

Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women

Catherine Stinton

University of Cumbria

Abstract

Activists and leaders in the far-right in the UK and Europe are often assumed to be working class white men (Cockburn, 2007). While this is reasonably accurate of the majority, the assumption has led to poor understanding of the active minority of women involved in the leadership and support of these movements. They have been similarly overlooked in research of the radicalisation process, which has primarily focused upon the Islamist radicalisation of men (Kundnani, 2015). In this article, literature relevant to the far-right radicalisation of white women is reviewed, beginning with establishing a base of pertinent research into multiple forms of radicalisation. On this basis, literature on potential radicalising pressures experienced by white British women is evaluated, with results reported on a micro, meso, and macro scale. Findings suggest these women are not necessarily misled by the men in their lives, ignorant, or pathological (Blee, 2003). They are individuals with their own agency, with something to lose, influenced and radicalised by pressures placed upon them by their lives, communities, and the world at large. The government's Prevent strategy identifies white supremacy as the ideology of the far-right, an ideology which still suffuses the postcolonial Western world (Home Office, 2015). Despite its social hierarchy that imagines men as the pinnacle of civilisation, white women are not beyond its influence, as both victims of its patriarchy and enactors of its racialized oppression (hooks, 2015). These are pressures which affect the radicalisation of women in the far-right; they are as susceptible as men to anxieties stemming from the fading of the Empire and the legacy of colonialism.

Keywords: radicalisation, extremism, far-right, white supremacy, women

In December 2016, the British Government for the first-time outlawed membership of a far-right group with the proscription of the organisation National Action (Allen, 2017). Nonetheless even as the UK counter-terrorism policy expands to further combat far-right extremism, it continues to grow as an issue for Britain (Abbas & Awan, 2015). Mark Rowley, retired Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, identified four far-right attacks foiled by police services in 2017, and warned that far-right extremists work in similar ways to Islamist extremists in their encouragement of intolerance and exploitation of grievances (Sandford, 2018).

This intolerance and these grievances can contribute to radicalisation, which drives individuals from mainstream beliefs to extreme ideologies, and influences - though does not predetermine - the potentiality for violent extremism (Odorfer, 2015). This is a process in which people are influenced by their everyday experiences, their own communities and by the media, and by wider global and cultural pressures (Schmid, 2013). Far-right extremists are assumed to be white, working class young men (Cockburn, 2007). In part this is supported by the statistics of perpetrators of hate crimes, voters for far-right parties, and the membership and leadership of far-right groups (Widfeldt & Brandenburg, 2017). However, while more men become violent extremists than women, women may be as influential and influenced in radicalisation (Odorfer, 2015).

Britain and Europe have seen women in leadership roles of far-right parties, such as Marine Le Pen of France's *Front National* and Jayda Fransen of Britain First. Of six people arrested in January 2018 as members of National Action, one of them was a woman, and women have and continue to play a role in the activism of groups such as the English Defence League (Pilkington, 2016). All that this handful of women has in common is their ideology, which they have come to from different backgrounds and for different reasons. Women are inadequately understood as studies linking gender and the far-right are limited (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2015). Some insight as to their motivation comes from Prevent, the government strategy established to 'prevent people from being drawn into terrorism' (Home Office, 2015, p. 2). Though Prevent has been criticised as slow to mobilise in the face of far-right extremism (Mythen, Walklate & Peatfield, 2016), it explicitly names the ideology of these groups as white supremacy (Home Office, 2015).

Rationale

Women are under-researched in all facets of radicalisation and extremism (Carter, 2013), and women in the far-right perhaps more so (Mulinari & Neergard, 2015). While this research found sources on far-right groups, radicalisation, and the Islamist radicalisation of women, as already stated the experiences and roles of women in the far-right are inadequately documented. There are some exceptions: Crown Prosecution Service figures in 2012 stated only 16.7% of hate crime defendants across all monitored strands of hate crimes were women (Roberts et al., 2013), however more recent figures do not include such a breakdown of offenders' identities. Women in the far-right are a minority, but Miller-Idriss and Pilkington (2017) argue them to be not so much absent as overlooked. One of the few in-depth sources giving accounts from such women is the mid-90s research by Kathleen Blee (2003) in the US. This has been both a limitation of this research and a rationale for its pursuit; more studies are indeed needed.

Without direct interviews of women in far-right organisations, other avenues of study must be pursued. This does not undermine the importance of their stories; Sedgwick (2010) names the stated grievances of Islamist radicals to be integral to understanding their motivations. Lacking many contemporary first-hand accounts, this research will focus on the processes of radicalisation of women on the micro, meso, and macro levels as influenced by the far-right's motivating white supremacist ideology.

There are reasons to question the usefulness of white supremacy as an ideology to comprehend female motivations. Ferber (2007) places it as a power structure prioritising white *male* superiority, while Hopkins (2016), examining perpetrators of gendered, racist hate crimes, supports this by placing masculinity and white supremacy as joint motivations. Aniagolu (2010, p. 180) confirms that white women have historically been victims of white men, but she goes on to argue how they have also been 'partners in and beneficiaries of the racist system.' As a power system it impacts white men, but white women are still influenced by how it prioritises their race and gives them a place within their society that is as racialised as it is gendered. It is through this positioning and influencing of white women in British society that white supremacist ideology will be assessed for its role in the far-right radicalisation of such women.

Methodology

This research is a literature-based study which will examine journals, reports, and government publications in areas such as radicalisation, violent extremism, the far-right in Britain, Europe and the US, poverty and austerity in Britain, as well as critical race theory and the study of white supremacy and its influence upon women. Secondary research has been necessary due to the sensitive nature of the issue and the elusive nature of the research population (Fielding, 2004). Due to this need to draw on a broad range of sociological and ethnographic research, this article is not an evaluation of psychological evidence, but rather a discussion based upon existing literature. This is also in part due to a lack of robust research on the psychological factors in this radicalisation process, though the discussion may provide groundwork for such future research. Another consequence of the limitations within the existing research is that certain sources have been repeatedly consulted. Specifically, Blee's (2003) work, as stated above, is one of the few in-depth pieces of research on the topic worldwide. The research of Busher (2015), Pai (2016), and Pilkington (2016) into the far-right in the UK, predominantly the EDL, have also made them regularly-cited cornerstones of this article. This has been a necessity in this under-researched area, though efforts have been made to analyse their findings with a theoretical lens.

The examination of white supremacy in radicalisation has thus required a thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 4) define a theme as 'a coherent and meaningful pattern' in the data, and point out that themes are not hidden, waiting to be discovered, but constructed by the researcher. This approach is relevant where data exists that can consider likely motivations of people who are radicalised or the pressures causing their radicalisation. Despite the risk of subjectivity from this hypothesis-testing approach, Braun and Clarke (2013) consider this subjectivity to be a quality that does not produce an undermining bias, but rather as essential to good qualitative research practice.

Findings

Radicalisation

To examine far-right radicalisation of women requires some estimation of the radicalisation process. Developed from post-9/11 scholarship, such understanding is almost exclusively focused on Islamist radicalisation, usually that of men, influenced by the neoconservative paradigm (Kundnani, 2015). As such, terrorism motivated by politics or other ideologies has received less academic attention. This requires some examination of the

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

established radicalisation frameworks where they are developed or relevant for this research's purposes.

Research from Schmid (2013) for the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism summarises causes of terrorism. As well as religious motivation, he lists political oppression, social inequality and marginalisation, poverty, collective or individual desires for revenge, and modern circumstances making terrorist methods easy. These offer motivation, but no illumination on what may catalyse activism or political violence from a minority when there are many people worldwide who are subject to some or all of these pressures.

