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Breaking the Masculine Looking Glass:  
Women as Co-founders, Nurturers, and Executors  
of Extremism in New Zealand

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A thesis presented in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## Abstract

The world of extremist violence is not wholly masculine despite presenting as such. Women are just as capable as men of embracing toxic ideologies, organized hate, and committing acts of violence. Yet when it comes to women's active presence in violent extremism (VE) and Extremism/Terrorism (E&T), general skepticism about women's agency and free will means that any discussion will be focused on men. Focusing on the NZ environment post 9/11, this thesis presents insight into how women can, and do, participate in extreme ideologies, specifically in contemporary Islamic (IE) and Right-Wing extremism (RWE). It aims to advance conceptual foundations applicable to the NZ counter-terrorism (CT) environment and enhance public and government agency understandings. This thesis will show that the predisposition to gender profile women erases them as potential extremists (violent and non-violent) which has ramifications for national security.

This erasure happens in two ways. Firstly, gendered norms and narratives that infantilize or sexualize these women inspire security, legal and political responses to do the same. Secondly, it leads security frameworks to focus on men and disregard the women in their lives. Continuing to underestimate women means the more extensive and complex picture of extremism in NZ remains missing. Women's IE or RWE ideological adherence and involvement are not purely domiciliary. Framing it as such deprecates women's contribution as actively committed co-creators of a euro supreme nation or a militant Islamic caliphate. This thesis confirms that extreme male hegemonic movements have long drawn diverse female recruits, and NZ women are not the exception. If NZ refuses to treat these women now or in the future with the same seriousness as their male counterparts, gender cynicism obscures potential national security threats. NZ needs to update its future-focused CT infrastructure to remove definitional silos and gender-blind spots because VE and E&T are ongoing global and local phenomena.

**Keywords:** Extremism, Violent Extremism, Terrorism, Ideology, Jihadi, Islamic Extremism, Right-Wing Extremism, Women, Female, Western, New Zealand, Gender, Feminism, Anti-Feminism, Misogyny.

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAF	Amadeu Antonio Foundation
ADL	Anti-Defamation League
Antifa	Left-Wing Anti-fascist movement
ASIO	Australian Intelligence Organisation
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
CT	Counter-Terrorism
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
Daesh	Arabic Acronym - Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) <sup>1</sup>
DIA	Department of Internal Affairs
DOC	Department of Conservation
DPMC	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
GTI	Global Terrorism Index
FVEY	Five Eyes Alliance (NZ, USA, Canada, UK & Australia)
ICCT	International Centre for Counter-Terrorism
ICG	International Crisis Group

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<sup>1</sup> Known as ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria), ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), Islamic State or Daesh however in this research the terms used by the various researcher will be incorporated to reflect their representations if required to their opinion/research. It should be considered to all mean the same group.

ICSR	International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation
IEP	Institute for Economics and Peace
IE	Islamic Extremism / Extremists
Incel	Involuntary Celibates
I&S	Intelligence and Security Committee
ISD	Institute of Strategic Dialogue
KKK	Klu Klux Klan
LW	Left-Wing
LWE	Left-Wing Extremism
MBIE	Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MRA	Men's Rights Activist/s
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
NSG	National Security Group
NZ	New Zealand
NZSIS	New Zealand Security Intelligence Services (SIS)
OIA	Official Information Act
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe
POTD	Propaganda of the Deed

RWE	Right-Wing Extremism / Extremists
RW	Right-Wing
TiA	Taken in Hand
Trad Wife	Traditional Wives
TSA	Terrorism Suppression Act
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
UTR	Unite the Right
VE	Violent Extremism/Extremists
WP	White Power
WS	White Supremacy
9/11	September 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2001 Twin Towers Terrorist Attacks. USA

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Women as Potential Violent Extremist Threats - Not just Brides or Pawns.



“NZ women are slightly different – They leave paradise to be martyred.”<sup>2</sup>

This thesis sets out to answer how New Zealand (NZ) women feature within contemporary violent extremism (VE), extremism, and terrorism (E&T) contexts. Are NZ women “slightly different” as we see in the cartoon? Or do they follow recognized ideological patterns that have long gone unnoticed in NZ? This thesis uses the NZ’s 2015 jihadi bride furore as a departure point to illustrate prevalent but reductive western gender notions and their influence on how extremist women are recognized, discussed and responded to in all sectors of society. It will show that inattention to women’s involvement in extremist contexts has allowed NZ to fall into the gender stereotype trap, which highlights men as perpetrators of extremism and women as their victims.<sup>3</sup> This thesis argues for the real-world dismantling of the ‘male as terrorist or extremist’ lens to future proof NZ’s national security and counter-terrorism (CT) strategies.

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<sup>2</sup> NZ Herald, *Cartoon: NZ Jihadi Brides*, 09 December 2015. Accessed 31 July 2021. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/cartoon-nz-jihadi-brides/LPO4IWJPTIPENOYTBG5OOC3U2I/>

<sup>3</sup> Catherine Powell. *Women and Terrorism: Victims, Perpetrators and Problem Solvers*. Council for Foreign Relations, March 2016, Accessed 13 February 2021. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/women-and-terrorism-victims-perpetrators-and-problem-solvers>

The thesis aims to demonstrate and then deconstruct the masculine lens that pervades the field. It moves beyond the confinements of male-centric narratives to render women more visible, specifically in Islamic Extremism (IE) and Right-Wing Extremism (RWE) both globally and locally. This visibility permits this thesis to offer a gender-inclusive (not genderless) view of the NZ threatscape and propose practical steps for national security sector analysis in NZ. And recommendations for academic research to further evolve those national security frameworks.

NZ's 'jihadi bride' narrative emerged in December 2015 after former Prime Minister John Key uttered the term during NZ's annual Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) meeting.<sup>4</sup> Key's comment was in response to NZSIS Director Rebecca Kitteridge's statement that NZ women were traveling to Iraq and Syria, which "*was something we hadn't seen previously or been aware of previously.*"<sup>5</sup> This thesis argues that Key's use of the 'jihadi bride' label played into western depictions that habitually construct Muslim women, particularly young women, as victims lacking the agency for violence who are persuaded to marry violent extremist men. Such depictions are problematic because framing an individual or a group as a single entity misaligns security responses to VE and E&T.<sup>6</sup>

Subsequent general discourse about NZ's jihadi bride/s' quickly replicated the western gender-biased, neo-orientalist depictions of women's contribution that this thesis will demonstrate is pervasive internationally. Furthermore, international and local case examples show what occurs when women's flagrant acts defy diversion or minimization, for example, label polarization mythicizes those women as deadlier than their male peers, especially western Islamic converts (i.e., 'White Widows').<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> NZME, "Jihadi Bride 'fears over Kiwi women,'" *Otago Daily Times*, 8 January 2016, accessed 05 May 2020. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/jihadi-bride-fears-over-kiwi-women>.

<sup>5</sup> Tracy Watkins and Tommy Livingstone. 'Kiwi Jihadi brides on the rise', *Stuff*, 08 December 2015. Accessed 31 July 2021. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/74881123/kiwi-jihadi-brides-on-the-rise>

<sup>6</sup> David A Lake, "Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-first Century", *DialogIO Spring* (2002): 17-18.

<sup>7</sup> Katherine R Brown. *White Widows: The Myth of the Deadliest Jihadi Women*, Institute for Global Change. 2018: 3

This thesis confirms that extreme male hegemonic movements have long drawn an array of female recruits and finds that NZ women are not the exception. Throughout this thesis (and appendix) case studies illustrate how female IE or RWE adherents can be efficient facilitators indoctrinators, intelligence gatherers, and conspirators. Furthermore, women's diverse extremisms are rarely consistently included in the R&T and VE narrative in ways that mirror reality. The literature shows that this oversight is not new globally, but NZ women have long been missing from the E&T and VE discourse, including academia. By looking at women, specifically in IE and RWE, due to their ideologies being prevalent in NZ's current narrative, this thesis seeks to challenge and fill that gap.

In NZ, due to 9/11, IE dominated the collective consciousness until the Christchurch Mosque Attacks on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019 by a lone male put RWE strains at the forefront. Global patterns (see Appendix A) not only held warning signs of western extremist activity but reflected the need to modernize and future-proof domestic CT strategies and incorporate male and female E&T / VE actors. While NZ typically experiences latency in international trends, the Christchurch Mosque attacks demonstrates the connectivity of extremist thought as the act inspired other overseas attacks.<sup>8</sup> By examining how women feature in these networks, this thesis contributes to that national security future-proofing.

This thesis utilizes academic analysis to think about a contemporary security issue. It is written primarily for NZ's CT practitioners and national security academic readers for three reasons. Firstly, to help shatter the dominant masculine lens which pervades E&T and VE analysis, so western women are (un)seen accurately as contemporary threat actors. Secondly, to identify superficial understandings around women's involvement in extremism to show how these worldviews evoke and manipulate womanhood, particularly in RWE contexts. Finally, it argues that if we eliminate women as a blind spot, we can begin to offer practical recommendations for a gender-inclusive (not genderless)

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<sup>8</sup> Subsequent RWE attackers linked themselves to the Christchurch event in their manifestos/discourse. These attacks occurred in America (Polway, El Paso). Norway (Baerum), and Germany (Halle), amongst others.

security approach to enhance CT analysis, cross-government collaboration, and public engagement.

The journey starts conceptually with Chapters One to Two presenting the thesis's rationale, focus, and methodology. The remaining chapter content is divided into two parts. The work in part one (Chapters Three to Five) continues to build a conceptual framework from the academic literature. It provides a gender-inclusive foundation that allows this thesis to change direction in part two (Chapters Six- Eight). Part two asks what happens when we use Part One's analysis to disrupt the masculine gaze and structure that dominates issues of E&T and VE in NZ? In other words, how do the concepts presented hold up when we apply them in practice to NZ.

Part one (Chapters Three-Five) explores three literature sets: General work on women and extremism (Chapter Three), IE and women (Chapter Four), and RWE and women (Chapter Five). By doing so, this thesis demonstrates that: (a) these ideologies have a reliance on women regardless of their vehement patriarchal characteristics, (b) women are tangible assets to these causes, (c) a diverse array of women can actively seek out, and contribute by choice, to these movements, and (d) these women already exist locally and internationally. These women are not hidden from sight, just from our general understandings and official responses.

The thesis appendices provide case study examples of individual women that fit the criteria discussed in chapters four and five. While the thesis chapters talk about IE and RWE in their entirety, the case studies point to individual lived experiences of those ideological views in western international contexts and here at home in NZ. In combination, this approach merges and expands insight into the similarities and variability in women's participation in extremism for government entities, the media, and the public.

Part one weaves in IE and RWE ideological aspects for two reasons. Firstly, to further contextualize and clarify the literature in this thesis, and secondly, to orient the reader to the IE/RWE ideological framing that underpins the women's experience. For example, how women navigate male hegemony or misogyny to contribute to extremist causes. Chapter Four includes dynamics such as the influence 'Binladenism' (media framing of IE)

and the (un)suitability of the western feminism lens to understand extremist women's motivations.

While Chapter Five untangles contemporary RWE strains to reveal the nuance of women's involvement, such as how women can peddle hateful racial notions through pseudo-intellectualism and deflect attention. The literature shows that RWE women's activity, even when blatantly overt, is often unrecognized by authorities, which allows them to continue unabated. Hence any exclusion of the ideological factors that motivate women or underpins their participation would contribute to the gender profiling that currently overlooks them.

In combination, the ideologies and the literature develop a view that critiques western feminism as an ill-fitting paradigm that overlooks the nuances of participation and how womanhood is strategically evoked and weaponized by these extremist groups. Notably, the literature shows that IE and RWE propagandize western feminism as decadent. They view it as the cause of moral and cultural decline, allowing them to offer their brand of anti-feminism as a counter-culture for recruitment and justification purposes.

Part one covers a vast body of knowledge about this female demographic. The literature, real-world examples, and ideological insights in this section construct a global understanding of western women in E&T and VE networks to apply to the NZ context in part two of this thesis. Part two (Chapters Six to Eight) finds that across NZ's literature, media and government, embedded western gendered norms erase, misrepresent or misunderstand women as potential actors in the field.

Chapter Six considers the 'Dual perspective of Extremism and Women in Aotearoa' to explore perspectives (i.e., academic and media) in NZ's E&T landscape. It inspects NZ's historical events and domestic RWE heritage to understand NZ women's participation or depictions of them. This exploration finds NZ women are missing from NZ's discussions of extremist actors, which contrasts with the literature reviewed in part one. Following part one's recognition that women's voices are expunged rather than extinct, the thesis then turns to NZ's government agencies and security sector to understand if the absence is replicated in that domain as well.



Chapter Seven demonstrates ‘How does the NZ Government view Women’s extremism’ and finds glimmers of understanding on a practical level amongst some agencies. Still, the official chronicles (Official Information Requests and NZSIS annual reports) evidence a muddled comprehension of women as extremists seems to exist despite demonstrating that NZ has one current and one recent case involving women in extremist contexts. The chapter’s analysis reveals a fragmentation across the NZ government that is likely to burden collaboration, intelligence sharing, and the identification of women associated with or within extremist networks.

Because Chapters Six and Seven demonstrate that extremist women are absent from the NZ threatscape, chapter Eight sets out to break the masculine looking glass itself to present ‘Women and Violent Extremism in New Zealand: A Threat Assessment’. It draws from across this thesis’s content to provide a rudimentary but gender-inclusive approach to NZ’s national security. Gender inclusivity in the field still needs to escape label polarising terms (e.g., Jihadi Brides) and western-centric formulations (e.g., feminism), but doing so would enhance NZ’s CT capabilities.

Any genderless dialogue about E&T and VE concerns may avert general criticism, but it detaches from the realities of the ideologies themselves. Not all women are threats, but we need to accept women as potential threats and be ready to act or respond proportionately. Complacency should not be an option, particularly when the Christchurch mosque attacks have created NZ sites of significance for IE and RWE adherents locally and globally.

Chapter eight argues that VE and E&T challenges will not cease, so the time is right for NZ to adjust the conversation across government, media, and public spaces. The accurate portrayal of women’s active participation on all platforms is likely to decrease the likelihood their ideological activity going underreported, unnoticed, or dismissed. Chapter Eight concludes part two’s analytical component, leaving Chapter Nine to summarise the thesis findings and providing suggestions for future research. It confirms that NZ women feature in extremist networks and that the male gaze seen internationally exists in NZ. We need to break, discard, or substantively revise it to consider women’s contributions more clearly. This thesis shows that NZ women are not different from western women overseas who adhere to IE or RWE beliefs on all spectrum levels. By

breaking the long-held masculine lens that habitually renders women non-threatening, the thesis offers gender-inclusive threat assessment recommendations that go beyond superficial head nods to self-agency, women as victims' frames, and females as extremist men's sidekicks.

Overall the thesis argues that locally and internationally, western women's active presence in E&T or VE gets downplayed or forgotten due to general skepticism about their involvement, overarching stereotypes, and outsider's ideological confusion. These influences play out within security agency frameworks, government, media narratives, public understandings and associated academic fields in NZ. This thesis's dual practitioner and academic focus allow it to provide a base of readily accessible and pertinent information to inform policy, training, and strategic considerations. It also encourages further research on aspects such as women's legitimate activism versus extremism in NZ.

While external disciplines can add to the field, a lack of practical insight into NZ's national security communities may temper their approaches' applicability and acceptability. Fortunately, NZ has a small pool of engaged E&T and VE scholars with insights into the sector, which will help bridge the gap between security practitioners and academia. This collaboration is vital because, as Anne Kelly argued earlier, the increased presence of women in extremism makes it irresponsible not to analyse their participation more accurately.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Annie Kelly, "The Housewives of White Supremacy", New York Times, 1 June 2018, Accessed 13 February 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/01/opinion/sunday/tradwives-women-alt-right.html>

## **Chapter 2: Methodology and Framework**

This chapter sets out the core research question and outlines the literature search, literature challenges, and justification for my approach. It evidences the various search terms used for the data collection on multiple platforms. Additionally, I explain the need to examine sporadic literature to harvest relevant perspectives and analysis and the focus on states in the Five Eyes (FVEY) intelligence alliance. I used the Official Information Act to obtain primary data from various NZ government agencies in combination with their public reports and media commentary. Two external perspectives were provided on NZ women and extremism through personal email communications. Finally, I overview how these all come together to answer the research question.

### **2.1 Methodology.**

This thesis's methodology combines an extensive literature review of what is known internationally about women's roles in extremist groups (mainly white supremacist and jihadist) with Official Information Act (OIA) requests sent to a variety of NZ Government Agencies asking for information about the presence of extremist women in NZ.

#### **2.1.1 Literature Search, Justification, and Rationale for the approach taken.**

An exhaustive search of relevant data from the era was required from post 9/11 until the present day, ranging from paragraphs and chapters in general terrorism academia to the small number of books and articles specifically focusing on female terrorism due to NZ data's absence and research. A substantial amount of data was collected and then summarised for the literature review and subsequent analysis. At times a descriptive approach has been necessary to provide a spectrum of understanding on modern-day female VE to inform western considerations.

Due to the lack of entire works on western female terrorism, general publications identified through searches are included if they dedicated a section of analysis to female terrorism and/or extremism or focused on relevant issues such as radicalisation. The literature review publications were limited to post 9/11 articles published in peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, books, expert reports, and think tank content.

Media commentaries included are authored by known experts/academics in terrorism and counter-terrorism (CT) or relevant to media discourse exploration. This criterion helped ensure the review had current, peer-reviewed scholarly information over opinion, hearsay, or media content. When applicable, media articles were utilized, including dialogue examples, case study data, expert opinion, interviews, government press releases, and media statements.

### **2.1.2 Literature Review Approach.**

A challenge to this type of research is access to immediate, first-hand accounts due to ethical considerations, security implications, classified information access (or lack thereof), and direct 'outsider' access to these groups' members are problematic. These factors all dictate drawing data generated from other western nations to lay a foundation for understanding the NZ security context. This approach aligns with NZ's international security coalitions and intelligence-sharing agreements from a practical security sector perspective. This literature review will combine data from NZ and international terrorism/extremism fields through a systematic literature review of 'Five Eye' (FVEY) Countries (Australia, UK, USA, Canada, and NZ) and supplementary literature from European sources.

The systematic review comprehensively analyzes primary and secondary sources relevant to the post 9/11 environment's research topic. The post 9/11 period encapsulates the timeline after September 11, 2001, New York terrorist attacks that altered the international security landscape and continue to do so today. Thus, for scope and relevance, I focus only on material generated after 2001.

Data was solicited through academic libraries (online and hard copy), texts (books and eBooks), archives, and internet sources (such as google scholar) balanced with perspectives from official websites and non-governmental websites. Secondary sources such as media reports represent media rhetoric, public reaction, and case examples to supplement the analysis. Other potential sources are police transcribes, sworn

testimonies, and substantiated accounts from individuals with direct access to information of interest.<sup>10</sup>

Specific author searches and search strings (keyword collections) relevant to the research variables were conducted within multiple literature search engines.<sup>11</sup> During assembly, I kept files to provide oversight of literature inclusion and rejection criteria and a technique to monitor and minimize any selection bias during the writing process.<sup>12</sup>

The literature review includes approaches and perspectives from various disciplines such as criminology, humanities, political science, sociology, and psychology; however, crime science approaches are appropriate due to latent conceptual similarities between terrorism and crime. As such, this review's wide-ranging contents reflect the interdisciplinary nature of this thesis, where the phenomenon of extremist women and their risk to NZ is the central focus, rather than any disciplinary approach to the phenomenon.

### **2.1.3 Literature Challenges.**

The lack of primary terrorism research, let alone female terrorism research, is not quickly addressed due to its complexities and potential danger for researchers.<sup>13</sup> Empirical studies are challenged by extreme groups or individuals' secretive, overt/covert, sporadic hostile nature.<sup>14</sup> Male members' information and ideological narrative about women can be more accessible than complete information from female members themselves, depending on the movement (i.e., IE versus RWE). Accessibility, locality of subjects and researchers, and language barriers block the primary data for this research. Another is the

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<sup>10</sup> Jialun Qin, Jennifer J. Xu, Daning Hu, Marc Sageman and Hsinchun Chen, "Analyzing Terrorist Networks: A Case Study of the Global Jihad Network", *Intelligence and Security Informatics*, no. 3495 (2005): 287-304.

<sup>11</sup> I.e., Western culture/background, female, extremist support/involvement, domestic or international, female gang involvement and age.

<sup>12</sup> Rory J Piper, *How to write a systematic literature review: a guide for medical students*, (UK, University of Edinburgh. 2013), 1- 8.

<sup>13</sup> Karen Jacques and Paul J Taylor, "Female Terrorism: A Review", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 21, no.3, (2009): 499-515.

<sup>14</sup> Jacques & Taylor, "Female Terrorism: A Review", 499-515.

lack of access, understandably, to national security classified information from government entities for public discussions.

A large proportion of primary data cited in the relevant literature was from media sources, such as journalists' interviews with terrorists. That is not to say this information is unreliable; however, the media favors fast dissemination over robustness and lacks incorporation of religious, cultural, and gender perspectives. Fortunately, numerous scholars contribute to media commentary and online content, which may help researchers with reliability and validity if they are diligent with their sources.

Shapiro & Maras report secondary data reliance is due to no direct access to individuals, non-methodological court data, national security redactions, and sample sizes too small for comparative statistical analysis.<sup>15</sup> As a result, they concluded that social learning approaches<sup>16</sup> help explain how females perform terrorist activities and maintain extremist ideologies. Future research methods, particularly qualitative methods, should create new tools that can be applied or combined to further female terrorism and extremism research.<sup>17</sup>

In this thesis, mixed methods exist in the base literature, e.g., interview content analysis combined with personal researcher notes and sequenced research about subjects' life histories.<sup>18</sup> The goal was to prevent this thesis from being an academic narrative that perpetuated the critique of current literature as being too narrow and superficial. However, academic structural limitations challenged discussion parameters. The lack of NZ literature meant drawing from international sources to provide a preliminary platform that enables a gender-inclusive perspective and a foundation for future research in a NZ context. Still, the combination offers a broad array of perspectives and actualities that offers a correlative framework for initial explorations into NZ

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<sup>15</sup> Lauren R Shapiro and Marie-Helen Maras, "Women's Radicalization to Religious Terrorism: An Examination of ISIS Cases in the United States", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 42, no.1-2. (2019): 88-119.

<sup>16</sup> Social Learning theory believes individuals learn beliefs and behaviour from observations of others and the visible results of the desired behaviours.

<sup>17</sup> Jacques & Taylor, 511.

<sup>18</sup> Jacques & Taylor, 511.

#### **2.1.4 Focus, Justification, and Rationale.**

Because of female terrorism research's diverse nature, let alone western female post 9/11 publications, collated articles are from various disciplines and sources. First, academic databases were searched via Massey University Library and Google Scholar, using variations of the reference words: "Female," "Gender," "Girls," "Women," "Terrorism," "Violent Extremism," "Terrorist" "Western," "Jihadi Brides," "Right-wing," "Extreme Right," "Suicide bomber," "martyr" and locations such as; "New Zealand," "Australia," "Canada," United States (and variants of), United Kingdom (and variants of), and Europe before considering other countries. Internet searches conducted utilized the above search terms into search engines to locate scholarly authored articles of relevance to this thesis.

The primary focus is on 'Five Eye' (FVEY) countries (UK, USA, Canada, Australia, and NZ), given the decisive role this alliance plays in NZ's national security. I overviewed the sporadic literature from FVEY sources on this topic and information from other western nations to ensure multiple female extremism presentations. References, footnotes, and bibliographies of relevant articles located pertinent to other items, and this process were repeated until no new content was found.

#### **2.1.5 Primary Data Generation: OIA requests and Personal Emails.**

To obtain primary data, OIA requests were sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), Department of Corrections (Corrections), NZ Police (Police), New Zealand Security Intelligence Services (NZSIS), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) and Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE). Chapter Seven discusses the material supplied, unable to be provided, and the unanswered questions about this female demographic of interest.

In April 2020, Dr. Paul Spoonley (Massey University) and Elisa Hategan ( Anti Extremism educator & ex Neo-Nazi) provided their perspectives (via email) about NZ women and

extremism in response to my request for their insights.<sup>19</sup> The information provided has been used and cited in this thesis. Massey University Low-Risk Notification for the research was obtained (ID 4000024076).

## **2.2 Chapter Summary.**

The combination of international literature about women within extremist movements and media commentary of women's roles in VE and terrorism provides a broad array of sources to initialize exploration in NZ. This thesis merges the source material with NZ data and discourse to locate and make visible the women who align with IE or RWE, whether domestically or abroad, irrespective of gaps and challenges in the field. It enables acknowledgment that, like other western nations, gender blindness has restricted national security practices. Extremist groups have long recognized Western stereotypes' benefit their tactics and strategies; therefore, CT modification using academic observations would enhance efforts to combat VE and E&T in NZ.

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<sup>19</sup> Paul Spoonley, Personal communications with the author, 23 April 2020. Elisa Hategan, Personal communications with the author, 22 April 2020.



## PART ONE

### Chapter 3 Understanding Women's Role in Extremism.

#### 3.1 Literature Review Introduction.

This chapter examines the existing literature on women's involvement in extremist contexts to set the groundwork for analyzing the New Zealand (NZ) environment later in this thesis. This review focuses on the international literature at a macro meso level to draw out what is recognized, what challenges and critiques exist, and where the gaps are. It begins with a comprehensive synopsis of global publications about women and terrorism that establishes a lack of progression in the field despite new and welcomed disciplines taking an interest. Equally, the literature reveals numerous valuable offerings about women's interactions with extremist groups, such as radicalization, global female terrorist trends, feminist constructs, CT deficits, and gender bias/blindness. Still, many scholars (e.g., Mia Bloom, 2005, 2007, Sjoberg & Getty 2007, Saltman & Smith, 2015) argue that the continuous neglect of woman-centric research blurs the sight of women's diversity and participation.

The literature then argues while women's developing interest in extremism went unrecognized by others (e.g., authorities), extremist groups took notice and sought women out for strategic and tactical reasons. But recognition of female militancy and extremism by general academia, government, and the security sector lagged due to its male-centric view of terrorism.<sup>20</sup> A shortcoming of a patriarchal CT lens is the extremist's successful operationalization of women as combatants or attack facilitators (e.g., logistics, money, and alibis) through actions unlikely to be closely scrutinized due to gender.

Furthermore, the research indicates these women can successfully use gender shields (e.g., passive, naïve) when challenged due to western notions about femininity. The literature also reveals an oxymoron. While women appear regularly omitted from the VE picture, the opposite can occur where they are fetishized or demonized more than their

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<sup>20</sup> Karla J Cunningham, 'Countering Female Terrorism', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30, 2007, Pg. 113-129.

male peers. This fetishization, particularly by the media, drives recruitment, making women an ‘untapped resource’ for VE groups.<sup>21</sup>

Throughout the literature, gender fallacies about women are denounced; for example, women have no self-agency, no political interest, are only victims of VE, not culprits or facilitators, or are routinely coerced by men. Forced participation can occur at times, but research reveals that voluntary membership is most likely.<sup>22</sup> Scholars (e.g., Bloom 2011, Alexander 2016, Shapiro & Maras 2018, Romanelli 2019) present evidence to show gender and ethnicity can be a cloaking mechanism due to stereotypes that depict women as non-violent or irrational but not dangerous.

By weaving the literature together, it is shown that despite repeated warnings from scholars, the full integration of women into the E&T and VE landscape has not yet occurred. While some advancements exist, the gaps persist despite examples of western female citizens partaking in E&T or VE. Irrespective of position or standing in their extremist community, these women contain risk elements that can negatively impact general society. A lack of awareness and acceptance of female extremists and female terrorism allows their activities to continue unabated or minimized into insignificance.

The existing literature shows the women within extremist movements are diverse, nuanced, and complicated yet provide vital lifeblood to non-violent (e.g., Wife, supporter) and kinetic activities. Therefore, allowing women's participation to remain isolated and barren within academia, national security frameworks, or public understanding arguably facilitate activities and rhetoric which place citizens at risk from hateful, sexist, and racist taunts at best and a terrorist attack at its worst.

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<sup>21</sup> Major Marne L. Suttan. *The Rising Importance of Women in Terrorism and the Need to Reform Counterterrorism Strategy*, (Kansas, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2009): 17.

<sup>22</sup> Jamille Bigio and Rachel Vogelstein. *Women and Terrorism: Hidden Threats, Forgotten Partners Discussion Paper*, (Council on Foreign Relations, 2019): 4.

### 3. 2 Women and Extremism – A Review of the Post 9/11 Literature.

Karen Jacques and Paul J Taylor's (2010) work anchors the post 9/11 literature about women and E&T.<sup>23</sup> In 2009, Jacques & Taylor applied qualitative and quantitative analysis to examine what theories and methods were used in 54 publications<sup>24</sup> on female terrorism from the 1970s to early 2000s. Of the 54 papers analyzed, Jacques and Taylor found only six articles focused on women's roles.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, 22 gave a synopsis of female terrorism, and one-piece focused on countering female terrorism.<sup>26</sup> Through content analysis Jacques & Taylor determined there were six leading research topics among the extant publications; a) Analysis and history of female terrorism, b) female terrorist roles, c) environmental facilitators, d) media perceptions of female terrorists, e) motivations - recruitment and f) alternative perspectives (i.e., criminology, CT).<sup>27</sup>

Many studies dealt with multiple issues, so Jacques and Taylor extended their content analysis, developing primary and secondary groupings for scrutiny. As a result, they critiqued most accounts of female terrorism as being too general and argued a lack of statistical inquiry and primary data hindered progression.<sup>28</sup> Despite this critique, Jacques & Taylor recognized that new but incongruent contributions to terrorism research emerged from criminology, sociology, and psychology disciplines in the post 9/11 era.<sup>29</sup>

Criminology considered, for example, organized racial terrorism and the nexus of female terrorism and crime, while sociology explored societal influences, gender, and religion, and feminist terrorist perspectives appeared.<sup>30</sup> Recently, Jacqui True and Sri Eddyono (2021) offered a psychological perspective on how gendered ideologies spread and fuelled VE and Extremism.<sup>31</sup> They argue for a gender-sensitive approach to prevent

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<sup>23</sup> Jacques & Taylor, "Female Terrorism", 499-500.

<sup>24</sup> Consists of 6 books, 3 book chapters, 1 doctoral thesis, 15 reports and 29 journal articles.

<sup>25</sup> Jacques & Taylor, "Female Terrorism", 499

<sup>26</sup> Jacques & Taylor, 499-500.

<sup>27</sup> Jacques & Taylor, 499-500.

<sup>28</sup> Jacques & Taylor, 500.

<sup>29</sup> Jacques & Taylor, 500.

<sup>30</sup> Jacques & Taylor, 500.

<sup>31</sup> True and Eddyono's Indonesia field research is out of this thesis parameters (Western/FVEY contexts) as it focuses on gendered norms in Indonesia.

extremism from evolving to VE and for the promotion of gender equality across communities.<sup>32</sup>

Notwithstanding critical reviews of the new emergent literature, Professor Mia Bloom (2010) welcomed fresh interdisciplinary terrorism approaches as they improved and increased scholarship in an underdeveloped field.<sup>33</sup> Consistent accounts of neglect of female-centric analysis came from academics such as Bloom, Proctor & Mazura, Jacques & Taylor, and Sjoberg & Gentry (2007).<sup>34</sup> Saltman & Smith (2015) specifically blamed gender understudy for creating significant female terrorism knowledge, policy, and theory gaps.<sup>35</sup>

Nonetheless, post 9/11, various authors were working to fill the void. Karla J Cunningham (2003)<sup>36</sup> analyzed global cross-regional female terrorism trends<sup>37</sup> while Peresin & Cervone (2015)<sup>38</sup> and Zakaria (2015)<sup>39</sup> focused on western female motivations for joining Daesh. Katharina Von Knop (2007)<sup>40</sup> and Saltman & Smith (2015)<sup>41</sup> made valuable contributions about facets of female radicalization, VE roles and considered gendered labels, particularly the reductionist tag of 'Jihadi Brides.'

This literature review will show the jihadi brides' tag is reductionist because it strips away these women's true diversity in these groups and imagines them non-influential male accessories. Earlier work from Cunningham (2003) was significant. She warned that

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<sup>32</sup> Jacqui True and Sri Eddyono, 'Preventing Violent Extremism, What has Gender Got to do with It? Gendered Perceptions and Roles in Indonesia', *European Psychologist*, 26(1), 2021: 55-67.

<sup>33</sup> Mia Bloom, Bradley A. Thayer, and Valerie M. Hudson, "Correspondence: Life Sciences and Islamic Suicide Terrorism [with reply]," *International Security* 35, no.3 (Winter 2012/2011): 190.

<sup>34</sup> Laura Sjoberg and Caron Gentry, *Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women's Violence in Global Politics* (London, Zed Books, 2007).

<sup>35</sup> Erin Marie Saltman and Melanie Smith, *'Till Martyrdom Do Us Part': Gender and the ISIS Phenomenon*, (UK, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2015): 1-78.

<sup>36</sup> Karla J Cunningham, "Cross-Regional Trends in Female Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 26, no. 3 (2003): 171-195

<sup>37</sup> Karla Cunningham focused on three cases with high level female involvement and viewed as terrorist threats: USA Right wing, Palestinian militants in Israel, and Chechen separatists in Russia.

<sup>38</sup> Anita Peresin and Alberto Cervone, "The Western Muhajirat of ISIS," *Studies of Conflict and Terrorism* 38, no.7 (April 2015): 1-15

<sup>39</sup> Rafia Zakaria, "Women and Islamic Militancy," *Dissent*, Winter 2015, accessed 10 August 2020. <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/why-women-choose-isis-islamic-militancy>

<sup>40</sup> Katharina Von Knop, "Female Jihad: Al Qaeda's Women," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30, no.5 (2007): 397-414.

<sup>41</sup> Saltman & Smith, *Till Martyrdom Do Us Part*, 1-78.

“regionally, logistically and ideologically” women’s involvement in terrorism increased for several reasons, such as cumulative background influences<sup>42</sup> and a rise in female political activity.<sup>43</sup> Other reasons, according to Cunningham, were terrorist groups actively sought out women, which aligned with an increase in women’s motivations, and terrorist operational strategies that made females highly useful tactical tools.<sup>44</sup>

Cunningham concluded that despite the expansion of female participation, specific gender dynamics such as female mobilization and how female terrorism occurs within patriarchal ideologies remained unrecognized.<sup>45</sup> According to Cunningham (2007), six counter-terrorism (CT) deficits are influential on how CT responds to, anticipates, and interacts with female terrorists.<sup>46</sup> She categorized the deficits as technological, denial and deception, tactical, exploitation, organizational, and cultural/ideological.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, her work indicates the male-centric view can extend beyond academia into government and impede comprehensive security sector approaches.

Cunningham argues CT needs to rectify these deficits because they are why “analysts and leaders” failed to forestall the rise and range of female militancy.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, she notes that western CT agencies are typically conservative ideologically, which blurs female participation because they do not expect it.<sup>49</sup> A report from the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE) (2019) validated Cunningham’s observations, indicating little had changed over 17 years.<sup>50</sup> OSCE found that if gender perspectives and awareness had been combined earlier into radicalization, VE, and terrorism contexts, the

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<sup>42</sup> For example. 9/11, conflict & social displacement.

<sup>43</sup> Cunningham, “Cross Regional Trends”, 171-172.

<sup>44</sup> Cunningham, 185.

<sup>45</sup> Cunningham, 185-187

<sup>46</sup> Karla J Cunningham, “Countering Female Terrorism,” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. 30, (2007): 113

<sup>47</sup> Cunningham, “Countering Female Terrorism,” 113.

<sup>48</sup> Cunningham, 114.

<sup>49</sup> Cunningham, 116.

<sup>50</sup> Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE). *Understanding the Role of Gender in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism*, (Vienna, OSCE, 2019): 32.

results would have been better-informed targeting and pre-emptive countermeasures today.<sup>51</sup>

Contrarily, Jacques and Taylor (2010) claimed targeted research into women as avid supporters or VE culprits had been ignited in response to their increased presence.<sup>52</sup> With Jacques & Taylor's claim under consideration, an overview of female terrorism literature spanning 2001 until 2009 found an increased focus on E&T and women. However, this increase had a narrow thematic focus on Muslim females, Islamic movements, and women as victims, which correlated with the era's media narratives.

Jessica Davis (2017) claims women's hegemonic oversight is due to two factors: 1) a low female terrorist population and 2) their supposed passive roles.<sup>53</sup> Davis (2013) observed that despite females having stereotypical male terrorist support roles, VE leaders recognized women's strategic and tactical value and that leader awareness impelled female militancy.<sup>54</sup> Mia Bloom (2011) reports that the female militant's shock value works globally because of the widespread belief that women have no political interest and that females' roles are victims.<sup>55</sup>

Bloom found that in similar terrorist acts where women were perpetrators, they received about eight times more media attention than the men, which drives onlookers' fear and group recruitment.<sup>56</sup> In alignment with Bloom, Major Marne Suttin (US Army, 2009) believes many VE groups view women as an "untapped resource" and are progressively willing to make ideological concessions to them.<sup>57</sup> Promoting women fighters influences male recruitment through shame and buffers membership shortages.<sup>58</sup> Suttin argues that

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<sup>51</sup> OSCE, "Understanding the Role of Gender," 32.

<sup>52</sup> Jacques & Taylor, "Female Terrorism," 499.

<sup>53</sup> Jessica Davis, *Women in Modern Terrorism: From Liberation Wars to Global Jihad and the Islamic State*, (UK, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2017): 144-146

<sup>54</sup> Jessica Davis, "Evolution of the Global Jihad: Female Suicide Bombers in Iraq", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 36, (2013) 279-291.

<sup>55</sup> Mia Bloom, *Bombshell: The Many Faces of Women Terrorists*, (Toronto, Viking, 2011): 7.

<sup>56</sup> Bloom, *Bombshell*, 7.

<sup>57</sup> Major Marne L. Suttin. *The Rising Importance of Women in Terrorism and the Need to Reform Counterterrorism Strategy*, (Kansas, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2009): 17.

<sup>58</sup>. Suttin, "The Rising Importance of Women," 17.

women are depicted as “feminist warriors” or “passive victims,” which wrongly narrows descriptions of women’s motivations to join the movement.<sup>59</sup>

Motivation analysis by Bigio & Vogelstein (2019) found women appear to join their chosen group voluntarily and actively partake in fundraising, propaganda, and recruitment.<sup>60</sup> They acknowledge that forced participation can happen but still consider most women to be volunteers.<sup>61</sup> However, Bloom maintains that researchers cannot overlook the “role of coercion” with female suicide bombers, including drugs, extortion, and rape to defile, which can leave them with no other possibility to re-attain honor.<sup>62</sup> Thayer & Hudson report another dynamic for inducing female “suicidal terrorism” can be fear for their families wellbeing, so women comply with the demand.<sup>63</sup>

By way of summary, Audrey Alexander and Rebecca Turkington (2018) point out that terrorist and VE groups selectively delineate roles for their members based on characteristics, i.e., gender and age, but parameters for engagement are not clean-cut, static, or enforced.<sup>64</sup> Hilary Matfess (2017) adds that terrorist and VE groups can exploit gender and cultural stereotypes to their advantage and leverage gender dynamics by claiming ignorance to downplay blame.<sup>65</sup> Matfess states that the value of tactically upending gender expectations and norms through symbolic “women as weapons” should not be underrated.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Suttan, 17.

<sup>60</sup> Jamille Bigio and Rachel Vogelstein. *Women and Terrorism: Hidden Threats, Forgotten Partners Discussion Paper*, (Council on Foreign Relations, 2019): 4.

