans who were murdered in January 2007. The Knoxville couple was carjacked, kidnapped, tortured, and raped over a span of several days. Newsom had reportedly been shot three times and his body had been burned and dumped near railroad tracks (Granju 2007). Christian's body was found in a large trashcan in one of the suspect's kitchen. The alleged suspects in this case are four black males and a black female. This story received scant national attention; yet, it was a hot topic among White

Nationalists throughout the world. This case, they argue, should have received nation-wide attention due to its gory details. White Nationalists were not the only ones to show outrage over the case and bewilderment as to the absence of national media attention. One blogger writes “Had the perpetrators been white, and the victims black, they say, the case would be all over the television and newspapers. Many cite the much-publicized dragging death of James Byrd, Jr. as an example” (Whyte 2007).

## **2.8 Proliferation of White Nationalism**

### ***The Internet***

White Nationalists use many methods of propagating its messages throughout the United States and around the world. For instance, the World Wide Web has become a place of assembly whereby “real world social communities can be established, sustained, or renewed as virtual communities” (Simi and Futrell 2006:115). Indeed, the Internet has provided a new community that helps bring people together around shared values and interests and creates ties of support that expand or replace their real world collective interaction. The Internet provides White Nationalists with an effective tool for such assembly and recruitment of new members into White supremacist organizations.

The *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (herein cited as JBHE) states:

With minimum costs, the Web permits Klan-type organizations to easily spread their messages of hate to millions of people worldwide. People holding sympathies with white supremacists...may now take in white supremacist propaganda in the comfort of their own homes without fear of detection” (1999: 81).

An analysis of white supremacist Internet practices illustrates “extreme volatility and mobility in the movement” (JBHE 1999:82). The JBHE (1999) posits that the majority of material on white supremacist sites is languid in an attempt to project a respectable image. White Nationalists desire to be seen as more acceptable to a larger segment of the white population and discourage the use of racial slurs and stereotypes.

### *Newspapers and Magazines*

White power newspaper and magazines function to promote collective solidarity and social cohesion among its members by providing them with information on current events, editorials, and written works endorsing the philosophy of the white power movement. There are numerous magazines, newsletters, newspapers, and pamphlets produced weekly, monthly, quarterly, and biannually. *The Insurgent*, published by White Aryan Resistance’s (WAR) Tom Metzger, is an example of a white supremacist newspaper (Daniels 1997). Published quarterly, this periodical is most popular among neo-Nazis and Skinheads. *The Insurgent* can be sent or e-mailed to anyone in the world and is hyped by WAR as “the most racist newspaper in the world” (WAR 2007).

*The Klansman*, published by the Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKKK) is edited by whoever serves as the current Imperial Wizard. The periodical has been in print since 1976 and publishers pride themselves that theirs is the “only publication for the White race which has never failed to publish” (Daniels 1997:27). Daniels (1997) describes the content in *The Klansman* as mainstream and is less vituperative compared to other publications, claiming that most of the content is organized around news such as fundraisers, “member of the month” columns, youth activities, and meeting reports (p. 27).

The year 1982 saw the birth of the National Organization for the Advancement of White People (NAWWP) by David Duke. The language, style, and tone of the organization's newspaper, *The Newspaper of the National Association for the Advancement of White People*, is described by Daniels (1997) as "subtle, reasoned, and sophisticated" (p. 27). The newspaper is directed at a more mainstream audience in hopes of attracting people who are resistant at and uncomfortable in defining themselves as Klan-like white supremacists.

Thom Robb currently publishes *The Torch*, a newspaper representing the ideas and values of the Christian Identity Movement (Daniels 1997). Christian Identity theology holds that those of white European descent are God's actual chosen people, while blacks and Jews are the "seed of Satan" (Daniels 1997:28). *The Thunderbolt*, which was renamed to *The Truth at Last* in 1989, is published by a chiropractor by the name of Dr. Ed Fields. This monthly publication provides readers with "the white man's point of view" and is similar to the content found in *The Klansman* (Daniels 1997:29). *The Thunderbolt* focuses on national and world news, government, and politics. Lastly, *Racial Loyalty* was published monthly by Ben Klassen until he gave control over to Rick McCarty and committed suicide in 1993. The Church of the Creator (COTC) represents the branch of the white supremacist movement known as "Creativity" (Daniels 1997:30). Founded in 1973, the COTC advocates a "racial religion" and is described as "violently" anti-Semitic and anti-Christian, and predicts and advocates a racial holy war (Daniels 1997:30).

### ***Cartoons***

Cartoons in White power literature also function to promote racial pride feelings of superiority. For example, Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997) reproduced a WAR cartoon of



“What’s on a Nigger’s Mind” by A. Wyatt Mann (p. 96). The cartoon depicts a black male’s profile with a view of the man’s brain. The largest sections of the brain are designated as his innate “crave for watermelon, crave for drugs, alcohol, pussy, gold chains, and drumbeats,” and “criminal behavior,” while the smallest sections of the brain are designated as centers of “responsibility, vocal skills, intelligence, creative skills (must be viewed through a microscope), logic, and proportion.” A scroll on the left side of this cartoon reads:

Research reveals that the Negro brain has shown considerable advancement since his crude jungle origin...the major significant change reflects his astounding ability to adapt to the relatively new environment of North America...today, with the advent of more opportunities to commit crimes, the organ’s capacity for criminal behavior has nearly doubled! (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997: 96)

Although there are obvious differences between assorted segments of the white supremacist movement, these organizations share an expansive ideological loyalty to the notion that the white race is crucial identity, rooted in genetic and “scientific” fact, and that being white is “ontologically superior” to being “Black, Jewish,” or anything other than white (Daniels 1997:31). These concepts of racial identity are imbedded within the dialogue of these publications and function to promote white racial awareness, solidarity, and pride.

### ***Music***

White power music is one of the most insidious yet functional means of racist expression. According to the SPLC (2001), the Internet has facilitated the exchange of white power music and is critical for racist music. Indeed, the absence of white power music in retail stores might lead one to believe that there are few bands and musicians. However, the SPLC (2002) states that there are over 120 White power bands in the United States and over 220 worldwide.

The growth of the white power music scene is aided by prominent white power recording companies such as Resistance Records and Free Your Mind Productions (Futrell, Simi, and Gottschalk 2006). The goal of these bands and record companies is to create alternatives to contemporary mainstream music genres by producing music that expresses white ideals and is linked to occasions and experiences in which the white power movement (herein after cited as WPM) is promoted (Futrell et al. 2006).

Surprisingly, there are many different forms of white power music available for white supremacist listeners. Futrell et al. (2006) describe the many different genres of music within the WPM. Rock, heavy metal and country are the most common forms in which messages of Aryan nationalism, white power, race war, anti-Semitism, anti-immigration, anti-race-mixing, and white victimization are employed. They also argue that there is a clear stress placed on upholding white values such as movement participation, brotherhood, kinship ties, and white racial loyalty. White power music functions not only as a recruitment tool, but also has a way of promoting group solidarity.

White power music concerts and festivals such as *Hammerfest* and *Nordic Fest* are perhaps the largest and most elaborate annual organized music conventions within the movement (Simi and Futrell 2006). Music gatherings range from small and large bar shows to longer and more organized multiday festivals (Futrell et al. 2006). These shows allow members of the white power movement to interact face-to-face and allow individuals to experience lyrics, music and symbols collectively. Futrell et al. (2006) argue that a small number of sociologists analytically consider how activists use “aesthetic, associational, and symbolic forces” of music in their movements (p. 275). Previous research links protest music and cultural traditions, focusing on

the ways in which music symbolizes and reworks traditions through performance rituals (Futrell et al. 2006). Music also helps to rally protests and create group cohesion that in turn facilitates a broad collective memory and identity (Futrell et al. 2006). Music festivals are one context for emotionally-loaded experiences. White power activists value these gatherings because of the heightened feelings about and identification with their peers in the scene and the wider movement.

White power music and lyrics function as a way for a White Nationalists to frame grievances and attract activists. For example, Futrell et al. (2006) argue that the meanings constructed through lyrics result from a wide array of factors with ritual being one of them. Rituals, according to Durkheim, are powerfully emotional and animated events that correspond meanings about social relationships in striking ways. They have been analyzed as emblematic performances that communicate conflict, resistance, rebellion, power, grievances, and also create “emotion culture” and group boundaries (Futrell et al. 2006:277). Further, it is in ritualistic contexts that individuals interpret music in a way that helps them define or reaffirm their social worlds (Futrell et al. 2006). White power music provides a means with which White power activists can identify with and commit to one another as they jointly take part in musical performances. Attending white power concerts or collectively listening to activist music gives members a shared focus of attention and can heighten their emotional energy, thus amplifying their collective feelings of camaraderie (Futrell et al. 2006). While the content of music is important, the “cultural practices in and through which [music] is used to produce social life” is vital (DeNora 2000:6 as quoted in Futrell et al. 2006).

### ***Conventions***

White power concerts and music festivals are the primary opportunities for participants to experience a level of camaraderie and fellowship that virtual or online involvement alone cannot afford (Futrell et al. 2006). White power conventions and conferences function to bring together white power activists who would otherwise be unconnected from white power culture, providing an opportunity for fellowship (Simi and Futrell 2006).

Organized events such as the Aryan Nations Congress, Christian Identity Conference, and White Christian Heritage Festival function to emphasize the ordinariness of intense racism and provide individuals who attend these functions with the chance to express these emotions (Simi and Futrell 2006). In addition, rituals are performed at these gatherings such as singing racial hymns, wearing white power ceremonial dress, cross lightings, and commitment ceremonies (Simi and Futrell 2006).