The influential pre-9/11 study of the causes of terrorism by Crenshaw (1981) argues for a three-level account, involving factors of individual motivation and belief, decision-making and strategy within a terrorist movement, and the wider political and social context. Even post-9/11 this framework has retained relevance, summarised by Schmid (2013) as the micro, meso, and macro-level influences upon individuals which lead to the process of radicalisation. Veldhuis and Staun (2009) describe the macro-level factors as preconditions to create a radicalisation-prone environment, while the micro and meso-level factors account for individual responses and behaviour.

The threshold between radicalisation and terrorism can be vague, even though the concepts are thoroughly distinct, as is the term extremism (Veldhuis & Staun, 2009). Schmid (2013) states that radicals need not be violent and despite shared motivations may be different to violent extremists, such as being willing to engage in critical thinking. The Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation can offer a concise working definition of violent radicalisation: 'socialisation to extremism which manifests itself in terrorism' (Alonso et al., 2008, p. 7). This is supported by Pisoiu (2015), who believes individual radicalisation processes do not occur in a vacuum but derive from a social and cultural environment.

Kundnani (2015) argues however, that these are complex factors, and there is little evidence to support the view that there is a single cause. Examination of the relevant radicalisation definitions for their usefulness or limitations in understanding factors in the radicalisation of women, the far-right, and both, is thus required.

With radicalisation as a term only arising post-9/11, much of its development is based upon US scholarship (Mythen, Walklate & Peatfield, 2016), which may struggle to be relevant to the processes undergone by white British women. This scholarship has also been subject to politicisation; one of the more popular analyses is that the process of radicalisation is akin to a 'conveyor belt' that pushes an individual to terrorism, which infers a certain

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

inevitability stemming from ideology and disregards personal or psychological factors (Kundnani, 2015). It also avoids a need for a wider exploration of the causes of radicalisation, such as the culpability of government policies, by putting the onus on the individual. Sedgwick (2010) argues that, in the case of Islamist radicals, ignoring their openly declared grievances will inevitably present obstacles in understanding their motivations.

These conflicting and politicised definitions raise the question of the usefulness of radicalisation and associated terms as concepts. Kundnani (2015) recognises that the word 'extremism' has long been used in denouncing political dissent, such as Indian militants supporting independence, or Martin Luther King. This highlights the subjectivity of the term, if it was applied to causes which successfully challenged oppression; perhaps they are 'extremists' only until they win or until it is politically imprudent to call them such. It is even defined as opposition to 'British values' (HM Government, 2015); in that way there is a risk of its usage by government policy to stifle opposition.

Fekete (2015) criticises the European Commission for inconsistency in its counter-radicalisation treatment of Islamists compared to white supremacists, where the former's grievances against Western foreign policy is 'not deemed legitimate but a symptom of their offending behaviour' (p.92). Abbas and Awan (2015) contend that UK counter-terrorism is subject to institutional levels of Islamophobia which has led to the disproportionate targeting of Muslim communities. They go on to claim that Prevent's misplaced focus and failure to tackle wider issues of far-right extremism have 'paved the way' for anti-Islamist groups such as the English Defence League.

The strategies of Prevent in identifying and tackling radicalisation of all kinds come under further fire from Mythen, Walklate and Peatfield (2016) who believe it dismisses studies that have rejected ideology, particularly religious, as the root cause of violent extremism. They criticise the strategies for using data on radical beliefs from unsuitable sources, such as the 2010 Citizenship Survey, not designed for such a purpose, and claim the strategy does not seek to reflect or construct an understanding of radicalisation.

These problems with definition, political bias, and practical policy are significant. Radicalisation scholarship is still critical to this topic, but there are specific challenges in using the research to comprehend an already under-researched topic.

The involvement of women in any form of terrorism or political violence has tended to be ignored in the literature (Jackson et al., 2011), terrorist radicalisation viewed persistently as a male issue (Carter, 2013). This is despite the long involvement of women in Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

such organisations, from Daesh to their direct opponents in the Kurdistan Workers' Party, though they have historically been involved mainly in non-violent, supportive roles providing leadership, ideology, strategy, or motivation (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017). Although their involvement has tended to be underestimated, there is a growing recognition of their complex roles in violent extremism (Carter, 2013).

Within Islamist radicalisation, Nair and Chong (2017) have found in their research 'the seeming irrelevance of gender' (p.1). This stands in contrast to much previous study, where female and male radicalisation have been viewed independently, with female radicalisation to terrorism often framed in personal terms (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017). Nair and Chong (2017) recognised the possibility that a radicalised woman in their research was influenced by her husband, but declared the line of analysis to be 'inadequate.' Similarly, they found women were *perceived* to be radicalised to the Islamism of Daesh out of submission to men, with their agency or political commitment doubted, which was not supported by subsequent research. Assumptions of women being less susceptible to political violence due to more nurturing, forgiving or patient natures was also deemed 'misleading' by Nair and Chong (2017). Those involved in political violence are still depicted as exceptions to this nature, represented in media and academia as deviant rather than granted any agency or rationality (Carter, 2013).

Evidence suggests that women who join Daesh actively support its principles, including violence (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017). Similar research suggests that these women follow their own interpretations of Islamist radical ideology, with some commentators finding that women terrorists can be more ruthless and more efficient than their male counterparts (Carter, 2013). The reasons for these forms of Islamist radicalisation by women are complex where norms, expectations, and structural pressures may impact both men and women, but in ways which are sometimes highly gendered (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017).

The majority of the research, and that which has been discussed, has focused on women and Islamist radicalisation. This remains useful in discussion of far-right radicalisation of women, as it consistently recognises the agency of women and their capacity to engage in these extremist organisations in manners and for reasons similar to those of men, but which are still subtly and importantly different.

Examination of the radical right requires defining it, which Miller Idris (2018) recognises as complex and varying across different legal, historical, and geographical

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

contexts. Rydgren (2018) discusses far-right movements as placing an emphasis on ethnonationalism rooted in myths about the past, wishing to strengthen the nation by making it more ethnically homogeneous and by returning to traditional values. They are often populist, anti-establishment, with an ideological core of authoritarianism stressing themes such as law and order and family values. Several threats stand according to them, against a nation's identity, often immigration, and frequently immigration from Muslim countries.

Identification by individuals and groups of this threat has been noted to cause levels of anxiety and intolerance that can lead to political intolerance and xenophobia (Capelos & van Troost, 2012). Miller Idris (2018) further notes structural explanations such as economic strain and demographic and social change as pressures felt amongst members of the far-right. Disengagement from politics and a sense of disconnect from society in its attitudes and demographics are deemed causes, though van der Valk (2014), researching in the Netherlands, found ethnic prejudice to be a more important motivator to far-right engagement than political ideas. Cultural factors such as a desire for comradeship and rebellion against societal norms are given importance by Miller Idris (2018), but she also recognises there exist specific individual characteristics which may make certain people more likely to espouse radical right views.

In the UK, the murder of Lee Rigby by two Muslims prompted reactions not just from government policy but also the far-right, with retaliatory attacks against the Muslim community. This spiralling violence between Islamist and far-right groups has caused more attention to be paid to cumulative or reciprocal radicalisation (Bartlett & Birdwell, 2013). Coined by Roger Eatwell in 2006, feelings of grievance and revenge are considered amongst contributing factors leading to acts of terrorism; this anger may then develop on the micro level of the individual and the meso level of mutual reinforcement of peers and ideological incitement (Sumpter, 2017).

There has been limited work considering the radicalisation process among white supremacists, though a US study by Schafer, Mullins and Box (2014) identified the embracing of white supremacist ideology as a catalyst for radicalisation by those struggling with the previously discussed pressures. The influence of white supremacist attitudes in these movements can be felt in their socialisation of members to emphasise hate-directed beliefs, feelings, and behaviours, which can lead to a solidarity necessary for their collective identity (Simi et al., 2017).