<sup>61</sup> Bigio & Vogelstein, “Women and Terrorism,” 4.

<sup>62</sup> Bloom, Thayer & Hudson, “Life Sciences and Islamic Suicide,” 191.

<sup>63</sup> Bradley A Thayer and Valerie M Hudson, “Sex and the Shaheed: Insights from the Life Sciences on Islamic Suicide Terrorism” *International Security*, Vol 34. No 4. (2010): 37-62.

<sup>64</sup> Rebecca Turkington and Audrey Alexander, “Treatment of Terrorists: How does Gender Affect Justice? *CTC Sentinel* 11, No 8 (2018) 24-29.

<sup>65</sup> Hilary Matfess, *Women and the War on Boko Haram: Wives, Weapons, Witnesses*. (London, Zed Books, 2017), 104.

<sup>66</sup> Hilary Matfess, *Women and the War*,133.

### 3.2.1 The Diversity of the Mujahidat<sup>67</sup> and Shieldmaidens.<sup>68</sup>

A strain of scholarship has explored the roles females have across various extremist groups resulting in several semi-congruent category formations. Despite classifications that highlight women's diverse capabilities, concurrent classification variability can hinder clarity and complicates the application of CT and judicial frameworks. A specific challenge for law enforcement is that women in extremist groups often avoid early detection simply because of gender, even when they blatantly break from assumed female virtues and stereotypes.<sup>69</sup>

Analysis by Sue Mahan and Pamela Griset (2012) offered four dimensions that succinctly represent female role categories across ideologies: 1) sympathizers: domestic & financial tasks, 2) spies: strategic support, 3) warriors: violence and operations, and 4) dominant forces: to guide, inspire and plan.<sup>70</sup> In his work examining IE, Audrey Alexander (2016) places "Jihadi" women into three groups: travelers, plotters, and supporters,<sup>71</sup> while Shapiro & Maras (2018) present six potential roles: planner, financial, supplier, terrorist enactor, spouse/breeder, and educator which contributed either instrumental, social cognitive, and operational support.<sup>72</sup>

To shed further light on characteristics (i.e., motivation, roles, and backgrounds), Bloom (2011) conducted interviews with female terrorists from the Middle East and the UK.<sup>73</sup> In her conclusion, Bloom denounced the general underlying assumption "*a man made her do it*" and suggested that future analysis of female roles and activities must avoid "stripping out" political motivations but nor should it seek excuses for their behavior.<sup>74</sup> As Lake warns a challenge is that extremist and terrorist traits are "often in the eyes of

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<sup>67</sup> A mujahidat is a female holy warrior, a woman striving to further the cause and take up arms if circumstances demand it.

<sup>68</sup> Shieldmaidens are considered the female equivalents of Vikings. This term is used by RWE women today such as Lana Lokteff.

<sup>69</sup> OSCE, "Understanding the Role of Gender," 111.

<sup>70</sup> Sue Mahan & Pamala L Griset, *Terrorism in Perspective 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*, (California, SAGE Publications. 2012)

<sup>71</sup> Audrey Alexander. *Cruel Intentions: Female Jihadists in America*, (USA, Program on Extremism, 2016): vii.

<sup>72</sup> Lauren R Shapiro & Marie-Helen Maras. "Women's Radicalization to Religious Terrorism: An Examination of ISIS Cases in the United States", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 42, no. 1-2, (2018), 1-32.

<sup>73</sup> Bloom, *Bombshell*: x-xi

<sup>74</sup> Bloom, *Bombshell*, x



the beholder.” Correlatively, OSCE (2020) found extremist women from “majority populations” are more likely to be regarded as non-violent and kind.<sup>75</sup> Indicating gender and ethnicity affords some women a dual cloaking mechanism.<sup>76</sup>

OSCE advises this gender-ethnicity bias influences judicial proceedings and results in women receiving less severe sentences than their male peers, even when they plead guilty to terrorism charges.<sup>77</sup> OSCE data shows women and men were equally disposed to hide plot-related information and demonstrated similar success rates in gathering the attack materials they needed.<sup>78</sup> For those reasons, OCSE is critical of women’s involvement in VE groups being “measured and valued” against their male counterparts due to the blinders this routinely creates.<sup>79</sup>

Sharon Pickering and Amanda Third (2003) offer an alternative view. They argue that when active female terrorists have been perceived as transgressing socially sanctioned female norms, they are criminalized and labeled aberrant, which frames them as doubly deviant.<sup>80</sup> Pickering & Third assert the female terrorist is a deliberate construct to induce fear, particularly when challenging hegemonic state norms.<sup>81</sup> Overall, they claim that female terrorists’ framing is as women with “highly motivated, excessively emotional,” traits that give them the capacity to commit the “most heinous of crimes.”<sup>82</sup>

Other authors (Rosanna Romanelli 2012, Laquer & Wall 2018, Suttan 2019) agree that society pigeonholes these women as irrational individuals despite the various motivations that can exist, such as perceived acts of honor.<sup>83</sup> Suttan reminds us that a “call to action” against perceived injustices has the same draw to men and women.<sup>84</sup> Whether IE women are sympathizers or militants, they hold crucial roles as guardians of social, cultural, and

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<sup>75</sup> OSCE, “Understanding the Role of Gender,” 109.

<sup>76</sup> OSCE, 109.

<sup>77</sup> OSCE, 71.

<sup>78</sup> OSCE, 73.

<sup>79</sup> OSCE, 109.

<sup>80</sup> Sharon Pickering & Amanda Third, “Castrating Conflict: Gender(ed) terrorist and terrorism domesticated”, *Social Alternatives* 22, no 2, (2003): 9.

<sup>81</sup> Pickering & Third, “Castrating Conflict”, 9.

<sup>82</sup> Pickering & Third, 9.

<sup>83</sup> Suttan, “The Rising Importance of Women,” 27.

<sup>84</sup> Suttan, 27.

religious values. Hence, regardless of the approach taken, women strongly believe those values and beliefs authenticate extremist violence.<sup>85</sup> And as Laqueur and Wall contend, terrorism is “terrifying logical” as a method to yield results.<sup>86</sup>

### 3.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter sets the groundwork for this thesis by confirming that since 9/11, embedded gender and cultural stereotypes and misnomers about women’s VE, E& T involvement have maintained it as male-centric. Many of the issues highlighted deserve further in-depth analysis (e.g., gender-ethnicity bias in judicial settings). Still, their inclusion demonstrates inaccurate depictions of these women impact academia, government, and the security sector perceptions. In contrast, extremist groups embrace inaccurate depictions and weaponized gender fallacies for women’s extremist roles. Consequently, integrating a gender perspective is crucial for ensuring the security sector’s operational effectiveness and legitimacy.<sup>87</sup>

Noticeably, women conduct most research on women in extremism, which may be symptomatic of a significant bias in the field. Regardless, male and female academics consistently raise underdevelopment and gender omission as ongoing challenges, even within research fields. Major challenges that perpetuate women’s portrayal in a mad, bad, or sad framing, that their primary motivators were men, and that female self-mobilization is rare. Alternatively, if a woman is overtly violent, breaking gendered expectations demonizes her or makes excuses in ways not afforded to her male counterparts.

Several scholars (e.g., Suttan, Cunningham, and Davis) argued western CT strategies focused on male executed threats despite women openly and actively being recruited into these brusque patriarchal movements. Regardless of hegemonic masculinity, the literature shows women can be essential willing violent and non-violent entities in the extremist ecosystem, a reality that often goes unrecognized by onlookers.

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<sup>85</sup> Suttan, 23.

<sup>86</sup> Walter Laqueur and Christopher Wall, *The Future of Terrorism, ISIS, al Qaeda and the Alt Right*, (USA, Thomas Dunne Books, 2018): 272.

<sup>87</sup> OSCE, “*Understanding the Role of Gender*”, 63.

In closing, the international literature demonstrates that women are more complex than one-dimensional female stereotypes. The literature argues for a western stereotype deconstruction to challenge what seems accepted without questioning about women within extremist movements. Doing so would move understandings beyond generalizations to make what is covert, overt, and potentially reduce any academic and security sector lag with extremists and terrorist tactics. Investigating real-world contexts and nuances to discover how women feature in their chosen ideology would help move comprehension away from instinctive stereotyping and generalizations. For this reason, the following chapters focus separately on two extremist ideologies, IE and RWE, to discover if women are more visible in the relevant literature or a specific ideological context.

#### **Chapter 4: The Spectrum of Female Islamic Extremism.**

##### **4.1 Framing Female Jihad<sup>88</sup> – The Truths and the Myths.**

This chapter expands on the previous VE and E&T literature by focusing on women's involvement in Islamic Extremism's (IE) male-dominated, authoritarian networks. This chapter reviews IE's ideological stance on women's participation in violence, the 'men as motivators' fallacy, the western feminism lens, and the inaudible IE western female demographic. The review aims to show how women do exhibit agency in IE action. The one-dimensional framing persists with IE women polarised as mothers, daughters, and partners of extremists or as more heinous than their male peers. Nonetheless, the literature delivers a more comprehensive view that emancipates the thesis from the confines of jihadi brides to inform later analysis of the NZ context in part two.

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<sup>88</sup> Gus Martin (2013) argues westerners misunderstand 'Jihad' as 'holy war' whereas it means 'sacred struggle' which can be a personal effort to, for example, avoid sin, pride or selfishness. Violent Jihad is an example of how IE groups subvert and weaponised Islamic concepts to denote their cause as just and righteous. Gus Martin, *Understanding Terrorism" Challenges, Perspectives and Issues 4<sup>th</sup> Ed*, (California, Sage Publishing, 2013), 162.

The paradox of women's agency in IE male-dominated authoritarian groups is unraveled by first considering how the IE ideology shapes women's combative jihad. Research (e.g., Bloom, Van San) finds that despite enforced gender roles and being statistically outnumbered by male jihadis, women have increasingly engaged in suicide bombings or had significant roles in jihadist activities. This literature shows that male IE leaders will strategically overturn strict domestic gender roles to operationalize women in warfare. It is also shown that some women self-operationalize to defend their faith, despite what male IE leaders proclaim is virtuous female behavior.

Secondly, the literature challenges the 'men as motivators' reasoning for women's participation by finding men are more often women's supporters and mobilizers.<sup>89</sup> Research findings questioned the notion that IE female recruits' families support or encourage their participation or knew about their intentions. In combination, the literature disputes the portrayal of women as victims of men or intimate relationships as women's stimuli into IE. CT practitioners need to reject such narratives in their approaches in favor of women's political and personal agency without a western feminist lens.

The application of western feminism in the analysis of IE women is the next challenge examined. Scholars (Vanzan 2016, Kneip 2016, Dronzina 2020) argue compellingly that western feminism is an ill-fitting lens and that IE women find their emancipation in "islamicipation," not western ideals. They believe that western feminist influences in analysis divert the cultural context, thus rendering these women misunderstood and underestimated. Vanzan and Kneip suggest these Muslim women are escaping ideals that image them as national security threats in western society.<sup>90</sup> Whereas in a patriarchal IE society, women can live according to their beliefs, i.e., veiling.<sup>91</sup> Dronzina (2015) agrees

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<sup>89</sup> Mia Bloom, "Women as Victims and Victimizers", *Foreign Policy Agenda* 12, no 5 (Washington DC, US Department of State, 2007) 16

<sup>90</sup> VanSan, 2016.

<sup>91</sup> Kneip, *Female Jihad*, 98

western women in IE groups reflect an ideological paradox; for example, these women can choose how they die but not how they live.<sup>92</sup>

Lastly, the literature challenges the label polarisation of Western IE women as “twisted celebrities” with ‘White Widows’ monikers or as jihadi brides. Brown (2018) reports that extremists and the media are responsible for any fanaticism western IE women receive. She argues the “media buzz” challenges CT efforts as myth-making perpetuates women’s interest and galvanizes recruitment.<sup>93</sup> Brown is equally critical of the jihadi bride image for misaligning women’s involvement and overlooking matriarchal IE western women. The literature acknowledges many young IE Muslim women have sought a Jihadi husband, but he is just part of their perceived ‘Jihadi girl-power’ lifestyle.<sup>94</sup> The jihadi bride frame is criticized for its oversimplification and providing IE women with a storyline to downplay their actions.

Lastly, the chapter considers data provided by Milton and Dodwell (2018) and Saltman & Smith to explore the role and number of western women recruited into IE groups. The literature borrows from Australian case examples to remind us that women do not need to migrate to IE societies to support them and are no less committed than those on the frontlines, whether financial support or domestic attacks. In truth, women’s involvement can range from the “operationally uninvolved” to “militant and operationally experienced.”<sup>95</sup>

#### **4.2 The Ideological Landscape of Women’s Violent Islamic Extremism.**

IE movements mobilized by Islamic extremist rhetoric became consequential in shaping global terrorism patterns after 9/11.<sup>96</sup> Recent estimates suggest IE groups account for 13

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<sup>92</sup> Dronzina, “Female Suicide Terrorism,” 255.

<sup>93</sup> Brown, 2018.

<sup>94</sup> Brown, 2018

<sup>95</sup> International Crisis Group (ICG), Women and Children First: Repatriating the Westerners Affiliated with ISIS. Report Number 208, 18 Nov 2019, accessed 18 April 2020. Pg. 3 <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/syria/208-women-and-children-first-repatriating-westerners-affiliated-isis>.

<sup>96</sup> Clara Egger and Raul Magni-Berton, “The Role of Islamist Ideology in Shaping Muslims Believers’ Attitudes toward terrorism: Evidence from Europe”, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, (2019):1 <https://doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2019.1571696>

of the world's 20 most deadly groups since 2001.<sup>97</sup> Despite their divergent agendas, four of the most lethal, Boko Haram, Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and Daesh, all mobilize Islam as an ideology to validate their violent strategies through an absolute belief an ethereal power demands it.<sup>98</sup> The online dissemination of extreme IE beliefs such as selfless sacrifice (including martyrdom) to defend and avenge Islam birthed a new worldwide sense of Islamic solidarity, boosting recruitment of men and women from the West.<sup>99</sup>

Within Islam itself, the subject of female participation in "combative jihad" has proved to be contentious.<sup>100</sup> Al Qaeda long ratified female domestic functions, such as raising the next jihadi generation over combat positions.<sup>101</sup> Yet in 2005, Mia Bloom observed Al Qaeda's online magazine (Al Khansaa, 2004 edition) called upon Muslim women to participate in jihad.<sup>102</sup> While the article reflected on females as "*a mother, wife, sister, and daughter,*" it positioned jihad as a "personal obligation" for men and women, and if "jihad" called a woman, they did not need to ask permission.<sup>103</sup> Bloom reports that as early as August 2001, the Saudi High Islamic Council approved a female suicide bomb attempt, evidencing that Al Qaeda was not the first to militarise IE women.<sup>104</sup>

In 2015, Daesh released an online scholarly-styled document – "*Women in the Islamic State: Manifesto and Case Study,*" which encouraged female recruits to play a "sedentary role in jihad as mothers and wives."<sup>105</sup> The document portrayed women's life under their rule as holy and satisfactory in the defense and service of jihad.<sup>106</sup> The "sedentary role" narrative conflicted with the presence of Daesh's all-female policing brigade (Al-Khanssaa) and other online propaganda that imaged women in combat. As Daesh lost ground and male fighters, they moved to fully promote female combat roles demonstrating how

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<sup>97</sup> Egger & Magni-Berton, "The Role of Islamist Ideology," 1.

<sup>98</sup> Egger & Magni-Berton, 1. For example, the Quran was reframed as the Muslim constitution to be unequivocally obeyed and used to justify acts of violence

<sup>99</sup> Martin, 180-182.

<sup>100</sup> Amin Saikal, "Women and Jihad: Combating Violent Extremism and Developing New Approaches to conflict Resolution in the Greater Middle East", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 36, no. 3, (September 2016): 314.

<sup>101</sup> Bloom, *Bombshell*, 215.

<sup>102</sup> Bloom, "Mother, Sister, Daughter. Bomber", 2005.

<sup>103</sup> Bloom, "Mother, Sister, Daughter. Bomber", 2005

<sup>104</sup> Mia Bloom, "Mother. Daughter. Sister. Bomber", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 61, no. 6 (2005): 60.

<sup>105</sup> Saikal, "Women and Jihad", 319.

<sup>106</sup> Saikal, "Women and Jihad", 319.

tactical necessity reshapes strictly enforced gender rules.<sup>107</sup> Bloom observed Al Qaeda also resorted to female militants due to a decrease in male foreign fighters.<sup>108</sup>

Scholars (e.g., Suttan, Saltman & Smith, Bloom) observe that IE groups have used female terrorists to manipulate male pride and shame them into jihad.<sup>109</sup> Bloom argues Islamic leader opposition to women militants achieved approval due to extensive global media coverage.<sup>110</sup> The influence of media discourse on IE is examined later in Chapter 6; however, Suttan reports IE groups have used female terrorists in Arab media to manipulate male pride and shame them into Jihad, and this media influence also exists in the west.<sup>111</sup> Suttan stipulates that the general populace's reaction to female VE is often shock and disbelief that a woman would take her own life alongside others or be a victimizer.<sup>112</sup>

Audrey Alexander (2016) emphasized that IE leaders quickly understood western female recruits could fill unique roles (e.g., western targeted propaganda), making them a specific strategic recruitment target.<sup>113</sup> She focused on the nexus between western women and jihadi terrorism in America through primary and secondary data concerning 25 US-based "jihadi" women between 2011 and 2016. The subjects' age range was 15 to 44 years old (average 27 yrs.) with affiliations to various VE Islamic groups.<sup>114</sup> Alexander's findings show that while women aligned with IE ideologies have a penchant for auxiliary roles, several will voluntarily perpetrate violence on home soil.<sup>115</sup>

Regardless of what male leaders decree about women's roles, this section finds evidence that women can be self-activated combatants. As one female Al Qaeda jihadist warned a

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<sup>107</sup> Saikal, 314.

<sup>108</sup> Bloom, *Bombshell*, 215.

<sup>109</sup> Suttan, 17. and Bloom, 2005, 18

<sup>110</sup> Mia Bloom, "Mother. Daughter. Sister. Bomber," 60.

<sup>111</sup> Suttan, 17. and Bloom, 2005, 18, and Saltman & Smith *Till Martyrdom Do Us Part*, 1-78

<sup>112</sup> Suttan, 17

<sup>113</sup> Audrey Alexander. *Cruel Intentions, Female Jihadists in America*, (USA, Program on Extremism Washington University, 2016): 4

<sup>114</sup> Alexander, *Cruel Intentions*, 4.

<sup>115</sup> Alexander, 4.

“... woman whose heart is burning for her faith and goes out in a suicide operation seeking Allah will not be deterred by the words of a thousand of [Al-Zawahiri’s<sup>116</sup>] like”.<sup>117</sup>

#### **4.2.1 Islamic Extremism and Women’s Relationships: Fallacy or Reality.**

Long before 9/11, Deborah Galvin (1983) observed that the “.....female lover/female accomplice is an all too frequent scenario” and that the women wanted to be more than followers and bedfellows.<sup>118</sup> Later in 2007, Bloom reported, “We no longer believe men force most women into terrorism” instead, men play a mobilization role and support her choice to be involved.<sup>119</sup> Yet in 2017, Patel critiques the West for not recognizing earlier that Daesh’s global caliphate call was genderless and motivated women to migrate to assist with state-building, not just as mothers or wives. A 2018 study found that women compromised 13% of Daesh’s approximately 40,000 “foreign terrorist” fighters in Syria and Iraq.<sup>120</sup>

Gender roles in Muslim female radicalization have been considered by Pearson and Winterbotham (2017),<sup>121</sup> Speckhard and Shajkovci (2017),<sup>122</sup> Saltman and Smith (2015),<sup>123</sup> and Vidino (2011)<sup>124</sup>, particularly with women affiliated with Daesh. These researchers criticize the dominant male coercion view and adamantly state many IE women operate freely and exhibit self-agency. A shared fundamental critique was that the chronic labeling of women as jihadi brides is inappropriate and simplistic compared to reality.

This censure is echoed by Jessica Davis (2016). She claims an emphasis on male partners or family is a “disservice” to the political agency of Muslim women as it imagines their

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<sup>116</sup> Ayman Al-Zawahiri is a senior leader of Al Qaeda. Currently on the FBI’s most wanted list.

<sup>117</sup> Saikal, 319.

<sup>118</sup> Deborah M Galvin, “The Female Terrorist: A Socio-Psychological Perspective”, *Behavioural Sciences & the Law* 1, no.2 (1983): 24

<sup>119</sup> Mia Bloom, “Women as Victims and Victimiziers”, *Foreign Policy Agenda* 12, no.5 (Washington DC, US Department of State, 2007), 16.

<sup>120</sup> OSCE, “*Understand the role of Gender*”, 26.

<sup>121</sup> Elizabeth Pearson and Emily Winterbotham, “Women, Gender and Daesh Radicalisation: A Milieu Approach”, *The RUSI Journal* Vol 162, no. 3, (2017): 60-72.

<sup>122</sup> Anne Speckhard and Ardian Shajkovci, “*Beware the Woman of ISIS: There are many, and they may be more dangerous than the men*”, (USA, International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism, 2017).

<sup>123</sup> Saltman & Smith. *Till Martyrdom Do Us Part*, 1-78.

<sup>124</sup><sup>124</sup> Lorenzo Vidino, “*Radicalization, Linkage, and Diversity: Current Trends in Terrorism in Europe*”, (USA, RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2011): 1-47.



involvement to be merely due to intimate relationships.<sup>125</sup> While Vogel, Porter, and Kebbell (2014) warn that a woman's relationship with a male extremist can only indicate the female has an active role.<sup>126</sup> In other words, a relationship does not automatically initiate their recruitment into extremist activities.<sup>127</sup>

Nacos (2005) suggests that when women are in extremist roles perceived as inherently male, there is a tendency to resort to prejudices leading to portrayals that her family influenced her over a choice of free will.<sup>128</sup> Proctor and Mazura (2018) argued family relationships were core to VE recruitment (and resistance) for men and women.<sup>129</sup> By contrast, research (Maher & Neumann ICSR 2016) on western female and male Daesh recruits families found their relatives had a 'universally negative' perception of Daesh rather than support.<sup>130</sup> In harmony with Maher & Neuman, ethnographic research by Marion van San (2018) found families of young male and female Daesh foreign travelers were frequently unaware of, and in denial about their children's actions, even in hindsight.<sup>131</sup>

This literature synopsis challenges any belief that women's families or intimate partners are the encouragers or supporters of their radical IE beliefs. Despite Glavin and Bloom's earlier observations about female agency, the notion of 'relationships as motivators' appears to be a persistent fallacy that security agencies need to mitigate against in their CT strategies. Bond, Cronin Furman, Loken, Lake, Parkinson, and Zelenz (2019) argue the overarching victim predisposition about women linked to IE groups orbits the individual

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<sup>125</sup>125 Jessica Davis, *Women in Modern Terrorism: From Liberation Wars to Global Jihadi and the Islamic State*, (USA, Rowman & Little Publishers, 2017): 44.

<sup>126</sup> Lauren Vogel, Louise Porter, and Mark Kebbell, "The Roles of Women in Contemporary Political and Revolutionary Conflict: A Thematic Model", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, no. 37, (Jan 2014): 91-114.

<sup>127</sup> Vogel, Porter, & Kebbell, "The Roles of Women,".

<sup>128</sup> Bridgette L Nacos, "The Portrayal of Female Terrorists in the Media: Similar Framing Patterns in News Coverage of Women in Politics and in Terrorism", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28, no.5 (2005): 435-451

<sup>129</sup> Keith Proctor and Dyan Mazura, "The Role of Gender in Mobilizing and Countering Fundamentalist Violent Extremist Organisations", *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Security*, ed, Caron E Gentry, Laura J Shepherd, and Laura Sjoberg, (UK, Routledge, 2018), 227-238.

<sup>130</sup> Shiraz Maher and Peter Neumann, *Pain, Confusion, Anger, and Shame: The Stories of Islamic State Families*, (ICSR Report 2016): 1. <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ICSR-Report-Pain-Confusion-Anger-and-Shame-The-Stories-of-Islamic-State-Families1.pdf>.

<sup>131</sup> Marion van San, "Belgian and Dutch Young Men and Women who joined ISIS: Ethnographic Research among the Families they left behind", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 41, no 1 (2017): 50

complexity, agency, and nuance factors readily afforded to extremist men without question.<sup>132</sup>

#### **4.2.2 Fear the Femme Fatale? Behind the Veil of Women and Jihad.**

This section presents real-life examples of IE women demonstrating their diverse characteristics and activities discussed in this thesis. These examples concur with the literature that IE women are more than one-dimensional beings and further support the modernization of CT and security sector practices. It then expands on women's jihadist acts and introduces high profile IE western women to the discussion.

In her 2011 book, *"Bombshell: The Many Faces of Women Terrorists,"* Bloom presents a case study of two Caucasian "Jihadi" females who committed harmonized suicide bombings on Moscow's subway line (29<sup>th</sup> March 2010), killing 40 and injuring 160.<sup>133</sup> This event received global attention as it was the first major terrorist attack in Moscow for six years and because women orchestrated it. Irrespective of location, these perpetrators deserve mention because their characteristic diversity demonstrates why reductionist terrorist stereotypes and generalizations must be challenged.

There were only three similarities between the two females [aside from gender]: 1) both were from Dagestan,<sup>134</sup> 2) neither family was aware of their radicalization or activities, and 3) both had married 'Jihadis' after radicalization. One female (Djennet) was 17 years old, uneducated, from a broken home, and at the time of her death, she was the widow of a local "Jihadi commander." The other female (Maryam) was 28 years old from a middle-class family, had an honor's degree in psychology and maths, was a teacher, and was reported to have secretly married a Jihadi after her radicalization.

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<sup>132</sup> Kanisha D Bond, Kate Cronin-Furman, Meredith Loken, Milli Lake, Sarah E Parkinson, and Anna Zelenz, "The West Needs to Take the Politics of Women in ISIS seriously," *Foreign Policy*. 4 March 2019 accessed 31 August 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/04/the-west-needs-to-take-the-politics-of-women-in-isis-seriously/>.

<sup>133</sup> Bloom, 2011.

<sup>134</sup> Dagestan is a federal republic of Russia located on the Caspian Sea Coast. It ethnically diverse and largely tribal. The majority population adheres to Islam.

Authorities alleged that Maryam's two brothers, who later disappeared, were not the attacks' masterminds but aided and abetted the women. The women killed 39 people and injured hundreds of others.<sup>135</sup> This act evidences how IE women can transcend static domestic roles with deadly effects and draw more media attention than their peers due to gendered perceptions of women as non-violent (see Bloom, Suttan, Bergen, Davis).

Cindy Ness (2005) examined women in secular and religious terrorist suicide attacks between 1981 and 2007 and found that almost 26% of all reported suicide attacks were female.<sup>136</sup> Ness notes that since 2005 there had been a marked increase in women of all ages committing "Jihad."<sup>137</sup> Beyond suicide attacks, older western women have gained significant roles in jihadist activities. Exemplars consist of Sally Jones (UK, Age 43, died 2017)<sup>138</sup>, Samantha Lewthwaite ('the White Widow,' UK, Age 34),<sup>139</sup> Rabiya Hutchinson (Australia, Age 64),<sup>140</sup> and Colleen LaRose (American, Age 54).<sup>141</sup> These Western women are older than 25, matriarchal<sup>142</sup>, high profile, and renowned within extremist networks. The activities of these women highlight the deficiencies of the modern 'Jihadi bride' label due to the wide variety of auxiliary roles that are integral to the extremist groups functioning and success.

One UK example is Lewthwaite, who used the facade of wife and mother to hide her IE beliefs from UK police after her radicalized husband committed a suicide bombing. She

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<sup>135</sup> Anna Nemtsova, "Female Terrorists of Dagestan," *Pulitzer Center*, 6 September 2012, Pulitzer Center, accessed 24<sup>th</sup> October 2020. <https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/female-terrorists-dagestan>.

<sup>136</sup> Cindy Ness. "In the Name of the Cause: Women's Work in Secular and Religious Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28, no.5 (2005): 353-73.

<sup>137</sup> Ness, "In the Name of the Cause," 353.

<sup>138</sup> Sally Jones: Was regarded internationally as an influential recruiter of women and attack planner for ISIS. She went to Syria in 2013 after marrying British "fanatic" Junaid Hussain. CIA reported her killed by a drone strike in Raqqa 2017.

<sup>139</sup> Samantha Lewthwaite: known for masterminding several jihadist attacks in East Africa with al-Shabaab and for ISIS in Islamic State. Lewthwaite is a high-profile member of the Islamic Militant group Al-Shabaab, her location is unknown, and she is subject to an Interpol arrest warrant for her role in numerous terrorist attacks.

<sup>140</sup> Hutchinson has an extensive history of international and domestic (Australia) involvement in Islamic extremist's activity. She was involved prior to 9/11 and often travelled and work in the middle east as a doctor for extremist groups.

<sup>141</sup> Known as "Jihadi Jane". Sentenced to 10 years in USA prison for a plot to kill a Swedish artist who depicted the head of Muslim Prophet Mohammad on a dog. Converted to Islam online and did not travel to the middle east. Reported to be a recruiter of other American women.

<sup>142</sup> Matriarchal: hold a position of power in a social system. This can entail social privilege, moral authority and control of some specific aspects or in some cases are the head of a group or organisation.

feigned shock and innocence until she later fled the UK (with her children) using fraudulent passports in 2007 and later announced as a member of the Somalian IE group al-Shababb, in 2012. Since then, Lewithwaite has reportedly ordered, led, and contributed to numerous IE attacks globally, and at this time, she is subject to an Interpol arrest warrant.

According to Audrey Alexander (2016), homegrown female jihadists only became an unmistakable western domestic threat in 2015.<sup>143</sup> In December 2015, Tashfeen Malik (US migrant, Pakistani Citizen, 29 years old) and her husband, Syed Farook (US Born, 28 years old), used firearms to kill 14 and injure 22 people in California.<sup>144</sup> Both Malik and Farook died during a standoff with police, orphaning their baby daughter. During their attack, Malik pledged, via Facebook, allegiance to "ISIS." The FBI found no evidence linking the couple to Daesh before the attack and concluded that they had self-radicalized.<sup>145</sup>

Police media statements strongly indicate that Malik was a willing and active extremist who had never previously come to authorities' attention.<sup>146</sup> This example shows neither travel abroad nor full extremist membership is needed to immobilize the IE faithful. Moreover, Alexander reports Malik was featured in Daesh's Dabiq Magazine (Issue 13) as a shaming method to push men into Jihadi participation.<sup>147</sup>

In 2015, Peter Bergen warned that female "jihadis" had significant violent and non-violent roles on their home soil, with or without male counterparts.<sup>148</sup> He claims that just like a male' lone actor,' a female will engage in lone-actor behaviours and endorse terrorist activity with their online 'virtual pack' of choice.<sup>149</sup> Jessica Davis (2017) later echoes

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<sup>143</sup> Alexander, 1.

<sup>144</sup> The shootings occurred at the Inland Regional Centre in California. Inland regional centre is a govt not for profit organisation that provides services to people with developmental disabilities.

<sup>145</sup> Alexander, *Cruel Intentions*, 1.

<sup>146</sup> Alexander, 1.

<sup>147</sup> Alexander, 7.

<sup>148</sup> Bergen, *More than Mere Victims*, 2015.

<sup>149</sup> Bergen, 2015.

Bergen's warning but uniquely extends 'lone actor' terrorist activity to include females who travel to join foreign extremist groups.<sup>150</sup>

Australian CT analyst Sofia Patel (2017) examined IE's attraction to western women to inform countering violent extremism (CVE) strategies and policy.<sup>151</sup> Patel presented two key findings; 1) female interplay with extremism varied greatly across foreign and domestic contexts, and 2) female motivations were not dissimilar from their male counterparts. Patel's key findings further promoted women are not a "homogenous entity"; they are not just brides, nor are they accessories to "war raging" partners. In response, she argues that CVE strategies needed to reflect women's multifaceted roles over linear thought.<sup>152</sup>

#### **4.2.3 Emancipation from Western Feminism.**

Following on from Patel's argument that women are not homogenous entities, this section explores the influence of western feminism and the contradiction perceived when western women support IE movements. Bjoernaas states western feminist notions equate to cultural imperialism as they shape Muslim women as victims in need of "white women's liberation."<sup>153</sup> In unison, Patel and Peter Bergen (2015) strongly argue western feminist concepts apply an ill-fitting layer of analysis when assessing women who flock to IE movements.<sup>154</sup>

Researcher Katharina Kneip (2016) conducted a blog content analysis of Western English-speaking "muhajirat"<sup>155</sup> to discover why western women support Daesh when the

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<sup>150</sup> Jessica Davis, *Women in Modern Terrorism: From Liberation Wars to Global Jihadi and the Islamic State*, (Lanham, Rowman & Little Publishers, 2017): 16.

<sup>151</sup> Sofia Patel, *"The Sultanate of Women: Exploring female roles in perpetrating and preventing violent extremism"*, (Australia, ASPI Counter-Terrorism Policy Centre, 2017): 4

<sup>152</sup> Patel, *The Sultanate of Women*, 5.

<sup>153</sup> Therese Ignacio Bjoernaas, "Saving Muslim Women: A feminist postcolonial critique of veiling legislation in Norway." *Islamophobia Studies Journal* Vol 3 No 1 (2015) pp 78-89

<sup>154</sup> Peter Bergen, *More than Mere Victims: Women and Violent Extremism*, New America Speaking Event March 2015. Accessed September 2019. <https://www.newamerica.org/nyc/events/more-than-mere-victims-women-violent-extremism/>

<sup>155</sup> Arabic word for emigrant.

ideology and jihadi community blatantly subjugated females.<sup>156</sup> She hypothesized and concluded that these females from western countries reject the idea of liberation in its western sense and find emancipation in “Islamicipation.”<sup>157</sup> Kneip defined ‘Islamicipation’ as having the free will to live in a state according to their beliefs; in contrast, the same views in a Western setting can be forbidden or misunderstood (i.e., veiling).<sup>158</sup> In other words, they seek emancipation from Western society and ideals.

Anne Vanzan (2016)<sup>159</sup> and Tatyana Dronzina (2020)<sup>160</sup> criticized the western assumption that the Muslim culture or extreme patriarchal Islam fully disempowers women. Instead, Dronzina argued, in settings ruled by a radical interpretation of Islam, women are given newly defined roles within the patriarchal context (e.g., mothers of the next Jihadi generation).<sup>161</sup> Kneip argued that the western lens interprets Daesh women as instrumental in enforcing “misogynistic ideologies” within a steadfast patriarchal system.<sup>162</sup>

Earlier work by Christine Sixta (2008) asserts that feminism is primarily a western term; therefore, it is irrelevant whether IE female terrorists identify as feminists.<sup>163</sup> Like Kneip, Sixta argues female participation in male-dominated terrorism does not mean they seek “western modernity.”<sup>164</sup> In her work, Sixta emphasized Islam considers that western culture is intrusive, sexualises women, and due to capitalism is corrupt; therefore, female

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<sup>156</sup> Katharina Kneip, “Female Jihad: Women in ISIS,” *Politikon: IAPSS Political Science Journal*, no.29, (2016): 89.

<sup>157</sup> Kneip, *Female Jihad*, 98.

<sup>158</sup> Kneip, *Female Jihad*, 88.

<sup>159</sup> Anna Vanzan, “Veiled Politics: Muslim Women's Visibility and Their use in European Countries' Political Life”, *Social Sciences* 5, no.2 (2016): 10.

<sup>160</sup> Tanya Dronzina, “Female Suicide Terrorism as a Function of Patriarchal Societies,” in *Hostile Intent and Counter-Terrorism*, ed. Alex Stedmon, Glyn Lawson, (London, CRC Press. 2015): 245-258.

<sup>161</sup> Tatyana Dronzina, *Interview with Ilya Roubanis*. European Interest, 19 March 2020. Available from <https://www.europeaninterest.eu/article/interview-tatyana-dronzina-women-isis-terrorists-victims-survivors/>

<sup>162</sup> Kneip, *Female Jihad*, 89.

<sup>163</sup> Christine Sixta, “The illusive third wave: Are female terrorists the new 'new women' in developing societies?”, *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 29, no.2, (2016): 262

<sup>164</sup> Sixta, “The illusive third wave,” 263.

terrorists seek a non-western society structure.<sup>165</sup> While Bloom reminds us the defense of Muslim women's honour is a "lynchpin" of IE's fury against the West.<sup>166</sup>

Vanzan (2016) agreed with Kneip when she writes in most western contexts, due to "terror with an Islamist nuance," the veiled Muslim woman is seen as an internal national threat symbol, which advances Kneip's idea of "Islamicipation."<sup>167</sup> Sixta likewise believes female terrorists seek political equality but fight to escape western ideals, meaning "women terrorists use terrorism to fight against dual oppression."<sup>168</sup> Dronzina explains equal rights are what the women do not receive within IE structures regardless of what they endure and contribute to the cause, which she defines as a "paradoxical ideological commitment."<sup>169</sup>

Dronzina argues female suicide operations are not about modernising female roles but the disintegration and transformation of patriarchal structures that weaken the norms.<sup>170</sup> Thus this section shows that IE women revise female empowerment to create different opportunities to participate with new responsibilities but not always new rights. As noted earlier, these IE women can choose how they die but not how they live.<sup>171</sup>

#### **4.2.4 White Widow Mythology**

Fetishization can occur in IE networks when it comes to Western IE women. While such reverence appears contradictory to IE male hegemony, this myth-making around Western women recruits serves to embolden IE groups, attract further recruits, and entice media attention. The literature has shown the media partner with extremists in the creation of the fanaticism these women receive. Katherine E Brown (2018) reports white female terrorists often become "twisted celebrities" due to extremist and media portrayals as

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<sup>165</sup> Sixta, "The illusive third wave," 263.

<sup>166</sup> Mia Bloom, "Death Becomes Her: Women, Occupation, and Terrorist Mobilization". *Political Science and Politics* 43, no.3, (July 2010): 449.

<sup>167</sup> Vanzan, "Veiled Politics," 10.

<sup>168</sup> Sixta, "The illusive third wave," 263, 283.

<sup>169</sup> Dronzina, *Interview with Ilya Roubanis*.

<sup>170</sup> Dronzina, "Female Suicide Terrorism," 254.

<sup>171</sup> Dronzina, "Female Suicide Terrorism," 255.

the most radical and lethal offenders.<sup>172</sup> The male IE fascination of white women extremists adds another layer to VE ideologies that hold deeply traditional, often cultural, patriarchal values.

Brown presents four “White Widows” (WW) as examples of this devotion and fanaticism; Myriam Goris, Sally Jones, Colleen LaRose, and Samantha Lewthwaite, three of which have been mentioned in this paper previously.<sup>173</sup> In 2005, Myriam Goris (37-year-old Belgian) gained infamy as the first European female suicide bomber in Iraq.<sup>174</sup> 55-year-old Sally Jones (UK) joined Daesh in 2013 and quickly became a core recruiter, a fruitful online propagandist, and plot contributor who made ferocious threats against the west.<sup>175</sup>

“Jihadi Jane” was the moniker for blond, blue-eyed American Colleen LaRose (now 57 years old), who traveled to Europe to participate in al-Qaeda plots on behalf of the Ireland-based Islamic cell that recruited her. When the actions failed to initiate, she left Europe, was arrested in the USA, and was indicted on terrorism charges in 2010. LaRose was released in 2018 after her sentence was commuted to 10 years from life imprisonment due to cooperation with security services.<sup>176</sup>

Brown reports WW’s are distinct from other jihadi bride stereotypes as they are European women who stay active after their partner’s deaths and are flagrantly involved in violence.<sup>177</sup> Brown proposes those specific factors combined with women’s partaking in terrorism leans into WW warrior “myth-making.” She continues that the “white identity” is essential because it galvanizes IE groups’ recruitment through white “poster girls” who validate the righteousness of IE actions and ideology over western ideals.<sup>178</sup> As Rachel Shabo (2015) observes, mythologizing terrorists obscures the reality “that they are just

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<sup>172</sup> Katherine E. Brown, “White Widows: The Myth of Deadliest Jihadi Women,” Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, (2018): 1-19.