In addition to Aryan gatherings, deliberate Aryan communities are being established to serve as durable refuges for stigmatized whites to cohabit and sustain a “pure” white culture (Simi and Futrell 2006). For instance, there is a 346 acre National Alliance community near Hillsboro, West Virginia and a thousand acre white separatist area in eastern Oklahoma. These communities serve as all-white communities and house Aryan workshop centers, hold archives of white supremacist prose and supplies, and are also centers for white power networking (Simi and Futrell 2006).

## **2.9 White Nationalism Online**

The White power movement is highly stigmatized in contemporary society, making overt public membership precarious. Thus, cyberspace has become a prominent tool used by

movement organizers and activists (Simi and Futrell 2006). Marginalized movements such as the white power movement requires what Simi and Futrell (2006) refer to as “free spaces”; spaces whereby politically incorrect and racialized discourse is free from ridicule by those whose racial beliefs are not in concordance with those of the movement. Thus, these “free spaces” allow white power advocates a space whereby they can “meet, articulate, and support their views” (p. 117). Such websites are “repositories of cultural materials” where activists preserve the movement’s networks and traditions and function to cultivate support for their activities and beliefs. They are both an outcome of collective action and help sustain action. The Internet offers a safe, powerful, and efficient context for members to articulate challenges to the dominant cultural codes that oppose overt and extreme forms of racism and anti-Semitism (Simi and Futrell 2006).

One need only perform an Internet search using the keywords “Aryan” or “white power” in order to find a host of white power movement sites. The purposes of these sites are manifold. Simi and Futrell (2006) argue that white power websites are a means of accessing many different dimensions of movement culture and provide members with the opportunity to coordinate actual, real world movement activities. These sites also uphold movement narratives that are imbedded in real world contexts, allowing activists to prolong their real world interactions over time and space. The Internet also provides the means to freely communicate fundamental beliefs and to do this with greater frequency and with a large number of unconnected movement members. Two of the most popular sites, *Stormfront* and *Vanguard*, provide and enhance access to the White power movement.

*Stormfront* and *Vanguard* are White Nationalist websites whereby members visit in order to engage in a myriad of discussion topics. For example, *Stormfront* forums include topics such

as “Newlinks & Articles” which is an online discussion thread for “all news of interest to White Nationalists.” One can brush up on the foundations of White Nationalism by clicking on the link to the “Ideology and Philosophy” discussion thread. White music, art, and literature are discussed in the “Culture and Customs” thread and one may also enjoy White Nationalist inspirational and motivational poetry under the “Poetry” link. In addition, discourse surrounding genetics, eugenics and racial science occur in the “Science, Technology and Race” thread while members “reexamine history with particular emphasis on World War II” in the “Revisionism” thread. Women looking to discuss issues concerning females within the movement may visit “Stormfront for Ladies Only” room. There are forums dedicated to the discussions of white power quotes, money, personal computer security and privacy, self-defense, health and fitness, homemaking, education and homeschooling, graphics, music and entertainment, and classified ads. There are also links to fifteen different *Stormfront* sites for members living outside the United States such as *Stormfront Nederland & Vlaanderen*, *Stormfront Russia*, *Stormfront South Africa*, and *Stormfront Hungary*.

When examining the content of online threads, one notices the avatar characters members utilize to express themselves. An avatar is a graphical image that represents a person on the Internet. For example, many avatars are images related to Nazi Germany, such as pictures of Adolph Hitler, the Schutzstaffel (SS), swastikas, Nazi flags, an eagle on a swastika, SS lightning bolts, the Iron Cross with a swastika, the Life Rune, etc. There are also Celtic themes of mythology, such as symbols or drawings related to Nordic gods. The Confederate flag is also used to represent those espousing Southern white supremacist beliefs, such as the League of the South and the Confederacy. Moreover, members’ online names or handles are also in concert with the themes of Nazism, mythology, and the white race. For instance, actual handles such as

*Reichman, strongly, Palerider, AmericanCelticScotsman, white\_is\_nice, Paryan, Euroblood, Spirit of 1776, and Kaiserreich* reflect said themes. There are literally hundreds of avatars, names, and symbols used by White Nationalist online members to project images and or ideas of white supremacy.

## **2.10 White Nationalist Utilization of Science**

White Nationalists are concerned with many racial issues in the United States, especially the high rate of black-on-white crimes (Swain 2002). Biological scientific theories of criminality are two means utilized by White Nationalists to explain consistently high rates of interracial violence. More specifically, White Nationalists use science to argue that blacks are biologically and morally inferior to whites with particular emphasis placed on intelligence (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997). These “scientific” arguments function to legitimate their ideology.

Swain (2002) and Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997) argue that present White Nationalist organizations were created from the older white supremacist movement, most notably the KKK, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, White Nationalist ideology centers on race and can be regarded as a racist ideology. Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997) contend that a standard sociological definition of racism as an ideology structured around three beliefs: Humans are divided logically by their respective physical traits that are inherently related to their culture, personality, and intelligence (90). In addition, based on genetic inheritance, some groups are naturally superior to others (90). Therefore, White Nationalists believe that there are innate biological differences between Whites and non-whites. They are also described as being exceedingly proud of the White race while at the same time are particularly protective over other Whites.

The discourse surrounding race and intelligence remains controversial. While most scientists today accept that the major factor influencing intelligence is environment rather than racial inheritance, prior research has challenged this claim (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997: 94). Many academicians with White Nationalist tendencies, including Michael H. Hart, Michael Levin, and J. Philippe Rushton, believe that high incidences of violence is rooted in Blacks' differential genetic endowment (Swain 2002: 17-18). They purport that the process of human evolution has produced a distinct racial hierarchy in terms of inborn intelligence, the ability to postpone gratification, to control emotions, and plan for the future (Swain 2002:18). Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997) give Arthur Jensen's work as an example. Jensen posited that heredity is the major cause in explaining IQ differences between blacks and whites, with white racist publications arguing that Jensen's 1969 research "found that two-thirds to three-fourths of the I.Q. difference is the result of genetics and not the environment," (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997: 95).

Another argument which White Nationalists use as scientific "proof" of biological inferiority comes from J. Philippe Rushton's work that maintained that blacks are less family-oriented and intelligent than whites and Asians (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997: 95). In addition, studies conducted by J. Philippe Rushton and Arthur Jensen found that compensatory education programs for black youths have failed to improve their academic achievement and IQ scores. They determined that the failure of these programs is rooted in black's inferior genetics (Swain 2002: 242).

Yet another, more popular study that fuels the biological explanation of black inferiority with regard to crime was Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray's 1994 book, *The Bell Curve*.



The book is credited with having spurred a new willingness among academics to promulgate theories of innate biological differences to explain racial outcomes. A main point that Herrnstein and Murray argue is that blacks as a racial group have a greater percentage of low IQ members than others, and that low IQ is associated with crime and delinquency (Swain 2002: 240). With regard to *The Bell Curve*, the “movement paper” *The Truth at Last* wrote: “The book cites many sources proving that Negroes, on average, have an I.Q. 15 points lower than that of Whites...Most importantly the book proves that I.Q. is *inherited* from ones [*sic*] parents and is *not* a product of environment” (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997: 95).

White Nationalist David Duke credits the disparity in school performance and arrest rates of blacks to genetic differences, arguing that it is an established scientific fact that blacks as a group are naturally less intelligent and more prone to violence than whites or Asians (Swain 2002: 243). In one interview, Duke was quoted as saying, “I think that blacks on average have a higher propensity to crime than whites, and I think it has to do with a number of factors, including brain differences and also including testosterone levels,” (Swain, 2002: 244). He goes on to discuss I.Q. and black inferiority, saying that “...this has been confirmed by literally thousands of studies – that there’s almost an entire standard deviation of difference in I.Q. between whites and blacks, and obviously I.Q. has a tremendous impact on society...there’s been tremendous numbers of studies I think that show beyond any reasonable doubt that they [the difference in socioeconomic success between whites and blacks] are certainly of genetic origin, the genetics overwhelmingly overriding the environment,” (Swain 2002: 245).

## **2.11 White Nationalists’ Utilization of Government Statistics**

Perhaps one of the most important tools used by White Nationalists is *The Color of Crime*, a report by New Century Foundation, a white supremacist organization, detailing the differences in crime rates by race, especially with regard to interracial crime (New Century Foundation). Based on FBI and BJS government crime data, *The Color of Crime* (2005) reports its major findings as follows: relative to non-blacks, blacks are seven times more likely than non-blacks to commit murder, eight times more likely to commit robbery, three times more likely to use a gun, and twice as likely to use a knife when committing crimes of violence. “The single best indicator of violent crime levels in an area” according to the report “is the percentage of the population that is Black and Hispanic” (p. 2). Regarding interracial crime, the report states that “Blacks commit more violent crime against whites than against blacks. Forty-five percent of their victims are white, 43 percent are black, and 10 percent are Hispanic. When whites commit violent crime, only three percent of their victims are black” (p. 2). The report goes on to conclude that “Blacks are an estimated 39 times more likely to commit a violent crime against a white than vice versa, and 136 times more likely to commit robbery. Blacks are 2.25 times more likely to commit officially-designated hate crimes against whites than vice versa” (p. 2). Therefore, according to this report, blacks are astronomically more likely to engage in criminal behavior compared to whites.