Although UK policy explicitly identifies white supremacist ideology in the far-right, Abbas and Awan (2015) still accuse the policy of lacking depth and substance on the threat of far-right extremist ideologies. As discussed, they believe there to be failures in policy to tackle this extremism, which has allowed far-right extremist groups to gain momentum and support relatively quickly.

Further analysis of the factors that contribute to far-right radicalisation will be conducted in subsequent findings, though the brief summaries offered here show consistent patterns in radicalisation, Islamist or far-right. Structural pressures of economic strain and social disengagement exist for many across the political spectrum, for example. Studies on radicalisation and its causes requires comprehension of the micro-level pressures felt by the individual, the meso-level pressures from immediate community and movements, and the macro-level influences from the broader global and cultural context, where regardless of ideology, there appear to be key similarities and unique differences.

There will be inevitable differences between the motivations of women in violent Islamist groups and women in violent far-right groups, but some findings are still of relevance to this research. It is consistently found that these women act of their own volition, with their own agency and choice, and that there are similarities between their radicalisation and the radicalisation of men. White supremacist ideology suffuses not only personal experiences (Ware, 1992), but manifests within institutions and systems (Aniagolu, 2010). It has been studied by predominantly US-focused critical race theory, and Cole (2015) has questioned its usefulness in understanding racism in the UK, but it has still been identified by Prevent as the ideology of the far-right. The next three sections will, with the established understanding of radicalisation, examine the processes undergone by women in the far-right, and the role of white supremacy within these processes. This will be done on a personal scale, examining the pressures upon the individual women, a community scale, and on a macro level, of white supremacy on a global level and the position of white women within it.

Micro-level Radicalisation

Schmidt (2013) summarises micro-level radicalisation pressures as those which operate on the individual level, including identity problems, feelings of discrimination, relative deprivation, moral outrage, and feelings of ‘vicarious’ revenge. As he writes predominantly on Islamist radicalisation, he lists other pressures, but this research has selected these for their relevance to far-right extremism of women. Due to limited

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

information on the micro-pressures affecting these women, this section will include a more general examination of right-wing extremism, with consideration of its gendering, and the impact white supremacist ideology has upon these pressures.

The value of the examination of micro-level pressures has been recognised by Blee (2003), who believes there to be a fallacious tendency to use macro patterns to understand micro behaviours. She argues that to explain individual recruitment into the far-right, the actual motives and experiences of its participants should be examined rather than only sweeping social trends.

Explanations for the actions of known terrorists range from psychological to social (Bhui, Everitt & Jones, 2014), whilst Schmidt (2013) recognises that the number of push and pull factors for radicalisation on this micro-level is large. There is little research on the vulnerability of far-right women, though Bhui et al. (2014), in researching vulnerability to Islamist radicalisation, recognise a higher risk for women who experience social isolation, powerlessness, oppression, and limited alternative lifestyles.

These arguments in favour of psychological causes of radicalisation have been criticised, with Bailey and Edwards (2017) arguing these models do not examine risk factors developing over time, or why some experiencing the same factors are *not* radicalised. Mixed findings on personal trauma as a fundamental motivation for women's involvement in violent extremism were reported by Carter (2013). Blee (2003), in her research of white supremacist women in the US in the 1990s, found many women to be educated, with resources and connections; with 'something to lose' (p.3). The majority were not raised in abusive families, nor were they mentally ill. Blee (2003) states her uncertainty as to if mental illness, when found, was a cause for affiliation with the far-right, or an outcome of involvement with it. She rejects the 'pathological individual' as a mainstay of racist movements, instead focusing on a 'pathological vein of racism, intolerance, and bigotry in the larger population.' (Blee, 2003, p. 192)

There is often an urge to assume women are participants in far-right extremism because they are victims coerced by men. Even historically, this has not been the case; Gottlieb (2000) found the support by women of Mosley's fascist movement to be characterised by 'choice, free will and personal rebelliousness' (p.7). This assumption mirrors some findings within more general studies of women's criminality; Shaw (1995) criticises tendencies to oversimplify explanation of women's crime and violence by portraying them as helpless victims.

The above includes noted scholars rejecting male influence as a major cause of female Islamist radicalisation; direct study of the far-right has not provided much evidence either way. Blee (2003) found great variety in her examination of reasons for women to join racist groups, while research by Pai (2016) and Busher (2015) into the British far-right include mentions of women involved for their own reasons, rather than at the urging of men. Pilkington (2016) explicitly identifies a number of women joining the EDL on their own or with other women, and not developing long-term partners within; their motivations and involvement remained independent of men.

Odorfer (2015) highlights relative deprivation as a key cause of radicalisation, though most consideration of its role for the far-right has not been specifically focused on women. Prevent itself claims support for violent extremism is more prevalent among lower socio-economic and income groups (HM Government, 2011), while Garland and Treadwell (2012) blame the growth of the EDL, in part, on the fall in living standards for the poorer of UK society. This will be examined as a wider cultural pressure in a later section, but Standing (2011) claims elements of the working class find their avenues to advance often blocked, causing senses of relative deprivation, anger, anomie, and anxiety that isolate them.

Of interest is a claim by Miller Idris (2018), focusing on the youth in Germany, arguing that women who worry about their economic situation are more likely to express right-wing views. This may be linked to traditional attitudes deeming a woman's 'proper' place to be in the home, which Moon (1999, p. 181) assesses through considerations of white enculturation and bourgeois ideology. Here the white home is a site of 'cultural learning and racial indoctrination', domestic traditions thusly influencing these women. Of relevance to their deprivation, Moon (1999) argues a white woman is socialised to desire a bourgeois construct of middle-class respectability, and taught to pursue this empowerment by aligning herself with white hegemony and supremacy. While of course this does not mean every impoverished white woman is radicalised by and in her own home, it speaks of a strain caused by deprivation that affects these women in a manner both racialised and specifically gendered.

Conversely, Krueger (2008), rejects poverty as a motivator for terrorism; while he writes of Islamist extremism, not subject to the above influences, it is a warning that such explanations may be reductive. Perhaps a more valuable interpretation of the role of relative deprivation is from Vieten and Poynting (2016), who remind us that economic crises have historically led to the scapegoating of 'others'. While they call this an ideological manoeuvre

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

that obfuscates the real causes of economic crisis, McLaren and Johnson (2007) remind us how immigrants are perceived to be the greatest economic threat to those of lower status. This is scrutinised by Pai (2016), who found many in her research directed their anger from economic threat not at white migration from eastern Europe, but non-whites, immigrants or not.

Pai (2016) also found these individuals to believe the 'English' way of life to be under threat from these immigrants. Such opinions are shared by men and women with little variation; she interviews a woman nostalgic for the 'good old days' without immigration (2016). This is not a new phenomenon; Ambikaibaker (2015) reminds us of Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech and its claims the settlement of former colonised subjects were a sign of a 'white racial and British national crisis.' Heath and Demireva (2011) claim multiculturalism is believed in Western countries to have not only failed, but caused communities to entrench in their differences, corroding trust and solidarity. Kinnvall (2015) further draws a link between attempted multiculturalism and the anti-establishment stance of far-right narratives, that of a homeland of divided communities belonging to a people betrayed by government.

This manifests in some immediate tensions, such as the EDL's belief that the police dare not interfere with the Islamic community and they themselves are disproportionately targeted by the authorities and judged by society (Treadwell, 2013). This sentiment is not exclusive to the far-right in the UK, Vieten and Poynting (2016) finding similar attitudes in Finland, where the far-right perpetuate a narrative where the 'true' Finns are 'victims, discriminated against in their own land by accommodation of cultural diversity' (p.538) These narratives, argue Bartlett and Birdwell (2013), where both Muslims and the far-right view themselves as victims and the other as oppressors, can lead to the 'cumulative' process, driving each other to become more extreme, provocative, or radicalised.