<sup>173</sup> Brown, “White Widows”, 4-5.

<sup>174</sup> Brown, 4-5.

<sup>175</sup> Brown, 3. Note: In 2017, security forces reported Sally Jones, and her 12-year-old son, had died in a Syrian drone strike

<sup>176</sup> Brown, 3.

<sup>177</sup> Brown, “White Widows”, 4.

<sup>178</sup> Brown, 7-8.



people.”<sup>179</sup> Debunking portrayals of these women as arch-villains moderates the sensationalism their VE seeks and improves analysis of their actions for CT strategies.<sup>180</sup>

#### 4.2.5 The Jihadi Bride Fairy-tale

The jihadi bride typology continues as an entrenched IE component and perpetuates the global imagery that misaligns females' enlistment in IE movements.<sup>181</sup> The literature consistently shows the jihadi bride stereotype obscures IE women as self-determined individuals who are fully capable of committing violent acts. While the jihadi bride narrative problematizes the young female Muslim demographic,<sup>182</sup> the discourse perilously ignores the matriarchs who can incite with influence, operationally participate, and facilitate male Jihadists, domestically or internationally.

Admittedly as ISD warns, some young Muslim women sought to partake in a perceived jihadi girl-power subculture, and a strong jihadi husband was often part of that image.<sup>183</sup> Typically, during this adventure or rebellion, the girls adopted more conservative versions of Islam, which eventually ingrained a duty to travel to Syria and be part of the Caliphate.<sup>184</sup> Today, camps in Syria and Iraq are full of Daesh's stranded women whose future is dependent on their home countries' political and security decisions.<sup>185</sup>

In addition, Australian CT research fellow Jacinta Carroll (2019) advises that not only do the public narratives wrongly differentiate between fighters and others, especially females, but these narratives oversimplify how authorities deal with them.<sup>186</sup> Carroll warns this framework helps to feed the extremist narrative and enhances recruitment.<sup>187</sup> Likewise, it opens the Jihadi bride typecast to be used by these radical females as a means

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<sup>179</sup> Rachel Shabi. “*The White Widow and Other Arch-villains*”. 20 May 2015.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/5/20/the-white-widow-and-other-arch-villains>

<sup>180</sup> Rachel Shabi. “*The White Widow and other Arch Villains...*”, 2015.

<sup>181</sup> While ISIS are the predominant group of relevance this research considers other Islamic extremist groups such as al-Qaeda, the Taliban and Al-Shabaab when applicable.

<sup>182</sup> This is inclusive of converts and Muslims who are born into Islam.

<sup>183</sup> Saltman & Smith, “Till Martyrdom Do Us Part”, 16.

<sup>184</sup> Saltman & Smith, “Till Martyrdom Do Us Part”, 16.

<sup>185</sup> OSCE, “Understanding the Role of Gender”, 28.

<sup>186</sup> Jacinta Carroll, “The Citizen as enemy combatant: dealing with foreign terrorist fighters”, *National Security College Policy Options Paper*. No 12, (2019): 1.

<sup>187</sup> Carroll, “The Citizen as enemy combatant, “ 1.

of downplaying their actions and endorsements of IE to deflect attention or escape legal consequences.<sup>188</sup>

The challenge of western female returnees involves multiple new complexities for the West. After all, these individuals have resided in a war zone, are likely to have undocumented children, and may hold views that vary from disillusioned to staunch supporters. Domestically, as evidenced by case studies, women are fully capable of radicalising to a level where they actively endorse, facilitate, or carry out ideological violence. The question now is whether the West's understandings of women in IE contexts have evolved adequately enough to respond without prejudice to the repatriation security challenge.

The ICG (2019) reported that the Al-Hol camp<sup>189</sup> has approximately 70,000 inhabitants, consisting of circa 13,500 detained foreign women and children.<sup>190</sup> Western females and children account for circa 1500 of the camp population. They are held together in a western community annex to keep them safe from other residents in the camp.<sup>191</sup> In recognition of security concerns, the ICG recommends that each nation undertake adequate investigations of each woman's background to evaluate any threat correctly, but ICG still firmly advocates for repatriation outcomes.<sup>192</sup>

The ICG does not suggest a blanket assessment approach because women can range from the "operationally uninvolved" to militant and operationally experienced.<sup>193</sup> NGOs and security commentators fervidly argue that if repatriation does not occur, these camps will continue incubating a new generation of extremists who will keep the "caliphate dream"

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<sup>188</sup> Carroll, 3.

<sup>189</sup> Also known as Al-Hawl. It is on the outskirts of a town called Al-Hawl in Northern Syria. It is situated close to the Syria – Iraq border.

<sup>190</sup>International Crisis Group (ICG), *Women and Children First: Repatriating the Westerners Affiliated with ISIS. Report Number 208*, 18 Nov 2019, accessed 18 April 2020. Pg. 3 <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/syria/208-women-and-children-first-repatriating-westerners-affiliated-isis>.

<sup>191</sup> ICG, *Women and Children First*, 3.

<sup>192</sup> ICG, 5.

<sup>193</sup> ICG, 5-6.

alive.<sup>194</sup> In other words, through non-repatriation and apathy, western nations could nurture a new wave of jihadi violence.

#### **4.2.6 The Indiscernible Demographic of Islamic Extremist Women.**

We now explore the demographic of women attracted to the Islamic state to understand if there is a general 'type' of women attracted to IE or if labels (e.g., jihadi brides) have validity. In 2018, Daniel Milton and Brian Dodwell applied empirical analysis on data obtained by US officials from a Syrian guesthouse (Islamic state-owned). The data set indicated 1139 females who had transitioned to Daesh-controlled areas over four months (year unspecified) and contained personal details such as citizenship, age, relationship status, and children.<sup>195</sup> Milton & Dodwell's findings indicate 7% declared they were from the West, including six females from Australia, six from America, and five from the UK.<sup>196</sup>

The dataset age demographic indicated the youngest female was 11 years old, the oldest was 76, and the mean age was 29 years.<sup>197</sup> Marital status was declared by 1135 women and reflects 77% were married, 13% were divorced or widowed, 10% were single, and 749 children were listed overall.<sup>198</sup> Milton & Dodwell reference that a high proportion was married versus single, which indicates finding a partner may not be a common motivation for females to transition into the Islamic state.<sup>199</sup> Results that potentially dent the bride narrative even further.

The authors acknowledge a challenging aspect of the gender dynamic females tended to be married several times due to their husbands dying.<sup>200</sup> Remarriage may also factor with women listed as divorced. Ultimately, Milton & Dodwell echo numerous authors opposing the jihadi bride archetype or that women become duped into joining IE groups.<sup>201</sup> They

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<sup>194</sup> Gina Vale. *Women in Islamic State: From Caliphate to Camps*. (International Centre for Counterterrorism (ICCT) The Hague. Oct 2019).

<sup>195</sup> Milton & Dodwell, "Jihadi Brides? Examining a Female Guesthouse Registry from the Islamic State's Caliphate," *CTC Sentinel* 11, no.5, (May 2018): 16.

<sup>196</sup> Milton & Dodwell, "Jihadi Brides?", 20.

<sup>197</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 18.

<sup>198</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 18.

<sup>199</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 19.

<sup>200</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 19.

<sup>201</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 21.

challenge the continuation of those dispersions because they downplay the diversity of motivations and the females themselves.<sup>202</sup>

The authors offered two caveats to recognize the research's possible deficits: 1) there is no guarantee these women entered the Islamic state.<sup>203</sup> Secondly, the register was in Russian, indicating individuals from affiliated locations could have been more likely to stay there.<sup>204</sup> Other challenges exist with the logbook data, such as a lack of ethnicity or birth country data.<sup>205</sup> Furthermore, it is unclear if the children listed were physically at the location, and no verification if the females were there willingly.<sup>206</sup>

Researchers Saltman & Smith (2015) contributed to a foreign terrorist fighter database which indicates up to 4,000 Western migrants had joined Daesh; this figure included upwards of 550 females from various countries.<sup>207</sup> The youngest reported western female migrant was 13 years old, with most being in their late teens to their early twenties.<sup>208</sup> The prominence of the young female demographic in this data is evident, which superficially reinforces patriarchal stereotypes and jihadi Bride imagery.

Sofia Patel's (2017) research reminds us that not all individuals with IE sympathies travel overseas and that radicalized females can have significant non-violent roles on home soil. To further complicate this picture, foreign policy commentators have observed that female extremists can form well-established patterns in which they go back and forth between non-violent and violent activity.<sup>209</sup>

Patel concurs with Peter Bergen<sup>210</sup> that the declaration of an Islamic caliphate in 2014 ignited western Muslim female interest.<sup>211</sup> The caliphate call dictated a need to get

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<sup>202</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 21.

<sup>203</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 21.

<sup>204</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 20.

<sup>205</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 21.

<sup>206</sup> Milton & Dodwell, 21.

<sup>207</sup> Saltman & Smith, "Till Martyrdom do us Part", 4.

<sup>208</sup> Saltman & Smith, 16.

<sup>209</sup> Bond, Cronin-Furman, Loken, Lake, Parkinson & Zelenz. Foreign Policy, 4 March 2019.

<sup>210</sup> Peter Bergen, *United States of Jihad: Who are America's Homegrown Terrorists and How do We Stop Them*, (Broadway Books, New York, 2016):

<sup>211</sup> Patel, *The Sultanate of Women*, 6.

numbers of women involved in state-building. For example, by February 2015, approximately 40 Australian women were known to have supported or participated in Iraq, Syria, and Australia activities.<sup>212</sup> Patel references two women (Bridget Namoa and Fatima Elomar) who separately came to authorities' attention in Australia for terrorist-linked domestic activities in 2016.<sup>213</sup>

Fatima Elomar (31 yrs. old) pleaded guilty to providing support for a terrorist group and received a suspended sentence of two years three months with a good behavior bond.<sup>214</sup> New South Wales Police arrested 22-year-old Bridget Namoa and her boyfriend, who dubbed themselves an "Islamic Bonnie and Clyde" for plotting a New Year's Eve attack on "non-Muslims."<sup>215</sup> In other activity, Bigio & Vogelstein reported in 2014 alone that fifteen women were prosecuted separately for transferring thousands of dollars to Somalian militants, facilitated by coded language and small transactions to avoid detection.<sup>216</sup>

Rodger Shanahan's 2019 Australian working paper findings reveal that citizens who facilitated or financed foreign VE groups from Australia were no less committed to Jihad than the frontline fighters.<sup>217</sup> This data set included 173 subjects; 85% were male, and 15% were female.<sup>218</sup> Shanahan reports this is also seen in France and Europe, so it is not unique to Australia.<sup>219</sup> It illustrates how women can conduct vital non-violent roles fundamental to the movement's agenda that NZ authorities should incorporate into their CT frameworks.

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<sup>212</sup> Patel, 6.

<sup>213</sup> Patel, 40.

<sup>214</sup> Joanna Woodburn, "Wife of Islamic State Fighter Mohamed Elomar given two-year suspended sentence", ABC news, 1 July 2016. Accessed 21 Nov 2020. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-07-01/wife-of-is-fighter-mohamad-elomar-pleads-guilty-terror-charges/7560986>

<sup>215</sup> Kathleen Calderwood, "Don't let everybody down: Islamic Bonnie and Clyde eligible for parole", ABC news, 31 January 2019, accessed 21 Nov 2020. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-31/islamic-bonnie-and-clyde-eligible-for-parole/10767532>.

<sup>216</sup> Jamine Bigio and Rachel Vogelstein, "Women and Terrorism: Hidden Threats, Forgotten Partners. Discussion Paper", *Council on Foreign Relations*, (May 2019):4

<sup>217</sup> Roger Shanahan, *Typology of Terror Australia Working Paper*, (Australia, Lowry Institute, 2019): 2

<sup>218</sup> Shanahan, *Typology of Terror*, 3.

<sup>219</sup> Shanahan, 4.

### 4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter started with the literature on women and their engagement with IE and discovered longstanding criticism about the negative impact of typecasting, narratives, western notions of feminism, and patriarchal movements. Valuable contributions levitate some concerns and provide foundations for further development. The literature demonstrates the general inclination to downplay women's participation as love, irrationality, religion, or other such framings due to western gender stereotypes wrongly informs security and CT strategies. Additionally, polarization can occur where white western women are imaged as deviant, mythical, and deceptive, with almost super villain capabilities and influence. These depictions also leave the gradients of women's IE activity side-lined and unobserved.

The literature reminds us the IE call was genderless, and IE women can provoke or use violence in all its forms against others in the name of religion, vengeance, or righteous indignation. Western gender ideals and feminist perceptions allowed these women to be overlooked, minimised, or excluded despite overt activity as evidence throughout the literature and by the case studies. Female recruits have differentiated roles that can be group ascribed and mobilised or self-ascribed and rallied. Accepting women's diversity and violent capability in a proportionate intellectual manner would better equip security and CT capabilities especially given repatriation calls from the camps in the Middle East.

Challenges do exist. Statistically, male IE actors outnumber women encouraging 'a men as threats' prioritization. Yet IE tactics have recognized this prioritization and operationalized women. As a result, IE groups often achieve more media attention with female-instigated VE, which correlates with IE recruitment. It can be well-argued that not paying attention to who, how, and why women join makes it more difficult to counter their participation today. Women's erasure as essential diverse members generates analysis with a one-dimensional caricature that submerges their threat potential.

The next chapter looks at women in the right-wing extremist (RWE) to discover if they are more understood, particularly given their "whiteness" and "sameness" as a majority demographic in many western countries. It also considers if there is recognition of their potential capability as threats is on equal terms with RWE men.



## Chapter 5: The Spectrum of Female Right-Wing Extremism

### 5.1: The New Right-Wing Extremist (RWE) Generation.

In this chapter, we now turn to focus on extreme Right-Wing (RW) women. A focus on RW men has obscured the allure that the RWE ideologies have for receptive women. This chapter argues that today's RWE women shelter behind mainstream stereotypes (e.g., Shieldmaidens, Trad Wives) while actively endorsing, facilitating, or committing acts of RW violence. RW women actively create, magnify, and engage in RW ideological content and action, which contradicts common assumptions they lack options and agency due to passive gender constructions.<sup>220</sup> CT and National Security frameworks need to reconcile western gender constructs to incorporate the operational and ideological implications of a modernized diverse RW female demographic.

To first determine how and where women feature in RWE, it is vital to understand the underpinning ideological ecosystem. After all, RW women navigate their role and contribution within this male hegemonic network. Hence, this chapter begins with a brief ideological primer for orientation and introduces the paradox of women's participation in the renovated diverse RWE world of virulent sexist incongruities.<sup>221</sup> The literature reveals that, like IE, RWE groups can weaponize gender stereotypes, particularly wife and mother, for numerous reasons: recruitment, justification, and deflection.

The literature moves to untangle the anti-feminist DNA that runs through RWE strands evangelized by the RWE community. Several works have considered how feminism, feminity narratives blend with white victimhood (Babich 2016, Mattheis 2018, Moon & Holling 2020), while other authors (Hermansson et al. 2019, Ebner 2020) reveal the aggressive masculinity, female degradation, and domestic abuse that exists within RWE

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<sup>220</sup> Kirsty Champion, "Women in the Extreme and Radical Right: Forms of Participation and Their implications". *Social Sciences* 9:9, 2020. Pg. 1-20.

<sup>221</sup> Seyward Darby, interviewed by Bonnie Erbe, "*To the Contrary: Women Thought Leader: Seyward Darby*". (USA, PBS, 23 October 2020. <https://www.pbs.org/video/woman-thought-leader-seyward-darby-mbr6pp/>. Accessed 2 January 2021



society and relationships. Research shows even high-profile idolized RWE women if deemed to transcend expected female behaviors, are subject to acrimony from RWE men.

Research then considers the modern mainstreaming of RWE discourse in ways that make their ideology appear less threatening to the mainstream, especially when espoused by a 'softer' female face. Ashley Mattheis's (2018) research found RWE women are well versed in RW semantics, defensive social justice diatribes, and anti-feminist "white is right" narratives that call on women to defend their families and culture. Darby explains RW women navigate legal flaws about hate speech to provoke bigotry and fear, often in a pseudo-intellectual manner, and do so unchallenged.<sup>222</sup> Alexander agrees and argues democratic legal systems are unable to deal with RWE female sympathizers that do not break the law but still peddle extremist and racist rhetoric.<sup>223</sup>

The chapter includes examples to demonstrate how the literature pertains to the real world of RW women's extremism. In combination with further case studies (see Appendix C) and the literature, how women navigate and fit into a dominant white manscape of bigotry and warped traditionalistic beliefs becomes clearer. Moreover, the thematic illustrates how social stigmas about gender, crime, and terrorism can be juxtaposed to reveal persistent notions of passivity and naivety that undermine women's extremism.

## **5.2 The Transnationalism and Modernisation of RWE.**

The focus on RW men hides the attraction that RWE ideologies hold for some women. Champion argues women interact in an RW ideological ecosystem that places them as "endangered womanhood" or the "key to racial salvation," sanctions non-violent and violent actions, and allows them to emulate their chosen ideological expression of RW femininity.<sup>224</sup> Champion contends that women's self-determined interactions and roles with the RW subculture should inform any ideological conceptions about their participation.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Darby, *Sisters of Hate*, 2020.

<sup>223</sup> Alexander & Turkington, "Treatment of Terrorists", 2018

<sup>224</sup> Kirsty Champion, "Women in the Extreme and Radical Right: Forms of Participation and Their implications". *Social Sciences* 9:9, 2020. Pg. 15

<sup>225</sup> Kirsty Champion, "Women in the Extreme and Radical Right"., 2020. Pg. 1

In other words, it is within the ideology where women can construct their own RW identity; therefore, understanding the fundamental RW ideological tenets is critical.

Debates about today's RWE origins include Islamophobia, anti-immigration, anti-feminism, and Donald Trump's presidency (i.e., Baysinger 2006, Darby 2018, IEP 2019, Ebner 2020). Irrespective of their origins, Dean *et al.* report that true RW believers uphold that Western identity and culture are under existential threat (e.g., 'The Great Replacement,' "White Genocide") and require rigorous protection.<sup>226</sup> Ebner and Lavin envisage that modern RWE activity will increase as societal issues are used to transmit "burn it all down" messages designed to hasten the apocalyptic race war needed to reset to the 'white' natural order.<sup>227</sup>

Baysinger (2006) warns it can be difficult to define one modern RWE ideology due to supporters' simultaneous and multiple memberships and links this behavior to belief advancement rather than erratic participation.<sup>228</sup> In agreement, Blee (2017) and IEP (2020) report the extreme RW demographic is defined as individuals with wide ideological erratic allegiances as they trial different philosophies before finding a fit.<sup>229</sup> Notably, IEP caution that not every RW variation is automatically terroristic or violent despite sharing racial or cultural framing such as victimhood.<sup>230</sup>

A shared and longstanding war cry of white supremacy is "white victimhood" which motivates RW women (and men) to vehemently defend their beliefs and goals (Babich 2016, Anderson 2018). Despite their shared idealized violence, some RWE strands are image-obsessed and mindful of public optics (i.e., White Nationalists - WN). SPLC observes optic awareness is why WN's frequently ostracise the more openly violent groups/individuals (e.g., Neo-Nazis), regardless of their shared vision.<sup>231</sup> In reality, local

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<sup>226</sup> Geoff Dean, Peter Bell and Zarina Vakhitora. Right Wing Extremism in Australia: The Rise of the New Radical Right. *Journal of Policing & Intelligence & Counterterrorism*. 11: 2. (2016). 123-125

<sup>227</sup> Lavin & Lenz, *Culture Warlords*, 34.20

<sup>228</sup> Baysinger, *Right Wing Group Characteristics*, 166.

<sup>229</sup> Kathleen Blee. "Similarities/Differences in Gender and Far Right Politics in Europe and the USA" in *Gender and the Far-Right Politics in Europe*. Ed. Michaela Kottig, Renate Bitzan & Andrea Peto. (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2017) :197

<sup>230</sup> IEP, 45

<sup>231</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). "White Nationalist", 2019. Accessed 15 January 2021. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/ideology/white-nationalist>

and international interconnected RWE networks permit a cross-pollination of ideas while retaining the intricate nuances and ingroup distinctions that confuse outsiders (see Belew 2018, Darby, 2019, Ebner 2020).

More comprehensively, Dean, Bell, and Vakhitora (2016) summarise RWE ideologies as beliefs centered on one or more principles such as anti-establishment, anti-elitism, fascism, nativism, rigid traditionalism, and fervent nationalism that includes exclusivist or racial ideals (often Islamophobic).<sup>232</sup> Catlyn Keenan (2014) observes that RW “murderers and terrorists” often believe they are “warriors for god” due to an ideological sense of religious reinforcement.<sup>233</sup> <sup>234</sup> In contrast, others avoid religion and theology altogether, but all strands tend to appropriate various traditions and histories for ideological legitimacy.<sup>235</sup>

Regardless of RWE's ideological characteristics and toxic masculine structure, Ebner reminds us that “white pride can be administered at dinner tables, during playdates, through electronic mailing lists and on private texts” by RW women.<sup>236</sup> Today’s RW women can transcend borders via the internet to contribute internationally to defend the global ‘white race.’<sup>237</sup> RWE women strategically use technology to help globalize old and new RW concepts in tight-knit online communities.<sup>238</sup> Belew specifically describes women as RW activists whose intergroup alliances help sustain “white power” as a social movement.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> IEP, 45

<sup>233</sup> Catlyn Keenan, *Behind the doors of white supremacy*, i-ii

<sup>234</sup> Some RWE groups incorporate Christianity, Odinism, or other religious or spiritual notions (I.e., Viking) Timothy Baysinger, 14, 17

<sup>235</sup> Seyward Darby, interviewed by Bonnie Erbe, “*To the Contrary: Women Thought Leader: Seyward Darby*”. PBS USA. 23 October 2020. Accessed 2 January 2021. <https://www.pbs.org/video/woman-thought-leader-seyward-darby-mbr6pp/>.

<sup>236</sup> Darby, *Sisters of Hate*, 254.

<sup>237</sup> Yassin Musharbash, “The Globalization of Far-Right Extremism: An Investigative Report”. *CTC Sentinel*, 14:6, 2021. 39-47

<sup>238</sup> Yassin Musharbash, “The Globalization of Far-Right Extremism”, 46.

<sup>239</sup> Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 8.

### 5.2.1 The RWE family tree and communal leitmotifs.<sup>240</sup>

This chapter seeks to untangle RWE strains to help locate the women within the ideology more generally, reducing their anonymity. This untangling is vital because the RWE ideological network is what Darby calls a “complicated motley space” that deliberately aims to confuse public [and arguably CT] interpretations.<sup>241</sup> Traditional RW cultures have been superseded, and many appear far removed from their roots in style and linguistically, which attracts more women to the cause. As a result, RW women should no longer be considered simple sycophants in a bastion of angry white men. Toxic nationalism is not genderless despite its [managed] appearances.

The RWE ecosystem is a heterogeneous assembly of worldviews. Worldviews that support insular patriotism and promote authoritarianism and are anti-democratic in extreme ways, e.g., violence.<sup>242</sup> The progenitor of western RWE groups is the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a white supremacist network with a core hatred of non-whites and Jews.<sup>243</sup> Closely aligned are Neo-Nazis, who often use the alias ‘Socialists’ and embrace Hitler, Nazi symbols, history, and racist eugenics.<sup>244</sup> A kin group is racist skinheads, who Baysinger describes as the “foot soldiers” of RWE due to their strategic recruitment by other strands (e.g., White Nationalists).<sup>245</sup>

White Nationalism (WN) is a thriving strand centered on the white identity as a nation's one true organizing principle, authenticating actions ranging from anti-immigration rhetoric to across-the-board ethnic cleansing.<sup>246</sup> Darby finds WN strains typically attract women personally disappointed by feminism and support the RW male view feminism has undermined Western civilization.<sup>247</sup> These women believe that nationalism has their best

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<sup>240</sup> The manosphere is excluded in this thesis but it is acknowledged anti-feminism and victimization narratives are bonding threads to RWE networks. Unlike RWE groups, the Manosphere groups specifically target women due to their perceived rejection.

<sup>241</sup> Seyward Darby, interviewed by Bonnie Erbe, *To the Contrary*, 23 October 2020.

<sup>242</sup> Campion, 2020, 2

<sup>243</sup> Timothy Baysinger, 2006, 10.

<sup>244</sup> Timothy Baysinger, 11. Self-label as socialists in attempt to soften their brand

<sup>245</sup> Timothy Baysinger, 14.

<sup>246</sup> SPLC. “*White Nationalist*”. 2019.

<sup>247</sup> Darby, *Rise of the Valkyries* 2017.

interests at heart, and like the men, they can pick and choose multiple RW ideological arguments to validate this belief.

Many modern strands (e.g., Christian Identity, Identitarian, Eco-fascists) fit under the WN umbrella. Baysinger and SPLC (2019) explain that WN enthusiasts abhor non-white immigration, miscegenation, multiculturalism and seek violent political revolutions to achieve a rigid paleoconservative society.<sup>248</sup> SPLC divide WN followers into two categories: 1) mainstreamers who want to covertly infiltrate and subvert government institutions to get power and resources, influence policies, and convert “normies”<sup>249</sup> to racist beliefs;<sup>250</sup> and 2) vanguardists who disavow system reform and promote radical revolutionary action as the only viable pathway to a white ethnostate.<sup>251</sup>

According to SPLC, WN’s will disguise their views to access power positions typically denied to overt racists such as policy making, military roles, or law enforcement.<sup>252</sup> ADL says women are encouraged to help normalize RWE views by working in specific fields, e.g., journalism or teachers secondary to domesticity.<sup>253</sup> SPLC warns that WN emphasizes polarisation tactics by manipulating social issues, e.g., immigration, law, and order, to normalize RW views.<sup>254</sup> To achieve this, AFF argues “right-wing identities” can be downplayed for years by individuals, and even when discovered, witness apprehension allows RWE beliefs to be unchecked and unchallenged.<sup>255</sup>

### **5.3 Looking behind the Floral Quilt of Right-Wing Extremism Literature.**

This literature review explores the RW female demographic to discover how they participate and support extreme RW ideologies. It demonstrates the RW subversion of gender and family encourages oversight by authorities and mainstreams women’s

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<sup>248</sup> SPLC, *White Nationalist*, 2019.

<sup>249</sup> A ‘Normie’ is a person whose culture is considered mainstream, conforming and conventional by non-conformists.

<sup>250</sup> SPLC, *White Nationalist*, 2019.

<sup>251</sup> SPLC, *White Nationalist*, 2019.

<sup>252</sup> SPLC, *Alt – Right*, 2019.

<sup>253</sup> Anti Defamation League (ADL). “*Feminism Perverted: Extremist Women on the World Wide Web*”. 2012:

<sup>254</sup> SPLC, *Alt – Right*, 2019.

<sup>255</sup> AFF, *Overlooked and Underrated*, 4-5.

activities. Anti-feminism is part of its cultural fabric used to recruit and underpin RWE policies and calls to action. Researchers expose the RWE polished lexicon as a deliberate normalization tactic supplemented by crafted imagery. The literature confirms women have online platforms to spin extreme beliefs and fuel the movement despite male hegemony. In conclusion, the literature shows that women play diverse roles within the RWE community as both the source, symbol, and propagators of its ideology and activities, including violence.

Linda Gordon's (2017) work points out there is no reason to expect women to be less bigoted or less capable of RWE violence and incitement than their male counterparts.<sup>256</sup> In agreement, Darby describes RW women as "hate movements dulcet voices and its standard-bearers." and "hates secret weapons."<sup>257</sup> She believes that the "women are wonderful"<sup>258</sup> effect encourages observers' skepticism about women's complicity in RW bigotry and blinds people to how women can participate in appalling behavior, even towards other women.<sup>259</sup>

Darby is adamant it is to a nation's peril that outsiders discount or overlook these women as spreaders, wardens, and caretakers of extremist ideologies.<sup>260</sup> Timothy Baysinger (2006) warns security agencies to understand who the "radical right" consider as heroes and catalytic incidents as they can invigorate new or inactive RWE threats; this includes women martyrs.<sup>261</sup> Cunningham and Belew (2018) point out that past "alt-right" martyr women (i.e., Kathy Ainsworth) have created a space for today's RW women.<sup>262</sup>

Ainsworth was an American elementary school teacher, a devout churchgoer, and a member of multiple militant Ku Klux Klan (KKK) groups. In 1968, police shot Ainsworth as

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<sup>256</sup> Linda Gordon. *The Second Coming of the KKK*. (Liveright Publishing, New York, 2017).

<sup>257</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 257.

<sup>258</sup> According to sociology the "women are wonderful" effect is the often-unconscious bias that evaluates women more positively than men overall.

<sup>259</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 54.

<sup>260</sup> Darby. *Sisters in Hate*, 257.

<sup>261</sup> Timothy E Baysinger, "Right Wing Groups Characteristics and Ideology". *Homeland Security Affairs II*, no.3 (2006), 15.

<sup>262</sup> Cunningham, *Cross Regional Trends*, 114.

she and a male conspirator attempted to bomb a Jewish leader's home.<sup>263</sup> Stuart Wexler (2016) reports that while Ainsworth's husband was aware of her KKK support, he did not know the extremity of her beliefs, nor her explosives and firearms training.<sup>264</sup> Wexler describes Ainsworth as "raised on hate" by her mother (solo parent) to become a true believer of the white xenophobe doctrine, and she was able to downplay these beliefs outside of her KKK cohort.<sup>265</sup>

Ideological concealment is not unique to Ainsworth. In her work, Andrea Dauber (2016) argues that a lack of discourse about extreme RW women sanctions gender as a helpful concealment mechanism to avoid recognition and culpability.<sup>266</sup> She writes that gender stereotypes hinder these investigations unless the women claim attention as instigators or RWE perpetrators.<sup>267</sup> Dauber reaffirms RW women are not genuinely invisible; instead, they are subject to underestimation, which leads to underreporting to authorities about their offenses.<sup>268</sup> In other words, they hide in plain sight. Darby argues, however, that there is a difference between hiding and not being seen.<sup>269</sup>

In media commentary about her book "*Sisters of Hate*," Darby believes the RW individuals "who are the most frightening" avoid mainstream cameras: the seemingly innocuous women of the movement.<sup>270</sup> Arguably 30-year-old American Erica Alduino<sup>271</sup> is a personification of this. Alduino was a key RWE facilitator for the 2017 "Unite the Right"

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<sup>263</sup> Michael Newton. *The Ku Klux Klan in Mississippi: A History*. (McFarland & Company Inc Publishers. 21 Nov 2009):177.

<sup>264</sup> Stuart Wexler, *America's Secret Jihad: The Hidden History of Religious Terrorism in the United States*, (USA, Counterpoint, 2015): 158.

<sup>265</sup> Wexler, *America's Secret Jihad*, 158-159.

<sup>266</sup> Andrea Dauber. "The Increasing Visibility of Right-Wing Extremist Women in Contemporary Europe: Is Great Britain an Exception?", *Gender and Far Right Politics in Europe*. Ed. Michaela Kottig, Renate Bitzan & Andrea Peto, ( Palgrave Macmillian, 2016), 60.

<sup>267</sup> Dauber, "Increasing Visibility of Right-Wing Extremist Women", 6.

<sup>268</sup> Dauber,60.

<sup>269</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 257.

<sup>270</sup> Mark Joyella. Interview with Seyward Darby. *Why the Mainstream Media Misses the Most Dangerous White Nationalists-The Women- According to Writer Seyward Darby*. (Forbes, 14 Oct 2020). Accessed 5 December 2020. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/markjoyella/2020/10/14/why-the-mainstream-media-misses-the-most-dangerous-white-nationalists-the-women/?sh=4c4e95b72e19>.

<sup>271</sup> Anti-Racism USA groups describe her as a "Neo Nazi" but self-identified on social media as a "Alt Right American Nationalist".

(UTR) Charlottesville Rally.<sup>272</sup> SPLC<sup>273</sup> and Darby<sup>274</sup> reveal Alduino was the “quiet architect” of UTR despite media reports focusing on WN males as the rally organizers. Alduino verified identities, collected levies, managed logistics, and created a private server for UTR planning between fractions.<sup>275</sup>

Simultaneously, Alduino was an influential member of Identity Evropa and Identity Dixie, who wanted an ethno-pluralistic society and used innocuous slogans (i.e., “European Culture”) to manage their overt aesthetics.<sup>276</sup> After the murder of a female counter-protester by a male RWE at Charlottesville, Alduino reportedly moved states to join a new RWE chapter and is still reportedly active today. Alduino remains missing from broader discussions, including academia, about Charlottesville.<sup>277</sup>

Alduino’s architectural role aligns with an earlier analysis by Kathleen Blee (2002), who found some RW women (i.e., ‘trad wives,’ ‘shieldmaidens’) <sup>278</sup> typically support RW men’s violence to further the cause.<sup>279</sup> In comparison, Blee says specific RW women (i.e., Neo-Nazi, White Supremacists) comfortably use overt intimidation and violence against minorities themselves.<sup>280</sup> Earlier, Blee (2017) found that Neo-Nazi ingroup expectations command women to be “female racial warriors” through participation in aggressive

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<sup>272</sup> Darby, 171-172.

<sup>273</sup> SPLC. “Jason Kessler”, 2019. Accessed 24 December 2020. <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/jason-kessler>.

<sup>274</sup> Darby. *Sisters in Hate*, 171-172.

<sup>275</sup> Magna Legal Services. *Exhibit 2: Deposition of Erica Alduino*. 3 December 2018. <https://www.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.vawd.109120/gov.uscourts.vawd.109120.457.2.pdf>. Accessed 26 December 2020. Darby, *Sisters in Hate*: 171-172.

<sup>276</sup> SPLC. “White Nationalist Group Identity Evropa Rebrands Following Private Chat Leaks, Launches American Identity Movement”. 12 March 2019. Accessed 25 December 2020. <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2019/03/12/white-nationalist-group-identity-evropa-rebrands-following-private-chat-leaks-launches>.

<sup>277</sup> Asheville Anti-Racism. “#IdentifyEvropa: Meet Erica Joy Alduino, Neo-Nazi Organizer”. 2019. Accessed 2 Jan 2020. <https://avlantiracism.blackblogs.org/2019/03/08/identifyevropa-meet-erica-joy-alduino-neo-nazi-organizer/>.

<sup>278</sup> Trad Wives is short for traditional wife. Many of these women self-ascribe to this narrative. A Shield Maiden is a female warrior from Scandinavian mythology, often imaged as fighting in support of Viking men.

<sup>279</sup> Kathleen M Blee. *Inside Organised Racism: Women of the Hate Movement*. (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2002): 136.

<sup>280</sup> Blee, *Inside Organised Racism*, 136.



interactions at group cultural events (i.e., initiations) and street violence against their chosen targets.<sup>281</sup>

Analysis by Bjorgo and Ravandal (2019) indicated “racial nationalism” enthusiasts (e.g., fascists, white supremacists, and Neo-Nazis) rated high as perpetrators of random violence (including vandalism) to premeditated terrorism.<sup>282</sup> Similarly, Latif *et al.* (2020) established ‘racist women’s violence’ can be self-ascribed, particularly in RWE groups with a drug/alcohol hyper-aggressive punk culture.<sup>283</sup> They report these women will use violence to settle scores, defend the group, show allegiance, and gain status.<sup>284</sup> In addition, Latif *et al.* found RW women's violence can also be under group direction, including women instigating incidents with a target, so her ‘protectors’ can violently respond.<sup>285</sup>

In her analysis, Darby found that RW women typically fly under the radar as RW men's activities distract onlookers.<sup>286</sup> Several authors (e.g., Blee 2002, Blee & Linden 2012, Mattheis 2018) have attributed this omission to the women's deliberate depiction of themselves as passive traditional family-centric beings. Additional evidence of oversight comes from Belew’s (2018) interviews with RWE women, where she discovered more women claimed altercations with minorities than those arrested for their violence and racist involvement.<sup>287</sup> Darby caveats this by stating not all ‘trad wives’ are racist and recognizes that traditionalism can make RWE messaging charismatic for mainstream conservatives.<sup>288</sup>

Research (Jupskas and Leidig 2020) shows numerous people can be radicalized and never engage in VE or extremist activities, while others become entrenched as RWE is a family

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<sup>281</sup> Kathleen Blee. “Similarities/Differences in Gender and Far Right Politics” in *Gender and Far Right Politics in Europe*. Ed: Michaela Kottig, Renate Bitzam & Andrea Peto. (UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 195

<sup>282</sup> Bjorgo & Aasland Ravndal, *Extreme-Right Violence*, 5.

<sup>283</sup> Mehr Latif, Kathleen Blee, Matthew DeMichele & Pete Simi. “Do White Supremacist Women Adopt Movement Archetypes of Mother, Whore, and Fighter? *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. (May 2020. 1-19):11

<sup>284</sup> Latif, Blee, DeMichele & Pete Simi, *White Supremacist Women*, 11.

<sup>285</sup> Latif, Blee, DeMichele & Pete Simi, *White Supremacist Women*, 13.

<sup>286</sup> Mark Joyella. Interview with Seyward Darby. *Why the Mainstream Media Misses the Most Dangerous White Nationalists-The Women*, 14 Oct 2020.

<sup>287</sup> Blee. *Inside Organised Racism*, 136.

<sup>288</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 155.

tradition they are being born into.<sup>289</sup> Belew's USA historical research found marriage was often used to cement alliances between RW groups and as a method to reinforce the network.<sup>290</sup> In contemporary RWE strains, women are still positioned, first and foremost, as the womb of the [white] nation despite any role variation the groups or these women construct. However, Darby warns not to let 'womb of a nation' perspectives side-line women's more comprehensive capabilities.<sup>291</sup>

The new RWE landscape sees traditional values being used to formulate resistance to social issues such as sexual and reproductive rights (e.g., abortion, sex education) and promote the natural family of a man, his wife, and many [white] children.<sup>292</sup> What upholds modern RW ideologies is a desire for tradition and systemic change away from gender equality and feminism as it has come at a cost – the loss of white male privilege and the nuclear family. Paradoxically many women enter the RWE landscape as anti-feminists and evolve to adopt more WN pro-white views despite its hegemonic sexism and misogyny.<sup>293</sup>

### **5.3.1 Sexism is a core feature of RWE networks**

RW ideologies include racist narratives about sexualized violence, women's rights, and concepts of feminism that endorse RW's hegemonic ethnicized sexism. In her interactions with RW women, Darby found they overwhelmingly celebrate sexism as natural and hotly disavow feminism as a cultural diversion.<sup>294</sup> All RWE ideological strains denounce western feminism and diversity as abominations and responsible for personal shortfalls and societal issues.<sup>295</sup> Darby sums up the RW worldview as one of victimization with a core of apocalyptic urgency.<sup>296</sup> Ultimately the blending of anti-feminism and white victimization

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<sup>289</sup> Anders Ravik Jupskas and Eviane Leidig. *Knowing what's (far) right*. (Oslo, C-Rex – Center for Research on Extremism, 2020) 59-60.