These statistics are based on government statistics and are therefore considered unbiased and fact. It is not surprising to conclude that White Nationalists use this report, as well as government data, to legitimate their case that blacks are more prone to engage in criminal behavior. Coupled with biological explanations for high black crime rates, this report and others like it are powerful tools used by the White Nationalist community to argue the innate inferiority of blacks.

## 2.12 The Eve Carson Homicide

If genetics or biology, and not the environment, determine criminal behavior and intelligence, then how do White Nationalists explain the murder of Eve Carson? When discussing the suspects, did White Nationalist scrutinize Lovette and Atwater and determine that their criminality is a result of their biological constitution and deficient intelligence?

The events that unfolded from the time the two suspects entered Carson's apartment and the time her body was found are outlined in the search warrant application of Chapel Hill Police Officer D. Britt dated March 12th, 2008. The report indicates that on March 5<sup>th</sup>, the body of Eve Carson was discovered by police officers on Hillcrest Drive in Chapel Hill at approximately 5:30a.m. (CNN). According to the report, Carson's autopsy results concluded that the cause of her death were attributed to several gunshot wounds. Her death was therefore ruled a homicide and the Chapel Hill Police Department launched their investigation into her murder.

The application goes on to state that on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008, Crimestoppers of Orange County received a call regarding information on the murder (CNN). The anonymous caller stated that "during phone conversations with a man she knows as Rio, Rio advised her that he and an unknown individual took Eve Carson to an ATM machine...he [Rio] and the other individual planned to obtain Carson's ATM card PIN from Carson before killing her." (CNN) And, according to the search warrant application, a "confidential witness known to the caller told the caller that Rio was the man pictured in a photograph being displayed on television news stations in reference to the murder" (CNN.com) The witness later identified "Rio" as twenty-one year old Demario Atwater.

The search warrant application also stated that the confidential witness (CW) informed investigators that Atwater told CW that he and Alvin Lovette entered Carson's apartment through an open door on March 5, 2008. The CW stated that Atwater said he and Lovette coerced Carson to accompany them to Carson's car and take them to an ATM machine. Carson was forced into the backseat with Atwater while Lovette drove Carson's Toyota Highlander. The application states that this information is consistent with video footage taken from an ATM camera on March 5, 2008. Britt goes on to write that Lovette and Atwater obtained Carson's PIN from Carson and withdrew \$1400 from her bank account (CNN.com). "Investigations can confirm," reports Britt, "based on ATM transaction information, that approximately \$1400 was taken from Carson's account, from ATM machines, over a two day period" (CNN.com) The CW also informed investigators that Lovette and Atwater shot Carson "multiple times," and this information was corroborated by crime scene search information that "two separate weapons were used in the homicide of Eve Carson," (CNN).

Carson's murder received national attention due to the nature of the crime and also to Carson's popularity and status at UNC. A native of Athens Georgia, Carson was the student body president and member of the UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees as well as a recipient of a Morehead Scholarship (UNC-Chapel Hill). UNC Chancellor James Moeser remarked at Carson's funeral that "she was the very pulse and heartbeat of Carolina." He went on to describe Carson as having a "big heart" and used her Morehead summer travel to "engage herself in the world, and her time on campus to work with other students, as well as faculty and staff. Eve Carson was a force of nature," (UNC-Chapel Hill).

The entire Carolina family, as well as the nation, grieved over Carson's death. National and local news stations reported on Carson's murder for months and illustrated how the Tarheel community dealt with their sorrow. Numerous interviews were conducted with Carson's friends as well as leaders of the university and community. UNC organized candlelight vigils, offered counseling to Eve's friends and fellow students while support flooded into the community from all over the nation. Naturally, the Carolina family was grief-stricken while members of white extremist groups were outraged.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORY

#### 3.1 Overview of Functionalism

Functionalism will be the guiding theoretical framework in examining the ways in which White Nationalists' attempt to foster group solidarity and justify their ideology as a result of Carson's homicide. Functionalism is one of the oldest macro-level theoretical perspectives in sociology and asserts that society is comprised of interdependent sections which work together to fulfill the functions necessary for the survival of society as a whole (Giddens, Duneier, Appelbaum and Carr 2008). Analyzing the functions of social behaviors or institutions is to study the contributions it makes to the continuation of a group, community, or society. Examining the role of some aspect of society means showing the part it plays in the continued existence and health of a society. Functionalism emphasizes the importance of moral consensus in maintaining order and stability which exists when most people in a society or group share the same values.

#### 3.2 Durkheim and the Function of Religion

One of the most regarded functionalist sociologists was Emile Durkheim, whose work on suicide, solidarity, and religion greatly contributed to the field of sociology. In *The Elementary Form of Religious Life*, Durkheim (1912) connected religion with the overall character of social institutions. "Religion," explains Durkheim ([1912]1965:257), is a:

...system of ideas with which the individuals represent to themselves the society of which they are members, and the obscure but intimate relations which they have with

it...for it is an eternal truth that outside of us there exists something greater than us, with which we enter into communion.

The “greater” entity of which Durkheim was speaking was *society*. For Durkheim, religion was defined in a “functionalist” sense rather than “substantive”; thus, *religion* was meant to describe a system of symbols and rituals about the sacred that was practiced by a community of believers (Edles and Appelrouth 2005:121). Durkheim’s functional theory posits that religion is an expression of social unity, a source of camaraderie and cohesion. Religion, according to Durkheim (1912), is defined in terms of a distinction between the sacred and the profane. In terms of White Nationalism, for example, *whiteness* and white heritage are regarded as sacred because they are revered by its members. In contrast, blacks and African American heritage are deemed profane because they do not represent what the movement holds as hallowed. Thus, sacred objects and symbols are treated as though they are apart from the profane – the routine practical aspects of day-to-day existence. Ceremonies and rituals dedicated to these sacred objects are essential to binding the members of groups together (Durkheim 1912).

According to Durkheim (1912), religion reaffirms people’s adherence to core social values, thereby contributing to the maintenance of social cohesion. Likewise, the belief in the sanctity of the white race is what binds members of the White Nationalist community. Durkheim (1912) posited that the primary function of religion is to encode the system of relations of the group by such means as focusing and reaffirming the collective sentiments and ideas that bind the group. Durkheim ([1912]/1965:474-475) stated that:

There can be no society which does not feel the need of upholding and reaffirming at regular intervals the collective sentiments and the collective ideas which makes its unity

and its personality...this moral remaking cannot be achieved except by the means of reunions, assemblies and meetings where the individuals...reaffirm in common their common sentiments.

### **3.3 Durkheim and Ritualization and Symbolization**

The communal function of religion is carried out via the dual processes of *ritualization* and *symbolization*. A *ritual* is an act that is highly routinized (Edles and Appelrouth 2005). For example, the taking of communion in Christian religious ceremonies is a ritual in that it commemorates the life and death of Jesus Christ while simultaneously represents participation in the unity of believers (Edles and Appelrouth 2005). The shared experience and focus of participants is what binds them together and are collective celebrations of identity and community. A *symbol*, according to Durkheim (1912), is a material expression of something else. The American flag, the Star of David, the Holy Cross, and the swastika are examples of symbols in that they all stand for something greater and more abstract than the material constitution of the item.

### **3.4 White Nationalism as Comparable to Religion**

White Nationalism is comparable to a religion in that it is an ideology, or a set of beliefs that shape the way in which one views the world. As with any religion, White Nationalism incorporates a basic set of tenets and values that influence the way members interpret social reality. The primary concern of these individuals lies within the inviolability of the white race, the inferiority of non-whites, and the need to protect whites from the physical and social dangers presented by non-whites (Daniels 1997). White Nationalists engage in many ritualistic activities (i.e. cross lightings, conventions, concerts, Internet discussion forums, etc.) that help solidify its



base and also function to legitimate their ideology and recruit new members. Additionally, as with many religious groups, White Nationalists make use of many symbols (i.e. swastika, crosses, white individuals, lightning bolts, etc.) to conjure up feelings of belonging, pride, and cohesion. Therefore, Durkheim's theory of ritualization and symbolism with regard to religion can be applied to White Nationalism, as well.

Conceptually, the functions of ritual are applicable to not only religion but also to White Nationalist activity, especially on the Internet. Durkheim (1912) stated that a periodical reunion where members may revivify their common faith by manifesting it in common serves to reinforce their common bond (in Edles and Appelrouth 2005). White Nationalist online forums allow for such an experience. In these forums, sentiments are strengthened and individuals are brought together when they participate in active affairs with one another (Edles and Appelrouth 2005). Online communications can also strengthen sentiments, passions, and influence. Moreover, in times of societal shock individuals come together to structure some common goal and societal actions become more recurrent and lively (Edles and Appelrouth 2005). The murder of Eve Carson is but one example of a shock rippling through the White Nationalist community, and it is no surprise that hate speech and a call to action amplified as a result of her homicide.

Collective action, according to Durkheim (1912) also gives one more confidence, courage, and boldness in one's actions and fuels one's moral character. The white race is sacred to White Nationalists and therefore it is their belief that they must protect the white race from harm, especially at the hands on non-whites (Daniels 1997). White Nationalists have consecrated the idea of whiteness, and this belief is unanimously shared by those within this group (Daniels 1997).