White supremacist ideology provides an explanation of how the narrative of the nation under threat may affect women. Ware (1992) reminds us of the role of white femininity as a symbol of white civilisation, which may position women to feel directly targeted. This is supported by Kinnvall's (2015) discussion of these far-right narratives as framing the survival of the nation in terms of protecting women in 'their sublime role of housewife and mother' (p. 524). Women socialised to play a supporting role in their community may feel the pressures of a finding by McLaren and Johnson (2007), where even those who are not threatened may worry on behalf of others within their in-group who *are*.

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

The position of white women in imperialism and post-imperialist anxiety will be examined more deeply in a later section, but immediate attitudes of women in the British far-right in this matter are in need of further research.

This sense of victimisation, of their culture under threat, is part of another concern of the far-right, recognised by Treadwell (2013) as the ‘dangerous Muslim Other’. As a form of racism, Frankenberg (1993) discusses this as ‘essentialist’ racism, the idea that people of colour are ‘fundamentally Other than white people: different, inferior, less civilised, less human, more animal, than whites’ (p.61). Gaston (2017) urges a nuanced consideration of these attitudes, recognition of where the beliefs are grounded in racial supremacy and where they may reflect discomfort, personal experience, or defences of liberal beliefs.

Such ‘liberal beliefs’, however, can be hijacked for the demonisation of British Muslims (Tufail, 2015), if they were ever developed in good faith at all. Far-right groups often encourage women to maintain a traditional role in society, then confront Islam in the name of women’s rights (Allen, 2014). An example of this lies in the Rotherham and Rochdale ‘grooming’ child sexual abuse scandals, where popular discourse was dominated by the focus on the race, ethnicity, and dangerous masculinities of Muslim men (Tufail, 2015). Pai (2016) discusses the far-right myth that these crimes are mandated by a sharia law, claiming a direct link between the grooming issue and Muslim communities, a myth reproduced in British media.

This contortion turns a scandal into a specifically racialised attack on white children from the Muslim community (Tufail, 2015), just as EDL protests against the niqab are identified by Pai (2016) as racism disguised as the defence of women’s rights. Kinnvall (2015) calls this ‘framing of gender issues as cultural concerns’ (p. 524) a chance for far-right movements to ‘securitise immigration’. Copsey et al. (2013) list further accounts from EDL members calling Islam a ‘child molesting cult’ who have ‘raped British women and children’ (p.26).

It holds particular relevance for how it affects white women; here they and their families are made victims of encroaching, aggressive Muslim culture. Blee (2003) discusses similar threats in the US as familial concerns used to support agendas of racial supremacy. This can be found historically, too, in female far-right aggression. Gottlieb (2000) refers to appeals to motherly protectiveness and fear-mongering driving British fascism, or the transformation of ‘motherly love into motherly hate’ (p. 132).

Frankenberg (1993) reminds us that people of colour generally have more to fear from white people than vice versa, but this false narrative is not new, especially with the white woman as a victim. Ware (1992) writes about the racist perception of black men as a threat, not Muslims, but similarities endure; expressions of racism infused with metaphors of rape, the helpless white victim, and threats to women's safety legitimating tough action. Gottlieb (2000) even refers to 1930s-40s antisemitism as reinforced by anxieties about sexual potency, with women 'portrayed as the symbolic victims of a Jew-ravaged Britain' (p.131). The 'other' may differ over time, but the narrative itself does not necessarily.

Blee (2003) examines how these attitudes affect women she has interviewed. She discusses how, in the stories of racist women, 'members of racial minorities are most often linked to memories of fear, vulnerability, and anger' (p. 85). Here, her narrative in the US differs little to that of Britain; assaults on men of minority races in retaliation for the threat they are presumed to pose to 'innocent white women' (Blee, 2003, p. 115).

The micro pressures for radicalisation then, are in the white woman experiencing relative deprivation as a strain on her position domestically, a victim in her own society, beset by anxiety that her English way of life and her own body or family are under threat from the ideologies and individuals of the dangerous Muslim 'other'. Beyond that lie the countless and unique personal vulnerabilities of the individual, socially and psychologically.

To discuss micro-level causes of far-right radicalisation has required examination of that which is studied; namely groups such as the EDL and Britain First, predominantly drawn from the British working class (Pai, 2016). This leads to a perhaps disproportionate focus upon the racism of the poor, even though Flemmen and Savage (2017) reject the view that the white working class are especially more xenophobic. As discussed, Krueger (2008) rejects poverty as a cause of terrorism; he further rejects a lack of education and other forms of inequality as influences.

On the matter of women, Blee may have been interviewing women in 1990s US, but her finding that there was, amongst them, 'no single racist type' (Blee, 2003, p. 7) is likely not irrelevant to the complexities of the UK twenty years later. A lack of research on women in the UK makes it particularly difficult to examine the micro-level pressures they feel. Lacking these stories of women who demonstrably exist within these groups and communities prompts research to examine wider social pressures, and many of these topics will be re-examined on a macro scale in a later section.

Meso-level Radicalisation

Despite these pressures, Busher (2015) points out that membership of far-right groups is usually impacted by one's social circles, while even angry declarations shouted in racist attacks are mirrored by the common ideology of government and media (Burnett, 2017). Blee (2003) confirms the involvement of women in racist politics to be influenced by where they lived, or worked, or partied; who their friends were.

Recruitment leads to deeper conviction: Busher (2015) reports far-right beliefs emerging, intensifying and defining after joining the EDL. Surface attitudes may speak of community and connection, but underneath far-right groups is often what Simi et al. (2017) call a 'deeper culture of hate and violence' (p.1167), a collective identity that becomes all-encompassing. Once involved, it can be harder to leave on both a social and ideological level. Pilkington (2016, p. 30) reports how gender identity in such groups can be 'constraining', many women at some point romantically involved with men in the movement and this affecting their position. They may be pushed into supportive roles, especially if the relationship leads to a family, and their involvement in the movement is seen as secondary to activist men. The impact is not particularly detailed, however, and she identifies several women who remained active independent of any men.

The beliefs espoused often consist of nostalgia that scapegoats others (Gaston, 2017), though Givens (2004), talking of political parties more than extremist groups, points out this is not necessarily attractive to female voters. Miller-Idris and Pilkington (2017) believe there to have been a recent reframing of femininity and women's roles in groups such as the EDL; this research has already examined the far-right's adoption of gender equality arguments to 'expose' oppressive Islam. A practical example of the harnessing of femininity is identified by Allen (2017) with National Action's 'Miss Hitler' beauty competition, in which women participated and demonstrated themselves fully entrenched in the traditionalist ideology - even that of staying at home and raising the next generation of white children. As performers and standard-bearers of idealised white beauty, the opinions they expressed were no less racist than those of male members of the group. In the US, Blee (2003) confirms subjects of her interviews to have joined male-dominated racist groups not ignorant of their interests as women, but that they reassessed their self-interests to fit these masculine agendas.

This reassessment is easier as membership builds an entrenched sense of community, with feelings of pride and cohesion catalysing and sustaining participation (Busher, 2015).

Simi et al. (2017) identify how involvement in the far-right includes a 'complete identity

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

transformation', individuals subsumed into the group. From there, members can grow increasingly isolated; Busher (2015) discovered that the EDL became the focal point of an activists' social life, often at the expense of other relationships. Many of them found this participation created strains and stresses in their relationships at home and at work, only isolating them further from mainstream society and driving them deeper into the group.

This collective identity causing further involvement and action is discussed by Carter (2015), examining group discussions where risk taking or political opinion often result in a shift in the average opinion toward increased extremism in the direction of the general consensus. Busher (2015) reinforces this with the idea that sometimes violent forms of political action are emerging through echo-chambers, activists either exchanging ideas with the like-minded or polarised by heated confrontations with their opponents.