<sup>290</sup> Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 180.

<sup>291</sup> Darby, *The Rise of the Valkyries*, 2017.

<sup>292</sup> Clare Provost, 'How the far right is weaponizing the family', *The Face*". April 2019. <https://theface.com/society/inside-the-far-right-family-movement>

<sup>293</sup> Darby, 2017.

<sup>294</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 236-239.

<sup>295</sup> ADL. *When Women are the Enemy*, 12.

<sup>296</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 11.

with 'white genocide' and race war convictions makes violent actions appear inevitable and plausible to RWE groups.<sup>297</sup>

Darby continues that this apocalyptic urgency encourages RW women to be the happy face for odious beliefs and strive to counteract RW's misogynistic reputation.<sup>298</sup> Instead, RW women promote health, age, and femininity as qualities that appeal to men, not education or careers, because they do not give white RW men the sexual gratification they deserve.<sup>299</sup> Hutchinson (2019) agrees that white victimhood (mainly male white victimhood) pervades RWE discourse and provides a frame for any personal resentment chosen.<sup>300</sup>

As an example, RW media personality Lana Lokteff espouses that women take on too many male responsibilities, and by doing so, women erase men's natural roles as providers and protectors.<sup>301</sup> Scholar Lynn Berg views the RW notion of women's inferiority and biological gender inequality as a gateway into the ideological fallacy "white men" must lead because of natural inequality among populations.<sup>302</sup> Berg warns that the acculturation of RW gender and racist images must be challenged and deconstructed, so RWE ascriptions of feminism and women's rights do not become mainstream.<sup>303</sup>

Caroline Kennedy (2013) determines RWE, whether hyperbole or xenophobia with diplomacy, relies on female terms and gendered imagery to stir men into fighting for home and country (i.e., the Motherland).<sup>304</sup> But as Kennedy argues, the truth is RW men prefer women to accede from politics and decision-making beyond their domestic scope.<sup>305</sup> Regardless, Blee's (2017) analysis of western RWE groups found that women

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<sup>297</sup> Mehr Latif, Kathleen Blee, Matthew DeMichele and Pete Simi, "Do White Supremacist Women Adopt Movement Archetypes of Mother, Whore, and Fighter?", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. May 2020 :2

<sup>298</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 11.

<sup>299</sup> Ebner, *Going Dark*, 54.

<sup>300</sup> Jade Hutchinson "Far-Right Terrorism", 24

<sup>301</sup> Ebner, *Going Dark*, 70.

<sup>302</sup> Lynn Berg. 'Between Anti-Feminism and Ethnicized Sexism. *Far-Right Gender Politics in Germany*' in Post-Digital Cultures of the Far Right: Online Actions and Offline Consequences in Europe and the US, . eds; Maik Fielitz & Nick Thurston, Transcript Verlag, 2019:88

<sup>303</sup> Lynn Berg, 'Between Anti-Feminism and Ethnicized Sexism', 89.

<sup>304</sup> Caroline Kennedy, "Gender and Security," in *Contemporary Security Studies 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition*, Ed. Alan Collins, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013), 121.

<sup>305</sup> Caroline Kennedy, "Gender and Security," 121.

entering WN-styled groups outnumbered those entering race-centric movements (i.e., KKK) in America.<sup>306</sup> She notes that modern women align with WN, hold expectations of themselves as “comrades in the struggle for white supremacy,” and challenge male counterparts who opposed their involvement.<sup>307</sup>

Professor Kate Manne (2021) views misogyny as the “law enforcement branch of patriarchy” and interprets sexism as an ideology that supports patriarchal social settings.<sup>308</sup> She argues misogyny rewards women who enforce it as the “status quo”<sup>309</sup> Manne views misogynistic behavior as hostility towards women who do not serve male interests in line with patriarchal norms.<sup>310</sup> One specific RWE female demographic, ‘Trad Wives,’ shield and endorses white supremacy and patriarchy through a hyperfeminine aesthetic that promotes virtues such as purity and fertility.

Nevertheless, Ebner found trad wives were similar to men's rights activists (MRA's) in that they perceive gender roles as sexual economics, known as SMV (Sexual Market Value).<sup>311</sup> She elaborates RW men decide upon women's SMV; however, RW women promote appearance and a lack of sexual promiscuity as a means of increasing SMV.<sup>312</sup> As one RW woman commented to Ebner, “...Sex is the main thing that men need from a woman. Therefore, it's the prime value that a woman has”.<sup>313</sup>

Sexism within RWE movements does not always translate externally. Amadeu Antonio Foundation (AAF) (2014) found the oversight of RW women by outsiders, especially Neo-Nazi women, is because the majority of “white power” females are not instantly recognizable as fitting a “Nazi” stereotype.<sup>314</sup> Consequently, they go unobserved and

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<sup>306</sup> Blee, *Similarities/Differences in Gender*, 195.

<sup>307</sup> Blee, *Similarities/Differences in Gender*, 195.

<sup>308</sup> Sean Illing, Interview with Professor Kate Manne, “*What we get wrong about Misogyny*”, 7 March 2017 <https://www.vox.com/identities/2017/12/5/16705284/elizabeth-warren-loss-2020-sexism-misogyny-kate-manne>

<sup>309</sup> Sean Illing, Interview with Kate Manne, 2017

<sup>310</sup> Illing, Interview, 2017

<sup>311</sup> Ebner, *Going Dark*, 53.

<sup>312</sup> Ebner, 54.

<sup>313</sup> Ebner, 55.

<sup>314</sup> Amadeu Antonio Foundation (AAF), *Overlooked and Underrated: Women in Right-Wing Extremist Groups in Germany*. (AAF, Expert Center on Gender and Right Wing Extremism, 2014): 4-5

underestimated by both law enforcement and the general public.<sup>315</sup> Dauber places the lack of consequences down to conservative gender stereotypes that displace women's RWE behavior, even their overt offenses.<sup>316</sup>

### **5.3.2. Feminism is decadent: Be "Feminine, not Feminist."<sup>317</sup>**

Women's participation in male hegemonic groups appears to be a confusing dichotomy, given that anti-feminism is a core tenet. As Campion explains, anti-feminism is a core RW ideological prop that places misandry accusations at feminists' feet, even by other women.<sup>318</sup> The literature reveals that RW women find power in anti-feminism and detoxify RW patriarchy while reframing internal gender violence. Saltman and others verify RW women are dynamic members of their chosen extremist communities who knowingly facilitate or carry out extremism regardless of female subjugation by men or their ideologies.

Feminism is viewed as decadent, particularly by RWE standards, partly due to their desire to control white women's reproduction and their internalized collective consciousness that men have been betrayed and disempowered by gender equality.<sup>319</sup> Feminist analysis by Moon & Holling (2020) positions white supremacy as a motivating influence for white women wanting a gender equivalence within a racial system that benefits them.<sup>320</sup> Moon & Holling explain "white women tears" side-line women of color so white women can epitomize [white] victimhood.<sup>321</sup>

Moon & Holling recognize victimhood allows white women to build RW ranks through feminism resentment, sexualized white supremacy, and "rape scourge" warnings.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> Amadeu Antonio Foundation (AFF), *Overlooked and Underrated: Women in Right-Wing Extremist Groups in Germany*. (AFF, 2014): 4-5

<sup>316</sup> Dauber, *Increasing Visibility of Right-Wing Extremist Women*, 60.

<sup>317</sup> Darby, 155.

<sup>318</sup> Kirsty Campion, "Women in the Extreme and Radical Right: Forms of Participation and their Implications." *Social Sciences* 9, no. 149 (August 2020): 12

<sup>319</sup> Hope Not Hate Ltd. *State of Hate 2019 People Vs the Elite?* (London, Hope Not Hate, 2019): 6

<sup>320</sup> Dreama G. Moon & Michelle A. Holling. "White Supremacy in Heels": (white) feminism, white supremacy, and discursive violence. *Communication and Critical / Cultural Studies*. 17:2. (June 2020): 255

<sup>321</sup> Moon & Holling, *White Supremacy in Heels*, 256.

<sup>322</sup> Moon & Holling, 257.

Mattheis points out these beliefs are sanctioned, particularly online, by “shieldmaidens of whiteness,”<sup>323</sup> which normalizes the anti-feminist, alt maternalism, and racist ideals while romanticizing the patriarchal “alt-right trad wife” lifestyle.<sup>324</sup> One of Darby’s subjects fervently embraced being a “trad wife” and marketed the lifestyle online through rhetoric and pastel imagery that promoted retrograde leveled hierarchies,<sup>325</sup> her beliefs about “cultural lanes,” traditional values, and white culture preservation.<sup>326</sup>

In Darby’s analysis, she found the marketed depiction of RW womanhood, whether married or single, is “feminine, not feminist.”<sup>327</sup> Similarly, in Ebner’s observations of online discourse, RW women advertised that to keep a man, femininity comes first, look “hip,” proud, innocent, and that women are more “valuable” in a “sexually pristine state.”<sup>328</sup> She argues the aesthetics obsession stems from a desire to look legitimate ideologically.<sup>329</sup> In agreement, Darby states attractiveness is an attempt to deflect from their views; for instance, Lokteff’s comment “pretty white girls get a bad rap.”<sup>330</sup>

Darby (2017) finds RW females like the idea of alpha males who embody “aggressive masculinity, ” making it difficult for them to see RWE men as misogynistic.<sup>331</sup> Instead, Darby says RW women contend men and women are fundamentally different, that they are “not equal but equally important.”<sup>332</sup> She observed RW women declare it is not submission or subjugation but a new “yin yang” analogy.<sup>333</sup> An alternative to this is earlier

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<sup>323</sup> Coined by Ashley Mattheis in his research examining the online narratives of prominent alt/right wing women. It refers to women’s roles as life givers of a white future through childbirth and indoctrination.

<sup>324</sup> Ashley Mattheis. Shieldmaidens of Whiteness: (Alt) Maternalism and Women recruiting for the Far/Alt Right. *Journal for Deradicalization*. Winter 2018/2019 Nr 17. (2018) 128-129

<sup>325</sup> Hierarchies for example, man and woman, citizens and the state.

<sup>326</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 47.

<sup>327</sup> Darby., 155.

<sup>328</sup> Ebner, *Going Dark*, 54-57.

<sup>329</sup> Ebner, 175.

<sup>330</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 219.

<sup>331</sup> Seyward Darby interview by Hari Sreenivasan. “Why are women joining alt-right?”, *PBS Newshour*, 19 August 2017. Accessed 10 October 2020. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/women-joining-alt-right>

<sup>332</sup> Darby interview by Hari Sreenivasan, “Why are women joining alt-right?”, 19 August 2017.

<sup>333</sup> Darby interview, “Why are women joining alt-right?”, 2017.

work by Iris Young (2013). She found that RW male dominance often gets framed as love, natural duty, and chivalry rather than hostility by their female base.<sup>334</sup>

In line with Young, Ebner describes multiple RW women's online declarations of domestic abuse, which their female peers reframed, and dismissed, as "domestic discipline"<sup>335</sup> Equally, Ebner recounts watching men coach each other online about "subtle authority signals" for their partners when out in public such as a code word, a raised eyebrow or removal for "domestic discipline."<sup>336</sup> She elaborates that traditional wives complain feminism has defined anything a man does to obtain relationship authority as abuse, preventing him from winning the "dominance struggle."<sup>337</sup> The preferred relationship model is TiH (Taken in Hand) which is male-led, and the female defers in everyday life, even sexually.<sup>338</sup> But even when viewed as subservient by an external viewer, RW women can be activists for the cause by exemplifying the trad wife role and supporting RWE action by men.

Hermansson et al. (2020) enter the discussion by stating the RW traditional family and wife image is incompatible with the routine degradation of women as sexual objects, to the point that RW advocates will play down white men's violence including rape.<sup>339</sup> The downplaying of incidents is because sexual violence damages the RW mirage of western superiority and male protection they hawk.<sup>340</sup> Hermansson et al. report that the most extreme RW men advocate for violence and sexual abuse against women on private property and believe women "crave the firm hand."<sup>341</sup> Therefore, if an RW woman betrays core values, her RW community will quickly turn on her regardless of her perceived status,<sup>342</sup> as demonstrated in 2017 with RW spokesperson Lauren Southern.

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<sup>334</sup> Iris Marion Young. The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*. 29:1 (2003)

<sup>335</sup> Ebner. 58.

<sup>336</sup> Ebner, 68.

<sup>337</sup> Ebner, 69.

<sup>338</sup> Ebner, 68.

<sup>339</sup> Patrik Hermansson, David Lawrence, Joe Mulhall, and Simon Murdoch. *The International Alt Right: Fascism for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. (London, Routledge, 2020) Pg. 188

<sup>340</sup> Hermansson, Lawrence, Mulhall, & Murdoch, *The International Alt Right*, 188.

<sup>341</sup> Hermansson et al, *The International Alt Right*, 188-189.

<sup>342</sup> Hermansson et al, 188-189.

In 2017, Southern, a Canadian RW media star, was subjected to an RW harassment campaign designed to put her in her 'rightful place' after a historical picture emerged of a prior biracial boyfriend. Hermansson *et al.* explain in the eyes of an RW purist, Southern was now a "coal burner" (miscegenator) and had betrayed her race.<sup>343</sup> Southern remained a vocal RW WN spokesperson but often received callous rebukes from 'suit and tie' Neo-Nazi Richard Spencer and his male followers.<sup>344</sup> Brad Hunter (2019) noticed even 'Queen Bee' spokesperson Lokteff has received acrimony from supposed ideological allies, with some RW men denouncing her as "...feminism infecting the movement" and critiques for making broadcasts instead of being a mother.<sup>345</sup>

Notwithstanding any infighting, Darby argues that this anti-feminism can empower some women. For others, power can range from engaging in dialogue, having a platform, or leading a part of the movement.<sup>346</sup> A major oxymoron exists because despite talk about femininity, as Champion (2020) points out, RWE women range from facilitators to shooters, arsonists, and murderers.<sup>347</sup> She argues that because of the appearance of RWE subservience, it is often only in the aftermath of terrorism when a woman's participation is known.<sup>348</sup>

### **5.3.3 "It's our Womb; it belongs to the males in her society."<sup>349</sup>**

Belew's analysis shows that the "cult of motherhood" features more in white power discourse than in mainstream society. She argues that this symbolic invocation not only allows RW men to engage in deep-rooted rhetoric about defending white women but inflates their justifications for violence to include homes and children.<sup>350</sup> Extensive

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<sup>343</sup> Hermansson *et al.*, 188.

<sup>344</sup> Hermansson *et al.*, 188-189.

<sup>345</sup> Brad Hunter, *White Power Barbies a powerful alt-right recruiting tool*. Cape Breton Post. 10 October 2019. Accessed 24 November 2020. <https://www.capebretonpost.com/news/canada/white-power-barbies-a-powerful-alt-right-recruiting-tool-362608/>

<sup>346</sup> Darby interview, 19 August 2017.

<sup>347</sup> Kirsty Champion. "Women in the Extreme and Radical Right: Forms of Participation and their Implications." *Social Sciences* 9:149 (August 2020): 12

<sup>348</sup> Champion, *Women in the Extreme*, 12.

<sup>349</sup> Neo Nazi Andrew Anglin's comment in response to mixed race children with a white mother, as cited by Seyward Darby. *The Rise of the Valkyries*, 2017.

<sup>350</sup> Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 157.



literature finds RWE ideologies promote the Aryan/Euro family as central to the upkeep of white supremacy and precludes white race eradication or dilution (see AAF 2012, ADL 2012, Darby 2017, Belew 2018, Mattheis 2018).

Apart from “white genocide” prevention, Linda Gordon (2017) explains that promoting ‘white mother white children’ aims to recover the nation's strength from the harms of multiculturalism.<sup>351</sup> Likewise, Patrik Hermansson, David Lawrence, Joe Mulhall, and Simon Murdoch (2020) view the RW emphasis on the trad wife lifestyle and feminine behaviors as a method to boost white birth rates and subsequently fortify their white nation.<sup>352</sup>

Erin Marie Saltman warns RW women are talking and tweeting about familiar topics, such as weddings, and babies to make themselves more human and connectable to outsiders.<sup>353</sup> Saltman found recruitment increases when RW women project everyday imagery about their home life as it alters external perceptions of them or their ideology as violent.<sup>354</sup> Lokteff promotes that ‘alt right’ men can provide everything that a woman needs, and if men are providing, the women will “fall in line.”<sup>355</sup> She tells women if their homes are in order, the children are cared for, and their husbands are happy, then women should engage in “pro-white activism.”<sup>356</sup>

Research by AAF (2014)<sup>357</sup> and Belew<sup>358</sup> concluded RW women utilize children and “white womanhood” to integrate into the mainstream for opportunities to influence, i.e., community groups, sports clubs, jury participation, teaching, or government positions. Ironically Lee (2017) reports that home-schooling is heavily promoted within RWE groups for their children to shield them from multiculturalism and outside forces while installing

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<sup>351</sup> Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920's and the Americana Political Tradition*. (New York, Liveright Publishing Corporation. 2017): 109

<sup>352</sup> Hermansson *et al* (2020, 185)

<sup>353</sup> Erin Marie Saltman, “How young people join violent extremist groups – and how to stop them”, TED Talk. June 2016. Accessed 13 February 2020.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/erin\\_marie\\_saltman\\_how\\_young\\_people\\_join\\_violent\\_extremist\\_groups\\_and\\_how\\_to\\_stop\\_them?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/erin_marie_saltman_how_young_people_join_violent_extremist_groups_and_how_to_stop_them?language=en)

<sup>354</sup> Erin Marie Saltman, “How young people join violent extremist groups...”, 2016.

<sup>355</sup> ADL, *When Women are the Enemy*, 10.

<sup>356</sup> ADL, 10.

<sup>357</sup> Amadeu Antonio Foundation, *Overlooked and Underrated*, 13.

<sup>358</sup> Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 70.

RW values.<sup>359</sup> Darby explains these RW forms of traditionalism are peddled to women as a new counterculture, a culture where women restore, rebuild, and revolt through domesticity first and foremost.<sup>360</sup> But as this thesis illustrates, there are exceptions to that rule.

### **5.3.4 Marketing Xenophobia, Fear, and Hate.**

Modern RWE ideological narrators maintain threat articulation, gender hierarchy, and forerunners' racial constructs, but individual strands (i.e., WN) employ new semantics to deliver their messages.<sup>361</sup> This snapshot provides enough grounding to ignite awareness about white identity narratives. It warns not to take things at face value due to 'sameness.' In the end, extreme RW women can be dangerous because they are typically not overly abhorrent in their looks or communication. Sameness allows them to gain traction before onlookers understand what the truth is about their beliefs.

The RW pitch is designed to be overtly non-threatening and uses a corpus that says it does not mean and denies those it does.<sup>362</sup> Ebner and Darby agree that WN's like to control their voices and image, so they are not interested in being part of any narrative they cannot control.<sup>363</sup> Image is only part of why women have become powerful influencers and amplifiers of RWE ideals. A 2016 study found women had a "significantly higher tendency" than men to privilege the rights of "native Europeans" and were more inclined to sympathize with "new right attitudes."<sup>364</sup> Darby says when challenged, RW women tend to launch into social justice diatribes to deflect and defend their views.<sup>365</sup>

Observations of the RW proliferating racist material online came from Kevin Thompson (2001), who recognised that RW radicals were leveraging cyberspaces for three main

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<sup>359</sup> Blee, *Similarities/Difference in Gender*, 195

<sup>360</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 155.

<sup>361</sup> Kristy Campion. "Australian right-wing extremist ideology: exploring narratives of nostalgia and nemesis." *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*. 14, no.3 (2019) 208.

<sup>362</sup> Darby interview by Hari Sreenivasan. –"Why are women joining alt-right?", 19 August 2017.

<sup>363</sup> Julia Ebner and Jacob Davey, 'How Women Advance the Internationalization of the Far-Right'. 2019

<sup>364</sup> Ebner and Darby, 'How Women Advance...' 2019

<sup>365</sup> Darby interview by Hari Sreenivasan. –"Why are women joining alt-right?", 19 August 2017.

reasons: campaigns, co-ordinate violent acts, and “Red Pilling” (indoctrinate) others.<sup>366</sup> A study of RWE global reach by Davey and Ebner (2017) found a high level of international RWE collaboration. They report communication starts on public pages (i.e., 8Chan, Reddit), then moves to closed forums (i.e., Discord) and includes tactics such as hashtags and memes crafted to influence mainstream social media (e.g., YouTube, Facebook).<sup>367</sup>

Lana Lokteff is an example of a female who has gained influence through mainstreaming conspiracy theories (Holocaust denial) and anti-feminist “white is right” rhetoric from her husband’s RW media platform.<sup>368</sup> Hermansson *et al.* point out the glaring hypocrisy in Lokteff’s RW marketing, given her vast media work schedule as she advocates others should focus on women’s noble domestic purpose.<sup>369</sup>

Lokteff’s online rhetoric was surveyed and analyzed by Ashley Mattheis (2018) to discover how women navigate their place within misogynistic ideologies. Mattheis sanctions Lokteff’s content as the narrative typical of most females in the “extreme right” as she unswervingly calls on women to defend their culture, be family-oriented, and renounce feminism while avowing that respect of women is a given within the ideology.<sup>370</sup> Mattheis concluded that Lokteff’s narratives effortlessly connect to the non-extremist female’s life experience, providing the normalization aura that increases RW mobilization.<sup>371</sup>

In further analysis, Darby reports that comparisons of Tarrant’s<sup>372</sup> manifesto to RWE language online result in Lokteff being identified as one of the RW influencers with the most similar rhetoric.<sup>373</sup> Lokteff dismisses her rhetoric to Darby by saying if her statements hurt people, that was not her problem.<sup>374</sup> Ebner describes this as subversion over confrontation and that RW crafted terms sabotage accusations of unacceptable rhetoric,

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<sup>366</sup> Thompson, *Watching the Stormfront*, 32-52

<sup>367</sup> Davey & Ebner, *The Great Replacement*, 2019.

<sup>368</sup> Lana Lokteff. Bio. N.D. Accessed 14 May 2020. <http://www.lanalokteff.com/about.php>

<sup>369</sup> Hermansson *et al*, *The International Alt Right*, 185

<sup>370</sup> Ashley Mattheis. “Shieldmaidens of Whiteness: (Alt) Maternalism and Women Recruiting for the Far/Alt Right”. *Journal for Deradicalization*. Nr 7. (2018):128

<sup>371</sup> Ashley Mattheis, *Shieldmaidens of Whiteness*, 129.

<sup>372</sup> Brenton Tarrant was the Australian RWE who committed the Christchurch Mosque Attacks.

<sup>373</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 249.

<sup>374</sup> Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 249.

e.g., ethno-pluralist or conservative revolution.<sup>375</sup> Outsiders often dismiss the material (e.g., jokes, memes), but as Ebner contends, the Christchurch attacks refute that offline and online worlds are different realities and that RWE internet memes (“Shitposting”) are not dangerous.<sup>376</sup>

Miller-Idriss provides a broader RW linguistical insight to explain their extreme ideological dialect centers on an existential threat to endorse the need to defend or protect a country or dominant race.<sup>377</sup> ADL (2012) discusses how RWE groups use Trojan Horse campaigns to sell that threat, such as “It’s okay to be white” as modes of amplification and influence.<sup>378</sup> In her RW zenith, Lauren Southern was a prolific amplifier of the “it’s okay to be white” signal and publicly campaigned against feminism (#TheTriggering) to help cement female anti-feminism as an RW counterculture.<sup>379</sup>

Several sources (Ebner, Darby, Miller-Idriss, Belew & ADL) found RW propaganda customizes various grievances, e.g., anti-abortion, anti-LGBT, anti-establishment, and white identity anxieties, to suit their agenda. As a tactic, this has been successful as OSCE’s (2019) research shows polarizing rhetoric spread by RWE (and LWE) groups has substantially increased in the mainstream across the West, mainly due to lexicon cleansing.<sup>380</sup>

Linguistics Professor Ruth Wodak describes RW discourse as the shameless normalization of Islamophobia, antisemitism, sexism, and xenophobia, which works through the fear of anything that can be rewritten as a “threat to us.”<sup>381</sup> Wodak points out RWE imagery often doubles down by manipulating and contrasting imagery of Muslim women in dark burqas who are “unseen” with smiling white women having leisure time with well-behaved white children.<sup>382</sup> She adds that RW women will depict Muslim women as unfeminine,

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<sup>375</sup> Ebner, *Going Dark*, 35.

<sup>376</sup> Ebner, *Going Dark*, 240-241

<sup>377</sup> Cynthia Miller-Idriss, *Hate in the Homeland*, 9

<sup>378</sup> ADL, “Feminism Perverted, Extremist Women on the World Wide Web” 2012.

<sup>379</sup> Julia Ebner and Jacob Davey, “How Women Advance the Internationalization of the Far Right” in *Perspectives on the future of Women, Gender, & Violent Extremism*, ed. Audrey Alexander, (2019), 34.

<sup>380</sup> OSCE: “*Understanding the Role of Gender in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization That Lead to Terrorism*” (Report. May 2019): 27.

<sup>381</sup> Wodak, *The Politics of Fear*, Preface.

<sup>382</sup> Wodak, 161.

dangerous, and as women, but not as mothers.<sup>383</sup> Confirmation that, as Moon & Holling argue, white women need to be held accountable for white supremacy production and reproduction, not just the men.<sup>384</sup>

To further legitimize' RW narratives, Lavin shows RW promoters apply pseudo-scientific studies into race and intelligence and manipulate demographic data.<sup>385</sup> In her literature, Lavin identifies that RWE "scholars" consistently misrepresent history to support their theories and share historical texts from 19<sup>th</sup>-century history and obscure fascist authors online.<sup>386</sup> She reports "a large cultural exchange" of viewpoints between extreme RW adherents often results in newly created RW "educational" audiobooks that they share.<sup>387</sup> Lavin describes the alma mater for their beliefs as eugenics.<sup>388</sup>

Challenging RWE narratives entails recognition of the corpus they use. Blee (2017) reports RWE public messages typically aim to induce fear in non-whites and provoke the mainstream white demographic.<sup>389</sup> Lexicons such as Holocaust reference - "6MWE" ("6 million wasn't enough"), and revered RW inscriptions such as Neo-Nazi David Lanes "14 words" ("We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children") are common.<sup>390</sup> SPLC highlights the RWE culture includes heavy use of online memes in social media to "red pill" RWE beliefs on various issues, including feminism.<sup>391</sup>

Darby's research indicates Lokteff inflicts damage by unilaterally limiting the definition of harm, and then she says what falls slightly outside of it.<sup>392</sup> She determines Lokteff provokes antagonism, bigotry, and fear as a matter of doing [RW] business.<sup>393</sup> Darby believes this shows RW speakers are aware of legal flaws around hate speech.<sup>394</sup> In

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<sup>383</sup> Wodak, 163.

<sup>384</sup> Moon & Holling, *White Supremacy in Heels*, 253-254.

<sup>385</sup> Talia Lavin interview with Lenz, Lyz, *Culture Warlords*, 2020.

<sup>386</sup> Lavin, *Culture Warlords*, 2020.

<sup>387</sup> Lavin, 2020.

<sup>388</sup> Lavin, 2020.

<sup>389</sup> Blee, *Similarities/Differences in Gender*, 198.

<sup>390</sup> ADL. "Proud Boys Bigotry on Full Display" 24 December 2020. Accessed 11 January 2020. <https://www.adl.org/blog/proud-boys-bigotry-is-on-full-display>

<sup>391</sup> SPLC, *Alt – Right*, 2019.

<sup>392</sup> Darby, *Sisters of Hate*, 249 .

<sup>393</sup> Darby, 249.

<sup>394</sup> Darby, 249.

contrast, Alexander argues democratic legal systems are rarely equipped to deal with RW female sympathizers, especially in situations where women engage in the rhetoric but do not break the law.<sup>395</sup> Darby acknowledges this legal deflection leaves the extreme right expertly exploiting free speech to silence naysayers while being amplifiers of VE and E&T.<sup>396</sup> As Lokteff puts it, “since we aren’t physically intimidating, we can get away with saying big things.”<sup>397</sup>

### 5.3.5 RW Women Online

In this section, scholars further expose the virtual RWE community within which RW female commentators have found a niche for spreading their propaganda brand (Kevin Thompson 2001,<sup>398</sup> Les Back 2002,<sup>399</sup> Miller-Idriss and Ebner). As with IE propaganda, RW groups embrace the strategic value of RW women being the face for their doctrine online. The literature indicates recruitment of women correlates with internet amplification of RWE ideologies on local levels and internationally. Ebner warns against treating RWE offline and online as two different realities because they are intertwined and dangerous.

Studies of online extreme RW forums show a thriving global network of RWE women, including a young female cohort who idolize and celebrate VE (Lavin, Ebner, and Darby). For example, Ebner observed a video of underage “Brentonettes” expressing their admiration and adoration of the Christchurch terrorist in a manner she describes as “beyond comprehension.”<sup>400</sup> The “Brentonettes” symbolize the paradox that Campion signposts in that women endorse or create RWE content to sustain men’s violence while magnifying ideological “symbolic expressions of femininity.”<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> Alexander, *Cruel Intentions: Female Jihadists in America*, 21.

<sup>396</sup> Darby, 249.

<sup>397</sup> Seyward Darby. *The Rise of the Valkyries*, 2017.

<sup>398</sup> Kevin C. Thompson. “Watching the Stormfront: White Nationalists and the Building of Community in Cyberspace”. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Anthropology* 45, no. 1 (2001):32-52

<sup>399</sup> Les Back. “Arayns reading Adorno: cyber-culture and twenty-first century racism”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25, no. 4. (2002): 628-651

<sup>400</sup> Ebner. *Going Dark*, 240.

<sup>401</sup> Campion, *Women in the Extreme and Radical Right*, 1.

Celebrating RWE attacks is not new. In 2002, Back found online RW networks regularly shared and celebrated real-world racial violent incidents.<sup>402</sup> He recognized that the internet linked international white diasporas into a “simulated racial homeland,” which included personal ads from white women.<sup>403</sup> Back corroborates AFF’s argument about a Neo-Nazi stereotyping obscuring RW women from view when he reflects the women’s private ad pictures were not the archetypal images of a Nazi white supremacist.<sup>404</sup> Back realised their appearance of normality showed how easily RW women could move between their mainstream and online global RWE communities.<sup>405</sup>

In 2003, Kayla Cunningham noticed an increase in RWE women due to groups intensifying women’s involvement and the internet amplification of RW ideologies.<sup>406</sup> In Ebner’s media comments, she states RWE females are the “poster girls for hate,” “..like Instagram models.” who can climb up in RW ranks if they get fetishized by a male base.<sup>407</sup> Darby’s 2020 research divulges that RW women remain poised and ready to recruit others by presenting themselves as “reasonable” conservatives on their alternative media platforms.<sup>408</sup>

Research by Anne Kelly (2018) on anti-feminism and “far-right” networks notes an insignificant number of female RW online.<sup>409</sup> However, she reports a surge in the preceding years as numerous women sold their blend of trad-wife discourse and RW dogma online.<sup>410</sup> Kelly unveiled multiple accounts she described as precisely designed with purposeful hyper-feminine aesthetics to mask ideological authoritarianism within

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<sup>402</sup> Back, *Arayns reading Adorno*, 634.

<sup>403</sup> Back, 636.

<sup>404</sup> Back, *Arayns reading Adorno*, 643.

<sup>405</sup> Back, 643.

<sup>406</sup> Cunningham, *Cross Regional Trends*, 173

<sup>407</sup> Brad Hunter. *White Power Barbies*, 2019

<sup>408</sup> Mark Joyella. Interview with Seyward Darby, *Why the Mainstream Media Misses the Most Dangerous White Nationalists-The Women*. 2020.

<sup>409</sup> Annie Kelly, “The Housewives of White Supremacy”, *New York Times*, 1 June 2018, Accessed 13 February 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/01/opinion/sunday/tradwives-women-alt-right.html>

<sup>410</sup> Annie Kelly. *The Housewives of White Supremacy*. 2018

the RW trad wife subculture.<sup>411</sup> Kelly reports the aesthetics gives a coating of social acceptability and low threat imagery.<sup>412</sup>

Kelly revealed one Australian male RW media personality had openly urged men to dial down their explicit misogyny to win over more women.<sup>413</sup> She is highly critical of RW men and argues even women that embrace their ideals frequently face hostility when they try to participate in discussions or state an opinion, even online and within international networks.<sup>414</sup> Hategan (2019) warns that RWE leaders know that hate and xenophobia messages are more palatable from innocuous-looking females; hence, they get promoted as the movement's face (but not as the leaders).<sup>415</sup>

In summary, this literature reinforces how a virtual radical community can gather RW strands through compelling echo chambers littered with their brand of cultural norms. It indicates RW personas' diversity (e.g., trad wife, Instagram models) on platforms with global reach and linkages with the broader male RW networks. The literature mentions RW's use of memes is not harmless. Future research of memes created for the NZ context would be worthy of in-depth analysis, alongside the RW lexicon highlighted earlier. Ultimately, as Kelly argues, RWE women's increased activity online makes it irresponsible not to analyse RW women, mainly because RWE networks continue to thrive.<sup>416</sup>

#### **5.4 Chapter Summary**

The literature on RW women aligns with many observations about IE women being an underestimated yet invaluable support system for their movement of choice. The challenge regarding RW women is their ability to blend in with the mainstream and relate to non-RW conservative women, which provides inroads to radicalisation. Some RW females choose to be strictly traditional (trad wives) that offer an extra layer of nicety to cloud their true fanaticism and detestation. Regardless of the RW thread chosen

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<sup>411</sup> Annie Kelly. *The Housewives of White Supremacy*. 2018

<sup>412</sup> Hategan as cited by Hunter, 2019.

<sup>413</sup> Annie Kelly, 2018

<sup>414</sup> Kelly, 2018

<sup>415</sup> Hategan as cited by Brad Hunter, '*White Power Barbies*', 10 Oct 2019.

<sup>416</sup> Annie Kelly. 2018



childbearing, the next generation of white warriors' mirrors IE's focus on Jihadi's future generations and depicting each other objectionable.

Another similarity in the IE and RWE literature is the argument that anti-feminism affords women a sense of power and agency that conflicts with western feminist thought. These women reject the notion feminism has delivered any gains and upholds the men's grievance that feminism disempowers men, and women having sexual and political freedoms is detrimental to men and families. Consequently, this means any analysis of RWE that is not gendered incorrectly renders these dulcet women non-influential. Accordingly, the visibility of modern RWE is impacted holistically due to the core motivating power of white women [womb] protection and anti-feminism for RWE men.

Keenan's warning that the true believers are more likely to have a 'warrior for god' mentality that propels them towards violence demands further investigation to identify patterns of behaviour that would be early warnings of mobilisation or support VE or terrorism. While the modern RW women mentioned can present as nonviolent in action, they are active inciters and male violence endorsers. After all, RW believers trust they are fighting against the annihilation of the white race.

Most noticeable is that while the extreme RW men make the headlines, women frequently remain hidden in plain sight of broader society, law enforcement, and security agencies. Historically, women have upheld RWE beliefs purposefully and in plain sight, yet they have rarely been taken seriously, let alone considered a threat, particularly in NZ. The following chapter investigates the NZ context more closely to see how relevant government agencies can expand on NZ women's association with RWE movements on a national level.

## PART TWO

### Chapter 6: Dual Perspectives of Extremism and Women in Aotearoa

This chapter turns to the New Zealand (NZ) context to determine what is known about women and extremists in this country by examining two perspectives (academic and media). Where do we see NZ women participating in the NZ E&T landscape, given the literature and examples challenge their absence. This exploration first examines NZ's terrorism history, finding disparity in our collective memory and labelling of domestic incidents (Battersby 2019c). This disparity correlates with research critiquing inconsistent usage of terms (VE and extremism) by NZ's government entities, and that definition ambiguity impacts inter-agency collaboration and communication.<sup>417</sup> These concepts are influential on how extremist men and women are recognized, evaluated, and countered.

The chapter then briefly merges key literature aspects of women and terrorism into an NZ context. The 2019 Mosque attacks have forced the nation to focus on domestic extremism as a national security issue, yet earlier incidents arguably contain terroristic or extremist attributes (e.g., Operation 8, Anti 1080 radicals). This review collectively shows that a perspective of NZ women in E&T contexts remains absent even though I show evidence for women's agency in extremist networks and ideologies in NZ (See Appendix C).

This chapter considers NZ's RWE heritage with NZ scholars' contributions (see Spoonley 1981, 1987, Dennehy & Newbold 2001, Gilbert & Elley 2019). The NZ literature is sparse on RWE men but non-existent when it comes to RWE women. However, it does reveal that NZ's visible traditional RWE groups embraced the neo-Nazi / racist skinhead culture; in alignment with modern overseas trends, White Nationalism (WN) has gained ground. The sparseness of NZ works on female extremism mirrors that of women in NZ gangs, potentially for similar reasons, such as stereotypes that depict them as subservient therefore not key players of interest. In both contexts, women are largely absent from accounts.

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<sup>417</sup> Holly Vandenburg and Will Hoverd. 'The Inconsistent Usage of the Terms "Extremism" and "Terrorism" around the Christchurch Mosque Attacks'. *National Security Journal*. 2:1, 2020, Pg. 49-62

The international literature highlights the media framing of extremist women is highly influential and problematic; therefore, the NZ media context is considered. Examination of NZ media on terrorism or terrorist-styled activities demonstrates a focus on IE (pre-15th March 2019), offshore jihadi bride narratives, and circumvent women's violence as a topic. The only possible exception is recent discussions on the 2021 repatriation of Suhayra Aden from Turkey to NZ. Generally, the research mirrors international media thematic about women that complicate national security practices because inaccurate depictions influence public and official opinions.

The chapter finishes with contrasting insights into the NZ RWE environment from Canadian ex Neo-Nazi, Elisa Hategan. She visited NZ in 2019 to speak at a conference about her lived experience and subsequent work countering extremism. In line with international literature and activity, Hategan surmises that today's NZ women are less visible on the street and more active online, but she argues that they exist.

Regardless of a caveat that this thesis is IE and RWE focused, NZ women remain largely unlocatable in NZ's extremist landscape for over 50 years and in the gang field for more than four decades. It is unfathomable given that the international literature and case studies (thesis and appendix) illustrate the contrary. Ultimately the section finds that domestically, in terms of NZ and extremism, women remain unseen.

### **6.1 New Zealand's Historical Experience of Violent Extremism/Terrorism.**

*"...And now we are known for something else. The 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2019."*<sup>418</sup>

PM Jacinda Ardern's comment above to the United Nations (UN) epitomizes the indentation made upon New Zealand's VE naivety. Unquestionably, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, was a watershed moment, but NZ has not been free from political violence or groups with racist or anti-establishment heartbeats. The purpose of this chapter is to find out if women are omitted from discussions of 1) extremism and terrorism in NZ and 2) RW and

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<sup>418</sup> Jacinda Ardern, "New Zealand National Statement to United Nations General Assembly 2019", *Beehive.govt.nz*, 25 September 2019, accessed 10 October 2020. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/new-zealand-national-statement-united-nations-general-assembly-2019>.

IE contexts by examining the local academic literature, relevant history, and media discourse. In the wake of the Christchurch mosque attacks NZ has had to accept the lived experience of modern extremism and has an opportunity to gender revolutionise its understandings, policies, and practices while people are paying attention to the issue of VE and E&T.