The sanctity of *whiteness* is also important when referring to Eve Carson as a symbol, or what Durkheim referred to as a *totem*. Durkheim (1912) states that a totem becomes a representation with sentiments being fixed upon it when it is placed center stage. This symbol evokes sensations during and after ceremonies and expresses social unity in a material form (Durkheim 1912). Additionally, the manifestation of symbols notifies individuals that they are in harmony and makes them conscious of their moral unity and assures the continuation of social consciousness (Durkheim 1912).

Thus, Durkheim's notion of *totem* can theoretically be applied to Eve Carson. Did she represent *whiteness* to White Nationalists? Realistically, Carson's physical and racial features, such as her blue eyes, blond hair, and white skin, made her the epitome of how an Aryan woman should appear. Carson was placed center stage on White Nationalist online forums, and pictures of Carson posted on these discussion threads induced feelings of rage and sadness among its members. Her death also intensified the call for white solidarity among White Nationalists. But was she still regarded as *sacred* after her political ideology was made public?

### **3.5 The Functions of White Nationalism Online**

There are several functions of White Nationalists online forums, most of which have been touched on above in the literature review. In sum, online forums function to connect White Nationalists who otherwise would possibly not have the opportunity to initiate contact with others who share White Nationalists beliefs. Secondly, White Nationalist websites are used by movement organizers and activists to recruit new members. Thirdly, members use the Internet to coordinate collective action in the real world, i.e. conventions, protests, concerts, etc. In addition, online forums are utilized by members as a tool to legitimate their beliefs or learn more

about the movement's culture and ideology. In return, these sites *function* to sustain White Nationalist culture. Lastly, these online forums provide members with the opportunity to meet, express, and experience movement culture (Simi and Futrell 2006).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODS

#### 4.1 Overview of Websites and Discussion Posts

The study at hand is a content analysis of a case study. Content analysis was utilized in order to examine White Nationalist thematic discourse surrounding Carson's murder, the case study under investigation. A content analysis is a method for examining information contained in written documents or other means of communication such as photographs, movies, advertisements, and websites (Neuman 2006). Online discussion threads and their posts, accessible on two popular White Nationalist websites, [www.stormfront.org](http://www.stormfront.org) (*Stormfront*) and [www.vnnforum.com](http://www.vnnforum.com) (*Vanguard*), served as the data source for this study. The nine threads analyzed from *Stormfront* were included under the link "Newslinks & Articles" on its homepage. The six threads analyzed from *Vanguard* are found under the link "This Just In" under the "News" section. These threads were written in 2008 within a two hundred and thirty-eight day comment period, March 6 through October 28, by registered members of the two websites within the United States and around the world. The nine threads from *Stormfront* were coded as *Stormfront A* through *I*, with *A* being the first thread created on March 6<sup>th</sup> and *I* being the last on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Similarly, the six discussion threads analyzed from *Vanguard* were coded as *Vanguard A* through *F*, with *A* being the first thread created on March 6<sup>th</sup> and *F* being the last on June 27<sup>th</sup>. For a list websites, titles and dates of the threads analyzed refer to Appendix A.

Fifteen discussion threads yielded a total of seven hundred and forty-one posts, with five hundred and twenty-four posts from *Stormfront* and two hundred and seventeen from *Vanguard*. Each post was examined carefully for relevance to the study at hand. If the posts did not contain any discourse surrounding issues related to Carson's homicide (i.e. Carson, the alleged suspects,

interracial crime, UNC-Chapel Hill, media coverage, etc.), then posts were omitted from the analysis. Of these posts, four hundred and thirty-seven (three hundred and nine from *Stormfront* and one hundred and twenty-eight), or 59% were used for the analysis while three hundred and four, (two hundred and fifteen from *Stormfront* and eighty-nine from *Vanguard*), or 41% were omitted due to irrelevance.

The posts were first examined to identify content written by posters regarding Carson's homicide. Each post was carefully read for substance and assigned a theme depending on the discourse interpreted within each particular post resulting in six different themes. Within each theme, I also developed subthemes that were contingent on the nature of the post. The five themes and respective subthemes found within the data are elaborated below.

## **4.2 Coding of Thematic Discourse**

### ***Theme One: Attack on Lemmings***

Thematic discourse surrounding whites who do not share similar views with White Nationalists regarding diversity, multiculturalism, political correctness, and liberalism are coded as "Attack on Lemmings". White Nationalists believe that whites who follow the liberal agenda are advocating for the genocide of their own race, and refer to these "race traitors" as *lemmings*. Posts with content pertaining to racial tolerance, liberalism, diversity, multiculturalism, white individuals' lack of knowledge concerning black-on-white crime, brainwashing, white guilt, the unfair attacks received when White Nationalists fight for white victims' rights were categorized into the theme "Attack on Lemmings". Additionally, subthemes were created for this theme: "Ideology", "Brainwash", and "Double Standard". "Ideology" represents attacks on racially tolerant ideologies (i.e. diversity, multiculturalism, racial tolerance); "Brainwash" represents

attacks on whites who do not subscribe to a liberal ideology or a White Nationalist ideology and are instead ignorant and or disinterested in race relations; and “Double Standard” encompasses discourse surrounding the political incorrectness of fighting for white rights.

### ***Theme Two: Eve Carson as Symbol***

Eve Carson’s death, as expected, prompted much attention and debate within the White Nationalist online community. Posts that referred specifically to Eve Carson and her death symbolically were categorized as “Eve Carson”. Within this theme I expounded upon two subthemes: posts referring to her death as a tragic loss or undeserved were placed in one category and those that referred to her death as beneficial or deserved were placed in another. These two categories were labeled “Sacred” and “Profane”, respectively. Posts referring to her death as undeserved, a loss to the white race, and Carson as beautiful, intelligent, and the epitome of *whiteness* were placed under the “sacred” category. Discourse referring to her death as beneficial to the White Nationalist movement, deserved, and requiring no sympathy were placed under the “profane” category.

### ***Theme Three: White Nationalist Criticism***

White Nationalists have also been extremely critical of the criminal justice system, government policies with regard to affirmative action and desegregation, and mainstream media organizations. Thus, theme three represents the discourse surrounding the criticism afforded to these three categories which were later broken down into three subthemes: “Criminal Justice System” (i.e. courts and police), “Media” (i.e. lack of coverage surrounding Carson case), and “Government Policies” (i.e. affirmative action, integration, and lack of concern for white citizens).

#### ***Theme Four: White Nationalists' Fears***

Eve Carson's homicide also prompted numerous online discussion posts referring to fear within the White Nationalist community. White Nationalists are primarily concerned with the threat to the continuance and preservation of the white race posed by blacks, and Jews, and the government. According to White Nationalists, the white race is under attack as evidenced by the high incidences of interracial crime (i.e. murder and rape), and the perceived lack of government policies directed at protecting whites from being victims of reverse discrimination. Therefore, posts containing discourse on interracial violent crime, the rape of white women by black males, the impending "race war", apprehension about sending white children off to colleges and universities, and gangs with the purpose of evoking panic within the White Nationalist online community were compiled into the theme of "White Nationalists' Fear." Subthemes were created for this theme: "Violent Crime", "Sex/Rape", "Race War", "College", and "Gangs". These reasons for alarm and concern serve to bolster and legitimate White Nationalists' ideology.

#### ***Theme Five: Calls for Action***

Discourse regarding the need to reach out to whites who, according to White Nationalists, are blind to the evils of liberalism and political correctness, the need to actively and publicly fight for the victims of interracial crime, and the importance placed on White Nationalists being solidified and steadfast in the face of the impending "race war" were manifest throughout the discussion threads analyzed. Therefore, posts in which dialogue concerning a call for protection and defense vis-à-vis caching guns and ammunition, the demand for vigilante justice for Carson,

and calls for white solidarity and unity were categorized under the theme “Solidarity and Action.” This theme represents the discourse surrounding the importance that White Nationalists place on the preservation, solidification, and education of not only self-identified White Nationalists, but also of the white race, generally. Subthemes were also created for this category: “Protection/Defense”, “Solidarity”, and “Vigilante”.

### ***Theme Six: Black Intelligence***

Essentialist explanations of black criminality, especially accounts of low intelligence, were discussed in the literature review and were also expected to be evident throughout the discussion posts. Therefore, discourse referring to the suspects’ intelligence was categorized into a theme and labeled “Intelligence”, which included references to black individuals’ brain size, lack of intelligence, brain functioning, and size and shape of the skull. No subthemes were created for this category due to the low number of posts for this topic.

### ***Increased Online Membership***

Lastly, I expected to find evidence that Carson’s murder prompted an increase in White Nationalist membership online. Since Carson’s murder attracted national attention given her popularity, attractiveness, and social and academic standing within the UNC-Chapel Hill community, I expected to find posts indicating new membership to *Stormfront* and *Vanguard* as a result. This was one of my initial hypotheses, not a theme I was seeking to uncover within the data. Posts were examined for indications of new membership on the two websites analyzed. Specifically, I was looking for posts that contained dialogue about new members, whether it is from tenured members of the community or newly registered members. Additionally, each member has a “join date” below their avatar character to the left of their post. If an individual’s



join date was dated after March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 and they indicated in a post that they became members as a result of Carson's homicide, then it can be assumed that her death did prompt new membership.