Busher (2015) also finds the sharing of information between the like-minded on social media to build common purpose, and validate anxiety, loathing, disdain and so forth. These become platforms for the curious to discover more on the far-right movements, and can be a breeding ground for recruitment and extremist sentiment. Saltman (2016), however, questions whether an organisation's propaganda alone is sufficient for radicalisation, criticising reductionist claims by media and the public that the internet causes any initial spark for radicalisation. She does accept its role in facilitating the continuation of radicalisation.

Pilkington (2016) notes female members of the EDL are more active online; as they are less exposed to the activism of demonstrations, theirs may be a specific and potentially different experience to the average male activist. A role for them may be inferred from Pearson and Winterbotham's (2017) research into Islamist radicalisation of women, where they note that once recruited, women and girls were more able to successfully recruit other women online, knowing what had worked for them. Likewise, they found young women tend to have larger online social networks, and spend more time messaging online, implying potentially greater susceptibility.

Such shared opinions on social media are not always from within a self-contained bubble; the three most common phrases used to attack Twitter users were 'Muslim paedos', 'Muslim terrorists' and 'Muslim scum'. Some 28% of these Islamophobic tweets were posted by women (Cole, 2015). This Islamophobia is not only part of mainstream society in social media, but mainstream media itself; Sumpter (2017) points out a tweet of Katie Hopkins after the 2017 Manchester bombing where she calls on Western men to 'rise up' to protect their

wives, daughters, and sons. Here mainstream media reinforces the racialised notion of the white woman and her family as victims.

Despite circulation of opinions such as this from a broadcaster, Burnett (2017) believes the role of the media is ignored in any discussion of a climate that can lead to racial violence. This limits opportunities by individuals or society to understand fascist ideologies and racism, lacking sensitivity to ‘the interconnection of politics, culture, and the mass media’ (Ware and Back, 2002, p. 97). Cockburn (2007) opines that racism is not just characteristic of extremist parties and their members, but belongs to white people in the political left, right, and centre, and is reinforced by the mass media. Years later, Pai (2016) reinforces that, saying the racism in the core ideology of the EDL has been mainstreamed, ‘permanently echoed in our public sphere’ (p.288).

These stories are often seized by far-right activists if they coincide with their pre-existing claims and beliefs (Busher, 2015), right-of-centre newspapers particularly popular when they report on issues which resonate not just in subject matter, but also invoke fear, outrage, and moral shock. The use of the scandals of Rotherham and Rochdale were discussed previously, and Tufail (2015) calls the aftermath of *The Times*’ investigation to be ‘oxygen for the far-right’ (p.32). Simply put by Blee (2003), when the racist activist women she interviewed spoke of racial minorities as threats to safety or way of life, they sounded very much like mainstream racist whites. This supports the argument of Miller-Idris and Pilkington (2017) that the mainstreaming of racist ideas reduces stigmatisation that has typically discouraged women from participating in the radical right.

White Supremacy on a Macro-Level

Even in examination of personal and social pressures, this research has focused upon white supremacist society as a fundamental influence on the lives of white women, from their personal experiences to life in their communities to the media they consume. There is little on the micro or meso level of influences that white supremacist ideology does not affect, especially in the context of white Britons seeking a sense of national pride in the wake of Brexit, and before that the waning of Empire. White supremacy is a part of this national pride, as a hierarchy of a capitalist patriarchy placing men, adults, and whites as the powerful above women, children, and blacks and non-whites (hooks, 2015). As such, white women are both empowered and oppressed by varying degrees.

The 'whiteness' by which they identify themselves and aspire to is a construct, changing with its historical context (Hage, 1998), desirable as it provides the comfort and security of conforming (Ware & Back, 2002), and the status from colonial-era power even in a postcolonial age (Lopez, 2005). It is relevant to this research that, while skin colour can be a factor, it is not necessarily the cause of Islamophobia, and the wider construct of 'whiteness' is still relevant to this prejudice (Cole, 2015). Those within whiteness do not often examine it, and it is usually most visible to those excluded by it, or experiencing violence by it (Frankenberg, 1993). Ignorant though they might be, white women's lives are still shaped by race (Frankenberg, 1993), and they often bond on the basis of this shared racial identity, even if they are unconscious of its significance (hooks, 2015). Aniagolu (2010), on the other hand, accuses white women of understanding that they are beneficiaries of the racial system of power and privilege created and controlled by white men.

These white, heterosexual European males are imagined at the top of the 'racial tree of superiority', the pinnacle of civilisation and racialised privilege and culture, but white women still have a role, essential for reproducing this superiority both biologically and culturally (Byrne, 2006, p. 24). They have undeniably been victims of the patriarchy, but historically have still supported practices of racism in the west, be it by association or outright participation.

Within political activism, Gottlieb (2000) believes the place of women in fascist policy cannot be examined in isolation from male constructs of gender and masculinity. They are entrenched within it, oppressed by and benefiting from it. Blee's (2000) examination of these groups identifies Aryan masculinity as 'venerated' (p.112) as the bedrock of the white race, and typically the role of women here is defined by their association with men - as wives, mothers, as supporters of the activism of racist men, their own activism secondary. But being of lesser importance within white supremacy is not the same as being unaffected by it, and Frankenberg (1993) claims white women to be, 'by definition, practitioners of white culture' (p.228).

This research has already examined women as symbols of white culture, specifically white women as victims. Ware (1992) believes the construct of women as victims builds the image of a white way of life under threat; it is not about the danger to the individual, but the danger to white culture. Blee (2000) points out that this use of women as symbols is more for the benefit of men, a 'statement to and about men' (p.115), justifying their racial violence to maintain white male superiority. It plays a role in the practice of constructing the 'other' into

as much of an object as possible (Hage, 1998), and Byrne (2006) accused this position of women as changing when it suits white men; for women to be victims to create a racial threat, or to be bedrocks of culture in reproducing white superiority.

Although the role of women here is weaponised for the benefit of men, there is still an impact on women. Women of colour are explicitly excluded from this construct of victimhood (hooks, 2015), creating a hierarchy within women. hooks (2015) also examines the bonding of white women as victims, which allows them to 'abdicate responsibility' (p.46) for their role in the maintenance and perpetuation of sexism, racism, and classism. In consequence they participate in the othering of non-white men and are implicitly discouraged from challenging this.

The historical context of white supremacy has some relevance, especially considering the tendency of the far-right to invoke nostalgia. Lopez (2005) claims that it is 'beyond argument' (p.6) that European colonialism was a white and racist undertaking, while Hage (1998) identifies how to be 'white' is to be an ideal bearer of Western civilisation. He calls it a fantasy position, but one that is yearned for by those eligible for such an identity, and that it is perpetuated by practices that reinforce racial hierarchy, including violence. Gender plays a crucial role in organising 'race' and 'civilisation', women involved in many different ways in the expansion and maintenance of the British Empire historically. For instance, as above with considerations of white women as victims, this alleged danger has been used to justify formal regulation of relations between races (Ware, 1992).

Furthermore, white women were also representatives and symbols of white imperialism and colonialism. Ware (1992) claims this was not only in a reproductive capacity, but so long as they were of the right class and breeding, they were, in a colonial context, a guarantee of British morals and principles. In a 1930s fashion magazine in Kenya, Ware (1992) identifies a depiction of white women in superiority to black men, the white women a symbol of white people's rule over the country.

Byrne (2006) agrees that middle-class white women played 'a central role in articulating national/imperial identity' (p.142). She points out how the domestic played a key role in the 'civilising' mission of empire, white middle class female domesticity something to be aspired to - and enforced. This research has already examined the work of Moon (1999) on domestic life as a means of reinforcing white bourgeois attitudes on women, making this in some form a legacy of white femininity in imperialism. One of the best examples of postcolonial reverence of white femininity has been, according to Roberts (2005), the Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

reaction to the death of Princess Diana, who provided ‘a perfect image upon which a nation displaces its longing for better days, days of white English beauty, glamour, power’ (p.39). Roberts (2005) goes on to claim that ‘we are still worshipping the white goddess, whatever names we give them’ (p.48); white women do not necessarily require agency to be symbols of white supremacy, and a history of imperialism encourages them to reinforce its hierarchy.