Men and their hyper-masculine racist discourse in NZ have garnered scattered analysis and until now, the literature on RWE and women in NZ is non-existent. It may be that RW women go unnoticed because they do not fit the racist image expected, or they get dismissed as simplistic female minions doing men's bidding. It may be because NZ women are not involved in organized racified RW ideologies, let alone in RWE or violence, but this would be contrary to the reality seen in other western countries (see Blee 2005, Darby 2019, Ebner 2020, Champion 2020). For example, during 2015, 18 percent of people arrested in Europe on RW terrorism charges were women, and within the next year, this had increased to 26 percent.<sup>419</sup> The omission and underestimation of women is a national security risk, whether these women support their men to act or choose VE for themselves.

In this next section, I avoid staying in the post 9/11 era as it would separate today's NZ extreme fringe from its heritage. As the literature has shown, both IE and RWE rewrite heritage and history to validate their worldview. To ignore the past would perpetuate any misconceptions NZ has been free from ideological violence. Moreover, avoiding NZ's past would mean this thesis itself risks writing women out of the picture. As Battersby (2019c) warns that amnesia about past events in NZ ferments a pretence there is no current problem.<sup>420</sup>

### **6.1.1 Terrorism in NZ's Rear-view mirror**

Before March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, previous attacks (actual or threatened) have occurred in NZ in the name of a cause or encouraged political change. Yet, except for the bombing of the

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<sup>419</sup> Bigio & Vogelstein, *Women and Terrorism*, 1.

<sup>420</sup> John Battersby. "The Ghost of New Zealand's Terrorism Past and Present". *National Security Journal*. 1, No1. (2019c):35

*Rainbow Warrior* by French state agents (including one woman), they were not branded or addressed as terrorism.<sup>421</sup> John Battersby's (2019) analysis found that the numerous manifestations of terrorism in NZ were not only downplayed during the twentieth century but also received nondescript media coverage.<sup>422</sup> A combination that has allowed a spectrum of acts to fade quickly from our collective memories and nourished a terrorist threat complacency within NZ society.<sup>423</sup> The following section is a general overview of events or actions conducted in the name of a cause in NZ.

Battersby reminds us that domestic attacks occurred in the early 1970s with internationally inspired attacks following 1975 when NZ members of the Ananda Marga Sect (originating in India) who were conspiring to bomb the Wellington Indian High Commission, kidnapped a police officer during an attempt to steal explosives.<sup>424</sup> An event that Greener-Barcham (2002) describes as highlighting the growing "trans-global" features of terrorism at that time.<sup>425</sup> A year later, in Auckland, while preparing a bomb for their target (meatworks), two affiliated Hare Krishna members accidentally killed themselves, followed in 1982 by an individual who shot at Queen Elizabeth II during her Dunedin royal visit.<sup>426</sup>

Other earlier NZ examples include multiple anti-Vietnam war bombings (1960/1970), the Wanganui bomb attack (NZ Police Computer Centre, 1982), and the suitcase bomb at the Trades Hall in Wellington (1984).<sup>427</sup> Greener-Barcham describes the early 80's as a period of traditional "ongoing development" of NZ's CT measures in alignment with global changes rather than due to any concerns about terrorism at that time.<sup>428</sup> In 1985, state-approved terrorism was committed by French agents (including one woman) when they bombed the *Rainbow Warrior* vessel in Auckland harbour, killing one male resulting in

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<sup>421</sup> John Battersby and Rhys Ball, "Christchurch in the context of New Zealand terrorism and right wing extremism", *Journal Of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*, 14, No.3. (2019):191.

<sup>422</sup> John Battersby. "Terrorism Where Terror is Not: Australian and New Zealand Terrorism Compared". *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*. 41, No.1. (2019):59.

<sup>423</sup> John Battersby, *Terrorism Where Terror is Not*, 71.

<sup>424</sup> John Battersby, 59.

<sup>425</sup> B. K. Greener-Barcham, "Before September: A History of Counter-terrorism in New Zealand", *Australian Journal of Political Science* 36, no.3 (2002) 509-524.

<sup>426</sup> Battersby & Ball, "Christchurch in the context of New Zealand terrorism, 93-94

<sup>427</sup> Battersby. *Terrorism Where Terror is Not*, 61-62.

<sup>428</sup> Greener-Barcham, "Before September...", 513.

manslaughter convictions.<sup>429</sup> This event, according to Greener-Barcham, revealed NZ's CT measures fell short when faced with the reality of a terrorist event.<sup>430</sup>

In retaliation for the 2005 London IE terror attacks, two male RWE associates were imprisoned after heavily vandalising Auckland Mosques. Similar activity occurred in 2008 when three men caused \$1 million worth of damage to the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) SIGNIT base in Blenheim. Battersby (2019c) rightly queries their acquittal since the men wanted to send a political message about their opposition to the War on Terror.<sup>431</sup>

A year before (2007), the controversial "Operation Eight" saw 18 people (including multiple women) arrested for activities including training in remote forest "military-styled training camps" that NZ Police assessed to be a credible public safety threat.<sup>432</sup> Evidence included warranted intercepts in which individuals reportedly discussed "going to war, fighting using guerrilla-based tactics" and that they intended to achieve "an independent Tuhoe nation within the Urewera area."<sup>433</sup> In the end, there were minimal convictions, but no public accounts have fully explained the group's outward anti-sovereignty aura or why they were engaged in paramilitary training. Those aspects became minimised publicly due to the surrounding commotion about police actions immediately before and during the operation.

More recently, in 2014, a man threatened to contaminate infant formula with 1080 chemicals unless the government halted its pest control use.<sup>434</sup> This threat caused manufacturers, retailers, and the government to increase supply chain security until his arrest (for blackmail) in 2015.<sup>435</sup> In 2019, due to his crusade against the Department of Conservation (DOC) that included threats to harm staff, another male was jailed for five

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<sup>429</sup> David Robie. "Rainbow Warrior Redux: French Terrorism in the Pacific". *Pacific Journalism Review* 22 no.(2016), 199

<sup>430</sup> Greener-Barcham, 513.

<sup>431</sup> Battersby, *The Ghost of New Zealand's Terrorism*, 41.

<sup>432</sup> IPCA. *Operation Eight: The Report of the Independent Police Conduct Authority*. May 2013 .

<sup>433</sup> IPCA. *Operation Eight*, May 2013.

<sup>434</sup> Battersby, *The Ghost of New Zealand's Terrorism*, 41.

<sup>435</sup> MPI. *1080 Blackmail Threat*. 16 November 2020. Accessed 1 January 2021.

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity/about-biosecurity-in-new-zealand/1080-blackmail-threat/>

years.<sup>436</sup> DOC reports showed that there had been an increase in threats and harassment of various intensity (online and offline) towards staff since 2018, resulting in significant financial resources going towards workforce protection.<sup>437</sup>

DOC's experience with acts and threats of violence aligns with academic concerns about terrorism not being labelled as such outside of Daesh and now RWE in NZ (Battersby 2019b, 2019c, Battersby & Ball 2019, Spoonley 2020). Battersby & Ball argue security practitioners recognise terrorism attributes in such acts, but such incidents do not typically raise the same E&T concerns in NZ's officials and policymakers.<sup>438</sup> Subsequently, this leaves organisations and individuals reacting to incidents as best they can.

Holly Vandenburg and William Hoverd (2020) found inconsistencies in the application of "terrorism" and "extremism" across NZ's security discourse. They maintain this variation is subsequently influential on government, security agencies, media, and public perceptions in NZ.<sup>439</sup> Vandenburg & Hoverd argue that the inconsistent discourse hypothetically promotes a disconnect between NZ's Terrorism legislation and its government agencies.<sup>440</sup>

In June 2016, two NZ men appeared in court for separate objectionable material charges relating to Daesh propaganda. One man received a prison sentence for making and distributing IE propaganda, while the other received home detention for having IE materials, including a beheading video.<sup>441</sup> 2017 saw a young IE radicalized male convicted and jailed for plotting a terror attack in which he planned to hit people with a vehicle and then stab them.<sup>442</sup> Then the 15 March 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks occurred, which

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<sup>436</sup> DOC. *DOC welcomes arrest over threats against staff*. 7 November 2018. Accessed 18 September 2020. <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2018/doc-welcomes-arrest-over-threats-against-staff/>

<sup>437</sup> DOC, *DOC welcomes arrest over threats against staff*, 7 November 2018.

<sup>438</sup> Battersby & Ball, *Christchurch in the context of New Zealand terrorism*, 192.

<sup>439</sup> Vandenburg & Hoverd. 'The Inconsistent Usage of the Terms "Extremism" and "Terrorism"', 49-62.

<sup>440</sup> Vandenburg & Hoverd. 'The Inconsistent Usage of the Terms "Extremism" and "Terrorism"', 49

<sup>441</sup> RNZ, "Men sentenced for Islamic State Material," *RNZ*, 23 June 2016, accessed 06 March 2021. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/307117/men-sentenced-for-islamic-state-material>

<sup>442</sup> Conan Young, "Teen imprisoned for terror attack plot gets drivers licence", *RNZ*, 7 August 2019, accessed 7 March 2021. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/396179/teen-imprisoned-for-terror-attack-plot-gets-driver-s-licence>

as Battersby & Ball (2019) note, resonated worldwide due to the attacker's social media live streaming of his deadly attack.<sup>443</sup>

Battersby & Ball argue the scale of the Christchurch attacks was unprecedented but “not its terrorist intent” and report there is no supportive evidence that an IE focus had prevented security monitoring of RWE.<sup>444</sup> In their research, Battersby & Ball identify security agencies were attentive to the criminal and public disorder elements of RWE activity in NZ since 2000 and believe any national security concerns would not have been dismissed.<sup>445</sup>

While this overview does not provide an all-inclusive list of potential terrorist acts, it shows that NZ has seen extremism or terrorism activities regardless of whether it is officially labelled. Nevertheless, the question that remains is, where are the NZ women?

### **6.1.2 NZ Women's 'Extreme' Dulcet Voices: Extinct or Expunged?**

Aside from the Jihadi Bride monologues, NZ women continue to be largely unlocatable in the post 9/11 NZ terrorism landscape in any detail. Even if classified information is considered likely, and dates extend beyond 9/11, it would still not fully explain an over 50-year absence of NZ female accounts regarding E&T activities (as reviewed in Chapter 6) given what the international literature tells us. This omission claim comes with a caveat that this thesis is IE and RWE focused, and more women may be locatable elsewhere (e.g., Left Wing Extremism (LWE) single-issue groups). Nevertheless, I did not filter the historical incidents by ideology to render any extremist NZ women visible first and foremost.

The *Rainbow Warrior* bombing in NZ was a pivotal event because it was foreign state-instigated and sanctioned. It is unique due to the two female and eleven male offenders being French foreign secret service agents sent to NZ to conduct state terrorism.<sup>446</sup> Dominique Prieur faced trial for her role while another female (Christine Cabon) who held

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<sup>443</sup> Battersby & Ball, “Christchurch in the context,” 191.

<sup>444</sup> Battersby & Ball, 191.

<sup>445</sup> Battersby & Ball, 201.

<sup>446</sup> James Veitch. “A Sordid Act: The Rainbow Warrior incident”, *New Zealand International Review*, (2019): 6



a covert intelligence and planning role in NZ manage to escape accountability by fleeing to France.<sup>447</sup>

Prieur and her male counterpart were convicted of manslaughter and wilful damage, received a jail sentence of ten years and were later transferred to Hao Atoll to serve their time.<sup>448</sup> But after only three years at the Atoll, Prieur was back in France, receiving a promotion and decoration for her service.<sup>449</sup> While the agents' actions focused on an anti-nuclear organisation, "Greenpeace," it took place in an NZ port which quickly translated to NZ as an attack on the country itself.<sup>450</sup> Irrespective of nationality, this is an explicit example of a female's key role in a kinetic act of violence in NZ.

Future research on LWE in NZ may help fill some of that void on women's extremist involvement. Makin & Hoard (2014) argue domestic terrorism policies typically focus on women as an LWE threat despite their presence in other ideologies.<sup>451</sup> Battersby (2019c) reports it is a "general truth" NZ has historically experienced more LWE and violence; therefore, it would be informative to discover if gender ideology typecasting occurs in NZ CT frameworks. Cunningham's (2007) analysis does indicate a primary CT leaning towards women's LWE involvement as a domestic threat over any potential threat from RWE women.<sup>452</sup>

This thesis has discovered a parade of literature about factors that can obscure women's participation internationally. Domestically, we see overarching issues such as definitional ambiguity in NZ (Vandenberg & Hoverd) and NZ's hesitancy to label incidents as terrorism (Battersby & Ball), alongside the international array of critical scholarship regarding the side-lining of women as male accessories, for an example. If we apply David Lakes' view

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<sup>447</sup> Cecile Meier and Kelly Dennett, "Thirty-two years after the Rainbow Warrior bombing, unrepentant French Spy Christine Cabon is found.", *Stuff*, 9 July 2017. Accessed 10 January 2021.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/94208355/thirtytwo-years-after-the-rainbow-warrior-bombing-unapologetic-french-spy-christine-cabon-is-found>

<sup>448</sup> James Veitch, "A Sordid Act", 7.

<sup>449</sup> Veitch, 8.

<sup>450</sup> Ministry for Culture & Heritage. *Sinking the Rainbow Warrior*. 10 July 2018. Accessed 10 January 2021. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/nuclear-free-new-zealand/rainbow-warrior>

<sup>451</sup> David A Makin and Season Hoard, "Understanding the Gender Gap in Domestic Terrorism through Criminal Participation". *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 25, No.5 (2014): 534

<sup>452</sup> Cunningham, "Countering Female Terrorism," 113-129.

that extremist and terrorist traits are in the “eye of the beholder,”<sup>453</sup> the obscurity of women in NZ’s E&T activities becomes logical given that the VE and E&T lens is male-dominated. Additionally, in NZ, evidence of inattention to these women is growing throughout this thesis so far.

Operation 8, while not deemed a terrorist incident, did result in numerous arrests of individuals under a warrant citing the Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA) (which was later dropped). Nevertheless, most online reports about the arrests and trials focus on men, and it isn't easy to find specific information relating to the approximately dozen women believed to be involved.<sup>454</sup> Two Wellington-based women, Valerie Morse and Emily Bailey, were charged with offences and given “image suppression.”<sup>455</sup> Due to evidence inadmissibility, firearms charges were dropped for Morse, while Bailey received nine months of home detention for restricted weapon & firearms possession. In 2012 Bailey’s appeal against the conviction was dismissed.<sup>456</sup> In a separate incident in 2010, Morse successfully appealed a conviction for offensive behaviour she received for publicly burning the NZ flag at an Anzac Day dawn service in Wellington.<sup>457</sup>

In 2012, 18-year-old Phillipa Parker punched a Vietnamese man, encouraged her dog to “kill him” while stomping on his groceries.<sup>458</sup> A few months later, she and her then-boyfriend (Steven Donaldson) let their dogs chase a Philippino man until he escaped inside a building.<sup>459</sup> They then encouraged their dogs to bite a nearby Japanese woman.<sup>460</sup> Later Parker and Donaldson pleaded guilty, admitted the attacks were racially motivated, and

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<sup>453</sup> David A Lake, ‘Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-first Century’, *Dialog-IO*, 2002, pp 15-29

<sup>454</sup> For example, NZHistory.govt.nz, Stuff News, NZ Herald, Sunday News, Newshub.

<sup>455</sup> TVNZ. *Timeline: Police Raids*. 15 October 2007. Accessed 7 March 2021.

<http://tvnz.co.nz/content/1438101/2591764.xhtml>

<sup>456</sup> Blair Cunningham, “Urewera 4 sentencing ‘generous’ – Court of Appeal,” *Nbr*, 29 October 2012, accessed 13 February 2021. <https://www.nbr.co.nz/article/urewera-4-firearms-appeal-decision-bc-131392>

<sup>457</sup> Supreme Court: *Valerie Morse v The police*. SC 10/2010. May 2011 accessed 05 March 2021.

<https://www.courtsofnz.govt.nz/assets/cases/2011/sc-10-2010-valerie-morse-v-the-police.pdf>.

<sup>458</sup> David Clarkson, “Jail for racist dog attacks, animals destroyed,” *Stuff*, 13 March 2012, accessed 1 June 2020. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/6567641/Jail-for-racist-dog-attacks-animals-destroyed>.

<sup>459</sup> David Clarkson, “Jail for racist dog attacks,”

<sup>460</sup> Clarkson, “Jail for racist dog attacks”.

advised the court they had stopped associating with “right-wing” groups after the attacks.

<sup>461</sup> The judge sentenced them to eight months in prison plus victim reparation.<sup>462</sup>

Parker’s case demonstrates how females (and males) with racist principles may not utilize terrorism against their targets but can still be motivated to commit violence. Parker received a similar jail sentence to her male counterpart under the Crimes Act. Such cases suggest that nonviolent extremism can be siloed from an ideological nucleus leaving it untethered and unrecognised as a potential broader security concern. Both cases allow us to now turn to NZ’s heritage to understand the foundations of radicalised beliefs and groups in NZ.

## **6.2 The ‘Black Sun’ rise of White supremacy in NZ.** <sup>463</sup>

As mentioned in 5.3 Timothy Baysinger warned western security officials to maintain continual awareness of extreme RW beliefs, activities, and zealots to safeguard nations from RWE and terrorism.<sup>464</sup> He cautioned that while RW threats might appear inactive, they can be quickly invigorated by ideas that promote violence against their chosen enemies.<sup>465</sup> Baysinger advised understanding who the ‘radical right’ considers heroes and martyrs, their catalytic events, and their criminal activities is vital to being predictive of any acts.<sup>466</sup> These elements overlaid onto the NZ context have chilling significance as the Christchurch Mosque locations now epitomize martyr sites for IE vengeance and typify concepts of RWE ‘heroism’ and accelerationism.<sup>467</sup>

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<sup>461</sup> Clarkson, “Jail for racist dog attacks”.

<sup>462</sup> Clarkson, “Jail for racist dog attacks”.

<sup>463</sup> The Black Sun (Schwarze Sonne, sonnerad) is an Old Norse / Celtic symbol misused by the Nazis. It is now widely associated with neo fascism, white nationalism and neo Nazi movements.

<sup>464</sup> Timothy E Baysinger. “Right-Wing Group Characteristics and Ideology”. *Homeland Security Affairs* II, no. 3. (2006), 15.

<sup>465</sup> Baysinger, *Right-Wing Group Characteristics*, 15.

<sup>466</sup> Baysinger, 15-16.

<sup>467</sup> Accelerationism is the RWE idea they need to hasten the inevitable race war needed to reset society in its white utopian state image. Tactics include polarization, chaos and acts of violence.

White superiority notions have lurked on NZ's societal fringe long before 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and before 9/11 (Spoonley 1981, 1987,<sup>468</sup> Battersby & Ball 2019,<sup>469</sup> Gilbert & Elley 2020<sup>470</sup>). The new radical RW generation no longer collectively fits the Neo-Nazi male stereotype of old; instead, these individuals can effortlessly blend into the mainstream under a 'harmless' veneer of clean-cut traditionalists (see Blee 2017, Darby 2020). Since 9/11, hyper racialized beliefs have infiltrated the global mainstream by adopting crafted semantics (e.g., remigration, race realist) and an image makeover (Jade Hutchinson 2019,<sup>471</sup> Ebner 2020).<sup>472</sup>

Professor Paul Spoonley reports that RWE individuals and movements have long been thought of publicly in NZ as a minor distasteful fringe demographic rather than a national security risk.<sup>473</sup> A societal myth that Tarrant shattered on March 15<sup>th</sup> when he attacked the Christchurch mosques. Spoonley writes that in NZ (before March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019), the most common official and public response has been to deny they are a challenge to our democracy.<sup>474</sup> Regardless, NZ authors have surveyed the lineage and activities of NZ's extreme RW to various degrees, such as Spoonley (1981, 1987)<sup>475</sup>, Glennis Dennehy & Greg Newbold (2001),<sup>476</sup> and Jarrod Gilbert & Ben Elley (2019).<sup>477</sup> Ultimately, after

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<sup>468</sup> Paul Spoonley, "Boots and Bristle: Skinhead Music and Politics as Resistance" (1987) and "The Politics of Nostalgia: Racism and the Extreme Right in New Zealand" (1987). "New Zealand First: The Extreme Right and Politics in New Zealand 1961-1981" (1981).

<sup>469</sup> John Battersby and Rhys Ball. "Christchurch in the context of New Zealand terrorism and right wing extremism. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism*. 14. no.3 (2019)

<sup>470</sup> Jarrod Gilbert and Ben Elley. *Shaved heads and sonnenrads: comparing white supremacist skinheads and the alt-right in New Zealand*. *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences* 15, no.2, (2020). 280-294.

<sup>471</sup> Jade Hutchinson "Far-Right Terrorism: The Christchurch Attack and Potential Implications on Asia Pacific Landscape". *Counter Terrorism Trends and Analysis* 11, no. 6 ( June 2019):24

<sup>472</sup> Julia Ebner. *Going Dark: The Secret Social Lives of Extremists*. (London, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020) 199-202. Kathryn Blee, "Similarities/Differences in Gender and Far-Right Politics in Europe and the USA" (2017).

Jade Hutchinson. "Far-Right Terrorism, 19.

<sup>473</sup> Paul Spoonley, Personal communication with author, 23 April 2020.

<sup>474</sup> Spoonley, Personal communication, 23 April 2020.

<sup>475</sup> Paul Spoonley, "New Zealand First: The Extreme Right and Politics in New Zealand 1961-1981" (1981); "The Politics of Nostalgia: Racism and the Extreme Right in New Zealand" (1987); and "Boots and Bristle: Skinhead Music and Politics as Resistance" (1987).

<sup>476</sup> Glennis Dennehy and Greg Newbold, *The Girls in the Gang*, (Auckland, Reed Books, 2001).

<sup>477</sup> Jarrod Gilbert & Ben Elley. "Shaved heads and sonnenrads: comparing white supremacist skinheads and the alt-right in New Zealand", *Kotuitui" New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online*, 15, no.2, (March 2020): 1-15.

locating the cornerstones of NZ's RWE and its presentations, we are still searching for the women's voices in NZ's RWE discourse.

This section briefly reviews NZ's RWE heritage for national context and buffer the lack of NZ RWE literature. Particularly given the NZ literature that does exist is male-centric. It confirms that traditional Neo-Nazi or skinhead-styled groups now coexist with the modern, clean-cut WN culture in NZ, which correlates with international experiences. Recent examples of RWE men in NZ evidence the characteristic diversity from traditional RWE, e.g., in 2020, the NZ Defence Force (NZDF) stood two male soldiers from the NZ Defence Force (NZDF) for RWE beliefs and activity.<sup>478</sup> One of the men was reportedly a co-founder of a WN group and had plans to travel to Russia with his partner before his arrest.<sup>479</sup>

If we step back circa 60 years to the 1960s-1970s, NZ was going through an era of rising ethnic and gender consciousness with the emergence of Maori political movements (i.e., Nga Tamatoa, a Maori activist group), patched gangs (e.g., Hell's Angels, Mongrel Mob<sup>480</sup>, Black Power)<sup>481</sup>, alongside the punk rocker, skinhead, and boot boy subculture.<sup>482</sup> By the early 1980s, boot boys had splintered off into non-racist and racist skinhead groups, with the latter eventually morphing into white supremacist-orientated gangs.<sup>483</sup> But while some patched gangs adopted Nazi iconography, typically to denote mongrelism and cause offence, they often lacked the guiding nucleus of racial bigotry seen in the groups with overarching RWE beliefs.<sup>484</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> Marc Daalder, "Army Reservist linked to New Zealand far-right group", *Stuff*, 25 June 2020. Accessed 7 March 2021. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/300042525/army-reservist-linked-to-new-zealand-farright-group>.

<sup>479</sup> Florence Kerr and Thomas Manch, "Counter-terrorism detectives question far-right soldiers' family and friends", *Stuff*, 31 January 2020, accessed 20 February 2021. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/119156104/counterterrorism-detectives-question-farright-soldiers-family-and-friends>

<sup>480</sup> Mongrel Mob was a Pakeha initiated group which has evolved over time to be a predominantly ethnic gang.

<sup>481</sup> Glennis Dennehy & Greg Newbold, *The Girls in the Gang*, (Auckland, Reed Books, 2001): 163.

<sup>482</sup> Dennehy & Newbold, *The Girls in the Gang*, 182.

<sup>483</sup> Cameron Hazelhurst, "Observing New Zealand Gangs. 1950-2000. Learning from a Small Country" in John M Hagedorn (ed) *Gangs in the Global City: Exploring Alternatives to Traditional Criminology*. (USA, University of Illinois Press, 2007): 120-151

<sup>484</sup> Dennehy & Newbold, *The Girls in the Gang*, 165-170.

Hazelhurst (2007) observes that any racist perspectives in NZ gangs accompany many internal mechanisms, often revolving around criminal enterprise and opportune events over activism or core philosophy.<sup>485</sup> Nonetheless, transitory exceptions have existed; for instance, in the 1980s, a WS criminal gang had formed in Timaru while a similar group in Wellington attempted to firebomb a building to highlight their aim to rid NZ of “coloured people.”<sup>486</sup> In 1982 and 1987, neo-fascist and Nazi-style fractions<sup>487</sup> existed in Christchurch, but by the late 1980s, only the United Skinheads remained due to intergroup hostilities.<sup>488</sup>

During this era, the apparent growth of “White Power” (WP) groups correlates with perceptions of “unfair Maori privilege and threat” amongst uneducated, poor white males who, when it suited their purposes, used fascism, ethnonationalism, and bigotry to validate the use of violence.<sup>489</sup> This racist counterculture was further influenced in the 1990s by the controversial award-winning movie *Romper Stomper*, about a Neo-Nazi group’s suburban war with Asian immigrants in blue-collar Australia.<sup>490</sup> *Romper Stomper*, combined with expanding internet access to international groups, not only glorified the neo-fascist and WP mentality but enhanced the use of symbols and codes, e.g., 88 (Heil Hitler)<sup>491</sup> in NZ.<sup>492</sup>

The skinhead subculture (racist and non-racist) developed a “smart, clean authoritarian” clothing style and utilised hard-core punk music as a form of protest.<sup>493</sup> And in line with their UK counterparts, NZ’s racist skinheads amplified Nazi symbology and catchcries’ as part of their brand and culture. During a viewing of ‘Stormfront’, a global Neo-Nazi internet site, for this thesis, a “Noble Maidens New Zealand/Australia” chat room (dated

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<sup>485</sup> Hazelhurst, *Observing New Zealand Gangs*, 142-143.

<sup>486</sup> Dennehy & Newbold, *The Girls in the Gang*, 182.

<sup>487</sup> Christchurch had several of these groups such as the Road Knights and Fourth Right and Auckland had a neofascist and Nazi styled group (Bandenkrieg, Unit 88 and NZ Hammer Skins) with small pockets existing in other regions.

<sup>488</sup> Dennehy & Newbold, 182.

<sup>489</sup> Dennehy & Newbold, 182.

<sup>490</sup> Jarrod Gilbert & Ben Elley, “Shaved heads and sonnenrads, 283.

<sup>491</sup> H being the 8<sup>th</sup> letter of the alphabet - 88 represents Heil Hitler.

<sup>492</sup> Gilbert & Elley, “Shaved heads and sonnenrads,” 282.

<sup>493</sup> LLC Graphics Subcultures Research Group, “Where have all the boot boys gone? Skinhead style and graphic subcultures,” (London University of Arts, 2013): 15-16.

2004-2007) was unearthed, confirming a female niche existed and encouraged networking.<sup>494</sup> Other racist fringe groups have conducted public activities, such as a yearly jackbooted “White Pride World Wide Day” march in Christchurch’s Cathedral square.<sup>495</sup>

While RWE individuals have gained ground in modern political arenas, particularly in Europe and the USA, any historical attempts in NZ were short-lived.<sup>496</sup> Paul Spoonley’s 2001 paper on the “Extreme Right” in NZ describes Colin Ansel’s failed attempt to launch his 1970’s NZ National Socialist Party but briefly notes two women featured on the mailing list.<sup>497</sup> Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine if these women were members or curious bystanders due to a lack of data. More recently, in line with other western nations, 2020 saw the appearance of controversial figures campaigning to gain political seats, e.g., Advance NZ<sup>498</sup> (conspiracy theories, Covid misinformation) and the New Conservative Party (NCP) with its borderline RWE rhetoric about migration and other topics.<sup>499</sup>

Right Minds NZ spokesperson Dieuwe De Boer (a Dutch immigrant) vied unsuccessfully for an NCP Auckland seat. De Boer’s description of himself is as a “nationalist” and “conservative Christian” who promotes “timeless values, smaller government, and national unity.”<sup>500</sup> A visit to De Boer’s “Right Minds NZ” website quickly removes any RWE plausible deniability with posts ranging from Trump, anti-Islam, to Armageddon and “Child Sacrifice” (legal abortion).<sup>501</sup> More notably, a July 2018 commentary headline describes Lauren Southern as a “Right-Wing Heroine ...”.<sup>502</sup> Furthermore, De Boer

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<sup>494</sup> niamh05. “Noble Maidens New Zealand and Australia”, Nd, accessed 10 January 2021.

<https://www.stormfront.org/forum/t420835/>

<sup>495</sup> Lincoln Tan, “Fears of Violence if far-right group marches against Asians,” *NZ Herald*, 14 May 2011, accessed 03 December 2020. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/fears-of-violence-if-far-right-group-marches-against-asians/4VKRL7G5B3GQPEQGBSLJ2ETTZY/>

<sup>496</sup> Dennehy & Newbold, *The Girls in the Gang*, 182.

<sup>497</sup> Paul Spoonley, “New Zealand First! The Extreme Right and Politics in New Zealand, 1961-1981”. *Political Science*, 33, no.2, (1981): 99.

<sup>498</sup> Advance NZ. *Advance NZ Home Page*. N.d. Accessed 12 February 2021. <https://www.advancenz.org.nz/>

<sup>499</sup> New Conservative. *Let’s Talk*. N.d. Accessed 12 February 2021. <https://www.newconservative.org.nz/>

<sup>500</sup> Times Online. “New Conservative Party promotes Dieuwe de Boer for Botany Seat,” *Times*, 7 May 2020, accessed 01 March 2021. <https://www.times.co.nz/news/new-conservative-party-promotes-dieuwe-de-boer-for-botany-seat/>

<sup>501</sup> Right Minds, “About Us & Our Mission”. *Right Minds*, 2016, accessed 01 March 2021.

<https://www.rightminds.nz/about-us-our-mission>

<sup>502</sup> De Boer, Dieuwe, “Right-Wing Heroine Lauren Southern Coming to NZ”, *Right Minds*, 4 July 2018, accessed 19 March 2021. <https://www.rightminds.nz/articles/right-wing-heroine-lauren-southern-coming-nz>

emulates the modern male RW culture by adopting the “suit and tie” uniform, and use of pseudo-intellectualism, a style exemplified by American WN leader Richard Spencer.<sup>503</sup>

Gilbert & Elley (2020) recently observed that RWE groups in NZ adopted a new clean-cut appearance over the standard shaved heads and black combat boots soon after the Mosque attacks.<sup>504</sup> They recognise the NZ “alt-right” shares traditional ideological DNA but differ in characteristics, i.e., their quasi-intellectualism, avoidance of street gang behaviour, and societal vanguardism.<sup>505</sup> Gilbert & Elley convey that NZ’s clean-cut young, predominately male groups heavily participate online and use internet platforms for overt and covert ideological marketing.<sup>506</sup> Most importantly, they acknowledge how the international-styled “alt-right” had gone primarily unnoticed in NZ before the Mosque attacks.<sup>507</sup>

Post-March 2019, various NZ men (e.g., Sam Brittenden 19 yrs., Philip Arps 45 yrs. and a 27 yr. old [ex]soldier) have separately appeared in court for offences linked to their various RWE beliefs.<sup>508</sup> In June 2020, the NZ Defence Force (NZDF) acknowledged a second soldier (James Fairburn) was no longer an army reservist, most likely due to his exposed RWE activity.<sup>509</sup> Arps is traditional in his overt white supremacist views, while the younger NZ RW men are typically associated with WN-styled movements like AZ, Wargus Christi, and Right Minds NZ (RMNZ). These WN movements are closed to women (AZ), or women appear only tolerated as wives and girlfriends.

Spoonley (2020) confirmed that in NZ, there is “literally nothing” known about NZ RW female involvement except for observations about the “misogyny of the radical right.”<sup>510</sup>

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<sup>503</sup> SPLC. *Richard Bertrand Spencer*. N.d. Accessed 24 February 2021.

<https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/individual/richard-bertrand-spencer-0>

<sup>504</sup> Gilbert & Elley, *Shaved heads and sonnenrads*, 292.

<sup>505</sup> Gilbert & Elley, 286.

<sup>506</sup> Gilbert & Elley, 287.

<sup>507</sup> Gilbert & Elley, 287.

<sup>508</sup> These three cases were made public in various NZ media reports over 2019 and 2020 i.e. Stuff, NZ Herald. Brittenden and Fairburn were linked to Action Zealanda (White Nationalist focus), Arps is a white supremacist and the soldier was linked to Wargus Christie (Identitarians focus).

<sup>509</sup> Marc Daalder, “Far Right Extremist no longer in Army Reserves”, *Newsroom*, November 2019, accessed 02 March 2021. <https://www.newsroom.co.nz/far-right-extremist-no-longer-in-army-reserves>

<sup>510</sup> Paul Spoonley, Personal communication with author, 23 April 2020.



Online photographs from NZ's traditional RWE group marches (2009, 2014) clearly show women wearing a similar 'uniform,' often holding children alongside the men. It is unclear how they have escaped analysis.<sup>511</sup> RW Male domination has likely led to a false dichotomy that women are less inclined to support RWE; hence, related stories write them out.

Spoonley's observation shares commonalities with the omission of females from gang analysis in NZ. In one publication, "The Girls in the Gang," Dennehy & Newbold (2001) argue that the mainstream perceptions of gangs in NZ permit a "general distaste" for any associated women due to perceptions of them as marginal subservient partners in a hyper-masculine culture.<sup>512</sup> This inattention links succinctly to the literature; for instance, the neglect of RW women is due to most females not fitting a perceived 'Nazi' stereotype or dismissing them as mere accessories.

Any tendency to bundle NZ RWE groups into the gang category is plausible because, in a physical sense, gangs are a tangible concept in day-to-day life, far more than terrorism or terrorists are. On the other hand, the nexus of gangs and racism may distort E&T threat identification and how RWE adherents present to society. Either way, the literature available clearly indicates women are continually absent from the discourse. Given that NZ has a documented 40-year history of gangs and fringe RWE groups, a closer analysis is overdue, mainly because the global literature (Chapters 3-5) suggests that women can be active in these spaces and to omit analysis of them empowers any threat they might represent.

### **6.3 NZ Media and the influence of "Binladenism."**

This section changes direction to explore NZ's media discourse and representations of E&T to discover if they can further inform us about NZ women's partaking in extremist

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<sup>511</sup> National Library, *Photographs of National Front New Zealand Flag Day, Wellington. October 2009*. Dylan Owen Photographs. Wellington. Oct 2009. Accessed 8 January 2020. <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/23067719>. Michael Botur. *Pride & Prejudice – the worried world of white pride*. 25 March 2014. Accessed 8 January 2020. <https://botur.tumblr.com/post/80628114887/pride-prejudice-the-worried-world-of-white>,

<sup>512</sup> Glennis Dennehy & Greg Newbold, *The Girls in the Gang*, (NZ, Reed Books, 2001): 151

ideologies. It also considers the tone and effect of E&T media discourse on public opinion and government entities in NZ. Inevitably, this analysis indicates the media focuses primarily on men and that when it does discuss women, it downplays their agency and motivations. The literature confirms that the media pigeonholes women in specific ways that negatively influence outsiders' understandings and employs moral panic tones (e.g., jihadi brides). This tendency requires journalistic attention to mitigate misinformation fortified by stereotypical gender framing to strengthen public security and minimize its influence on security sector policies and practices.

In interviews with NZ security practitioners conducted by Battersby (2020), they reported feeling the media was a "volatile" influence that disproportionately affected government action and public opinion through shallow and dramatic reporting of events.<sup>513</sup> The interviewees recall struggling to convince politicians or broader public service that domestic terrorism was a valid security concern, let alone the need to prepare and deter an attack.<sup>514</sup> Overall, they believed the media impacted how government officials considered their risk assessments in that the media opinion was ahead of the information presented from their analysis.<sup>515</sup>

John Ip (2007) validates the claim that NZ media content is influential on public opinions. He considered "*Crime, Criminal Justice and the Media*" in NZ and concluded much of what people "know" is learned via media filters, not personal experience.<sup>516</sup> Ip argues media depictions aid in the creation, influence, and endurance of moral panics<sup>517</sup>, resulting in a person or a group being, rightly or wrongly, defined as a threat to societal values due to their perceived activity.<sup>518</sup> Ip contends moral panics then provoke an incorrect censure response and provide an illusion of legitimacy, despite the media's depiction differing from reality.<sup>519</sup>

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<sup>513</sup> Battersby, *Security Practitioners*, 298.

<sup>514</sup> Battersby, *Security Practitioners*, 297.

<sup>515</sup> Battersby, *Security Practitioners*, 296.

<sup>516</sup> John Ip, "Crime, Criminal Justice, and the Media" in *Criminal Justice in New Zealand*, Ed Julia Tolmie & Warren Brookbanks, (2007), 389.

<sup>517</sup> John Ip, *Crime, Criminal Justice, and the Media*, 389.

<sup>518</sup> John Ip, 404.

<sup>519</sup> John Ip, 390, 404.

Substantiation for Ip's assertions comes from research on the media, Islam, Muslims, and terrorism in NZ. Jacqui Ewart, Mark Pearson, and Guy Healy (2016) interviewed 29 NZ and Australian journalism teachers, journalism students, and reporters to gauge media understandings about Islam and Muslims.<sup>520</sup> Their findings suggest the lack of accurate stories on Islam and Muslims is influenced by newsroom culture, accompanied by obliviousness on the impact of media on Muslims and a lack of knowledge about the faith itself.<sup>521</sup> Ewart et al. argue what is known about Islam and Muslims is affected by the normalised Anglo-centric media focus.<sup>522</sup> In other words, intentionally or unintentionally, media is written and disseminated from a white cultural gaze.

Research into media portrayals of Islam in NZ has highlighted how the western media have freely stereotyped Muslims and almost exclusively linked terrorism and Islam negatively (Kabir 2016).<sup>523</sup> The analysis of national NZ newspapers<sup>524</sup> by Kabir & Obaidul Hamid (2015)<sup>525</sup> and Kabir & Bourk (2012)<sup>526</sup> revealed that between 2005 and 2006, NZ Islamic communities were primarily invisible to the press. A later study on media narratives<sup>527</sup> by Rahman & Emadi (2018) found in 2014 alone there were five times more articles categorized as "Islamic Terrorism" over just "Islam."<sup>528</sup> By 2016, this had increased to seven times more, suggesting an emergent tendency to stereotype Islam negatively.<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>520</sup> Jacqui Ewart, Mark Pearson, and Guy Healy. "Journalists' and Educators Perspectives on News Media Reporting of Islam and Muslim Communities in Australia and New Zealand", *Journal of Media and Religion*, 15, no.3, (July 2016): 136-145.

<sup>521</sup> Ewart, Pearson & Healy. "Journalists' and Educators Perspectives", 136-145.

<sup>522</sup> Ewart, Pearson & Healy, 136.

<sup>523</sup> Shah Nister Kabir, "New Zealand Newspaper Coverage of Islam and Muslims", *Media Development*, 2, (2016): 24-27.

<sup>524</sup> New Zealand Herald, Otago Daily Times, and The Press.