After identifying and categorizing the posts into over-arching themes, I then generated frequencies to determine which themes were more prevalent throughout the fifteen discussion threads. Additionally, frequencies were created for subthemes within each theme in order to illuminate which topics received more posts within each theme. The frequencies produced are employed to guide the qualitative examination of the data. Examples of posts are provided in the next section for each theme and subtheme.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FINDINGS

My research questions were 1) Regarding the murder of Eve Carson, to what extent do White Nationalists use science and statistics in order to justify their ideology, specifically black-on-white crime?; 2) Did Carson's homicide promote an increase in White Nationalist online membership?; and 3) What thematic discourse took place on White Nationalist online discussion forums as a result of Carson's murder? These questions were addressed by the content analysis. Initially, the five major themes found within White Nationalist discourse a propos Carson's murder will be summarized. This will be followed by in-depth discussions of each theme and subtheme.

#### 5.1 Research Question One: Science and Statistics

*Research question one: To what extent do White Nationalists use science and statistics in order to justify their ideology with regard to interracial crime?* Upon analyzing the discourse on the two White Nationalist websites, I found seventeen posts referring to black intelligence. This represented only 3.9% of the total discussion posts and was much lower than I expected. However, I included this data as a theme, which is presented and discussed in further detail at the end of this chapter. Additionally, I found only two posts that included FBI data or other data on interracial crime statistics, including rape. For example, David Duke, a prominent leader in the White Nationalist community, posted: "37,460 White women were raped by Black males in 2005 as compared to less than ten Black females by White males" (*Stormfront I*). The other post contained detailed statistics on interracial crime and also provided links to websites in which this data was retrieved.

Therefore, I must conclude that, with regard to the Eve Carson homicide, White Nationalists do make use of essentialist explanations of black male criminality and government crime data, but not as often or as to the extent I had initially believed.

## **5.2 Research Question Two: Increased Online Membership**

*Research question two: Did Carson's homicide serve to increase White Nationalist online membership?* After examining the content of the discussion posts on both websites and assessing the "join dates" of members who posted within the threads, I found no evidence of increased membership on *Stormfront* or *Vanguard* as a result of Carson's death. It seems as though individuals who participated in the discussions were already members of the two websites prior to Carson's murder on March 5th, and those became members after that date did not indicate that they joined the White Nationalist websites as a result of her death.

The next section of this chapter is a discussion of the thematic discourse interpreted from posts regarding Carson's murder. Each theme and its respective subthemes will be examined in depth and examples of posts categorized as included in the theme/subtheme will be provided.

## **5.3 Summary of Thematic Discourse**

*Research Question three: What thematic discourse took place on White Nationalist online discussion forums as a result of Carson's murder?* In order to evaluate the various themes found within the online discussion threads and subsequent posts, an initial synopsis of these themes is useful. The frequency distribution (Table 4.1) of overall themes shows that posts coded under the theme titled "Attack on Lemmings" (white non-White Nationalists) were cited much more than posts coded under the theme "Eve Carson as Symbol", "White Nationalists' Criticism", "White Nationalists' Fears", "Calls for Action", and "Black Intelligence". This infers

that the main function of Internet forums regarding Carson’s homicide was to discuss and or attack whites who do not subscribe to a racialist or racist ideology.

**Table 4.1 Major White Nationalist Themes**

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Post Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Attack on Lemmings	166	38.0
Eve Carson as Symbol	131	30.0
White Nationalist Criticism	128	29.3
White Nationalists’ Fears	80	17.0
Calls for Action	73	16.7
Black Intelligence	17	3.9
	N = 595	

Note: Post counts and percentages do not equal 437 and 100%, respectively, due to some posters mentioning more than one theme in a single post.

Of the total posts analyzed, statements coded as “Attacks on Lemmings” represented 38% of the data. These posts will be discussed more thoroughly in the following section of this chapter. Thirty percent of posts comprised the theme “Eve Carson as Symbol”, which was divided into two subthemes: Eve Carson as “sacred” versus “profane.” The theme “White Nationalists’ Criticism” comprised the third most discussed category with 29.3% of the total posts. This subject matter includes criticism of the media, government policies, the police and courts. “White Nationalists’ Fears” constituted 17% of the discourse and includes posts discussing interracial crime, sex/rape of white women, a race war, crime on college campuses, and gangs. Statements coded as discussions of solidarity and action represented 16.7% of the posts, which were coded as calls for solidarity, vigilante justice for Carson, caching weapons and ammunition, and protection and defense of white families and loved ones. Finally, statements

coded as “Black Intelligence”, mentioned in 3.9% of the posts, included assumed low intelligence of the alleged suspects involved in Carson’s homicide.

***Overview of Attacks on Lemmings***

The theme that received 38% of the total discourse analyzed on the fifteen threads examined was labeled “Attacks on Lemmings.” In light of these data, it is imperative to divide this category into subthemes in order to shed light on the different topics of conversation within this category. Table 4.2 illustrates the breakdown of this theme into subthemes.

**Table 4.2 Attack on Lemmings**

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Post Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Ideology	88	53
Brainwashed	65	39.2
Double Standard	13	7.8
N = 166		

Note: Percentages do not equal 100% due to their being rounded to the nearest tenth.

Over half (53%) of the posts within the theme “Attack on Lemmings” involved criticizing aspects of racially tolerant thinking (i.e. diversity, multiculturalism, and liberalism); thinking that is the complete opposite of White Nationalists’. Statements coded under the subtheme “Ideology” included: “Chalk another senseless killing up to the greats of multiculturalism” (*Stormfront A*); and:

Multiculturalism is literally killing so many whites. Its insane. And to see those antis in the OV section who ADMIT that they are being hurt by this, but compromising their own safety and right to a decent life in a good community by coming up with endless excuses, i just dont get them and their insisting to keep taking that. (*Stormfront A*)

Not only do White Nationalists openly attack liberal whites who choose to embrace multiculturalism, diversity, and liberal thinking regarding race relations, but they also assault those who they believe have been brainwashed by the media and liberal rhetoric. Posts referring to “brainwashed” whites comprise over 39.2% of the posts in the “Attack on Lemmings” theme. Statements coded under “brainwashed” include: “Through the Marxist educational system Whites are brainwashed into accepting a false version of reality” (*Vanguard B*); and “Most White people I meet are lost,” (*Stormfront B*).

Double standard represents 7.8% of the discourse of the theme “Attack on Lemmings”. White Nationalists discussed the double standard of being called racists when publically fighting for white victims’ rights. Statements coded as “Double Standard” include:

Everytime a White man or woman speaks out against the black community they do so in whispers for fear of being called a racist. While al sharpton and co. are screaming from the mountaintop's "Free The Jena 6" most Whites from that community hid quietly in their homes and said nothing because if they did then they would've been labeled dumb, ignorant, hillbilly rednecks (*Stormfront A*).

“It is constantly being said that not all blacks are bad. And yet when one or more blacks commit crimes many other blacks come to their defense. They don't condemn the criminal act they defend the criminal. And if any white people point out the crime and condemns it,they are labeled racists” (*Stormfront I*).

### ***Overview of Discourse Surrounding Eve Carson as Symbol***

The third theme unearthed within the White Nationalist discussion posts analyzed was the debate between members who believe Eve Carson’s death was undeserved and a loss to the white race (sacred) and members who believe that Carson’s demise was deserved and beneficial to the white race (profane). The discussion surrounding Carson represented thirty percent of the total discourse on the two White Nationalist websites analyzed. Table 4.3 below shows the percentage of those who saw Carson as “sacred” and those who regarded her as “profane.”

**Table 4.3 Eve Carson as Symbol**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Post Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Sacred	80	61.1
Profane	51	38.9
	<hr/> N = 131	

***Eve Carson as “Sacred”***

As Table 4.3 shows, over sixty-one percent of the posts containing discourse comprising the theme “Eve Carson” indicated that she was sacred; beautiful, intelligent, promising, a loss to the white race, and undeserving of her homicide. Statements coded as “Sacred” include: “Here is the lady herself, what a tragedy, what a loss” (*poster included a YouTube video of Carson welcoming UNC students back for the new school year; Stormfront A*); “What an incredible waste of a beautiful bright young white woman” (*Stormfront A*); “This is tragic to see a girl killed in such a way by a human turd.. obviously this girl was exceptionally white and attractive which makes it all more upsetting” (*Stormfront A*); “Eve Carson was an intelligent, lovely white woman with a wonderful future--a double-major pre-med student” (*Stormfront C*); “Such a sweetheart ripped away from us by nothing more than savage animals out of their cages” (*Stormfront E*); and:

A pretty girl, what a shame



(Image retrieved from <http://vnnforum.com/showthread.php?t=68435&highlight=student+body>)

### ***Eve Carson as “Profane”***

Not all members shared the sentiment of regarding Carson’s murder as a loss. Almost thirty-nine percent of posts contained discourse of Carson’s death as beneficial essentially because of her liberal ideology, which came to light a few days after her murder. However, it is important to note that many posts regarding Carson as “sacred” were evident *after* this information was made known to the public. Statements coded as “Profane” include: “But yeah I saw her profile I noticed the word diversity and had to back off fast” (Stormfront A); “It is probably a blessing his daughter was slaughtered. Now her and her weak-willed **father's** DNA will not continue on” (*Vanguard E*); “Some people believe in survival of the fittest? This is a great example..the useless and weak devoured by the savages of the jungle. Nothing of value lost whatsoever” (*Stormfront E*); “Also, she was obviously a multiculti fetishist as you can read in previous posts. Of course if the killer was black this is a hate crime, even if she was the worst “\*\*\*\*\* loving whore” (*Stormfront A*); “Think of what she might have become: another venial politician pandering for votes. Oops. I guess that's what she already was” (*Stormfront B*); “I think



it's ok.....even necessary...to look at a beautiful White girl like this one and say..."Fuck it, she wasn't going to help our cause anyway" (*Vanguard A*);