Western feminism does not always reject these influences sufficiently. Ware (1992) points out that feminism has dealt with issues of gender, class and sexuality without acknowledging the dynamics of race, and that few factors have caused more bitterness, division and resentment within the movement. Attempts towards solidarity of gender are fraught with issues of racism, and failure to acknowledge the impacts of white supremacy, the impacts of power and privilege, within feminism (Aniagolu, 2010). hooks (2015) outright accuses racism of abounding in the writings of white feminists, which she believes fail to understand the living conditions of women unlike themselves in race or class. Despite the claims of white feminists, despite how many women suffer from ‘sexist tyranny’, hooks (2015, p. 5) rejects the belief this forms a common bond among all women.

Ware (1992) questions how well white women who have objected to imperialism as a whole, its racism as opposed to only its sexism, have been examined honestly. She believes only their challenges to gender have been celebrated, and that there has been ‘little interest’ in British women who confronted the complexities of male power *and* racism. This focus on gender issues over racial issues is echoed in accusations by hooks (2015) that interest in white women’s rights is kindled whenever society stirs to respond to the needs of oppressed non-whites. The state here prefers to aid whites, prioritising issues of gender so it does not have to address issues of race.

These failures of intersectionality within white feminism are more pressing if one considers that black women historically experienced oppression of white supremacy more often from white women than men, and often in a manner far more brutal and dehumanising. This has only changed a little in modernity; the advances of the status of white women now means that the immediate supervisor, boss, or authority figure of black women is often a white woman (hooks, 2015).

If white women have been shaped by the British Empire, they will have been shaped by its decline. Racial tensions and increases in hate crimes have been linked to the Brexit vote, itself in many cases a manifestation of British desire to ‘take our country back’ (Burnett, 2017). The economic decline of the last ten years has contributed to the far-right’s

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

nostalgic narrative, as austerity impacts not only the working class the hardest, but its racialised workers and communities (Cole, 2015). White supremacy's power in institutions of government keeps non-whites in poverty with less opportunity (Aniagolu, 2010), what Cole (2015) calls part of 'the legacy of empire' (p.27). This poverty, meanwhile, is not part of the construct of 'whiteness' to which the white working class aspire: the white, middle class lifestyle associated also with 'Englishness'.

Again, this brings relevance to Moon (1999), claiming any white woman aspires to become a 'good white girl' (p.179) through bourgeois respectability. It raises the question of what tensions are experienced if this respectability is not economically attainable. While these pressures affect men, too, Byrne (2006) reminds us that race, gender, and class intersect in different ways to produce different experiences.

Racism is not merely a by-product of poverty. hooks (2015) links them both as products of the exploitative hierarchies of capitalism, 'class struggle inextricably bound to the struggle to end racism' (p.3). Cole (2015) puts it more bluntly: that 'the ruling class uses racist ideology to divide workers against each other' (p.8). Influenced towards racism, the working class instead blame structural inequality on each other.

Aside from this manipulation, Hage (1998) examines other reasons for more racist activism from white working classes than middle classes, namely that those with a high sense of governmental belonging have no need to deploy personal violence for national purposes. They are, Hage points out, 'secure in the knowledge that the state is acting their violence for them' (p.69).

Efforts to combat racial tensions through multiculturalist or pluralist approaches to education or the media tend to be watered down by institutional bureaucracies (Frankenberg, 1993), and mainstream politics adopt racist rhetoric if threatened by xenophobic extremist parties (Cole, 2015). Thus is Islamophobia, as encouraged by government, a product of Western imperialism, hegemony, and greed (Cole, 2015), a redirection of public anxiety that in some ways stems from the diminishing of the British Empire.

From depictions of male immigrants as sexually and physically violent by white-owned press (Frankenberg, 1993) to the othering of the colonised subject (Byrne, 2006), colonialism has impacted white racism with a narrative of the white British destined to rule the inferior races (Cole, 2015). But with the end of colonialism, the consequent immigration and changes to Britain's position within Europe and the world, Byrne (2006) questions how

the imagination of Englishness and Britishness has adapted. Lopez (2005) asks the question directly: ‘What happens to whiteness... after it loses its colonial privileges?’ (p.4).

Hage (1998) examines acts of racist violence as means by which a nationalist assumes themselves the ‘master’ of this national space, enacting violence on an other to reinforce its identity; in other words, attacking the non-white as a means of reinforcing white Britishness. It is worth noting the work of Byrne (2006) on the differences between the ‘British’ and ‘English’ identity in relation to imperialism and racism; the former more accepting of multiculturalism, while the latter more of a bastion of tradition and hierarchy. The women in her research posited ‘Englishness’ as ‘white, middle class, and rural and under threat’ from racialised urban spaces, a tranquil and idyllic construct of more traditional and white time (Byrne, 2006, p. 173).

This idyllic construct is under threat from economic downturn, measures of austerity, and the decline of the British Empire itself, with all practical and ideological consequences thereof. Women are as susceptible as men to these pressures giving the sense of something to lose or already lost, from their position within society to an imagined idealised - and white - lifestyle. Only with a separation of the anxieties regarding the fall of Empire from racist ideology can this cease to manifest in racialised violence.

Tackling racism is challenging when it is ingrained in social hierarchy, when white supremacism proves ‘a rhythm to the very heart of the culture’, and its confrontation would inevitably bring instability and anxieties (Ware & Back, 2002, p. 22). Cole (2015) concludes that only challenges to capitalism and imperialism can ease the burdens of racialised communities, while Lopez (2005) calls upon whiteness to begin to surrender ‘its position of mastery’ (p.21). The culpability of white women in white supremacy has been established, as well as their failures to address it in the fight for their own equality. They remain part of a system which, as it others non-whites and encourages whites to feel threatened, urges them to take their place on both a passive and active level to maintain hegemony.

Conclusion

Despite a lack of studies focusing upon the violence and activism of women in the far-right in Britain, evidence places them as perpetrators of hate crimes and members of groups such as the EDL or National Action (Allen, 2017). They may be a minority, but they are a presence, and hooks (2015) reminds us that the fact that women may not commit violent acts as often as men, does not negate the reality of female violence. ‘By combining the Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

aberrant with the ordinary, the peculiar with the prosaic, modern racist groups gain strength' claims Blee (2003, p. 3); and the radicalisation process is driven by pressures of everyday lives and undercurrents of everyday hatred.

In an age of austerity, of a desire for independence from Europe and national sovereignty, of the decline of Empire and the consequent social anxieties, it would be easy to underestimate how women have been affected. White women may be perceived as oppressed by the patriarchy, victims of the hegemony of white men or the violence of non-white men. They have nonetheless been supporters of white supremacy, either in implicit familial and social support, or directly, for the benefit of all whites or in pursuing the equality of white women at the expense of non-whites. In the examination of white supremacy's place in the micro, meso, and macro levels of far-right radicalisation, there has always been a place for women to be affected, directly or through the men in their lives, or through wider loyalty to the hierarchy of white supremacy that benefits them.

It is clear that these women have been under-researched, though what is not clear is why. Perhaps there is more to hooks' (2015) belief that white women are supported by the state when the state must meet demands to answer structural inequality, and favours helping white women rather than non-whites. There is benefit to society maintaining a portrayal of white women as oppressed instead of oppressors, so the state may appear to take action while doing nothing to dismantle white supremacy. If not the state, then the work of white feminists has led the recent means by which white women are examined, and it often finds them victims of non-whites (Ware, 1992) or as confronting systemic inequality in which they are the oppressed (Aniagolu, 2010). There is more to be learnt from the writing of black feminists and other postcolonial academics as the primary means by which white women and their role in enforcing systematic oppressions are challenged.