<sup>525</sup> Shah Nister Kabir and M Obaidul Hamid. "Muslims in Western Media: New Zealand Newspapers Construction of 2006 terror plot at Heathrow Airport and beyond," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 35, no. 4, (2015): 469-485.

<sup>526</sup> Shah Nister Kabir and Michael Bourk, "Representing Islam and Muslims in New Zealand Newspapers", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 32, no.3, (2012): 324-338.

<sup>527</sup> Newztext database – contains the full text of many newspapers, including Fairfax Newspapers (and exclusively, the STUFF archive), NZME (including the New Zealand Herald and their regional newspapers) the Radio New Zealand Newswire, Scoop, and National Business Review (exclusively) and many more.

<sup>528</sup> Khairah A. Rahman and Azadeh Emadi, "Representations of Islam and Muslims in New Zealand Media," *Pacific Journalism Review* 24, no. 2, (2018): 183.

<sup>529</sup> Rahman & Emadi, "Representations of Islam and Muslims in New Zealand Media," 169-170.

Rahman & Emadi report NZ articles about “Jihadi Brides” are frequently paired with images of male “ISIS” fighters and symbols that “present the demonization of Islam” and promote “Islamophobia.”<sup>530</sup> Such imagery potentially elevates public concern and misaligns perceptions about Islam, Muslims, and Muslim women specifically. Unfortunately, such framing in NZ helps to camouflage RWE narratives that overtly negatively contrast Muslims with ‘white people’ for propaganda, as discussed in the literature —and evidenced by Olivia Pierson’s comments (See Appendix C).<sup>531</sup>

Internationally, Brigitte Nacos (2006) described the media's female E&T discourse as commentaries focused on the women’s features, clothing, body shape, and they infer female charms conflict with an ability to kill.<sup>532</sup> All of which are narratives missing from the discourse about male terrorists.<sup>533</sup> Davis extended this censure, saying that media representations typically position male partners as the instigators of female involvement.<sup>534</sup> In contrast, Patel argues that the media’s exuberant attention fuelled western female recruitment to Daesh and that any portrayal of them as Jihadi men's mere accessories feeds ill-fitting perceptions.<sup>535</sup>

Audrey Alexander and Rebecca Turkington (2018) argue that the media depict female terrorists as “misled enigmas” or exaggerated and often sexualized, unlike male terrorists.<sup>536</sup> Nacos deplores the “extra level of shock and horror” afforded these women when they choose to act because female terrorists are neither rare nor misfits.<sup>537</sup> Further support comes from AFF findings that the media have a gory fascination with IE female

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<sup>530</sup> Rahman & Emadi, 183.

<sup>531</sup> YouTube, *Stirring the Pot*, 2017. Accessed 10 December 2020.  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI8K5lr4wGiNIUQgICBs5IA/videos>

<sup>532</sup> Nacos., *The Portrayal of Female Terrorists in the Media*, 439.

<sup>533</sup> Nacos, 439.

<sup>534</sup> Jessica Davis. *Women in Modern Terrorism*, 16.

<sup>535</sup> Sofia Patel, “*The Sultanate of Women: Exploring female roles in perpetrating and preventing violent extremism*” ( Australia, Australian Strategic Policy Institute 2017), 6

<sup>536</sup> Audrey Alexander and Rebecca Turkington, “Treatment of Terrorists: How Does Gender Affect Justice”, *CTC Sentinel*, 11, no.8 (2018): 24-29

<sup>537</sup> Nacos, *The Portrayal of Female Terrorists in the Media*, 436.

suicide bombers, distinct from the downplay of violence by RW women, even compared to their RW male cohorts.<sup>538</sup>

Media activated violence has been well studied internationally and contributed valuable knowledge on topics such as the use of social media to radicalise (e.g., Morris, 2016,<sup>539</sup> Awan, 2017),<sup>540</sup> hostile actions motivated by extreme political rhetoric (Sunstein, 2009,<sup>541</sup> Wojcieszak, 2009)<sup>542</sup> and the role of hate speech in rousing xenophobic paranoia or hate crimes (Daniels, 2009,<sup>543</sup> Posselt, 2017)<sup>544</sup>. Given women's demonstrated 'activism' on behalf of their extremist community, these scholarly contributions can further guide security practitioners and legislators.

This section revealed the existence of Bergen's "Binladenism" in NZ's media content. Ip found that the NZ media's framing influences public opinion and, according to NZ security practitioners, influences NZ Government official's acceptance of their security risk assessments. Research findings that NZ 'Jihadi Bride' stories are paired with male fighter imagery lean towards 'myth making' about the women themselves, which may prove challenging for repatriation, integration, and national security. It is notable currently, even though the current media focus is RWE, there are no locatable NZ media pieces on any RW women in NZ. The media should be encouraged to engage with security professionals and academics to shape media discourse to portray these women more accurately and bolster national security, not problematise it.

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<sup>538</sup> Amadeu Antonio Foundation (AAF) "Overlooked and Underrated, (2014)

<sup>539</sup> Emma Morris, "Children: extremism and Online Radicalization", *Journal of Children & Media* 10, no 6. (2016): 508-514.

<sup>540</sup> Imran Awan, "Cyber-Extremism: Isis and the Power of Social Media, SOC 54, (2017): 138-149.

<sup>541</sup> Cass R Sunstein, *Going to Extremes: How like Minds Unite and Divide*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>542</sup> Magdalena Wojcieszak, "Carrying Online Participation Offline – Mobilization by Radical Online Groups and Politically Dissimilar Offline Ties", *Journal of Communication* 59, no 3. (2009): 564-586

<sup>543</sup> Jessie Daniels, *White Supremacy Online and the New Attack on Civil Rights (Perspectives on a Multiracial America)*, (Lanham USA, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009).

<sup>544</sup> Gerald Posselt, "Can Hatred Speak? On the Linguistic Dimensions of Hate Crime", *Linguistik Online*, 82, no.3. (2017): 5-25.

#### 6.4 Commentary: Elisa Hategan - Ex Neo-Nazi Poster Girl turned 'Race Traitor.'

"It was my duty as a white woman to help save the white race..."<sup>545</sup>

This section combines direct email communication from Canadian Elisa Hategan's received on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020 with her personal history to gain a perspective into women in NZ's RWE community. Hategan's viewpoint is valuable due to her 1990's lived experience as a spokesperson for 'The Heritage Front' (HF), a prominent Neo-Nazi group that endorsed white supremacy in Canada. In 2019 Hategan was invited to speak at a conference in NZ. Currently, Hategan works as the Regional Coordinator for Canada and the United States for the "Against Violent Extremism" (AVE) group. AVE is a global network of former extremists and survivors of extremist violence that work alongside ISD Global.<sup>546</sup> Her perspective ultimately highlights that NZ RWE women are more likely to be underground and online than in the physical public arena, making them less visible but not non-existent.

Shortly after leaving the HF in 1994, a Canadian news program (*It's About Time*) interviewed 19-year-old Hategan about the HF and its ideology. She admitted she passionately recruited others, recorded propaganda, and made public appearances on behalf of the movement.<sup>547</sup> Hategan explained she had wanted to take part in the race war and "kill as many non-whites as possible" so that in the end, the "white race would survive."<sup>548</sup> Hategan had believed that the HF was in a "fight for survival"; therefore, she did whatever "they felt was necessary to be done."<sup>549</sup> While she encountered sexism in the group, she believes the male leadership realised a "soft, pretty teenage girl" was a better recruitment tool than an angry male skinhead with swastika tattoos.<sup>550</sup> Simultaneously, Hategan was covertly military trained to participate in the race war, and

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<sup>545</sup> Elisa Hategan Documentary "*It's about time*" (1994) – "On Kids being Groomed into White Supremacy", Posted 3 Feb 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hCeWeSvww0>. 26.06 length.

<sup>546</sup> ISD, *Against Violent Extremism (AVE) network*. <https://www.isdglobal.org/against-violent-extremism-ave/>, Accessed 13 February 2021.

<sup>547</sup> Elisa Hategan Documentary "*It's about time*", 6.26.

<sup>548</sup> Hategan, "*It's about time*", 6.01.

<sup>549</sup> Hategan, 6.15.

<sup>550</sup> Hategan, Personal Communication (Email) 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

she admits that she would have been willing to use a gun should the need arise at that time.<sup>551</sup>

At 16 years old, the men coached her to “dress sexier” and “behave a certain way” and speak softly for media optics and recruitment.<sup>552</sup> Hategan explained it was also the duty of a good “Aryan” woman to breed as many “Aryans” as possible.<sup>553</sup> Therefore they pressured her to date and told her that any hesitation was “not natural.”<sup>554</sup> Hategan says as time went by, she felt “looked down” on because she was female.<sup>555</sup> The misogyny and patriarchy became apparent when she, the spokesperson, was excluded from “important political discussions” and ridiculed when she raised women’s rights in the movement.<sup>556</sup>

This gendering, combined with the group's “terror campaign” of anti-racist rallying women, caused Hategan to revisit her views because she was not “into it” [the harassment] as much as she thought she should have been.<sup>557</sup> Due to this campaign, Hategan started to warn the HF targets covertly, but police arrested her, and she came under pressure from the HF.<sup>558</sup> She realised she was “expendable” and felt betrayed by the HF but did not know how to leave, so Hategan attempted suicide due to the “invisible chains.”<sup>559</sup> She covertly started to work with the anti-racist community and a few months later, at age 18, a disenchanted Hategan testified in court, resulting in a prison term for several of the HF leadership and the group’s disbandment.<sup>560</sup>

The interviewer asked Hategan if it was a ‘scary thing’ thinking about her past self in the HF, to which she replied the only scary thing was the “person she was then would kill the person she is now.”<sup>561</sup> She goes on to warn that some “kids” may only be interested in the culture (e.g., clothes, music) when they join these groups but soon become racist

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<sup>551</sup> Hategan, “*It’s about time*”, 7.17-7.28.

<sup>552</sup> Hategan, 8.50 - 9.20.

<sup>553</sup> Hategan, 9.31.

<sup>554</sup> Hategan, 9.55.

<sup>555</sup> Hategan, 8.00.

<sup>556</sup> Hategan, 8.09, 8.23.

<sup>557</sup> Hategan, 10.10-10.50.

<sup>558</sup> Hategan, 11.50.

<sup>559</sup> Hategan, 12.30 – 13.04.

<sup>560</sup> TSAS, “*Elisa Hategan*”, Nd, accessed 11 February 2021. <https://www.tsas.ca/affiliate/elisa-hategan/>

<sup>561</sup> Hategan, “*It’s about time*”, 20.42

because the culture content is racist.<sup>562</sup> Hategan finished that interview by stating that anyone can be a white supremacist, from “all walks of life,” they won’t wear their “Klan robes” or “SS” tattoos out, “ they are ordinary people, they could be your neighbour.”<sup>563</sup>

Today Hategan is an Anti-RWE educator through her Changemaker Project and consultancy with multiple global CT groups.<sup>564</sup> Her research focuses on developing radicalisation prevention/intervention methods and women’s involvement in radicalisation.<sup>565</sup> Hategan acknowledged that while she had visited NZ in 2019 to speak at a conference, she did not have in-depth knowledge about the “white power” scene in NZ.<sup>566</sup> Hategan ventured some observations about why females may be less present in the extreme RW demographic with that caveat in place.

Hategan says it’s possible that in NZ, the RWE men are more “macho anti-feminist” than elsewhere.<sup>567</sup> Thus, they deter women’s participation, but this alpha male persona may draw in other women equally.<sup>568</sup> She also points to another reason, potentially explaining a lack of female representation in NZ RWE groups.<sup>569</sup> She believes many young men involved in RW activities have “issues,” which reveals an overlap with Incel types, consisting of men feeling unappreciated and awkward around females, “lost in the world,” and without purpose.<sup>570</sup> Moreover, Hategan echoes their belief is affirmative action and feminism have taken their birth right as men.<sup>571</sup>

Hategan observes that these men do not have the skills to maintain intimate relationships, so they will align with male friends – their fighting and drinking buddies.<sup>572</sup> She has found women do not tend to stay with these personalities for long and tend to be introduced to

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<sup>562</sup> Hategan, 21.10.

<sup>563</sup> Hategan, 22.13.

<sup>564</sup> TSAS, *Elisa Hategan*, Nd, accessed 11 February 2021.

<sup>565</sup> TSAS, *Elisa Hategan*.

<sup>566</sup> Elisa Hategan, Personal Communication with author, 24 April 2020.

<sup>567</sup> Hategan, Personal Communication, 24 April 2020.

<sup>568</sup> Elisa Hategan, 24 April 2020.

<sup>569</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>570</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>571</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>572</sup> Hategan, 2020.



the RW group due to that relationship, inevitably leaving when the relationship ends.<sup>573</sup> Hategan believes the longer a female is in that environment, the more likely she will eventually become repelled by the men's alcohol/drug use and anger issues.<sup>574</sup> And if physical abuse occurs along with having children, the women typically decide the WP scene will not be the baby's future.<sup>575</sup>

According to Hategan, most women will leave these environments where they are second-class citizens, where beyond babies and sex, the men have no purpose for them.<sup>576</sup> An example used by Hategan was of a local skinhead gang who beat up people, got drunk, and had no interest in optics or growing as an international political movement like WN tends to.<sup>577</sup> Regarding WN, Hategan surmises NZ does not have prominent WN groups, neither does it have NZ women that are high profile WN role models.<sup>578</sup>

Nonetheless, she writes the women are not as visible as men generally, and today they form virtual connections and friendships with other WN women.<sup>579</sup> The RWE online environments, according to Hategan, have reduced the need to be physically involved in "skinhead groups" and results in women appearing invisible in the general community but will "troll online" and behind the scenes.<sup>580</sup>

In summary, Hategan's remarks align with the literature that shows the Neo-Nazi type scene differs from WN in its presentations, adherents, and the use of violence but share core themes. Her comments about group leadership in the 1990s, recognizing the veneer a female face provides 'hate' shows how delayed analysis is about group tactics and women supporters. Overall, Hategan's insights connect to the gang, skinhead, Neo-Nazi imagery within NZ's history, which provides a platform for further NZ situated research.

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<sup>573</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>574</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>575</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>576</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>577</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>578</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>579</sup> Hategan, 2020.

<sup>580</sup> Hategan, 2020.

## 6.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the research set out to discover where we can see the woman's perspective and participation in New Zealand E&T. It explores NZ's history of violence for a political cause, the nexus of racist beliefs seen in NZ gangs since the 1960's and introduced current exemplars of RWE thought in NZ. Morse and Parker's contrasting cases show the alternative stereotype framing of women's activities and variable consequences in NZ. A further complication is inaccurate media portrayals of 'jihadi brides' that problematize an NZ demographic (Muslim women) and provides a moral panic framing about these 'brides'. Spoonley suggests the misogynistic nature of RW extremism has taken NZ academic interest away from the women themselves. All these dynamics serve to deliver inaccurate perceptions to the public and government about extremism and its participants, which Hategan challenges in her comments, "They are ordinary people; they could be your neighbour."<sup>581</sup>

In conclusion, after examining women's participation in NZ through the two academic and media perspectives, the outcome remains consistent – women are missing from the broader conversation. Their voices are expunged rather than extinct. The enigma of NZ women in extremism and terrorism conflicts not only with the literature but with the case studies (Pierson & Voice of Zealandia) presented in Chapter 5. Hategan gives some explanation of why this might be the case. But all is not lost; in the next chapter, we turn to the NZ government and security sector reports to see what they can tell us about women and extremism, VE and terrorism in NZ.

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<sup>581</sup> Hategan, 22.13.

## **Chapter 7: How Does the New Zealand Government view Women's Extremism.**

This chapter turns to focus on NZ's Government agencies to determine what they can tell us about women and extremist violence in NZ. So far, the NZ discourse, where women are absent, has diverged from the international picture, which evidences RWE and IE women exist in western society today. This research shows that not only do they exist, but these women live in a more nuanced and diverse way outside of stereotype-inducing labels like Jihadi Brides (see Alexander, Blee, Campion, Cunningham).

Using the Jihadi Brides' notion as a departure point, a review of the NZSIS annual reports finds NZ women traveling to Daesh lightly features. In fact, outside the framing of 'marry' and 'brides,' the discussion about women's agency and motivations is omitted. Secondly, an examination of primary data from OIA requests reveals how the wider government considers these women.

Ultimately, this chapter shows that NZ Government and Security Agencies are not publicly singling women out for consideration holistically or consistently. Women are missing in the State discourse even though two current women present NZ with a challenge in this space. One of which NZ has known about for some time in the "jihadi bride" narratives discussed further in chapter 8.

### **7.1 On the Outside Looking in - NZ's National Security (post-March 2019).**

This section briefly discusses the fragmented space between the government, classified (e.g., security agencies), and unclassified (e.g., public, media) communities. NZ is a fledgling nation in its consideration of domestic extremism and VE as a national security issue compared to other FVEY nations (see ASIO, LaFree, IEP). That is not to say NZ can linger in its embryonic state. There is a need to engage in proportionate analysis when considering the NZSIS annual reports and OIA information presented in this chapter. Security practitioners indicate practical awareness of potential extremism, VE, and terrorist ideologies; however, the media is more influential on the broader bureaucratic system. Consequently, media narratives are likely to submerge gender even further from consideration. Moreover, a misshaped public understanding hinders their ability to report feasible extremist security concerns outside explicit extreme violence.

Shortly after the 2019 mosque attacks in Christchurch, security scholars Battersby & Ball published their analysis reassuring the public that “...counter-terrorism practitioners do monitor and address RWE and other ideologies in the same manner as additional security and criminal risks.”<sup>582</sup> John Battersby (April 2019) warned assumptions do happen in the aftermath of terrorist attacks as CT strategies defensively react to the “miss.”<sup>583</sup> An assumption Battersby highlights are the processes “of labelling and framing” and warns while some individuals have prejudicial views, these do not make them terrorists.<sup>584</sup>

Another reaction is the inevitable expansion of security agencies ‘watch lists’ however, this growth does not mitigate the challenge of finding the “dangerous needle in the haystack.”<sup>585</sup> Battersby warns watch list expansion makes it less likely that a new threat would be found and isolated by NZ security agencies and that “ordinary people” will be the first to see evidence that someone is developing into an extremist or terrorist.<sup>586</sup> The literature reported that due to gender, even when extremist women are overtly offending, they are rarely challenged even by law enforcement. Thus, to enable this public resource for security agencies, it necessitates counteracting extremism gender bias.

To empower “ordinary people,” public education is needed about extremism’s characteristics and the various ideological strands. A coherent, accurate representation is required, which includes how women may feature. In this chapter, it becomes clear the NZ CT picture, along with information about E&T from officials, lacks the clarity and substance required to enable “ordinary people” to recognize E&T outside of explicit violent male rhetoric or actions. It does not mean classified information should be mass released, but that NZ’s discourse and legislation are developed further alongside

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<sup>582</sup> John Battersby and Rhys Ball, “Christchurch in the Context of New Zealand terrorism and right-wing extremism”, *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism* 14, no.3, (2019): 192.

<sup>583</sup> John Battersby, “We are repeating common counter-terrorism mistakes, “ *NZ Herald*, 12 April 2019, accessed 5 March 2021. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/john-battersby-we-are-repeating-common-counter-terrorism-mistakes/CBQKZLRWF6JBTXBIZ7ELKE3J6M/>

<sup>584</sup> John Battersby, “We are repeating common counter-terrorism mistakes”

<sup>585</sup> Battersby, “We are repeating...”.

<sup>586</sup> Battersby, “We are repeating...”.

understandings that extremism occurs across genders so it can be understood and applied to address nonviolent and violent ideological behaviours.

Conversely, through 12 interviews conducted by John Battersby (2020), the security practitioners' perspective reveals media narratives are problematic. The NZ security practitioners<sup>587</sup> report feeling their roles were convoluted by an all-encompassing sense of "social, bureaucratic and political complacency towards the threat of terrorism."<sup>588</sup> He says the individuals perceived this complacency produced legislative inactivity that adversely affected security agencies' powers, and they felt under-resourced.<sup>589</sup>

Battersby contends that despite these barriers, the agencies considered threats across the risk spectrum (i.e., LW, RW, IE, Single issue activism, and "fixated" criminals.<sup>590</sup> Security practitioners' perspective about media influencing opinions further encourages a national approach to counter problematic narratives that undermine national security. Due to the cumulative effect of media simplification, legislative complacency, and broad disinterest, the nuanced understanding needed to reveal women's agency in extremism is absent, making holistic CT analysis impossible.

## **7.2 "Protecting New Zealand" ... "at home and abroad from terrorism."<sup>591</sup>**

This section explores NZSIS annual reports (2002-2019) to discover any official data that this agency might specifically mention women and E& T in NZ. The NZSIS annual reports originate from the relevant NZSIS directors and provide declassified information about the agency ranging from financial, human resources to warrants and NZSIS's operational work and priorities. These annual reports confirm that 9/11 significantly altered the NZSIS's domestic terrorism considerations placing IE as a terrorism frontrunner in early editions and incorporating RWE discourse in recent editions. Despite those developments,

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<sup>587</sup> Study included "frontline" operators, analysts and middle-top level managers in the NZ Intelligence Community starting in 2018 and ending after the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019 Christchurch Mosque attacks.

<sup>588</sup> John Battersby, "Security Sector Practitioner Perceptions of the Terror Threat Environment before the Christchurch attacks," *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Services Online*, 15, no.2, (2020): 295

<sup>589</sup> John Battersby, "Security Sector Practitioner Perceptions," 296.

<sup>590</sup> Battersby. Security Sector Practitioner Perceptions, "296.

<sup>591</sup> NZSIS, "Annual Report for the year ended June 2013," NZSIS, (2013): 24.

extremist NZ women remain continuously missing from the unclassified narrative as diverse, motivated extremist individuals and continue confined frame of “marry.”

### **7.2.1 NZSIS Annual Reports, 2002 – 2006. Director: E (Richard) Woods.**

NZSIS Director Woods reports that after 9/11, NZ had increased CT capabilities to avoid any complacency.<sup>592</sup> In the 2001/02 report, he confirmed no evidence of a “serious terrorist threat” against NZ and specifically mentioned Al Qaeda (IE) as an international concern. For the 2002/03 report, Woods notes the IE Bali bombings and discloses NZSIS investigations had sought to determine if “Al Qaeda” had established itself in NZ.<sup>593</sup> Woods discusses further international IE attacks (e.g., Jakarta, Istanbul, and Madrid) and acknowledges “international terrorism” was now the agency's “main preoccupation” in his 2003/04 report.<sup>594</sup> Woods writes Al Qaeda sympathies were a domestic concern, as were individuals “in or from” NZ who supported IE causes.<sup>595</sup> He mentions attempts to use NZ as a “safe haven from which activities” domestically or internationally can be facilitated.<sup>596</sup> No other domestic extremism information was forthcoming.

The 2004/05 NZSIS report featured the 2005 IE London bombings by British citizens unknown to security agencies.<sup>597</sup> Using that incident, Woods commented that Al Qaeda’s tactics, specifically “self-guided jihad” that inspired individuals in Western nations, often unknown to security agencies, to commit domestic attacks, had implications for NZ’s CT efforts.<sup>598</sup> He repeated that there are NZ individuals who are sympathetic to the IE cause. In his 2005-06 report Woods highlighted an increase in IE attacks and activity in western nations (e.g., London, Australia, Canada), and he warned that NZ was not immune from

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<sup>592</sup> NZSIS, “Report of the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service: Report to the House of Representatives for the year ended 30 June 2002.” *NZSIS*, (2002): 9.

<sup>593</sup> NZSIS, “Report of the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service: Report to the House of Representatives for the year ended 30 June 2003.” *NZSIS*, (2003): 6.

<sup>594</sup> NZSIS, “*Report of the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service: Report to the House of Representatives for the year ended 30 June 2004,*” *NZSIS*, (2004): 6

<sup>595</sup> NZSIS, “...for the year ended 30 June 2004,” 11.

<sup>596</sup> NZSIS, “...for the year ended 30 June 2004,” 11.

<sup>597</sup> NZSIS, “Report of the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service: Report to the House of Representatives for the year ended 30 June 2005,” *NZSIS*, (2005): 6

<sup>598</sup> NZSIS, “...for the year ended 30 June 2005,” 10-11.

the same threat.<sup>599</sup> Woods discussed Al Qaeda's ability to “proselytize to the worldwide Muslim community “ on the internet as a security challenge for all western security agencies. The implication here is that the primary domestic threat would be IE-inspired.

### **7.2.2 NZSIS Annual Reports, 2006 - 2013. Director: Dr. Warren Tucker**

In his first report as Director, Dr. Warren Tucker briefly discloses the SIS had investigated individuals linked to IE domestic activity, associates, and links to international terrorist groups.<sup>600</sup> In the following report (2007/08), Tucker generally speaks about CT and does not mention extremism or terrorism beyond agency frameworks, making it difficult to compare to previous E&T discourse and activity.<sup>601</sup> Tucker reported “successful counter-terrorism operations” had taken place over the next year (2008/09)<sup>602</sup> and that the SIS had worked with border agencies to identify, monitor, or exclude from entry any individuals with international terrorist links.<sup>603</sup> He also reveals the SIS had changed its CT investigative framework over this period to work better for the future.<sup>604</sup>

In the 2009/10 report, Tucker comments the SIS had increased CT training for its staff and that the NZSIS had worked with other NZ agencies with CT to mitigate any threats.<sup>605</sup> The following year (2010/11), Tucker continued his general CT commentary absent of any specific extremist or terrorist entity remarks or information.<sup>606</sup> Tucker notes in both the 2010/11 and 2011/12 reports that “Islamist extremist terrorism is likely to continue to be a significant threat to Western interests...” however, he writes that overall, any domestic terrorism was a “relatively low threat.”<sup>607</sup>

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<sup>599</sup> NZSIS, “Report of the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service: Report to the House of Representatives for the year ended 30 June 2006,” *NZSIS*, (2006): 6

<sup>600</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2007,” *NZSIS*, (2007): 4

<sup>601</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2008,” *NZSIS*, (2008): 1-27.

<sup>602</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2009,” *NZSIS*, (2009): 5.

<sup>603</sup> NZSIS, “...for the year ended 30 June 2009,” 12.

<sup>604</sup> NZSIS, “...for the year ended 30 June 2009,” 14.

<sup>605</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2010,” *NZSIS*, (2010): 20.

<sup>606</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2011,” *NZSIS* (2011): 1-34.

<sup>607</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2012,” *NZSIS*, (2012): 24.

He expands on his comments in 2012/13 where he reports “that despite “the degradation of “Al Qa’ida” in some countries, it continued to grow in Africa and the Middle East.<sup>608</sup> Tucker continues; “we cannot be dismissive of the continued possibility of either transnational or homegrown and self-radicalised individuals or groups emerging as a future threat.”<sup>609</sup> The implication here was still a focus on the risk of IE extremism to NZ.

### **7.2.3 NZSIS Annual Reports, 2013 – 2019. Director: Rebecca Kitteridge.**

Under Rebecca Kitteridge, the agency's domestic terrorism and extremism environment has radically changed. In her first full NZSIS annual report (2013/2014) as Director, Kitteridge writes:

*In the months following the period to which this report applies, the global terrorism threat has evolved alarmingly both in terms of scale and mode of operation. Random acts of extreme violence, and the promotion of extreme ideology through global social media remain distasteful and shocking to the vast majority of New Zealanders, but plant seeds in the minds of a very small minority of susceptible individuals. Violent extremism has no place in New Zealand, and it is the job of the NZSIS, working closely with the New Zealand Police and other agencies, to protect New Zealand from that small number of people who combine extreme views with a propensity for violence.<sup>610</sup>*

Kitteridge writes that the IE recruitment of westerners and the travel of “individuals” [NZ Citizens] to the Middle East was a significant NZSIS focus.<sup>611</sup> She discloses that NZ citizens and NZ permanent residents nationally and internationally had displayed various intentions, i.e., traveling abroad to “engage in politically motivated violence,” facilitate others to travel and fund terrorist groups.<sup>612</sup> She revealed that the NZSIS had made recommendations to cancel passports for a “number of” NZ individuals that the agency

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<sup>608</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report for the year ended June 2013,” *NZSIS*, (2012): 24.

<sup>609</sup> NZSIS, “...for the year ended June 2013,” *NZSIS*, 24.

<sup>610</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report: For Year ended 30 June 2014,” *NZSIS*, (2014): 5-6.

<sup>611</sup> NZSIS, “For Year ended 30 June 2014,” 4.

<sup>612</sup> NZSIS, 10.



believed had intent to travel to the Middle East.<sup>613</sup> This 2013/14 report frames passport cancellation as a preventative to the “risk of battle-hardened individuals” returning to compromise NZ’s security.<sup>614</sup> Despite an IE focus later in the report, Kitteridge notes that:

*“Islamist terrorism isn’t the only possible threat; other domestic single-issue activist causes also remain prominent potential motivators for violence in the current threat environment.”*<sup>615</sup>

In the 2014/15 report, Kitteridge discloses, the NZSIS received funding to increase the agency's capability and capacity to “monitor and investigate foreign terrorist fighters and other violent extremists.”<sup>616</sup> This funding extended into 2015/16 to respond to the “evolving threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters.”<sup>617</sup>

The 2014/15 report states that in addition to any NZ-based E&T threat, there had been an increase of NZ foreign fighters with Daesh and “an increase in the total number of females travelling to Syria/Iraq to marry jihadist fighters.”<sup>618</sup> It continues; “The total number of New Zealanders in Syria and Iraq is likely to increase in the coming year” and that individuals fighting with Daesh pose a “significant threat ” if they returned to “New Zealand or other countries. Kitteridge writes that NZ has not yet had returnee fighters, but there was a “realistic possibility” that this will occur soon.<sup>619</sup>

The NZSIS 2015/2016 annual report continued the IE stance. Kitteridge writes that international IE attacks had continued while a “small number” of NZ citizens continued affiliated with Daesh in the Middle East.<sup>620</sup> She repeats that NZ individuals were overseas as foreign fighters, were inciting and recruiting others, fundraising, or marrying Jihadi

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<sup>613</sup> NZSIS, 10.

<sup>614</sup> NZSIS, 10.

<sup>615</sup> NZSIS, 12.

<sup>616</sup> NZSIS, Annual Report: Year Ending 30 June 2015,” NZSIS, (2015): 11.

<sup>617</sup> NZSIS, “Year Ending 30 June 2015,” 4.

<sup>618</sup> NZSIS, 10.

<sup>619</sup> NZSIS, 10.

<sup>620</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report 2016,” NZSIS, (2016): 7

fighters.<sup>621</sup> Subsequent editions (2016/17, 2017/18) show that any references to women linked to or involved with VE or E&T were discontinued.

In 2016/17, Kitteridge recognizes that “foreign fighters” may attempt to leave Iraq and Syria.<sup>622</sup> She writes that NZ returnees could motivate and facilitate others to join “extremist militant groups” or have personal experience and skills to use explosives or weapons.<sup>623</sup> Domestically, Kitteridge reports that “ISIL” still resonated with some individuals, and “between 30-40 individuals” were on the CT risk “register” at any one time during the 2016-17 period.<sup>624</sup> However, unlike 2015/16, outside of the ‘marry’ context, there was no specific mention of women participants in E&T.

The 2017/18 annual report states “ISIL” remained persistent online and “a small but concerning number of New Zealander’s sustained engagement with “often violent online content and radical ideology...”<sup>625</sup> In comments about active CT investigations, she writes the most leads during 2017/18 were linked to “ISIL” and moves on to discuss the influence and proliferation of extremist material online.<sup>626</sup>

Kitteridge mentions that NZ individuals had been convicted domestically relating to “objectionable extremist material” and repeats that approximately 30 individuals, at any one time, can be of interest to the NZSIS relating to VE and terrorism.<sup>627</sup>

Kitteridge comments that the NZSIS was not aware of any “terrorist foreign fighters” who had returned, nor were any individuals “ISIL-aligned” expected to “imminently travel” to NZ.<sup>628</sup> Concerning “emerging terrorism threats,” she writes the NZSIS analyses “global

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<sup>621</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report 2016”, 14.

<sup>622</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report 2017.”, 12.

<sup>623</sup> NZSIS, 15.

<sup>624</sup> NZSIS, 15.

<sup>625</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report 2018,” NZSIS, (2018): 8.

<sup>626</sup> NZSIS, 13.

<sup>627</sup> NZSIS, 12.

<sup>628</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report 2018,” NZSIS, (2018):13.

trends” relating to VE to understand “how this may translate into activity in NZ” and explicitly mentions international extremism.<sup>629</sup>

Kitteridge described the current “threat environment” as being due to a “convergence of events, sentiments, and ideology.”<sup>630</sup> Then, in March 2019, an act of domestic RWE in NZ abruptly altered this discourse, and Kitteridge states:

*“The Christchurch terrorist attacks on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019 made it devastatingly clear that New Zealand is not immune to the threat posed by violent extremism. The attacks will likely have a long-term impact on the domestic terrorism environment.”*<sup>631</sup>

Concerning the “Christchurch Terrorist Attack,” Kitteridge writes that the NZSIS “had for some time believed it could be possible that an individual, unknown to intelligence or law enforcement agencies, could carry out a terrorist act in New Zealand.”<sup>632</sup> She explains that following the attacks, the NZSIS expanded efforts to identify individuals motivated by violent RWE ideologies and work through leads generated by the public.<sup>633</sup>

Kitteridge describes violent RWE as an internationally recognized growing threat and that the “disparate nature” of RWE ideologies, people and groups, and its online capabilities make it a challenge for global “security agencies” over the “foreseeable future.”<sup>634</sup> IE groups, “ISIL” and “Al-Qaeda, are still reported as active threats due to their ability to “inspire terrorist attacks” worldwide.<sup>635</sup> Kitteridge repeats that for 2018/19, “between 30 and 50 individuals” under investigation concerning VE at any one time in NZ.<sup>636</sup>

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<sup>629</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report 2018,” 13.

<sup>630</sup> NZSIS, 13.

<sup>631</sup> NZSIS, “2019 Annual Report New Zealand Security Intelligence Services,” NZSIS, (2019): 11.

<sup>632</sup> NZSIS, “Annual Report 2019,” 14.

<sup>633</sup> NZSIS, 14.

<sup>634</sup> NZSIS, 11.

<sup>635</sup> NZSIS, 11.

<sup>636</sup> NZSIS, 14.

#### **7.2.4 NZSIS Summarised: 2012-2019.**

A holistic look across the NZSIS annual reports from 2002 to 2018 shows women, or references to “marry,” had a short debut 2014-2016 before disappearing. Kitteridge (2015/16) does provide a hint of IE role diversity through comments about fundraising and incitement of others inserted between foreign fighters and “marrying Jihadist fighters” notations. The jihadi bride label does not make an overt appearance. Unfortunately, this does little to dispel the imagery of women participants as one-dimensional modulated characters. The NZSIS inclusion of women’s participation in extremist movements was momentary and IE stereotypical. Moreover, the divergence of the ‘foreign fighter/s’ and ‘woman as brides’ narratives leans into the women as male accessories perspective and the western viewpoint of IE female subservience.

Ideologically the NZSIS annual reports (2002 – 2017/18) evidence the two post 9/11 dominant CT watchtower windows, firstly IE’s global reach, impact, and influence. Secondly, preserving E&T and VE as a hegemonic masculine practice negates the fundamental network that women provide extremist movements. A shimmer of alternative ideologies, before 2019, was supplied by Kitteridge; in 2013/14, she mentions “other domestic single-issue activist causes,” and in 2015/16, she comments “foreign terrorist fighters and other violent extremists.” Although it is unclear if “other” VE means other individuals in IE (e.g., women) or different ideologies. The events of March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, set the tone for the NZSIS 2018/19 report that explicitly discusses RWE for the first time since 2002, with IE relegated to five lines.

There is a repeated figure of 30-50 individuals on the security watchlist throughout the NZSIS reports, which was surprising given the reported increased focus on RWE after March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019. It isn't easy to further analyse this, given further data is likely to be classified and is deserving of more analysis than this thesis can provide. Not having the characteristics and demographics limits any real sight of women’s linkages to E&T and the NZSIS watchlist. Given official comments about women traveling to Daesh, any security list is unlikely to be entirely male.

All directors’ comments show IE received a significant proportion of the NZSIS’s resources irrespective of the IE movement. Notwithstanding any official information shared or

omitted, gender stereotypes and auxiliary notions continue to anchor women's extremism and VE participation to a narrow gender thematic of passivity. Granted, acknowledgment of "individuals" linked or associated with terrorist entities or security concerns around "foreign fighters" and "returnees" in the reports could easily relate to men and women; these are genderless terms. Nevertheless, it is a safe discourse that is ambiguous and leaves space for inferences and gender stereotyping. The following section spreads the official net wider through OIA requests to various NZ government agencies to locate more pieces for the gender VE and E&T picture.

### **7.3 Official Information Requests (OIA)**

As part of data collection, OIA requests were sent to the Department of Corrections (Corrections), Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), Ministry of Business, Innovation and Enterprise (MBIE), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), NZ Police, and the NZSIS to discover what information they hold relating to women, VE, and terrorism. An inevitable challenge with national security is that the agencies can withhold information if the agency determines providing the material would "... prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand".<sup>637</sup> Nevertheless, this section will demonstrate that the OIA evidence lacks any specific information disclosed or available about women. It still adds to the picture of women and extremism in NZ.

In combination with specific media commentaries, incidents, and academic literature, the various agencies' remit shaped the OIA requests, which resulted in a mix of focused and broad questions. The purpose of OIA requests was twofold: first, discover what is known about NZ women involved in VE ideologies since 9/11, and secondly, how these agencies consider NZ women as extremist actors/supporters. While the OIA findings appear

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<sup>637</sup> Official Information Act 1982. Section 6.  
<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1982/0156/latest/DLM65366.html>

limited, the women as extremists' concepts are not entirely invisible; instead, it seems more disconnected and incomplete across these agencies.

Combined with Battersby's interviews with security practitioners, it seems those tasked with CT or relevant security roles are aware of extremist gender diversity. However, in practice, the procedures, policies, and legislation that frame this work appear to hinder capabilities and CT strategies in terms of any specific focus.

### **7.3.1 Lead CT Agencies: NZ Police and NZSIS.**

#### **OIA, 2020: NZ Police <sup>638</sup>**

NZ Police report that aside from the French female agent, Dominique Preiur (1985 *Rainbow Warrior* bombing), no other female has been arrested in NZ for any "terrorist links" or activity (as of 2020).<sup>639</sup> Nonetheless, NZ Police report they recognize that internet activity shows extremist women participate in all aspects of extremist action, including violence.<sup>640</sup>

In their OIA response, NZ Police provided a "qualitative summary" that shows out of the "thousands of potential leads" received after the March 15<sup>th</sup> Mosque attacks, 7% were about females.<sup>641</sup> A percentage that is not as reductive as it appears; for example, with 2000 leads, 140 would have been about women. These females were subject to police inquiry or investigation to determine any national security risk they may pose, and, in most cases, NZ Police say they resolved these concerns.<sup>642</sup>

To meet the NZ Police criteria for further investigation cases, need to meet one of the following categories: 1) Religiously motivated violent extremism / religiously motivated extremism, 2) Ideologically motivated violent extremism / religiously motivated

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<sup>638</sup> NZ Police, *Official Information Act Request*, IR-01-20-11377. 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>639</sup> NZ Police, OIA, IR-01-20-11377. 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>640</sup> NZ Police, OIA. 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>641</sup> NZ Police, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>642</sup> NZ Police, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

extremism, and involve a degree of pre radicalisation, radicalisation, and mobilisation to violence.<sup>643</sup>

NZ Police advise they could not collate data (i.e., age, relationship status, education) about the number of women linked to extremist ideologies.<sup>644</sup> They stated it would take substantial time to collate regardless of scope or that the information does not exist.<sup>645</sup> Police were also unable to provide data about the relationship status (i.e., married, single) of any men known to them who held extremist ideologies.<sup>646</sup> They revealed that information “does not exist in police records” in response to a query on whether identified extremist NZ women had partners that upheld similar beliefs.<sup>647</sup> Police note that in cases that identify men as supporting “radical ideologies,” they can have a female partner who shares the same views.<sup>648</sup> Still, no official process exists to record that status.