I would only feel sympathy (and a lot of it) if she were either A) awake or B) capable of being awakened - i.e. still had pro-White tendencies and feelings. I know A) is false, and based on her "activities" B) is false too. She was obviously the typical do-gooding know-it-all "i'm-so enlightened and non-racist" liberal love everyone the world is so great we're all one big happy family cumbaya ignorant college BITCH. So I say "fuck it". I don't give two shits either. Maybe it shouldn't be that way, but that's the way it is. I've dealt with enough of these brain dead college twats where I'm at the point now where I simply despise them. – *Vanguard A*

Have you ever seen anybody so invested in marxist-jewy filth, as this girl was, and then actually snap out of it? She was a star student and a power seeker, she was very likely to become a change agent for the jew's and marxist's agenda, she may very well have gone into government, the media, education, any place where she can influence and have power upon others. She is thousands of times worse than the average lowly race mixer, she wanted to be amongst those who influence the innocent to adopt a filthy ideology that amongst other things encourages race mixing. She's only worth avenging if there is some political gain to be had from it, but otherwise she is unworthy of any sympathy. -  
- *Vanguard B*

### ***Overview of White Nationalists' Criticism***

As Table 4.1 shows, discourse containing criticism of the criminal justice system, the media, and government policies constituted 29.3% of the overall discussion found within the content analyzed. In order to better illuminate the targets of criticism by White Nationalists, Table 4.4 breaks down the subthemes within this theme.

**Table 4.4 White Nationalists' Criticism as a Result of Carson's Homicide**

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Post Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>Criminal Justice System</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>38.1</b>
Courts	27	54
Police	23	46
<b>Media</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>38.3</b>
<b>Government Policies</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22.7</b>
	N = 128	

Note: Percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding to the nearest tenth. Only bolded post counts and percentages were used when adding total percentages and post counts.

### *Criticism of the Criminal Justice System*

Criticism of the criminal justice system was the most popular topic of discussion with relation to the Eve Carson case. The Orange County and Chapel Hill Police Departments, the prosecutors, probation officers, and the State of North Carolina were the target of much denigration by White Nationalists.

The subtheme “Criminal Justice System” represented 38.1% of the discourse within the theme “White Nationalists’ Criticism as a Result of Carson’s Homicide.” Statements coded “Court” under this subtheme include: “One of the Niggro murderers was brought into court for Parole Violations and should have gone back to jail, but was instead released by the Jew-dicial System” (*Stormfront A*). Statements coded “Police” include: “There may be some good White cops out there, but just as you've said yourself, the **AVERAGE** cop is a sheep-like enforcer of the jews' anti-White genocidal agenda,” (*Stormfront B*). Additionally, posts criticizing the language police used when providing information to the public and media include:

No surprises here. I knew this was black on WHITE the minute the story broke, as did everyone else here. The sad part was she was killed by the very people she tried so hard to save. A young life lost trying to help sub human garbage. When police start using terms such as "random crime", "wrong place, wrong time", robbery gone wrong", ect, you know its a cover for negro savagery. (*Stormfront A*)

### ***Criticism of Media***

As the literature on White Nationalism and media confirm, members fear that the “Jew-controlled” media would give insufficient attention to Carson’s murder due to the race of the alleged suspects (black) and of Carson (white), representing 38.3% of the posts within the “White Nationalists’ Criticism as a Result of Carson’s Homicide” theme. White Nationalists believed that mainstream media intentionally overshadows white victims of black crime with new coverage of black victims of white crime. A statement coded as “Criticism of Media” includes:

I didn't hear about this. I guess the media doesn't feel this case is that important anymore. Because I keep checking the news but they are not covering it as much anymore. It was all they covered at first. And it seems as soon as they found out the criminal was black, all they could do then was switch to the Eliot Spitzer story. Who to the general public, would be a white guy doing something criminal, which is what they really want to talk about. I bet they had a sigh of relief when that story came along so they wouldn't have to cover the co-ed murders as much.  
– *Stormfront C*

### ***Criticism of Government Policies***

The criticism of state and federal government’s policies comprised 22.7% of the discourse within the “White Nationalists’ Criticism as a Result of Carson’s Homicide” theme. Posters feared that affirmative action laws, desegregation, and lack of concern for the welfare of whites would eventually contribute to white genocide and social mayhem. A statement coded for fear of integration included: “There has been quite a few of these "random" killings since

we've been blessed with integration” (*Stormfront A*). A statement coded for fear of affirmative action included:

It's looking like this sheboon *{the black parole officer assigned to one of the alleged suspects prior to Carson's homicide}* was an "affirmative action" hire designed to fill quotas. Never mind the fact that she already had a criminal record before they even gave her a job as probation officer. Apparently, background checks for potential law enforcement officers are now optional in the State of North Carolina. (*Stormfront H*)

Lastly, a statement coded for fear of lack of concern for white welfare included:

We're paying our taxes to a tyrannical government that uses the money against us in every manner conceivable and further deteriorates this nation by turning it into a new-fangled India in the pursuit of the almighty dollar (which isn't worth as it was just a few years ago). I hope Big Brother is happy with this senseless death, because there is no one to point the finger at besides the government, whose anti-white policies have created this monstrosity. Can we blame the black, who is simply responding to all the anti-white rhetoric he has been fed, any more than the jungle cat who stalks upon the defenseless animals in the jungle, with nothing to fear? No, it is the government that is at fault for this--the folks who laid the ground work--who have exacerbated this nonsense, who integrated our cities, who tore the guns from the whites, who promoted the interracial disaster that is responsible for this. (*Stormfront B*)

### ***Overview of White Nationalists' Fears***

White Nationalists also took the opportunity to discuss the uneasiness felt within the community as a result of Carson's homicide. Subthemes derived from this data include the fear of interracial violent crime, sex and rape of white women, the race war, sending white children to colleges and universities, and gangs. Table 4.5 shows the breakdown of these subthemes.

**Table 4.5 White Nationalists' Fears as a Result of Carson's Homicide**

<i>Fear of:</i>	<i>Post Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Violent Crime	23	28.8
Sex/Rape	20	25.0
Race War	17	21.3
College	13	16.3
Gangs	7	8.8
N = 80		

Evidence of fear of increasing interracial violent crime was found in approximately 28.8% of the posts categorized as “White Nationalists’ Fears”. Statements coded as “Violent Crime” included: “There will be black on white violence on an unprecedented scale...makes me glad I live in a largely, white rural area in the Appalachians, (*Stormfront B*). The fear of sexual assaults on white women represented 25% of the discourse within the “White Nationalists’ Fear” theme. Statements coded as “Sex/Rape” include: “This has probably been considered and mentioned on this board previously, but the killing and rape of White women, and girls, may now be a rite of passage for black males,” (*Stormfront B*); and “So many, many stories of white girls raped and murdered by blacks today that you almost can't even keep up with them, and yet, they still continue to date them everyday” (*Stormfront B*). Discourse of the ominous “race war” represented 21.3% of the posts in the “White Nationalists’ Fears as a Result of Carson’s Homicide” theme. Statements coded as “Race War” include: “Acts like this are one more proof that the race war has already begun. All that's left is for Whites to start shooting back” (*Stormfront A*), and “The time is fastly approaching and we must all be ready for this forthcoming war!after all...its allready begun,they started it...its up to us to end it” (*Stormfront*

B). Carson's homicide also prompted a discussion about the lack of white safety at colleges and universities and comprised 16.3% of the discussions of "White Nationalists' Fears as a Result of Carson's Homicide. Statements coded as "College" include:

"What stinks even more, is alot of these colleges FORCE kids to live on campus their freshmen year, when they are most vulnerable, and these campuses are dangerous for young people, especially YOUNG WHITE GIRLS, they cover up the amount of rapes and assaults on their campuses and force people to send their kids to live there. College campuses are exactly where predators go to prey on young people, especially rapists hoping to get a young girl unawares walking around by herself. Kids would be safer living at home while going to school. Sickening." (*Stormfront B*)

Finally, 8.8% of the posts categorized under the theme "White Nationalists' Fears" related to the fear of gang activity among young black males. Statements coded as "Gangs" include:

Looks like a gang symbol to me. It's been a while since I paid attention to the gangs in Durham (I tend to avoid that area and the gangs tend to multiply).The two primary negro gangs are the crips and the bloods. They are basically wannabe impostors of the similarly named gangs from Los Angelas and New York. Negroes have no real sense of organization and they are always infighting though so there are a lot of sub-gangs and what not; a local negro might claim to be a "crip" while not being on good terms with whoever is leading the gang or whatever. It's a complex and confusing system and loyalties change more often than I change the oil in my car as they don't hesitate to roll on each other if there is bling to be made. – (*Stormfront C*)

### ***Overview of "Calls for Action"***

Discussion posts comprising the theme "Calls for Action" represented 16.7% of the total discourse on the two White Nationalist discussion threads analyzed. As Table 4.5 shows, this theme was divided into three subthemes: calls for *solidarity*, *vigilante justice* in response to Carson's murder, and calls for *protection and defense*.