It draws attention to an inherent limitation of this research: namely, the author's own whiteness. Ware and Back (2002) examine the ethics of such an enquiry; that it requires 'looking into the face of racism and seeing a trace of oneself reflected in its eye' (p.59). An attempt to analyse white supremacist society without considering its influences upon myself would be, at best, disingenuous; at worst it would reproduce those same racist attitudes. It then becomes easy to condemn racist women as Blee's (2000) 'pathological individual' (p.192) instead of accepting one's own place in the pathological racism, intolerance, and bigotry in society. As a middle-class white woman, I benefit from the prestige and status granted by a white supremacist society, and am empowered by the feminism of white women

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

to fight for my own rights while being excused from any fight for equality for others. Without accepting one's own culpability, one cannot effectively recognise the culpability in society at large. This discomfort and its difficulties are, Ware and Back (2002) claim, necessary and must be embraced, but this research has still been conducted from a position of privilege and benefit from the same hierarchical system of white supremacy that it endeavours to condemn. If whiteness is most visible to those disadvantaged by it (Frankenberg, 1993) then it is their work and findings that should be supported first in challenging white supremacy.

Much of the study of micro and meso-level pressures focused upon the radicalisation of the working class, even though the view that the white working class are especially more xenophobic has been questioned (Flemmen & Savage, 2017). Certainly austerity and its manipulation by the ruling classes has contributed to the rise of groups such as the EDL, but further examination of the racism of more affluent, white men and women in Britain, its causes and consequence, would be of benefit. The above brief examination of the 'English' identity by Byrne (2006) as part of a tranquil, traditional, white middle class rural, and aspirational lifestyle is worthy of more research in regard to radicalisation. Its lure is felt by disadvantaged whites who cannot achieve it, but those who live it, benefit from it, and perpetuate it as desirable are playing perhaps a more significant role in widening the racial rifts in society.

It benefits capitalism to fracture the racialised working classes, to force the working classes to bear the brunt of austerity, and to deploy global Islamophobia as a means of upholding modern imperialism (Cole, 2015). This renders it more than poverty that causes the anxieties which provoke far-right radicalisation; these are also white communities who feel disconnected from their own governments, feel unrepresented and unheard, and this leads to the populism that has prompted Brexit and the subsequent backlash against multiculturalism (Ford & Goodwin, 2017). Sections of white communities are radicalised by disconnection from their own government, and their own government's manipulations to make them blame anything else.

These are not pressures which explicitly affect women, and are often written of in general terms that, if they are specific, tend to focus upon men. But they do affect women; women feel the pressures of capitalism, the anxieties of the collapse of the British Empire and decline of prestige of their cultural identity; women voted for Brexit and participated in subsequent violence. Sometimes they are affected in different ways and with different outcomes, but sometimes their anxieties and vulnerabilities are much the same as those of

Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

men. They have still been often ignored in the literature; sometimes implicitly by discussion of men's experience as general, sometimes explicitly by the examination solely of men.

Research might suggest them to be only approximately a fifth of the British far-right (Bartlett & Littler, 2011). But they are a considerably larger presence in the white supremacist hierarchy, ideology, and society that fuels and drives it.

References

- Abbas, T. & Awan, I. (2015). Limits of UK counterterrorism policy and its implications for Islamophobia and far-right extremism. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 4(3), 16-29, doi: 10.5204/ijcjsd.v3i2.241
- Allen, C. (2014). Britain First: The 'frontline resistance' to the Islamification of Britain. *The Political Quarterly*, 85(3), 354-361. doi:10.1111/1467-923X.12118
- Allen, C. (2017). Proscribing National Action: Considering the impact of banning the British far-right group. *The Political Quarterly*, 88(4), 652-659. doi:10.1111/1467-923X.12368
- Alonso, R. (2008). *Radicalisation processes leading to acts of terrorism*. Retrieved from http://www.rikcoolsaet.be/files/art_ip_wz/Expert%20Group%20Report%20Violent%20Radicalisation%20FINAL.pdf
- Ambikaipaker M. (2015). Liberal exceptions: violent racism and routine anti-racist failure in Britain, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38(12), 2055-2070. doi:10.1080/01419870.2015.1021262
- Aniagolu, E. (2010). *Co-whites: How and why white women 'betrayed' the struggle for racial equality in the United States*. Plymouth: University Press of America.
- Bailey, G. & Edwards, P. (2017). Rethinking 'radicalisation': Microradicalisations and reciprocal radicalisation as an intertwined process. *Journal for Reradicalization*, 10, 225-281.
- Bartlett, J. & Birdwell, J. (2013). *Cumulative radicalisation between the far-right and Islamist groups in the UK: A review of evidence*. Retrieved from <https://www.demos.co.uk/files/Demos%20-%20Cumulative%20Radicalisation%20-%205%20Nov%202013.pdf>
- Bartlett, J. & Littler, M. (2011). *Inside the EDL: Populist politics in a digital age*. Retrieved from https://www.demos.co.uk/files/Inside_the_edl_WEB.pdf
- Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

- Bhui, K., Everitt, B., & Jones, E. (2014). Might depression, psychosocial adversity, and limited social assets explain vulnerability to and resistance against violent radicalisation? *PLoS ONE*, 9(9), doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0105918.
- Blee, K. (2003). *Inside organised racism: Women in the hate movement*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Burnett, J. (2017). Racial violence and the Brexit state. *Race & Class*, 58(4), 85-97. doi:10.1177/0306396816686283
- Busher, J. (2015). *The making of anti-Muslim protest: Grassroots activism in the English Defence League*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Byrne, B. (2006). *White lives: The interplay of 'race', class and gender in everyday life*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Capelos, T. & van Troost, D. (2006). *Reason, passion, and Islam: The impact of emotionality and values on political tolerance*. Retrieved from <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2013316>
- Clarke, V. & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: Over-coming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26 (2), 120-123.
- Carter, A. (2016). Right-wing terrorism and hate crime in the UK, in Fielitz, M. and Laloire, L. (eds.) *Trouble on the far-right: Contemporary right-wing strategies and practices in Europe* (pp. 155 – 162). Retrieved from <https://www.degruyter.com/viewbooktoc/product/484284>
- Carter, B. (2013). *Women and violent extremism*. Birmingham: GSDRC.
- Cockburn, T. (2007). 'Performing' racism: engaging young supporters of the far-right in England. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 28(5), 547-560. doi:10.1080/01425690701412564.
- Cole, M. (2015). *Racism: A critical analysis*. London: Pluto Press.
- Copsey, N., Dack, J., Littler, M., & Feldman, M. (2013). *Anti-muslim hate crime and the far-right*. Retrieved from https://www.tees.ac.uk/docs/DocRepo/Research/Copsey_report3.pdf
- Crewnshaw, M. (1981). The causes of terrorism. *Comparative Politics*, 13(4), 379-399.
- Fekete, L. (2015). Rewiring fascists: behind the cult of Exit. *Race & Class*, 56(3), 91-101.
- Ferber, A. (2007). The construction of black masculinity. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 31(1), 11-24. doi:10.1177/0193723506296829
- Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