#### **OIA, 2020: NZSIS<sup>649</sup>**

The NZSIS OIA questions focused on obtaining gender and demographic information about NZ adherents to extremist ideologies in NZ or overseas. Specifically, they requested information on any individuals on any security or person of interest (POI) list. In response, the NZSIS correspondence stated: “It would be detrimental to New Zealand's national security should I disclose any information that might reveal areas of NZSIS focus or capability. I must therefore refuse this request”.<sup>650</sup>

When asked if the NZSIS had conducted any gender-specific risk assessments on the possibility of women and children returning to NZ from Syria or Iraq or on female extremism in NZ, the NZSIS informed the researcher that:<sup>651 652</sup>

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<sup>643</sup> NZ Police, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>644</sup> NZ Police, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>645</sup> NZ Police, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>646</sup> NZ Police, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>647</sup> NZ Police, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>648</sup> NZ Police, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

<sup>649</sup> NZSIS, *Official Information Act Request*, DMS42-6-4946, 4 June 2020.

<sup>650</sup> NZSIS, OIA, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>651</sup> NZSIS, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>652</sup> This OIA was conducted prior to public discussions regarding recent repatriation of Suhayra Aden

*The NZSIS has not conducted gender-specific risk assessments, I must therefore refuse this request under section 18(e) of the OIA as the information requested does not exist.*

*The NZSIS does assess the risk and threat levels for various individuals and investigations in the counter-terrorism space. I must withhold specific information about our assessments under section 6(a) of the OIA as the release of the information would prejudice the security of New Zealand.*

When asked if repatriations of any females or children associated with IE groups to NZ had already occurred, the NZSIS declined to answer.<sup>653</sup> The NZSIS explained they determined risk as to the chance of something happening, measuring harm caused or consequence if a threat occurred.<sup>654</sup> For comparison, an NZSIS threat assessment considers the individual or group's intent and capability to engage in actions of a national security concern.<sup>655</sup>

### **7.3.2 Subsidiary NZ Government Agencies**

#### **OIA, 2020: Department of Internal Affairs (DIA)<sup>656</sup>**

The researcher requested any information relating to any temporary or permanent passport cancellations (current or expired) of NZ or dual NZ citizens due to security concerns. The questions were framed around NZ females who may be residing overseas or female NZ citizens who had voyaged to Syria, Afghanistan, or Iraq. In response, DIA acknowledged they are responsible for the cancellation of passports under NZ Legislation, but further information was “refused pursuant to section 6(a) of the Act; the making available of that information would be likely to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.”<sup>657</sup>

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<sup>653</sup> NZSIS, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>654</sup> NZSIS, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>655</sup> NZSIS, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

<sup>656</sup> Department of Internal Affairs, *Official Information Act Request 19/20 0691*, April 2020.

<sup>657</sup> Department of Internal Affairs, OIA. April 2020.



**OIA, 2020: Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. (DPMC)<sup>658</sup>**

DPMC advises: “Yes, women have come to the attention of the National Security Group within DPMC for supporting extremist ideologies”<sup>659</sup> however:

*“Due to the nature and sources of this information, and in some cases its relation to ongoing investigations, we cannot provide any further specificity. This information is withheld under section 6(a) of the Act, which relates to the withholding of information where its release would be likely to prejudice the security of defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.”<sup>660</sup>*

DPMC advises their CT role is to “connect and coordinate the system.”<sup>661</sup> They have no powers to investigate or monitor individuals or hold information about all individuals deemed to hold VE views.<sup>662</sup> They comment that NZ Police is NZ’s CT operational lead (risk reduction and threat response), and NZSIS was the lead agency for the detection, investigation, and understanding of “such threats.”<sup>663</sup>

DPMC withheld further information under Section 6 (S6) of the OIA Act concerning whether any analysis or risk assessment had been done concerning the potential return of NZ women (and any children) from Iraq and Syria, and the risk level was given to general NZ female extremism.<sup>664</sup>

**OIA, 2020: Ministry of Business, Innovation & Enterprise. (MBIE).<sup>665</sup>**

A duplicate of the OIA sent to DIA was sent to MBIE. Out of the six questions, MBIE referred four to DIA. The other two questions asked about canceled or suspended NZ

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<sup>658</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Official Information Act Request* OIA-2019/20-0486, May 2020.

<sup>659</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Official Information Act Request* OIA-2019/20-0486, May 2020.

<sup>660</sup> Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, OIA-2019/20-0486, May 2020.

<sup>661</sup> DPMC, OIA, May 2020.

<sup>662</sup> DPMC, May 2020.

<sup>663</sup> DPMC, May 2020.

<sup>664</sup> DPMC, May 2020.

<sup>665</sup> Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. *Official Information Act Request* DOIA 1920-1462, April 2020.

passports due to security concerns and, if any, what ideologies were those individuals associated with. MBIE responded, “there have not been any individuals who have been identified from Immigration New Zealand’s records that meet your request...”.<sup>666</sup> This OIA response failed to provide this thesis with valuable information but infers that its immigration and cross-government functions are limited.

### **OIA, 2020: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (MFAT).<sup>667</sup>**

MFAT stated they were aware of a “small number” of NZ women and men in Syria linked to Daesh. They acknowledge awareness of reports about an NZ orphan located in Syria, but they could not comment further. MFAT declined to comment about whether any repatriations of NZ women or children from overseas extremist groups had already occurred. They describe the situation as “highly complex” and that they were not able to comment further.

MFAT explained that there was no NZ diplomatic presence in Syria; therefore, MFAT had little ability to assist NZ citizens in that location. They stated they consider NZ citizen involvement with terrorist groups seriously, and those citizens should expect to be investigated under NZ law if they return. Overall, MFAT state under Section 6 (OIA), the Ministry neither confirms nor denies the existence or non-existence of further information.

### **7.3.3 Department of Corrections (Corrections).<sup>668</sup>**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2020, the media reported OIA information that revealed NZ Prisons had 81 individuals with “white power gang affiliations.”<sup>669</sup> The characteristics of the 81

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<sup>666</sup> Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. OIA, DOIA 1920-1462, April 2020.

<sup>667</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Official Information Act Request*, May 2020.

<sup>668</sup> Department of Corrections, *Official Information Act Request C120196*, April 2020.

<sup>669</sup> The groups/gangs Corrections listed included White Power Creed, White Power, National Front, Right Wing Resistance, Skinheads, Chaos Skins, 4<sup>th</sup> Reich, Rodent Aryan Brotherhood, Ruthless Boot Boys and Crew 38.

individuals, i.e., gender, were not reported, and there was no mention of any individuals with IE beliefs.<sup>670</sup> In response to this researcher's OIA, Corrections provided a commentary: reflecting their practical awareness of RWE movements' distinctions.

Corrections note that:

*"...there is a distinction between individuals having white supremacist attitudes, and prisoners recorded as affiliated with gangs known for white supremacist attitudes. The former group are not necessarily members of the latter group. Corrections records information pertaining to gang affiliations of prisoners, but not on attitudes or views of prisoners".*<sup>671</sup>

As of 29 February 2020, the male prison population in NZ totalled approximately 9353, with 75 men affiliated with "a gang known to have white supremacist attitudes."<sup>672</sup> Corrections report at the same time, the female prison population totalled 690, with just one female recorded as affiliated with a gang known to "uphold white supremacist attitudes."<sup>673</sup> Corrections declined to answer in detail about the number of female prisoners identified as holding any form of extreme or radical ideological views (such as RWE, Anti 1080, IE, and others) since 9/11 due to that "information not being available."<sup>674</sup> They report they had "no grounds to believe another agency" would have that information.<sup>675</sup>

Records of gang affiliations occur when individuals enter prison to assist with placement decisions and management purposes.<sup>676</sup> Some individuals explicitly say they belong to a specific gang, i.e., "White Power," and Corrections staff will record it as stated.<sup>677</sup> Corrections will record an affiliation if an individual admires others White Power or Nazi

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<sup>670</sup> Department of Corrections, OIA, C120196, April 2020.

<sup>671</sup> Corrections, OIA, 2020.

<sup>672</sup> Corrections, OIA, 2020.

<sup>673</sup> Corrections, OIA, 2020.

<sup>674</sup> Corrections, 2020.

<sup>675</sup> Corrections, 2020.

<sup>676</sup> Corrections, 2020.

<sup>677</sup> Corrections, 2020.

tattoos and voice their support for other people's "white supremacist views."<sup>678</sup> Overt statements, approval, or affiliation with white supremacist views by an individual will also result in a gang notation by Corrections.<sup>679</sup>

Corrections say when they identify an individual who may hold "potentially violent extremist views," a unique management/engagement plan is applied to "disengage" the individual from potential violence.<sup>680</sup> This process can involve family members, cultural/religious leaders, and psychologists. As far as Corrections are aware, no female prisoners have undergone deradicalization while in prison.<sup>681</sup> Corrections report they do not record information on the beliefs of partners or family members of the individuals who hold extreme views.<sup>682</sup> Nor do they register partnerships, relationships, or family information of this male demographic.<sup>683</sup>

### **7.3.4 Analysis of the OIA Findings.**

In this section, the research analyses the OIA requests' results to understand NZ women's extremist role. It shows the disconnect among government agencies regarding communication and awareness of the extremist picture. While some practical understanding of extremist participants is evident, agency frameworks and policies counter security practitioners' ability to record and monitor extremist networks. NZ police report no NZ women's arrests have occurred nationally due to "terrorist-related" activities. However, this could be debatable with Operation 8, given the original arrest warrants were issued citing the TSA. No charges were ultimately laid under the TSA, and only a few individuals were subsequently charged under criminal legislation.

Corrections report one female prisoner is determined to have "white supremacist beliefs." It is unknown at this time if her conviction and sentence are related to her extreme racial views. The literature reviewed suggests that women in white supremacist

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<sup>678</sup> Corrections, 2020.

<sup>679</sup> Corrections, 2020.

<sup>680</sup> Corrections, 2020.

<sup>681</sup> Corrections, 2020.

<sup>682</sup> Corrections, 2020.

<sup>683</sup> Corrections, 2020.

environments are more likely to be aggressive or violent due to the RW or more likely to offend than other women in RWE strands criminally. Hence it would have been informative to understand her conviction and circumstance. The research also indicates women are less likely to be arrested for their behavior, so her sentence may be completely unrelated to her views.

Gangs, not ideologies, are the approach that enables Corrections staff to consider if an individual holds extremist beliefs; however, their processes do not appear to allow staff to ask or record that information officially. The ratio of one white supremacist in 690 women is noteworthy. It may indicate that RWE women criminally offend but are not imprisoned, or they do not criminally offend at all. The academic literature reviewed has evidenced RWE women do criminally offend on various levels, including violently. And it informs us that in terms of extremist women, gender serves as a concealment mechanism for their offending, allowing them to continue underestimated and unobserved (Belew 2018, Campion 2020, Dauber, Darby).

While useful for Corrections prisoner management, these gang frameworks may perpetuate a stereotype of the jackbooted white supremacist over recognizing contemporary IE or clean-cut RWE presentations. Thus, ultimately, the extremist woman is harder to locate. An upside to the blurred lines between gangs and ideological groups is that officials may have more resources under a gang thematic to address or monitor extremist beliefs.

A deradicalisation framework in the Corrections context displays an official awareness that individuals in the system may hold extremist views despite not recording the information outside of gang parameters. Presumably, an individual's conviction is the exception; for example, those imprisoned for actions linked to their ideologies (i.e., Tarrant, Arps). A complex picture appears where prison management processes recognize gang-related racist individuals, but no other extremist forms yet appear to have an official deradicalization process.

The non-recording of information by Corrections about individuals with alternative VE or extremist beliefs (e.g., IE) gives space for those to go officially unrecorded and potentially unheeded in their early stages. Outside of the RWE variants recorded due to gang framing,

other VE beliefs only come to light through any expressed behaviour, comments, or actions in prison observed or reported by onlookers. One risk of not officially recording family member involvement, or if prisoners are married or partnered to an equally radicalized wife/husband or partner, is any continuation or escalation is subverted or hidden.

The NZSIS reports no risk assessments about NZ women or children returning to NZ from Daesh. This suggests a disconnect given multiple NZSIS annual agency reports identified NZ citizens returning from Syria or Iraq was entirely possible and could be a risk. Combined with Australia's steady deportations of New Zealanders' the likely removal of an NZ or dual citizen due to activity or associations with Daesh was foreseeable. Potentially concerns about male 'foreign fighters' overshadowed any possible repatriation of NZ women and their children from Syria or Iraq, even with recent repatriation events.

Overall, aside from the occasional periphery appearance, women are omitted in the OIA responses. Yet the combination of academic literature, media narratives, and international events demonstrate it is not a case of 'if' women are involved in extremist ideologies but how, why, where, and who. The OIA's do not represent their existence or the scope of their participation; again, the caveat of classified and unclassified information may play a role in the data shared. The responses indicate awareness of the broader issues, but the policies and procedures hinder addressing or resourcing in response to those challenges.

#### **7.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter looked to NZ government agencies to gain information about potential threats and extremist activities, explicitly relating to NZ women associated with IE or RWE. Part one of the thesis underpins this examination through the global literature and case studies that have built a foundation of understanding. Specific representations of extremist women in this thesis and appendices linked to an NZ context create an expectation of declassified awareness about how women are visible in extremist ideologies in NZ. Ultimately, apart from the minimal entry in the NZSIS annual reports and various OIA commentaries, I am still searching for substantial discourse about NZ

women's VE and E&T participation. Ironically, this thesis maybe it. Subsequently, this has necessitated an additional chapter that genders the NZ VE threatscape.

In two NZSIS annual reports (2014/15, 2015/16), women continued in the context of "marry" and brides. There were no explicit references to women or females and extremism, VE, or terrorism in the other annuals reviewed. I acknowledge that genderless connections exist, such as "individuals," which leaves it open to interpretation inevitably and guided by gender biases. On the one hand, the omission decreases the risk of criticism and causing unintentional harm or offense to, for example, the NZ Muslim population concerning IE. But on the other hand, writing women out of the extremism narrative removes the opportunity to counter problematic media narratives and build an informed public that can generate more appropriate leads, regardless of the ideology. It leaves a gap for inference and innuendo in place of balanced, empirical information.

The NZSIS 2014/15 report validates the literature in this thesis that critiques the media about their negative Islamic discourse tendencies and Ip's claims about media-induced moral panics. This publicly posted annual report mentioned NZ women travelers before the 2015 I&S meeting, yet their activity did not get audible media attention until Key commented about "Jihadi Brides." I do note that around the same time, the media reported on a 2015 intelligence community (IC) briefing "Violent extremism in New Zealand and by New Zealanders" was ranked by the NZSIS as the highest risk to NZ's national security due to "ISIS supporters."<sup>684</sup> The combination of discourse may have propelled "Jihadi brides" and IE further into the media headlines and incorrectly inflamed the VE, E&T threat frame. As this thesis argues, narratives need to include women proportionally with a gradient of all possible roles.

As the OIA summary indicates, the across-agency disconnect thwarted any government group insights and compelled a process of disjointed OIA integration to tease out relevant data. This disconnect in responses may lie with various understandings of classifications,

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<sup>684</sup> Stuff. *Home-grown threats more serious, says spy boss Rebecca Kitteridge*. 05 November 2015. Accessed 6 March 2020. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/73704551/home-grown-threats-more-serious-says-spy-boss-rebecca-kitteridge>.

and agencies err on the side of caution. The over-classification of information may be a barrier to academic contributions to the security sector that could contribute to CT practices and save resources. It may also be that the hollow responses are influenced by the lack of definitional consensus about extremism, VE, and terrorism across NZ Government agencies discussed earlier in this thesis.

Nonetheless, informative OIA contributions align with Battersby's security sector interviews that indicated security practitioners have an awareness of the broader extremist landscape, including women. Yet, the processes and policies created do not enable these individuals on a practical level to address extremism in its various forms until it shows itself and potentially harms someone. Finally, this gap aligns with general critiques in literature and national security commentary about overlooked or invisible women within terrorism, let alone VE.

This chapter shows that NZ Government and security agencies are not identifying (certainly not publicly) women for consideration holistically or consistently. Women are absent from the state picture even though two women present NZ with a challenge in this space in late 2020 and 2021. Agencies are likely to have known about one of these women since the "Jihadi Brides" revelations in 2015. Both cases are discussed further in the following chapter as I break the masculine looking glass myself to consider the NZ Threatscape with a simple rudimentary approach.



## Chapter 8 Women and Violent Extremism in New Zealand: A Threat Assessment

This chapter sets out to complete the task of breaking the masculine looking glass when it comes to thinking about women and extremism in NZ. It builds upon and combines this thesis's international and domestic literature to present a threat assessment synopsis applicable to the current climate and the threat horizon. It argues that the masculine lens that renders all women non-threatening must be dismantled. It has been in place in NZ for over half a century. Only by inserting gender can we get past superficial head nods to women's agency when talking about women and extremism. Women are threats, but not all women are threats. Consequently, the chapter suggests further work on differentiating legitimate protests from women who may be an unidentified national security concern

The chapter begins with a table that brings together the over 60<sup>685</sup> woman exemplars used throughout this thesis (including the appendices), except for two cases discussed shortly. The table shows that women support extremist movements or ideologies and exhibit ideological diversity of action. The male hegemonic nature of extremism is a reality, but that is not a reason to keep downplaying women's involvement. After all, the RWE and IE ideologies need women in their communities, except for the incel RWE fringe. The literature illustrated that IE/RWE males could invoke 'women' to justify their violence against others (i.e., protection of home and family), so we need to understand the ideological gender framing regardless of women's physical presence.

The chapter then presents the two last case studies (1, Suhayra Aden & 2, Otago University Graduation) that show NZ women involved in extremist contexts. One in NZ and one will be repatriated to NZ at some stage soon. Both cases are ongoing in different ways, and further details may come to light in the future. The following section considers the NZ threatscape with a gender-inclusive lens and borrows from the literature to consider NZ's CT challenges. It then moves to suggest analysis considerations that would help reduce women as a national security blind spot. In conclusion, the chapter presents

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<sup>685</sup> 29 individuals and approx. 38 women mentioned as groups, i.e. arrested over an annual period for financing or travelling to support terrorist groups.

future research and considerations to enhance women's recognition as extremism nurturers, co-founders, and executors with the broken, masculine-looking glass.

Before setting out, I present some caveats. Firstly, this chapter is not an all-inclusive intelligence brief of issues worthy of further examination. Nor do I access classified materials or utilize tools such as a threat assessment matrix to reference and assign a designated risk status (e.g., threat x vulnerability) for a specific event, target/person of interest (POI), or location. However, given that populating such tools is influenced by the western gender-exclusive framework this thesis often critiques, a different approach is appropriate. After all, a gender-inclusive process needs to go beyond conventional strategic methods and superficial by-lines that women can be involved in VE [as brides] to include an emancipated understanding of their diversity and complex characteristics in analysis.

Secondly, across NZ security agencies, legislation, and government, inconsistent definitions and a lack of distinctions about VE and E&T create interpretation challenges.<sup>686</sup> These terms are influential on who and what needs to be assessed or narrated as a security threat. Particularly in democratic NZ, where activism tolerance potentially hampers consideration of women's participation as extremism or potential VE, as demonstrated by Operation 8.<sup>687</sup> Or, as shown by modern RWE rhetoric, freedom of speech can be employed, often unchallenged, as a vehicle for overt xenophobia and propaganda, variables that underpin VE. Each construct is distinct, and not all individuals who embrace extremism move to VE; yet, as RWE and IE case studies evidence, extremism is often a precursor mobiliser for those who commit VE.

Lastly, threat assessments need to consider all the variables that form the threat actor's intent (commitment and confidence) to conduct an attack and their ability (resources and knowledge) to do so successfully, not the likelihood or consequence of a harmful event (a

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<sup>686</sup> Vandenburg & Hoverd, 2019.

risk assessment). Doing that would stretch thesis limitations, so I present a brief strategic outline that inserts women into the threatscape.

### 8.1 Women as VE Nurturers, Co-Founder, and Executors.

There is ample international and NZ evidence to show women's involvement in extremism. The list below brings together the women mentioned throughout this thesis (and appendices), except for two final cases presented shortly. By learning about these women and others like them, we create security practices that meet the dangers women may endorse or carry along the extremist spectrum. Until we consciously break the masculine-looking glass, women can be a neglected, potentially deadly cohort, whether as nurturers of male VE or VE co-founders and executors themselves.

**Table 1. Women exemplars within this thesis and appendices**

Kathy Ainsworth	American, 26 years old. (RWE) Shot by police during an attempted bomb attack.
Lana Lokteff	American, 42 years old. RWE media personality.
Erica Alduino	American, 30 years old. RWE facilitator for the 2017 UTR Rally. Charlottesville, USA.
Dayanna Volitch	American, 25 years old. Fired as a teacher due to RWE podcast and RWE comments to children during lessons.

Colleen LaRose	American, 54 years old. (IE)  Failed Plot. Imprisoned /released.
Kiz Kardassian	American, ' '20-'30s.  RWE Podcaster/admirer of Lokteff.
Tashfeen Malik	American Immigrant, 29 years old. (IE) Deceased, shot by Police.
Rabiyah Hutchison	Australian, 64 years old. (IE)
Fatima Elomar	Australian, 31 years old. (IE)  Arrested for terrorist group support
Fauzia Bacha	Australian Resident, (IE)  (Singaporean Immigrant)  Deceased (Syria).
Zaynab Sharrouf	Australian, 17 years old. (IE)  Repatriated to Australia in 2019.
Bridget Namoa	Australian, 22 years old. (IE)  Failed plot, arrested.

Myriam Goris	Belgian, 37 years old. (IE) Deceased, suicide bomber.
Samantha Lewthwaite	British, 34 years old. (IE) Wanted by Interpol.
Sally Jones	British, 43 years old. (IE) Presumed Deceased.
Shamina Begum	British, 19 years old. (IE) Stateless in Syria.
Mina Dich	British, 44 years old. (IE) Foiled plot, arrested, and in prison.
Safaa Boular	British, 18 years old. (IE) Foiled plot, arrested, and in prison.
Rizlaine Boular	British, 22 years old. (IE) Foiled plot, arrested, and in prison.
Khawla Barghouthi	British.Tunisian, 21 years old. (IE) In Prison: Plot Assistance.

Elisa Hategan	Canadian, 40's. (RWE)  Ex Neo-Nazi spokesperson  (At age 16-18 years old).
Lauren Southern	Canadian, 25 years old.  'Former' RWE spokesperson.
Djennet	Dagestan, 17 years old. (IE)  Deceased, suicide bomber.
Maryam	Dagestan, 28 years old. (IE)  Deceased, suicide bomber.
Christine Cabon	French, now 70 years old.  State Terrorism 1985. Never arrested.
Dominique Prieur	French, now 72 years old.  State Terrorism 1985. Imprisoned/Released.
Phillipa Parker	NZ, 18 years old. (RWE).  Convicted for racially motivated attacks.

	Imprisoned for eight months.
Valerie Morse	NZ/American, 40's.  Alleged militia activities (Op 8).  Flag Burning Conviction overturned.
Emily Bailey	NZ, 30's.  Alleged militia activities (Op 8)  Arrested, convicted of arms charges.
Olivia Pierson	NZ/ British, 40's.  Author and commentator.
2014	Arrests of 15 American women for financing terrorists overseas (IE)
2014-2015	circa 38 Australian women were linked to domestic IE activities.
2015	less than a dozen NZ women reported having gone to Syria or Iraq from Australia.

## 8.2 Case Studies: Women and Extremism in New Zealand.

To further illustrate extremist women's potential threat to NZ, we review two further and final case studies, one recent and one current. These case studies showcase two modern examples of NZ extremist women to support the chapter argument.

The first is a dual NZ and Australian female (and children) who are likely to be repatriated to NZ from Turkey due to Australia revoking her Australian citizenship.<sup>688</sup> The second case is a young woman who threatened Otago University with an act of violence that would 'surpass the Christchurch Mosque attacks.' Both cases demonstrate how differently women can be involved in E&T and VE contexts in a country with little official recognition of the nuance and complexities of female extremism.

The following two cases encapsulate the nature of the problem for NZ. NZ women have an active presence within the extremism context. The lens across NZ literature, media, and government show gendered norms have erased or misrepresented women as potential extremists, violent extremists, or terrorists. As a result, NZ responds in a retrospective and reactionary manner, further complicating proportionate and accurate outcomes.

### 8.2.1 Suhayra Aden

In late February 2021, news broke worldwide that a dual Australian and NZ female citizen and her two young children were detained at the Turkey border trying to leave Syria. Turkish authorities labeled 26-year-old Suhayra Aden as an Islamic terrorist, but it appears unknown what her activities entailed in Syria.<sup>689</sup> John Ip reports Aden traveled to join Daesh in 2014 on her Australian passport and was previously known to NZ and Australian authorities.<sup>690</sup>

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<sup>688</sup> This repatriation was completed during the writing of this thesis.

<sup>689</sup> John Ip. *Revoking Citizenship just Global NIMBYism*, 23 February 2021. Accessed 1 March 2021. <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/news/2021/02/23/revoking-citizenship-global-nimbyism.html>

<sup>690</sup> John Ip, *Revoking Citizenship just Global NIMBYism*, 23 February 2021.



Ip believes Australian and NZ officials have had prior discussions about state responsibility for Aden and other women should they return from Syria.<sup>691</sup> Australia revoked Aden's citizenship in 2020, leaving her as a sole NZ citizen, despite Aden living there since she was six years old.<sup>692</sup> Ip describes citizenship revocation as a "form of legalised NIMBYism with dual citizens as objects..." and is "neither a sustainable nor internationally responsible" method of addressing the problem.<sup>693</sup>

As John Battersby (2021) points out, the previous media and public uproar about NZ women leaving Australia for Daesh missed the warning that one day they may return.<sup>694</sup> The issue of returnees has featured heavily in SIS annual reports and legislation discussions. Nonetheless, NZ is now dealing with an NZ citizen on the verge of returning from Syria. NZ missed a golden opportunity to create a policy and process supported with academic data to provide repatriation, resettlement, and deradicalization frameworks that balance security risks alongside human rights. Ip reports all that is known for sure is Aden's two marriages to now-deceased Swedish fighters, but otherwise, publicly at least, her day-to-day activities are unknown.<sup>695</sup>

Leader of the Opposition, the Rt Hon Judith Collins, argued that NZ should have revoked Aden's citizenship before Australia did<sup>696</sup>, but NZ would have obfuscated state responsibility. This is an action which the government has previously stated it would not do to its citizens. Nonetheless, it did not have to be an either-or situation. Battersby makes a valid point saying if NZ had revoked her citizenship first, it did not mean NZ would not support Australia with Aden and her children.<sup>697</sup> He points out that Aden has spent her life in Australia, and her links there would better support reintegration.<sup>698</sup> The NZ Islamic

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<sup>691</sup> John Ip, 23 February 2021.

<sup>692</sup> John Ip, 2021.

<sup>693</sup> John Ip, 2021.

<sup>694</sup> John Battersby. *How NZ Overlooked Isis Bride Suhayra Aden and What we must learn from it*. NZ Herald. 1 March 2021. Accessed 10 March 2021. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/john-battersby-how-nz-overlooked-isis-bride-suhayra-aden-and-what-we-must-learn-from-it/HT2C4S6VM67BHIGRQZ6UI4KVIU/>

<sup>695</sup> John Ip. *Revoking Citizenship just Global NIMBYism*, . 23 February 2021.

<sup>696</sup> John Ip. 2021.

<sup>697</sup> John Battersby. *How NZ Overlooked Isis Bride Suhayra Aden and What we must learn from it*. NZ Herald. 1 March 2021. Accessed 10 March 2021. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/john-battersby-how-nz-overlooked-isis-bride-suhayra-aden-and-what-we-must-learn-from-it/HT2C4S6VM67BHIGRQZ6UI4KVIU/>

<sup>698</sup> John Battersby, *How NZ Overlooked Isis Bride Suhayra Aden*, 1 March 2021.

Women's Council agrees and argues Aden should be in Australia because her family connections are there.<sup>699</sup>

Battersby counters other observers' opinions that Aden will be subject to the controversial Terrorism Suppression (Control Orders) Bill in NZ.<sup>700</sup> He highlights the Bill applies to "people who have been engaged in or materially assisted those engaged in, terrorist activity."<sup>701</sup> It may eventuate that demonstrated grounds to impose this Bill on Aden may be lacking.<sup>702</sup> This critique aligns with the literature that shows there is no consensus on what determines terrorist activity for women, with arguments ranging from traveling to Daesh itself as terrorism to undeniable VE acts.

Determinations about Aden's worldview and activities on behalf of Daesh are yet to come. Regardless, a risk assessment will challenge NZ authorities, as will reintegration into western society and her children's welfare. As Battersby argues, a combination of proven processes from international examples and a pragmatic approach is needed to face this situation.<sup>703</sup>

### **8.2.2 Otago University Graduations**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021, an unnamed 22-year-old female appeared in an Auckland court facing "threatening harm to people or property" charges due to threats to attack made on social media targeting Otago University Graduations.<sup>704</sup> These threats led to the cancellation of eight graduation ceremonies in Dunedin. At this time, the reasons behind these threats are not yet publicly known; regardless, the actions are undoubtedly extreme

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<sup>699</sup> Stuff. *Plea for Compassion towards children of Kiwi "terrorist" detained in Turkey*. 16 February 2021. Accessed 1 March 2021. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/300232045/plea-for-compassion-towards-children-of-kiwi-terrorist-detained-in-turkey?rm=a>

<sup>700</sup> John Battersby, *How NZ Overlooked Isis Bride*, 1 March 2021.

<sup>701</sup> John Battersby, 1 March 2021.

<sup>702</sup> John Battersby, 2021.

<sup>703</sup> John Battersby, 2021.

<sup>704</sup> Hamish McNeilly. *Otago uni graduation threat 'surpassed magnitude' of Christchurch terror attack*. 18 December 2020. Accessed 1 March 2021 <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/123751610/otago-uni-graduation-threat-surpassed-magnitude-of-christchurch-terror->

and, if conducted, would most certainly have raised the ‘terrorism or not’ debate legislatively.

According to the charge sheets, her threats made on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 involved firearms and explosives and statements that the attacks would be of a “magnitude surpassing the March 15 Christchurch mosque massacres”.<sup>705</sup> Another person she met on a dating site took a role in the offending, but no charges were pending.<sup>706</sup> The woman was granted name suppression at court, told to surrender her passport, and ordered to stay at her parents' residence unless attending medical appointments.<sup>707</sup>

Also, the court applied internet device restrictions and barred her from entering any tertiary property.<sup>708</sup> This incident is still ongoing. No further details have been confirmed publicly about the woman’s intent and whether the threat was rhetoric, hyperbole, or a viable planned attack; this incident evidences that women can be extremist threat actors in NZ. Even if hyperbole, the fact remains that a female chose to utilize a threat of extreme violence in NZ regardless of the trauma and impact of the Christchurch Mosque attacks.

There are indications this female offender may have some health issues due to the “medical appointments”; however, future research to consider if the “mad, bad or sad” female framing was at play would be valuable. Furthermore, it appears she could convince another person to assist her in this activity which demonstrates a degree of agency and planning. And if this individual were a male, would the public and legal response be any different?

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<sup>705</sup> Hamish McNeilly, Otago uni graduation threat, 18 Dec 2021.

<sup>706</sup> Hamish McNeilly, 18 Dec 2021.

<sup>707</sup> Daisy Hudson, “University Grad Threats: Accused wanted to surpass mosque attacks – police.”, *Otago Daily Times*, 18 December 2020, accessed 10 March 2021. <https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/university-grad-threats-accused-wanted-surpass-mosque-attacks-police>.

<sup>708</sup> Kim Baker Wilson, “Woman accused of threatening Otago Uni graduation wanted to surpass Christchurch terrorist attack, police say,” *TVNZ*, 18 December 2020, Accessed 10 March 2021. <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/woman-accused-threatening-otago-uni-graduation-wanted-surpass-christchurch-terrorist-attack-police-say>

### 8.3 Gendering the NZ VE Threatscape

Since the 2019 Christchurch Mosque attacks, New Zealand's security and government understandings about VE face an era of evolution to meet the spectrum of possible threats. Since 9/11, the 'propaganda of the deed' (POTD) has become a worldwide domestic VE tactic. VE deeds are not homogenous and can portray different messages to observers but true believers, male and female, see such violence as justifiable and motivational.<sup>709</sup> An overarching vulnerability across the NZ VE threatscape is the western tendency to downplay women's involvement, eroding her standing as having VE capacity, despite contrary evidence.

On a local level, the Christchurch mosque attacks have global and national significance as potential vengeance and martyrdom sites for RWE and IE believers, which adds permanently to the NZ threatscape. Significant events can invigorate VE ideologies; therefore, March is likely a perpetual annual VE concern for NZ's national security. RWE discourse mainstreaming continues to provide the modern RW culture with a platform to normalize its VE beliefs under plausible deniability. And in the two years since the Mosque attacks, the framing of RWE in NZ remains male-centric.

Internationally, IE, led by Daesh, has declined globally, yet reports from Syrian camps indicate some women are harboring their loyalty and indoctrinating in the belief Daesh will return. Moreover, other IE movements (e.g., Taliban, Al Qaeda) fill the IE ideological void online and offline. In a post-Covid 19 environment, the repatriation of western men, women, and children from the Middle East will remerge as an ongoing debate between nations and raises questions about NZ's willingness, readiness, and ability to assess returnees equitably.

For women returnees, any analysis influenced by gender passive stereotypes ('Jihadi Brides') or mythical deviant personas ('White widows') creates several challenges; the most severe would be missing a threat actor hiding behind gender stereotypes.

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<sup>709</sup> Catlyn Keenan, *Behind the doors of white supremacy*, i-ii, (2014) and G Dean, P Bell and Z Vakhitora. The Rise of the New Radical Right. *Journal of Policing & Intelligence & Counterterrorism*. 11: 2. (2016).

Alternatively, ostracization and demonization give the extremists narrative legitimacy and risks further cementing radical ideals. In the six years since the “Jihadi Bride” uproar, NZ still lacks a visible gender-inclusive analysis of women’s participation in VE groups which would have challenged the stereotype's influence nationally. Research has shown that influential media narratives perpetuate myths and impact officials' understanding of security assessments, which potentially causes delays and misinterpretations.

Overseas trends show LWE and “Antifa” activity have risen correlatively to RWE. Given that NZ has historically experienced more LWE, a closer investigation of the NZ environment would be prudent. Unlike other extremist ideologies, research shows a CT tendency to consider women an LWE threat, a potential gender bias that requires moderation to ensure appropriate responses or mitigations. It may be the case that women do feature more in LWE in NZ, but any LWE threat perception is ambiguous without analysis.

Another international trend in NZ is groups, i.e., Advance NZ, who peddle conspiracy theories and misinformation. The Covid 19 pandemic and government responses (e.g., lockdowns) have provided a new vector, internationally and nationally, for propaganda, recruitment, and incitement. As Covid 19 continues, there is a realistic probability that continued exposure to this content will radicalize believers, but it is too soon to forecast mobilization to VE.

Incel VE is another rising international trend. While NZ has not yet noted any incidents of Incel VE; however, the shared networks with the RWE male population make it worthy of investigation. Women are more likely to be the victims of Incel VE, but there is no reason to believe female incel extremists do not exist.<sup>710</sup> Without a gender perspective, the assessment of incel VE narratives would lack sight of their recruitment into fringe RWE strands that populate the manosphere. RWE favors white women; hence there is no guarantee a VE act by Incels against non-white women would not be supported or incited.

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<sup>710</sup> Note: A female Canadian started a website for people struggling to form loving relationships. From here the site morphed into the incel movement – away from the female founders intended community.

On a local level, in recent years, some Anti-1080 adherents have demonstrated a transition from activism and extremism to VE, resulting in DOC workers receiving death threats and being subject to acts of violence. Despite security practitioners' concerns, officials view it differently, leaving it addressed on a dangerous reactionary level. The only arrests have been men, but it is unclear if or how women participate in the extreme Anti 1080 fringe. Without this knowledge, gender is potentially an exploitable vulnerability that could enable further acts of violence (VE).

Regardless of the ideology, security agencies rely on the public for leads to potential threats. Public observations are a valuable source of information to identify and mitigate threats before an act of VE can occur. Nevertheless, when accurate portrayals of how women feature and participate in VE movements are missing from the discourse, it increases the likelihood women's ideological behavior goes unnoticed or underreported to authorities. Except for women incorrectly stereotyped due to race, culture, or religious beliefs. My research demonstrates that excluding women, especially white women, as VE nurturers, co-founders, or executors is an NZ national security vulnerability, so the 'male as terrorist or extremist' frame needs to be challenged and dismantled.

#### **8.4 Women as a National Security Blind Spot.**

This chapter, and my thesis as a whole, finds women to be a national security blind spot in NZ. Any NZ security sector analysis of extremist vulnerabilities and considerations can be gender enhanced immediately through the following recommendations. A gender-inclusive approach must include (in no specific order):

1. Potential threat analysis requires an understanding of the complexities of women's involvement to ensure a proportionate response. An inadequate over-reactive response can legitimize the extremist narrative, or a successful ruse of 'just a wife and mother' can subvert attention away from a threat.
2. The countering and removal of labels (e.g., Jihadi Brides, White Power Barbies). These labels cloak women's full participation and limit the visibility of their diverse roles
3. Avoid stripping out women's political agency from the analysis as it reduces women's involvement to one of male coercion or an intimate relationship. A male partner only indicates possible involvement, not automatic recruitment by them.

4. Do not seek “hysterical” excuses for women’s actions such as “mad, bad, or sad”. Mental Health may be relevant on occasion, but it will not fit them all and removes accountability.
5. The ‘Women are wonderful’ effect prompts doubt about women's complicity in VE. Extremist women from majority populations are more likely to be viewed as non-violent - Gender Ethnicity Bias.
6. Western feminism is an ill-fitting lens as western modernity is not a goal for all women. RWE women see freedom in anti-feminism, and Western feminism can be a cultural mismatch for traditional Muslim women.
7. Women can navigate and gain power within patriarchal movements despite hegemonic masculinity. For example, RWE pretty woman media stars who peddle propaganda to incite RWE male VE, or an IE woman who conducts a suicide attack – i.e., Chooses how she dies, not how she lives.
8. Criminal activity, even minor, should not be dismissed or overlooked from the analysis. Research shows many RWE women are not detected even when they overtly offend.
9. Develop enhanced national security vetting processes using subject matter experts due to ideological nuances because extremists do and will tactically downplay their ideology to access power roles, e.g., military, govt, law enforcement.
10. The new RWE lexicon is designed to confuse and deflect; therefore, an analysis is needed to understand what statements genuinely mean within the ideological culture and how to reduce their influence. This lexicon often avoids legislative thresholds.
11. Incorrect media constructs influence public and government perceptions regardless of security sector assessments. We need to consider developing analysis for media consumption to counter problematic narratives and improve media awareness of their negative impact on national security understandings. This analysis must aim to educate, not to infer, and decline commentary.
12. Academic collaboration with security agencies and law enforcement to share research and ideological tenets to inform the analysis. i.e., RWE believers abhor state education, and mothers will be encouraged to home school children. That is not to say all home school children in NZ are from RWE contacts, but it is one tenet to consider with white nationalism strands, for example.