**Table 4.6 Calls for Action**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Total Posts</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Protection/Defense	40	54.8
Vigilante	24	32.9
Solidarity	9	12.3
	<hr/> N = 73	

White Nationalists’ discussions of the need to protect oneself and one’s family, especially with the use of firearms, from non-whites represented almost fifty-five percent of this discourse within the “Calls for Action” theme. Examples of posts within this subtheme include: “Start carrying weapons now people! The right to defend yourself is your right as a human being” (*Stormfront E*); and “There are monsters that walk among us. Some are White, but the vast majority are not. White women and men, get your CCW, and carry for your own defense” (*Stormfront A*).

Not only do White Nationalists believe that whites need to be armed for protection, but they also voiced the preference for vigilante justice in response to Carson’s death. The subtheme “Vigilante” represents almost thirty-three percent of this discourse within the “Calls for Action” theme. Statements coded as “Vigilante” include: “the 1920’s and 30’s,when justice was justice,when the white man was feared and respected.start making examples outta this garbage and this monkey menace wil end. LONGING FOR THE RETURN OF THE ROPE” (*Stormfront B*).

Finally, calls for white unity, solidarity, and plans of action concerning recruiting more whites into the White Nationalist movement were categorized as “Solidarity” and comprised approximately twelve percent of this discourse within the “Calls for Action” theme. Statements coded as “Solidarity include: “Whites need an International White Solidarity Day now--more than ever--to take a stand for our heritage and what we hold dearly!” (*Stormfront B*).

### ***Overview of Black Intelligence***

Discussion posts comprising the theme “Black Intelligence” represented 3.9% of the total discussion within the fifteen discussion threads analyzed. Since this theme received the least number of posts (seventeen), I did not feel it necessary to break it down into subthemes. Essentially, posts with content relating to this theme involved discussions about black males’ brain and skull size, intelligence, and cognitive functioning. Statements coded as “Black Intelligence include:

Ever see the expression on a monkey's face in a laboratory experiment where it seems perplexed on how to solve a problem so it can get a reward? Damm if this chimp in the surveillance photo doesn't have the same perplexed expression trying to figure out how to work the ATM. Of course the real difference is the monkey is acutally more intellegent and for that matter more civilized. – *Stormfront B*

“Here again we have the nigger animal's lack of capacity to understand the consequences of its actions on display for all the world to see. Not only that it wasn't interested in the fact that there was a camera taking its image.”





*(The above quote and image was taken from  
<http://vnnforum.com/showthread.php?t=68549&highlight=Murder.>)*

Overall, the data yield little evidence in supporting the idea that White Nationalists used scientific theories of black male criminality and government statistics in justifying their racially intolerant ideology. Only two posts contained government crime data to illuminate interracial crime statistics, and just under four percent of the posts made reference to the alleged suspects' intelligence. Additionally, I found no evidence to support that Carson's homicide prompted an increase in White Nationalist online membership.

#### **5.4 Summary of Findings**

Data analyzed showed that White Nationalists made little use of government crime statistics or essentialist theories of black criminality in response to Eve Carson's homicide. Only two posts were dedicated to crime statistics and approximately four percent of the total posts were related to discourse around black intelligence.

The content analysis of thematic online discourse surrounding Carson's homicide showed that the majority of the conversation found within the two discussion threads analyzed concerned attacking liberal whites who champion ideas of diversity, multiculturalism, and racially tolerant ideologies; ideologies that are the polar opposite of that which White Nationalists espouse. Discussions related to Eve Carson was the second most popular premise, with the majority of posters indicating they perceived her as "sacred" – beautiful, intelligent, and undeserving of her murder, even though she purportedly did not share the same ideology as White Nationalists. White Nationalists' criticisms of the criminal justice system, media, and government policies followed, with the majority of criticism aimed at police and the judicial system. Carson's

homicide also prompted fear within the White Nationalist community, especially fears of interracial violent crime, interracial crimes of a sexual nature, and the ever-threatening “race war.” Additionally, calls for white racial solidarity within the White Nationalist community and beyond were also apparent in the data, as posters advocated white solidarity, vigilante justice for Carson’s murder, the need to cache weapons for protection.

## CHAPTER SIX

### DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

As the literature on White Nationalism indicates, members of this extremist group are alarmed by many social issues prominent in contemporary United States; immigration, crime, race relations, and the economy (Swain 2002). Specific to this thesis, the subject of crime, especially black-on-white violent crime, is an extremely prevalent topic of discussion on White Nationalist online discussion forums.

My content analysis of White Nationalist online discussion threads showed that Eve Carson's murder did not function to increase online membership. No posters indicated they became members of these websites as a response to her murder and the join dates for those who did participate in the discussion threads indicate that they were members before Carson's homicide on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

The analysis also confirmed that White Nationalists do make utilize science and statistics to justify their beliefs regarding black male criminality. While no members wrote specifically about biological theories of criminality in the Lombrosian sense (i.e. atavism), many did make reference to low intelligence of the alleged suspects in Carson's slaying. Additionally, posters also compared the suspects' mug shots to pictures of monkey skulls, discussing skull size and brain functioning. However, these posts represented the least amount of thematic discourse found within the data. Moreover, the attempted use of government crime statistics as a tool for justifying beliefs of black criminality was found in only two posts. Therefore, I can conclude that White Nationalists use science and government data as tools for justification, but not to the extent I hypothesized with regard to Carson's homicide.

My content analysis of White Nationalist online discussion threads also helped identify thematic discourse surrounding Eve Carson's homicide, a single but prominent case of black-on-white crime. The content analysis showed that posts criticizing and attacking whites who do not espouse White Nationalist beliefs represented the majority of the discourse, followed by discussions surrounding Carson as either sacred or profane, criticism of the criminal justice system, government and media; discussions of fear of crime, a race war, and gangs; action and solidarity, and black intelligence.

The majority of the discussion posts coded under the "Attack on Lemmings" theme concerned attacking whites who embrace diversity, multiculturalism, and other facets of liberal thinking. According to White Nationalists, those who subscribe to racially tolerant ideologies and actively assist racial minorities are deemed race traitors. White Nationalists argue that by aiding non-whites politically, economically, and socially, these "lemmings" are perpetuating the genocide of the white race. Since White Nationalists are primarily concerned with the continuance and preservation of the white race and white heritage, it is no surprise that the subtheme "Ideology" within the "Attack on Lemmings" theme received the majority of posts than any other subtheme within the entire data. Additionally, whites who were seen as "brainwashed" or hypnotized by whites to subscribe to a racially tolerant ideology were seen as in need of "waking up." According to White Nationalists, Carson's murder should serve to wake these sleeping whites from their ignorance or feelings of white guilt. However, these "brainwashed" whites are not seen as the enemy as are lemmings; instead, they are seen as potential White Nationalists who haven't yet had the "Great Awakening." In view of the fact that the maintenance of the white race is central to the White Nationalist ideology, it is not surprising to find that the majority of the discussion within the theme "Attack on Lemmings"

concerns discourse surrounding whites who are seen as actively or passively contributing to the annihilation of the white race; an annihilation which White Nationalists are vigorously fighting to prevent. Thus, according to White Nationalists, the white race is under attack not only by non-whites, but other whites as well.

The content analysis also shows how the White Nationalist online community was torn between whether or not Eve Carson's murder was beneficial or detrimental to the white race. I found the majority of posts indicated that Carson's homicide was disadvantageous to the movement; in effect, they regarded Carson as "sacred." Members who posted within the subtheme "sacred" conveyed that Carson was a beautiful, intelligent, caring, and attractive young white woman. She had pale white skin, long blonde hair and bright blue eyes; she was your quintessential Aryan woman. Additionally, these members indicated that not only was Carson's murder detrimental because it resulted in the loss of the perfect physical Aryan woman, but also because it resulted in the loss of the potential to reproduce white children. Therefore, those who deemed Carson's murder as detrimental did so based on her *whiteness* and her potential for reproducing beautiful white children (Daniels 1997). Conversely, posts containing discourse with reference to Carson as "profane" argued that her liberal ideology, involvement in diversity at UNC, and her travels to third world countries with the intent to aid minorities made her a race traitor; therefore, her demise was deserved and beneficial to the overall White Nationalist movement. Members also believed that had she the opportunity to reproduce white children, she would have raised them to be racially tolerant, which would also not be beneficial to the movement. Therefore, discourse pertaining to Carson as either "sacred" or "profane" was based on whether or not she would have aided the preservation and continuance of the white race.

White Nationalists' criticism of the criminal justice system (i.e. courts and police), the "Jew-controlled" media, and government policies comprised the third theme found within the data. White Nationalists have long criticized the ineffectiveness of the court system's sentencing and releasing of black offenders. Members believe that the courts are either afraid to hand down harsh penalties to habitual violent black offenders or do so intentionally to avoid the costs of housing and maintaining them in jail or prison. Additionally, White Nationalists voiced contempt for the police officers involved in apprehending Carson's killers. Many posters indicated that the Chapel Hill Police Department was not forthcoming with information concerning the suspects (i.e. pictures taken from the ATM surveillance camera and the race and estimated ages of the suspects), and this lack of information, they believed, indirectly put the lives of more whites at risk within the community. Additionally, criticism was directed to the media organizations covering the homicide. White Nationalists charged the media with dropping coverage of the murder when the race of the suspects was made public. This case exemplifies the "double standard" in media reporting with regard to interracial violent crime. As the literature shows, White Nationalists believe that the media are perpetuating the liberal agenda by disproportionately focusing on black victims of white crime. Members contended that had Carson been black and the suspects white, the media would have continued to report on the events surrounding the murder and given more attention to the victim while simultaneously demonizing the white suspects.