- Fielding, N. (2004). Getting the most from archived qualitative data: Epistemological, practical and professional obstacles. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 7(1), 97-104. doi:10.1080/13645570310001640699
- Flemmen, M. & Savage, M. (2017). The politics of nationalism and white race in the UK. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 68, 233-264. doi: 10.1111/1468-4446.12311.
- Ford, R. & Goodwin, M. (2017). Britain after Brexit: A nation divided. *Journal of Democracy*, 28, 17-30.
- Frankenburg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of whiteness*. Routledge: London.
- Garland, J. & Treadwell, J. (2012). The new politics of hate? An assessment of the appeal of the English Defence League amongst disadvantaged white working-class communities in England. *Journal of Hate Studies*. 10(123), 123-141.
- Gaston, S. (2015). *Far-right extremism in the populist Age*. Retrieved from <https://www.demos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Demos-Briefing-Paper-Far-Right-Extremism-2017.pdf>
- Givens, T. (2004). The radical right gender gap. *Comparative Political Studies*, 37(1), 30-54. doi:10.1177/0010414003260124.
- Gottlieb, J. (2000). *Feminine fascism: Women in Britain's fascist movement*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. & Namey, E. (2012). *Applied social analysis*. London: Sage Publication Ltd.
- Hage, G. (1998). *White nation: Fantasies of white supremacy in a multicultural society*. Annandale: Pluto Press Australia.
- Heath A. & Demireva, N. (2014). Has multiculturalism failed in Britain? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37(1), 161-180. doi:10.1080/01419870.2013.808754.
- hooks, b. (2015). *From margin to center*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Home Office (2015). *Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales*. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf
- Hopkins, P. (2016). Gendering Islamophobia, racism, and white supremacy: Gendered violence against those who look Muslim. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 6(2), 186-189. doi: 10.1177/2043820616655018
- Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

- Jackson, R., Jarvis, L., Gunning, J. & Breen Smyth, M. (2011). *Terrorism: A critical introduction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jha, N. (2008). *Research methodology*. New Delhi: Abhishek Publications.
- Kinnvall C. (2015). Borders and fear: Insecurity, gender and the far-right in Europe. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 23(4), 514-529.
doi:10.1080/14782804.2015.1056115
- Krueger, A. (2008) *What makes a terrorist?: Economics and the roots of terrorism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kundnani, A. (2015). *A decade lost: Rethinking radicalisation and extremism*. Retrieved from <http://www.claystone.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Claystone-rethinking-radicalisation.pdf>
- Lopez, A. (2005). Introduction: Whiteness after empire. In A. Lopez (ed.) *Postcolonial whiteness: A critical reader on race and empire* (pp. 1-30). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- McLaren, L. & Johnson, M. (2007). Resources, group conflict and symbols: Explaining anti-immigration hostility in Britain. *Political Studies*, 55, 709-732. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00680.x
- Miller-Idriss, C. (2018). Youth and the radical right. In J. Rydgren (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of the radical right* (pp. 348-365). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Miller-Idriss, C. & Pilkington, H. (2017). In search of the missing link: Gender, education and the radical right. *Gender and Education*, 29(2), 133-146.
doi:10.1080/09540253.2017.1274116
- Moon, D. (1999). White enculturation and bourgeois ideology: The discursive production of “good (white) girls”. In T. Nakayama, T. & J. Martin. (eds.) *Whiteness: The communication of social identity* (pp. 177-197). London: Sage Publication Ltd.
- Mulinari, D. & Neergard, A. (2015). Racist dreams and municipal budgets: women representing a culturally racist party in local politics. *Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture*, 21(5), 506-523. doi:10.1080/13504630.2015.1081561
- Mythen, G., Walklate, S. & Peatfield, E. (2016). Assembling and deconstructing radicalisation in PREVENT: A case of policy-based evidence making? *Critical Social Policy*, 37(2), 180-201. doi:/10.1177/0261018316683463
- Nair, T. & Chong, A. (2017). *Radicalisation of the female worker*. Singapore: Nanyang Technological University.
- Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

- Odorfer, C. (2015). *Root causes of radicalization in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States*. Retrieved from <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/conflict-prevention/discussion-paper---root-causes-of-radicalism.html>
- Pai, H. (2016). *Angry white people: Coming face-to-face with the British far-right*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Pearson, E. & Winterbotham, E. (2017). Women, gender and Daesh radicalisation. *The RUSI Journal*, 162(3), 60-72. doi:10.1080/03071847.2017.1353251
- Pilkington, H. (2016). *Loud and proud: Passion and politics in the English Defence League*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Pisoiu, D. (2015). Subcultural theory applied to Jihadi and right-wing radicalization in Germany. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 27(1), 9-28. doi:10.1080/09546553.2014.959406
- Roberts, C., Innes, M., Williams, M., Tregidga, J. & Gadd, D. (2013). *Understanding who commits hate crime and why they do it*. Retrieved from <http://www.mesmacnortheast.com/wpcontent/uploads/2013/08/understanding-who-commits-hate-crime-and-why-they-do-it-en.pdf>
- Roberts, D. (2005). The body of the princess. In A. Lopez (ed.) *Postcolonial whiteness: A critical reader on race and empire* (pp. 31-52). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Rydgren, J. (2018). The radical right: An introduction. In J. Rydgren (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of the radical right* (pp. 1-16). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Saltman, E. (2016). Western female migrants to ISIS: Propaganda, radicalisation and recruitment. In M. Khader (ed.), *Combating violent extremism and radicalisation in the digital age* (pp. 174-196). Hershey: Information Science Reference
- Sandford, D. (2017, February 26). Far-right terror threat 'growing' in UK as four plots foiled. *BBC News*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43200966>
- Schafer, J., Mullins, C. & Box, S. (2014). Awakenings: The emergence of white supremacist ideologies. *Deviant Behavior*, 35, 173-196. doi:10.1080/01639625.2013.834755
- Schmid, A. (2013). Radicalisation, de-radicalisation, counter-radicalisation: A conceptual discussion and literature review. *The International Centre for Counterterrorism - the Hague*, 4(2). doi: 10.19165/2013.1.02
- Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115

- Sedgwick, M. (2010). The concept of radicalisation as a source of confusion. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 22(4), 481-502. doi:10.1080/09546553.2010.491009
- Shaw, M. (1995). Conceptualising violence by women. In R. E. Dobash, R. Dobash, & L. Noaks (eds.) *Gender and crime* (pp. 115-131). Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Simi, P., Blee, K., DeMichele, M., & Windisch, S. (2017). Addicted to hate: Identity residual among former white supremacists. *American Sociological Review*, 82(6), 1167-1187. doi:10.1177/0003122417728719
- Standing, G. (2011). *The precariat: The new dangerous class*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Sumpter, C. (2017). *Terror in Finsbury Park: Copycat retaliation or cumulative radicalisation?* Singapore: Nanyang Technological University.
- Taylor, S., Bogdan, R. & DeVault, M. (2016). *Introduction to qualitative methods*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Treadwell J. (2013). The English Defence League and the counter jihad. *Criminal Justice Matters*, 93(1), 8-9.
- Tufail, W. (2015). Rotherham, Rochdale, and the racialised threat of the ‘Muslim grooming gang.’ *Crime and Justice Journal*, 4(3), 30-43. doi:0.5204/ijcjsd.v4i3.249
- van der Valk, I. (2014). Youth engagement in right-wing extremism: Comparative cases from the Netherlands. In C. Mudde, (ed.) *Youth and the Extreme Right*, New York: IDebate Press.
- Vieten, U. & Poynting, S. (2016). Contemporary far-right racist populism in Europe. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 37(6), 533-540. doi:10.1080/07256868.2016.1235099
- Veldhuis, T. & Staun, J. (2009). *Islamist radicalisation: A root cause model*. Retrieved from https://www.diis.dk/files/media/publications/import/islamist_radicalisation.veldhuis_and_staun.pdf
- Ware, V. (1992). *Beyond the pale: White women, racism and history*. London: Verso.
- Ware, V. & Back, L. (2002). *Out of whiteness: Colour, politics and culture*. London: University of Chicago Press.
- Widfeldt, A. & Brandenburg, H. (2017). What kind of party is the UK Independence Party? The future of the extreme right in Britain or just another Tory Party? *Political Studies*, 00(0), 1-24. doi:10.1177/0032321717723509
- Stinton, C. (2019). Combining the aberrant with the ordinary: The role of white supremacy in the far-right radicalisation of women. *Journal of Applied Psychology and Social Science*, 5(1), 86-115