Government policies, such as affirmative action and desegregation, were also the target of condemnation within the discussion posts. White Nationalists assert that one of the suspect's probation officers, a young black woman, was employed by the State of North Carolina simply due to affirmative action hiring policies. Reports indicated that the probation officer, Chalita

Thomas, never met with her client, Laurence Lovette, one of the suspects in Carson's homicide.

A post written by David Duke also stated that Thomas has an extensive criminal record.

Therefore, in light of this information White Nationalist charged the government, specifically the State of North Carolina, as being partly responsible for Carson's demise.

Eve Carson's murder also served as a launching pad to discuss different elements of society which White Nationalists fear: interracial crime, the rape of white women, the "impending race war", safety at colleges and universities, and gangs. White Nationalists seemed to be primarily concerned with violent crime and sexual assault. As the literature shows, White Nationalists believe that black-on-white victimization will increase due to the rise in the minority population. White Nationalists believe this rise in the minority population will result in a "race war" – a war in which whites will fight for their right to exist and safeguard white heritage and the white race. Likewise, my findings suggest that this fear is very palpable within the White Nationalist community. White Nationalists used Carson's homicide as an opportunity to further evoke panic and terror within its community via the Internet. Once again, this fear is rooted in the threats that many White Nationalists believe are facing the continuance and preservation of the white race.

Not only was interracial violent crime a topic which functioned to evoke fear and panic within the White Nationalist online community, but it also served to induce calls for white solidarity, vigilante justice, and the need for protecting oneself and family with weapons and ammunition. White Nationalists believed that if whites band together in the face on the looming "race war" then the white race will stand a better chance of defeating their enemies and protect white women and children from the threat that non-whites pose, especially black males. Calls for the return of the rope and KKK-style lynchings were also evident, indicating that this type of

vigilante justice might deter black males from committing transgressions against whites. Additionally, discourse surrounding the need to cache weapons and ammunition in order to protect white individuals and families indicated that White Nationalists are calling on whites to be prepared to do their part in eradicating the threat minorities pose to whites both presently and in the years to come. Therefore, the discourse surrounding solidarity, vigilante justice, and calls for protection stem from White Nationalists' belief that the very existence of the white race is under attack, and this thread symbolizes the proverbial battle cry for whites to arm themselves and prepare for the ominous "race war."

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, this content analysis resulted in few posts containing discourse of biological determinism as an explanation for black male criminality. References were made to the suspects resembling primates and of their assumed low intelligence quotient, but no scientific theoretical explanations were evident in the posts to serve as tools for ideological justification. This does not mean that White Nationalists fail to make use of essentialist explanations of inherent black male criminality; instead, evidence of this within my content analysis was scant.

This thesis contributes to the literature in several ways. First and foremost, it supports the existing scholarly literature on White Nationalism. This study especially reinforces the literature regarding the emphasis White Nationalists place on the perceived threat to the continuance and propagation of the white race; for example, distrust of different facets of government, criticism of the liberal media, and interracial violent crime.

Secondly, this thesis is a content analysis of a case study; thus, this thesis carefully examines discourse surrounding a single murder and affords the reader with a specific example of the ways in which White Nationalists respond to a homicide in which the victim is white and



the suspect(s) is/are black. Given that the literature on White Nationalism is scant, this study provides a detailed examination of a single case study of White Nationalism; an examination that has not been attempted in scholarly research until now.

Additionally, functionalist theory was utilized in order to demonstrate how White Nationalists use the Internet as a tool for solidarity, discourse, and action. Moreover, Durkheim's notions of *sacred* and *profane* were applied to Eve Carson as a totem. This content analysis shows that, according to White Nationalists who posted on the discussion threads used in for this analysis, the sanctity of whiteness (Daniels 1997) is contingent upon the individual; therefore, not all members regard every white individual as *sacred*.

In sum, this thesis adds theoretically to literature on White Nationalism with regard to functionalism, ritualism, and symbolism. As mentioned earlier, White Nationalists use the Internet as a tool for solidarity, discourse, action, and justification of their ideology. Finally, through this thesis I hope to contribute to an in-depth understanding of one of the most understudied racial extremist groups presently operating within the United States.

## APPENDIX A

### LIST OF WEBSITES USED FOR ANALYSIS

*Stormfront A*: “UNC Student Body President Shot Dead: Looks like carjacking”

Time Period of Posts: March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=466978>

*Stormfront B*: “Pictures of Black Suspect in NC Student President Eve Carson’s Murder”

Time Period of Posts: March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=467623>

*Stormfront C*: “Breaking News: Durham police in armed standoff with Eve Carson Killer”

Time Period of Posts: March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=468770>

*Stormfront D*: “UNC student’s killers were both on parole”

Time Period of Posts: March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=468931>

*Stormfront E*: “Breaking News: Authorities arrest second suspect in UNC student slaying”

Time Period of Posts: March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=468952>

*Stormfront F*: “UNC Murder Suspect Was in Court 2 Days Before Carson’s Death”

Time Period of Posts: March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 only

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=469587>

## APPENDIX A CONTINUED

*Stormfront G:* “Eve Carson’s Murderer Had Violated Parole”

Time Period of Posts: March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 only

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=471790>

*Stormfront H:* “Probation officer of Carson murderer was a drunkard”

Time Period of Posts: March 26<sup>th</sup> only

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=472862>

*Stormfront I:* “2 Negro Criminals, 1 Black Probation Officer = Eve Carson’s Murder!”

Time Period of Posts: March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008

<http://www.stormfront.org/forum/showthread.php?t=474704>

*Vanguard A:* “UNC student body president shot, killed, car stolen”

Time Period of Posts: March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://vnnforum.com/showthread.php?t=68435&highlight=student+body>

*Vanguard B:* “Student body president of UNC – murdered in apparent carjacking”

Time Period of Posts: March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://vnnforum.com/showthread.php?t=68441&highlight=student+body>

*Vanguard C:* “Nigger ‘Person of Interest’ in UNC Co-ed Murder”

Time Period of Posts: March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 only

<http://vnnforum.com/showthread.php?t=68549&highlight=Murder>

*Vanguard D:* “AP can’t bring themselves to call Carson’s killer ‘Black’”

Time Period of Posts: March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://www.vnnforum.com/showthread.php?t=68793&highlight=Carson>

## APPENDIX A CONTINUED

*Vanguard E*: “Eve Carson’s father still wants to help minorities”

Time Period of Posts: March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<http://vnnforum.com/showthread.php?t=69069&highlight=carson%27s+father>

*Vanguard F*: “Eve Carson (White Girl) was raped by the two niggers that killed her”

Time Period of Posts: June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008 through July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

<http://www.vnnforum.com/showthread.php?t=75187>

## APPENDIX B

Table 7.1 Posts by Theme and Discussion Thread on *Stormfront*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Sacred	30	2	9	0	2	0	1	0	3
Profane	21	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Call for Protection/Action	13	5	3	2	4	0	0	0	0
Solidarity	3	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Race War	10	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fear and Crime	7	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Criticism of Ideology	52	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	4
Brainwashed	16	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Criticism of Media	26	5	6	1	2	0	0	0	0
Vigilante	5	4	1	2	4	0	0	0	0
Criticism of Police	14	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Intelligence	9	2	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
Double Standard	8	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1
Criticism of Government	6	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	15
Guns	3	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gangs	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sex/Rape	5	5	2	0	1	0	0	0	0
Statistics	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wake Up	13	7	2	0	1	0	0	0	1
Criticism of Courts	3	0	4	7	3	2	1	0	4
College	1	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Posts Analyzed	295	82	77	13	23	2	3	3	26
Omitted	117	40	38	3	10	0	0	2	5
Total Posts Used	178	42	39	10	13	2	3	1	21

**APPENDIX B CONTINUED**

Table 7.2 Posts by Theme and Discussion Thread on *Vanguard*

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Sacred	3	20	1	2	4	3
Profane	3	15	0	0	7	0
Call for Protection/Action	1	1	0	0	7	0
Solidarity	0	0	0	0	1	1
Race War	0	0	0	1	0	0
Fear and Crime	0	2	0	1	0	2
Criticism of Ideology	9	0	0	1	17	0
Brainwashed	0	14	0	0	6	0
Criticism of Media	1	2	1	0	1	4
Vigilante	1	3	0	1	2	1
Criticism of Police	0	1	1	1	0	2
Intelligence	0	0	1	0	0	0
Double Standard	0	0	0	0	2	0
Criticism of Government	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guns	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gangs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sex/Rape	0	0	0	1	0	6
Statistics	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wake Up	0	0	0	0	2	0
Criticism of Courts	0	2	0	0	0	1
College	0	5	0	1	0	0
Total Posts Analyzed	23	83	5	20	75	11
Omitted	6	34	2	7	38	2
Total Posts Used	17	49	3	13	37	9

## APPENDIX B CONTINUED

Table 7.3 Total Posts by Theme used from *Stormfront* and *Vanguard*

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Sacred	80
Profane	51
Call for Protection/Action	31
Solidarity	9
Race War	17
Fear and Crime	23
Criticism of Ideology	88
Brainwashed	39
Criticism of Media	49
Vigilante	24
Criticism of Police	23
Intelligence	17
Double Standard	13
Criticism of Government	29
Guns	9
Gangs	7
Sex/Rape	20
Statistics	2
Wake Up	26
Criticism of Courts	27
College	13
Total Posts Analyzed	741
Omitted	304
Total Posts Used	437

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