## Chapter 9: Final Remarks

This thesis aimed to locate NZ women involved in extremist ideologies to build a comprehensive picture of their participation. Initial research exposed that gender exclusivity in VE and E&T barriers understandings, or acceptance, of women's involvement in these groups. As a result, this thesis argues that any tendency to gender profile women in a way that expunges them as potential extremists has ramifications. Primarily, genderised narrow perceptions of just who commits or designs VE acts shape how these women are perceived, presented, and discussed.

Academics agree that when gendered discourse sexualises or infantilises extremist women, it has encouraged officials to do the same. A male-centric lens means security practices may overlook a credible female threat. The virulent male hegemonic nature of IE and RWE groups further shrouds women participants and how they are vital to the movement's infrastructure. Furthermore, these groups weaponize western gender notions to their advantage, which aids in preserving VE, E&T as a male phenomenon. By putting gender into CT and security analysis, women who participate in extremism become more visible, and we find, as Darby argued, they are not hiding; they are unseen.

In Part One, the international literature and case examples show extremist women exist, and trends in other western states indicate they are becoming more prevalent. In Part Two, this thesis took a comprehensive journey to locate this NZ female demographic and found that they escaped analysis for over 50 years. The modernization of NZ's security responses and threatscape forecasting requires gender cynicism to be replaced by gender inclusion along all extremist ideological spectrum gradients. In truth, this is essential to future-proof New Zealand's national security sector.

Chapter One argues that identifying how NZ women feature in extreme ideologies will improve NZ's CT strategies by incorporating how they operate, facilitate, and encourage VE and terrorism. In the aftermath of the Christchurch attacks, NZ has an opportunity to evolve understandings of extremist ideologies because modern challenges continue with intense debates about western returnees (IE) and IE/RWE groups using Covid 19 to further their agendas.



NZ scholars have found, despite improvements, definitional inconsistency about E&T across NZ's security sector impacts general discourse and legislation. According to international research, such definitional uncertainty specifically impedes research about women as VE actors and advocates. With the addition of western gender biases, observations of participants in extremism narrow even further to cast these women out of focus.

Chapter two, I set out the thesis methodology before Chapter three, presents the general literature about women and extremism in the post 9/11 era. Here scholars expose that a female-centric perspective is missing on a broader level and presents criticisms about gaps in female terrorism trends, theory, and information. The information deficits contribute to a lack of recognition about women's rise and range within extremism and terrorism. Extremist women can be minimized or become revered as abhorrent deviants, which induces fear and fanaticism about their role and activities. Such fallacies influence and complicate CT and judicial frameworks with hegemonic masculine extremist narratives. At the same time, extremist groups utilize western gendered notions to weaponize women supporters and receive substantial media coverage by doing so. The international literature signals that women are complex, diverse, and often willing entities in non-violent and violent extremist contexts.

Chapter four focuses on the IE male-dominated context and ideology to gain insight into western women's involvement. Since 9/11, IE's global terrorism landscape became reinforced by western recruits, male and female, who mobilized domestically or migrated to join IE groups (i.e., Daesh). Female participation in "combative jihad" is contentious within Islam itself, but IE will move the ideological line for women operatives. IE has recognized that women are vital wives and mothers, state builders' propagandists, intelligence gatherers, recruiters, and, when necessary, militants. Yet, in western discourse, problematic framing exists around why women, let alone western women, support IE ideologies and choose to live in rigid patriarchal societies.

The emphasis becomes about women's intimate relationships and ideas of coercion, victimization, or age-related stereotypes, ignoring self-agency and self-mobilization. Due to its western [white] cultural roots, the feminist lens overlaid onto IE women results in misunderstandings and disconnections. These elements were visible in the commotion

over so-called Jihadi Brides in 2015, which risk legitimizing the extremist narratives. Academics propose Islamification provides emancipation from Western ideals that conflict with ideological and cultural Muslim beliefs. A paradox exists in that women are denied equal rights but contribute to the cause. In most western contexts, fear of extremism with an Islamic nucleus allows a veiled Muslim woman to be wrongly equated to a national threat symbol and ostracises a demographic.

Western female ideals contribute to the IE white women myth-making, i.e., white widow warriors, and such reverence of IE white women galvanizes recruitment (White 'poster girls'). Due to the fanaticism women get compared to their male counterparts, academics criticize the literature, media, and security agencies for perceived 'Binladenism' when other extremism forms exist.

Chapter 5 turns to RW extremism to discover the women amongst its many new strands. Since the Mosque attacks, general sensitivities in NZ to RWE, or perceived RWE, have increased, making it imperative to understand this complex and nuanced network. Due to ethnic and cultural 'sameness' (appearance), freedom of speech manipulation, and historically tolerated white supremacists' fringes, it is a challenge for onlookers. The new generation of RWE advocates has successfully crafted their semantics, tidied their appearance, and use traditional moderate conservatism to mainstream their racified worldview.

The ecosystem of RWE mirrors the virulent hyper-masculinity that IE can entail, as does their use of online propaganda and weaponization of white families. All too often, the 'softer face' RW women markets their white victimhood narrative. Modern RWE supporters typically circumvent the traditional image of Neo-Nazi jackbooted tattooed men, which impacts RW women's recognition even when they overtly offend. If challenged, RW women play on gendered notions of female passivity, foolishness, and emotionality to avoid accountability.

Women can be just as prejudiced and racist as men. They can be equally capable of instigating, facilitating, funding, and conducting VE or terrorism whether they are trad wives, Neo-Nazis, White Nationalists any other blend of RWE. This chapter shows that

RW believers are devoted to saving the white race from destruction, and while men dominate the discourse, women continue in plain sight, unabated.

Chapter 6 examines relevant NZ history and NZ's academic and media perspective to locate women and extremist ideologies in NZ. Regardless of past incidents, NZ appears reluctant to recognize various extremist activity gradients domestically and reshapes women's activity into a gang, criminal, or activist context. More importantly, it reveals that NZ women remain missing from the discourse apart from the Jihadi Bride framing despite the emergence of modern RWE men in NZ. Hategan's observations lend confidence to the belief that extremist women will exist within NZ irrespective of extremist groups' misogyny. Binladenism is discovered in NZ's Media discourse, and they are yet to focus on RWE women. Over the history of incidents with extremist attributes, there is an approximate 50-year absence of women's participation in E&T that further research into other ideologies (e.g., LWE) is unlikely to fulfill.

Chapter 7 turned to the NZ Government to determine if extremist women were more visible in official narratives and experiences. A review of the NZSIS annual reports 2012-2019 finds outside of the "marry" framing, the nuanced and diverse nature of women's participation in extremist groups is missing. NZ government agency OIAs evidence the disconnect of understandings about extremism and its adherents in NZ. The lack of legislation and policy has instigated situations where, for example, gang framing is necessary to gain some insight into individuals' beliefs.

Security practitioners indicate awareness of the broader extremist landscape; however, media narratives hinder other government official's comprehension of security concerns. A more general conversation about extremist characteristics beyond labels would potentially counter problematic narratives and bolster the public's ability to provide security agencies with valuable leads.

Chapter 8 argues an overarching threat for NZ's national security is the longstanding tendency to avoid seeing women as VE nurturers, co-founders, or executors. This chapter takes a brief look at the NZ threatscape through the now broken, masculine looking glass. It combines international and domestic information to consider the current context and potential issues on the horizon. It recommends exploring women's diversity in extremist

ideologies to further enhance NZ's national security capabilities by challenging male-centric narratives and habitual framing of terrorism and violent extremism as a male activity.

Here in Chapter 9, this thesis journey has traversed many contexts to locate NZ's extremist women. After all, it was unlikely, given the evidence NZ was void of these women, which has indeed proved correct. NZ is not an exception. We have not paid attention to women while focusing on the threat shaped by male extremists and patriarchal ideologies. By breaking the masculine lens, a modernized landscape provides academia and the security sector a more accurate and nuanced approach to women's participation in extremist ideologies and activities.

While innate and explicit biases are difficult to challenge, awareness is a vital first step to strengthening New Zealand's national security. Part of this challenge is revitalizing media narratives to bolster public perceptions with accurate framing and enhance lead generation. The longer we keep women out of the framing, the longer E&T and VE are framed as a male. Gender exclusion undermines security agencies' success, law enforcement, and national security at home and abroad.

An inability to adapt from a western [male] gaze may well feed into the extremist narrative about persecution, prejudice, and the western state as the enemy. As Kelly argued, the increased presence of women in extremism makes it irresponsible not to analyse their participation more accurately.<sup>711</sup>

### **9.1 Future Research:**

Throughout the thesis tasking, I have sought to reveal women as potential extremist threat sources in NZ. With that task completed, a myriad of questions can be asked about the role, nature, and future responses to these women. This thesis has shown that women's participation in IE and RWE occurs, to some extent, how it happens and argues

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<sup>711</sup> Annie Kelly. "The Housewives of White Supremacy", 2018.

how it can be alleviated. However, a primary question not deeply analyzed within this thesis is the 'why.'

This thesis has mentioned, for example, stereotypes and gender norms but has not provided an in-depth analysis of *why* women have been muted or erased from VE and E&T contexts. Research into why women have been excluded from the discourse would be an interesting avenue of future research. In my final comments, I suggest that additional future research could consider the following questions:

- How do we address women's extremist behaviour when there is a lack of definitions and coherency legislatively and across government for extremism, violent extremism, and terrorism?
- How should NZ evolve its legislative response to enable law enforcement and security agencies to recognize and respond to women's diverse participation in extremism and VE?
- How does NZ fairly assess any potential threat repatriated men and women from Syria and Iraq hold?
- How to counter overt RWE racist, xenophobic speech such as that from Olivia Pierson? Freedom of speech versus the Propagation of hate.
- What are the distinctions in NZ between activism and extremism? Have women escaped accountability for extremist behaviour under the cloak of activists?
- How do NZ women participate in LWE, given its correlative rise seen globally in response to RWE?
- How do women participate in single-issue movements (i.e., Anti-1080)?
- How do we educate "ordinary people" about extremism's characteristics and strands without problematizing a community?
- How can security vetting be enhanced to capture extreme covert ideologies in men and women?
- How does NZ assess, manage, and support repatriated children from extremist movements?
- What are the potential consequences of the Covid 19 pandemic propaganda marketed by IE, RWE, and other actors (i.e., conspiracy theorists and anti-vaxxers)?

- Does NZ have an unseen Incel demographic who hold equal potential for VE, as seen internationally? And are they force multipliers for RWE due to shared ideological bonds, or vice versa?

## Appendix A: Global patterns that are influential on NZ trends.

According to the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) report 2020 Global Terrorism Index” (GTI), “far-right” attacks in Oceania, Western Europe, and North America increased by 250 percent since 2014, with over 35 RWE attacks in the West year on year (2014-2019).<sup>712</sup> By comparison, in 2019, there were 49 RWE terrorist attacks, with only one recorded RWE terrorist attack in 2010.<sup>713</sup> In 2018, the United States of America (USA) recorded two ‘successful’ IE incidents and 28 RWE events, with a further 27 events committed by “unidentified perpetrators.”<sup>714</sup> Following Daesh’s decline, the GTI attributes no deaths in Europe to the group itself in 2018 but still claimed that “Jihadi inspired extremists” had claimed 16 lives.<sup>715</sup>

In Canada, 2018 saw a decline in completed terrorist attacks to four after 12 successful terrorist attacks in 2017.<sup>716</sup> In Australia, closer to home, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) reported five successful terrorist attacks between 2015-2018, 16 thwarted attacks, and 93 individual convictions for terrorism between 2014 and 2019.<sup>717</sup> The United Kingdom (UK) reported five RWE attacks in 2017, and that near 850 Daesh supporters had left the UK for conflict zones (2016-2017) while earlier Daesh travelers (2011) had returned.<sup>718</sup> Correlatively, between 2014 and 2016, 18 Jihadi attacks in the UK and other European countries involved returnees.<sup>719</sup>

In 2020, ongoing intense debates about repatriation between origin countries and Human Rights Groups (HRG) went into a holding pattern due to the Covid 19 pandemic. IEP (2020) reports explicitly Covid 19 has delayed the potential repatriation of Daesh-linked women

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<sup>712</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), *Global Terrorism Index 2020 - Measuring the Impact of Terrorism*, (Australia, Institute for Economics and Peace, November 2020): 3.

<sup>713</sup> IEP, *Global Terrorism Index 2020*, 5.

<sup>714</sup> GTI report there were 27 unknown perpetrators in the USA- ideology unknown.

<sup>715</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), *Global Terrorism Index – Measuring the Impact of Terrorism*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, (Australia, Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019): 3.

<sup>716</sup> IEP, *Global Terrorism Index 2019*, 38.

<sup>717</sup> Australian Security Intelligence Organization, *ASIO Annual Report 2018-2019*, (Australia, Australian Government, 2019): 4.

<sup>718</sup> Public Health Wales NHS Trust, *Preventing Violent Extremism in the UK: Public Health Solutions*, (Wales, Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2019): 19.

<sup>719</sup> Public Health Wales NHS Trust, *Preventing Violent Extremism in the UK*, 19.

and children from Syrian camps in Syria to their home countries.<sup>720</sup> The Covid 19 pandemic has provided extremist groups with an international “captive audience” for recruitment and incitement, further challenging security agencies.<sup>721</sup>

Daesh has encouraged global jihad while the pandemic diverts the focus of security groups, and Al Qaida suggested westerners should convert to Islam during this time.<sup>722</sup> RWE groups have used the pandemic to mainstream Islamophobic, anti-immigration, and racist “hate speech.”<sup>723</sup> The outcome of these tactics is not yet clear but adds to future security concerns worldwide

While outside the scope of this paper, other forms of modern extremism exist worldwide as rising security concerns, such as “Antifa” (Anti-Fascist).<sup>724</sup> According to Gary LaFree (2018), western anti-fascist movements began to increase in the “late 80’s” in Europe as a response to a perceived surge in RW ideologies(i.e., Neo-Nazism).<sup>725</sup> He reports events such as Donald Trump's presidency and the “Unite the Right” (UTR) rally in Charlottesville (2020) fuelled a growing interest in the Antifa movement<sup>726</sup>, and this included left-wing militants.<sup>727</sup> Further gender-inclusive research on Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), alongside single-issue movements such as environmentalism (i.e., radical Anti-1080 activity) in an NZ context, would also be beneficial and timely for the modernization of CT strategies.

## **Appendix B: Case Studies – Islamic Extremism.**

These case studies correlate with Chapter four and supplement the thesis.

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<sup>720</sup> IEP, *Global Terrorism Index 2020*, 29.

<sup>721</sup> IEP, 29.

<sup>722</sup> IEP, 29.

<sup>723</sup> IEP, 29.

<sup>724</sup> Antifa is described as a loose collection of groups and individuals who believe in active opposition to far right movements.

<sup>725</sup> Gary LaFree, “Is Antifa a Terrorist Group”, *Society*, no.55 (June 2018): 248

<sup>726</sup> Gary LaFree concluded Antifa does not currently constitute a group and described them as counter protestors based on 2016-2017 data of domestic terrorist attacks.

<sup>727</sup> LaFree, “Is Antifa a Terrorist Group”, 249-250.



The first case study is about a high-profile British teenager Shamina Begum, who left the UK with two female friends and joined Daesh. Since Daesh's downfall, she has been kept in a camp while seeking to return home to the UK. The second case study introduces an Australian female taken by her family to join Daesh and recently repatriated after a robust political debate in 2019. The third case study recounts the first known all-female UK domestic terrorist plot discovered in 2018. A scheme was born due to authorities preventing one of the women from traveling to Syria by canceling her passport.

### **Case Study 1: Shamina Begum – United Kingdom.**

In 2019, one high-profile UK case involving a 19-year-old pregnant British female, Shamina Begum, became a lightning rod for state deliberations about citizenship, state responsibility, and Daesh. Debate raged in the UK over Begum, who requested repatriation (via the media) and her foreign-born children from a Syrian refugee camp. Her request gained media attention because, at the age of 15, Begum gained global attention when she and two school friends (15-16 years old) followed another UK female, Sharmeena Begum (unrelated), into Syria to join Daesh.

In her first 2019 western media interview at the Al-Hol camp, Begum admitted she did not regret joining "ISIS" but specified "ISIS" did not deserve victory due to their oppression and corruption.<sup>728</sup> This comment did little to endear her to the UK government or other officials. UN representative and former NZ Prime Minister (PM) Helen Clark told journalists that she was "appalled by the no regret attitude..." Begum displayed in her media interviews, however, conceded, "Begum was a citizen, and there were obligations to citizens."<sup>729</sup>

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<sup>728</sup> Anthony Lloyd, "Shamina Begum: Bring me home says Bethnal Green girl who left to join ISIS," *The Sunday Times*, UK. 13 February 2019, accessed 19 October 2020  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/shamima-begum-bring-me-home-says-bethnal-green-girl-who-fled-to-join-isis-hgvqw765d>

<sup>729</sup> Frances Perraudin and Vikram Dodd, "ISIS Briton Shamima Begum pleads to return to UK after giving birth," *The Guardian*, 18 February 2019, accessed June 2020.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/feb/17/shamima-begum-who-fled-uk-to-join-isis-has-given-birth-say-family>

Sajid Javid, former UK Home Secretary, said he would not hesitate to prevent Britons' return from the so-called Islamic State despite any state obligations. Whereas his opposition, Diane Abbott (UK Labour Home Secretary), told media she was not favoring making people stateless and wanted Begum (pregnant and with children) repatriated.<sup>730</sup> In February 2019, Javid took decisive action and removed Begum's UK citizenship leaving her stateless in the Syrian Camp. While her lawyers argued Javid's decision was unlawful as making her stateless was against international law.<sup>731</sup>

Counterarguments said she could apply for Bangladeshi citizenship due to paternal dual citizenship, despite being born and raised in the UK.<sup>732</sup> However, Bangladesh refuted Begum had citizenship and refused her entry into the country. In early 2020 British journalist, Aina Khan argued that Begum was a product of Britain and, therefore, she should face justice in the UK, particularly since Bangladesh had "washed its hands of her." Presently, despite citizen obligations, Begum sits stateless in the al-Roj refugee camp after being moved from the al-Hol camp for her safety. At al-Hol, stalwart female Daesh supporters reportedly disapprove of Begum's desire to repatriate.<sup>733</sup> In July 2020, Begum won a legal battle through the UK Court of Appeal, which declared she must be allowed to return to the UK to contest her citizenship revocation.<sup>734</sup> Currently, Begum is still in Syria, and the situation is ongoing.

Migration researchers Meghan Benton and Natalia Banulescu-Bogdan critically argue nations who struggle with their radicalized citizens utilize and rely on revocation for symbolic and practical reasons.<sup>735</sup> They agree it helps deter travel and prevent the re-entry of potential terrorists to reduce a security threat while symbolically sending a signal

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<sup>730</sup> Perraudin & Dodd, "ISIS Briton".

<sup>731</sup> Perraudin & Dodd, "ISIS Briton

<sup>732</sup> Elisa Menendez, "Shamima Begum loses challenge against revoking her British citizenship." *Metro UK*, . 7 February 2020 accessed 21 March 2020. <https://metro.co.uk/2020/02/07/shamima-begum-loses-challenge-revoking-british-citizenship-12198512/>

<sup>733</sup> Dan Sabbagh, "Shamina Begum says her world fell apart after losing UK Citizenship," *The Guardian*, 17 February 2020, accessed 29 March 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/feb/17/shamima-begum-says-her-world-fell-apart-after-losing-uk-citizenship>.

<sup>734</sup> Sabbagh, "Shamina Begum ...", 2020.

<sup>735</sup> Meghan Benton and Natalia Banulescu-Bogdan, "Foreign Fighters: Will Revoking Citizenship Mitigate the Threat?" *Migration Policy Institute*. 3 April 2019 accessed 26 September 2020. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/foreign-fighters-will-revoking-citizenship-mitigate-threat>.

on citizen obligations and state protection. But Benton and Banulescu-Bogdan warn it risks scapegoating a demographic (i.e., Muslims) and infers their loyalty is questionable.<sup>736</sup>

### **Case Study 2: Zaynab Sharrouf – Australia**

In 2014, 13-year-old Australian-born Zaynab Sharrouf was taken to the Islamic State with her four younger siblings by her Australian parents (Tara Nettleton and Khaled Sharrouf) and converted to Islam.<sup>737</sup> Nettleton died in a Syrian hospital in 2015 while Khaled died, along with his eldest sons (Abdullah 12 yrs., Zarqawi 11 yrs.), in an airstrike near Raqqa in 2017. Zaynab's Australian grandmother, Karen Nettleton, travelled to Syria multiple times to search for her grandchildren before finding them at the al-Hol refugee camp. In 2019, a pregnant Zaynab (17 yrs. old) pleaded to the Australian Government to repatriate with her young children and siblings<sup>738</sup> to live with Nettleton.<sup>739</sup>

Initially, Australian PM Scott Morrison stated there would be no assistance unless the group made their way to a consulate the government, a suggestion challenged by Human Rights Groups (i.e., Save the Children).<sup>740</sup> In late June 2019, Morrison reported the repatriation of eight "Australian Orphans" of two deceased Daesh foreign fighters from Syria.<sup>741</sup> The eight consisted of the Sharrouf family and the three children (under 12 yrs.) of dead Australians, Fauzia Khamal Bacha and her husband, Yasin Rizvic, who joined Daesh in 2014. Australian Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton told journalists that the government protected Australian citizens, especially children.<sup>742</sup> Dutton acknowledged

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<sup>736</sup> Benton & Banulescu-Bogdan. *Foreign Fighters: Will Revoking Citizenship Mitigate the Threat?*

<sup>737</sup> Jacinta Carroll. "The Citizen as enemy combatant: dealing with foreign terrorist fighters". National Security College Policy Options Paper No 12 (Canberra, Australian National University, 2019):3.

<sup>738</sup> Her children Ayehsa 3yrs, Fatima 2yrs. Zaynab's sister (16 yrs.) and brother (9yrs).

<sup>739</sup> Abc news, "Khaled Sharrouf orphan gives birth to third child days after rescue from Syria," *Abc news*, 26 June 2019, accessed 01 January 2021. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-26/sharrouf-orphan-gives-birth-to-third-child-days-after-rescue/11247028>

<sup>740</sup> Helen Davidson, "Children of Isis Terrorist Khaled Sharrouf removed from Syria, set to return to Australia," *The Guardian*, 23 June 2019, accessed 28 March 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/jun/24/children-isis-terrorist-khaled-sharrouf-return-australia-removed-syria>.

<sup>741</sup> PM Morrison's statement was reported by multiple media outlets such as The Guardian, ABC News, NZ Herald, and Aljazeera in between the 23rd and 26th June 2019.

<sup>742</sup> Davidson. *Children of Isis*, 2019.

that the Australian government investigated support services such as education, deradicalization, and family services.<sup>743</sup>

Zaynab's father was a high-profile figure. He was the first dual national stripped of his citizenship and gained further notoriety in 2014 when he posted a picture of his young son (now deceased) holding up a Syrian soldier's severed head.<sup>744</sup> Australian CT expert Jacinta Carroll (2019) suggests Zaynab's profile as part of "Australia's most infamous family" could have "drawing power" amongst IE supporters despite her initial recruitment being through the family as a child.<sup>745</sup> Carroll explains that while Zaynab did not independently choose to join Daesh, she was radicalized and lived what appeared to be a privileged life under the Islamic regime.<sup>746</sup> Zaynab lived in a family home with luxury goods and slaves and posted online pictures of other veiled women holding assault rifles.<sup>747</sup>

Saltman and Smith say that Zaynab capitalized on her identity as Australian to entice other females to undertake 'hijra' (migration)<sup>748</sup> through social media accounts.<sup>749</sup> Carroll describes Zaynab as "... both a victim and supporter of terrorism and cases like this are very legally and morally complex."<sup>750</sup>

### **Case Study 3: All-female VE plot in UK 2018**

A UK court found a young woman, Safaa Boular, guilty of plotting an IE attack in 2018, and later her sister and mother also received convictions.<sup>751</sup> Boular radicalised online after the Paris attacks, which occurred when she was 16 years old. In 2016, Boular was stopped at

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<sup>743</sup> Davidson. *Children of Isis*, 2019.

<sup>744</sup> Davidson. *Children of Isis*, 2019.

<sup>745</sup> Jacinta Carroll. "The Citizen as enemy combatant: dealing with foreign terrorist fighters". National Security College Policy Options Paper No 12 (Canberra, Australian National University, 2019):3

<sup>746</sup> Jacinta Carroll, *The Citizen as enemy combatant*, 3.

<sup>747</sup> Rod McGuirk. *Analyst says Australian teen was Islamic State propagandist*. APN News 20 June 2019. Accessed 25 June 2020. <https://apnews.com/9362c362dd75405c879276826909645e>

<sup>748</sup> Hijrah, in the modern extremist context this is the journey undertaken by foreigners from their origin country to extremist strongholds / territory.

<sup>749</sup> Saltman & Smith, *Till Martyrdom do us part*, 35.

<sup>750</sup> Jacinta Carroll, *The Citizen as enemy combatant*, 3.

<sup>751</sup> BBC, *London Teen Guilty of Mass Terror Plot*, 4 June 2018, Accessed 15 July 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-44359751>

a UK airport by UK Authorities who believed she was planning to travel to Syria to join a jihadi fighter she met and married online. Authorities then cancelled her passport, so Boular started to plan a domestic IE attack on various London sites.

On 4 April 2017, UK authorities covertly informed Boular about her Jihadi husband's death in a drone attack.<sup>752</sup> In response, she told the undercover officers about her attack plot, which resulted in her arrest and imprisonment pending trial in April 2017.<sup>753</sup> While in jail, she continued to talk by phone to her sister Rizlaine (22yrs old) and her mother, Mina Dich (44yrs old), about an attack coded as an 'Alice in Wonderland' themed tea party.<sup>754</sup> Subsequently, her sister and mother carried out reconnaissance of Westminster landmarks and purchased a rucksack and knives.<sup>755</sup>

On the date of the planned attack (27<sup>th</sup> April 2017), authorities arrested the pair and another female – Khawla Barghouthi, to prevent them from acting. Dich had reportedly adopted a strict conservative Islam interpretation from online sources and pontificated her daughters for years.<sup>756</sup> Dean Haydon (CT Co-Ordinator) reported police had not identified any "controlling mind" or "ringleader" in the family, and it was not clear when Dich had become a threat.<sup>757</sup> Haydon told the media that social services, local authorities, schools, and the family court had all attempted to intercede, but Boular was relentless with her views.<sup>758</sup>

While Dich and Rizlaine appeared in court fully veiled, Boular was a "changed woman" and had responded to de-radicalization assistance.<sup>759</sup> And as part of her defense, Boular told the jury it was all pretense and that "It's online – nothing online is real."<sup>760</sup> A statement that avoids her active attempt to travel to Syria, conversations about UK attacks captured by authorities, and encouragement of others to carry on while she was

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<sup>752</sup> BBC, *London Teen Guilty of Mass Terror Plot*, 4 June 2018.

<sup>753</sup> BBC, 4 June 2018.

<sup>754</sup> Dominic Cascani, *The Radicalisation of Safaa Boular: A teenager's journey to terror*. BBC News. 4 June 2018. Accessed 01 March 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-44359958>

<sup>755</sup> Dominic Cascani, *The Radicalisation of Safaa Boular*, 4 June 2018.

<sup>756</sup> Dominic Cascani, 4 June 2018.

<sup>757</sup> Dominic Cascani, 2018.

<sup>758</sup> BBC, *London Teen Guilty of Mass Terror Plot*, 4 June 2018.

<sup>759</sup> Dominic Cascani, *The Radicalisation of Safaa Boular*, 4 June 2018

<sup>760</sup> Dominic Cascani, 2018

in jail.<sup>761</sup> In August 2018, the court sentenced Boular to life imprisonment, of which she must serve 13 years before being assessed for “release on license.”

## Appendix C. Case Studies – Women and RWE ideologies.

### Case Study 1: Dayanna Volitch, America.

The 2018 case of Dayanna Volitch (alias Tiana Dalichov), an American social studies teacher, lends further credibility to the literature about intentional downplay of RW ideologies to influence and normalise their views (see AFF, Belew, SPLC, Wexler. Volitch was a 25-year-old middle school teacher in Florida, stood down after her employers became aware of her WN activity exposed by media sleuthing.<sup>762</sup> Under her alias Dalichov, she espoused extreme RW beliefs online and told students it was not hateful or supremacist to prefer “your own people over others.”<sup>763</sup>

Before her exposure, Volitch interviewed Lokteff on her WN podcast “*Unapologetic*.”<sup>764</sup> The duo promoted feminism as a devious conspiracy designed to weaken white families

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<sup>761</sup> Dominic Cascani, 2018

<sup>762</sup> Christopher Mathias, Jenna Amatulli & Rebecca Klein. *Exclusive: Florida Public School Teacher has a White Nationalist Podcast*. 06 March 2018. Accessed 19 February 2021. [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/florida-public-school-teacher-white-nationalist-podcast\\_n\\_5a99ae32e4b089ec353a1fba](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/florida-public-school-teacher-white-nationalist-podcast_n_5a99ae32e4b089ec353a1fba).

<sup>763</sup> Jessica T DeCuir-Gunby, Elizabeth M. Allen and Janet K Boone. “Examining pre-service teachers’ color-blind racial ideology, emotion regulation, and inflexibility with stigmatizing thoughts about race”. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*. Vol 60. (2020):1

<sup>764</sup> DeCuir-Gunby, Allen & Boone. “*Examining pre-service teachers*”, 1.

and bemoaned the education system.<sup>765</sup> After Volitch revealed she “played by the rules” with supervisors and instructed children to “play along,” both women advocated for more WN’s to become teachers and covertly take over with their views.<sup>766</sup> Volitch championed that white races were more intelligent and misused research to validate her ideas and argue for private WN schools.<sup>767</sup>

During the same podcast, Volitch boasted about successfully lying to the principal about her beliefs after her parents complained about her political bias in the classroom.<sup>768</sup> After being stood down, Volitch released a statement through a lawyer describing her comments as “political satire and exaggeration” and that her Dalichov persona was a “hobby.”<sup>769</sup> She set her social media accounts to private and attempted to scrub away her podcast, and Volitch submitted her resignation shortly after.<sup>770</sup>

Media examples of her social media activity evidence thinly disguised calls to “eradicate” Muslims as a CT measure, holocaust denials, and reposts from prominent RWE groups such as Identity Evropa.<sup>771</sup> Posts were fear-inducing, such as pictures of Muslims at prayer on Paris streets, arguing it was the future for western countries.<sup>772</sup> Along with memes such as “It’s okay to be white” and that white women were “unmatched” and needed preserving, which was worth “dying for.”<sup>773</sup> Ebner reports Volitch’s exposure as an RWE podcaster made Lokteff furious, who responded, “Two girls do a simple podcast, talking about leftism and how we need to take schools back and its national news.”<sup>774</sup>

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<sup>765</sup> Eyes on the Right. *Alt-Right Educator Tiana Dalichov Boasts about Infiltrating Public Schools*. Angrywhitemen. 1 March 2018 Accessed 17 February 2021. <https://angrywhitemen.org/2018/03/01/alt-right-educator-tiana-dalichov-boasts-about-infiltrating-public-schools/>

<sup>766</sup> Eyes on the Right. *Alt-Right Educator Tiana Dalichov*, 2018.

<sup>767</sup> Eyes on the Right, 2018.

<sup>768</sup> Mathias, Amatulli & Klein. *Exclusive: Florida Public School Teacher*, 2018.

<sup>769</sup> Amir Vera, *Teacher who ran white supremacist podcast she said was satire submits resignation*. CNN. 03 April 2018. Accessed 19 February 2021. <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/04/02/us/florida-teacher-resignation-white-supremacist-podcast/index.html>.

<sup>770</sup> Eyes on the Right, 2018.

<sup>771</sup> Eyes on the Right, 2018.

<sup>772</sup> Eyes on the Right, 2018.

<sup>773</sup> Eyes on the Right, 2018.

<sup>774</sup> Ebner, *Going Dark*, 227.

Lokteff's comment epitomizes how RWE uses irony, sarcastic humour, and ambiguity to offset their critics and downplay their bigotry. Despite Volitch's notoriety, it is difficult to ascertain what she is doing today; unverifiable online chatroom discussions indicate she is married with a baby and still upholds her ideology. Volitch's case aligns with AAF (2014)<sup>775</sup> and Belew's 2018 findings<sup>776</sup> that RW women use "white womanhood" to integrate into the mainstream and seek opportunities to influence.<sup>777</sup> It further confirms that WN will hide their RWE activities yet be ready with plausible deniability to downplay their actions if challenged.

### **Case Study 2: Olivia Pierson, New Zealand.**

Olivia Pierson's website biography states she is of British and NZ heritage and cherishes Western democracy's principles as the core of western civilisation.<sup>778</sup> She writes she values emancipation but brackets many women "don't deserve their vote," that she "values" religious tolerance "except for Jihadists." and freedom of speech "excluding deniers" who deem speech they dislike "illegal hate speech."<sup>779</sup> Her online blog dates back to 2014 and posts supportive comments for RWE personalities such as Lauren Southern, 'polite' rants about the Middle East, Muslims, Susan Devoy's race relations activity, and Covid lockdowns.<sup>780</sup> Pierson's most recent content repeats and perpetuates Trump's misinformation about the USA election and supports election conspiracy theories.

In November 2020, Pierson received media attention and public criticism for a tweet from her now private Twitter account about NZ's new Foreign Affairs Minister, Nanaia Mahuta's moko kauae (Maori facial tattoo). Her tweet included a comment saying, "facial tattoos are not exactly the polished, civilised presentation for a foreign diplomat in the

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<sup>775</sup> Amadeu Antonio Foundation (AAF). *Overlooked and Underrated: Women in Right-Wing Extremist Groups in Germany*. (Germany, AAF, 2014):2

<sup>776</sup> Belew, 163.

<sup>777</sup> Belew, 163.

<sup>778</sup> Olivia Pierson. *OliviaPierson.org -Free Thought Advocate*. N.d. Accessed 20 February 2021. <https://www.oliviapierson.org/about.html>.

<sup>779</sup> Olivia Pierson. *OliviaPierson.org*.

<sup>780</sup> <https://www.oliviapierson.org/blog>



21<sup>st</sup> century....".<sup>781</sup> In the face of criticism, Pierson doubled down and repeated that a moko on a female diplomat was "the height of ugly, uncivilised wokedom."<sup>782</sup> Some retailers quickly announced they would be dropping her 2016 book ("*Western Values Defended*") in reaction to her public comments.<sup>783</sup>

Olivia Pierson promotes her book as an overview of western civilization history to explain the character of "individual liberty in the West." Positive reviews circle on now-familiar RW notions of 'freedom' and fears about white culture, e.g., "...for anyone that cares about the future of European culture". In contrast, among multiple critical comments, one review states Pierson centers "primarily on the idea that feminism is the real culprit of the decline of Western values" and that multiculturalism will be the nail in the coffin.<sup>784</sup> Other reviewers criticise she has rewritten history and included discredited myths,<sup>785</sup> which aligns with the literature that RW advocates utilise pseudo-intellectualism to sell their ideas.

Being an author and her recent infamy has not been Pierson's only platform for her "white' ideas. "*Stirring the Pot*" (STP) describes itself as a political show that Olivia Pierson was a regular panel member alongside controversial NZ blogger Cameron Slater in 2017. Pierson's rhetoric across seven segments (YouTube) cover Trump, white supremacy, Muslims, sharia law, and free speech at Auckland University aligns strongly with renowned core RW tenets.<sup>786</sup>

In 2019, white supremacy posters appeared around the Auckland University Campus, causing public debates about racism and free speech.<sup>787</sup> During the STP panel discussion,

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<sup>781</sup> 1 News. *Retailer pulls author's books after criticising new Foreign Minister as 'ugly and uncivilised'*. 4 November 2020. Accessed 13 February 2021. <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/retailer-pulls-authors-books-after-criticising-new-foreign-minister-ugly-and-uncivilised>

<sup>782</sup> 1 News. *Retailer pulls author's books*, 4 November 2020.

<sup>783</sup> 1 News. *Retailer pulls author's books*, 4 November 2020.

<sup>784</sup> Amazon. Reviews. 2018, <https://www.amazon.com/Western-Values-Defended-Olivia-Pierson-ebook/dp/B01EA8RU3M#customerReviews>.

<sup>785</sup> Amazon. Reviews. 2018

<sup>786</sup> YouTube, *Stirring the Pot*, 2017. Accessed 10 December 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI8K5lr4wGiNIUQgICBs5IA/videos>.

<sup>787</sup> Katie Scotcher. *Open Letter denounces White Supremacy at Auckland University*. 2 October 2019. Accessed 21 January 2021. <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/400168/open-letter-denounces-white-supremacy-at-auckland-university>.

Pierson excused the signs as “pro-western values” and that the individuals just “loved the culture they were from.”<sup>788</sup> She argues that having free speech of “ideas” prevents it from spilling into violence.<sup>789</sup> Pierson moves on, making other comments such as “Western, Anglo Saxon” values are superior and “what’s wrong with superiority.”<sup>790</sup> Pierson laughs about ethnic students feeling persecuted and agrees with Slater, who comments about “Sharia Law” taking over NZ.<sup>791</sup>

Pierson insists on asking, “what is wrong with superiority when it comes to culture” and “what is wrong with discrimination when it comes to personal choices” because she felt there was “nothing wrong with either” of those things.<sup>792</sup> Ironically she states being superior includes religious tolerance, then quickly moves to racist statements about Muslim women-only pool nights in Auckland. Pierson said it was not about the pool but more that “...We allow other people to come into our culture as long as they abide by our culture”, and this is “cultural jihad.”<sup>793</sup> She moves to announce that a “symptom of cultural jihad” is that Muslims manipulate western bureaucracy to have legislation for their benefit.<sup>794</sup>

Pierson continues, “they are not compatible with western culture.” or “western civilisation” and inferred Muslim people “run around western countries” and kill people in the “name of their god.”<sup>795</sup> In her explanation of what cultural Jihad was, Pierson says it is when Muslims implement their lifestyle “over ours.”<sup>796</sup> She declares her Muslim intolerance is because “they seek to take away my freedoms” and that “we have been so dominated by multiculturalism that we are losing our culture, losing our values.”<sup>797</sup>

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<sup>788</sup> Stirring the Pot – *Auckland Uni Free Speech, Queer Spaces, Safe Spaces* S1-Ep5, 12 April 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnIxd7Aukhk> time 3.42

<sup>789</sup> Stirring the Pot, time 6.04-6.20.

<sup>790</sup> Stirring the Pot, time 8.18-8.49.

<sup>791</sup> Stirring the Pot, time 9.26-10.31.

<sup>792</sup> Stirring the Pot, time 10.42.

<sup>793</sup> Stirring the Pot. *Muslim Sharia Law, White Supremacy at Auckland University*. S1 Ep4. 12 April 2017. Accessed 21 January 2021. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtl98\\_-7aXo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtl98_-7aXo) time 2.39 – 3.30

<sup>794</sup> Stirring the Pot, time 6.11.

<sup>795</sup> Stirring the Pot, time 6.22.

<sup>796</sup> Stirring the Pot, time 13.26 – 13.40.

<sup>797</sup> Stirring the Pot, time 24.00.

Pierson follows this with the declaration, “you are never allowed to stand up for your culture if you are white.”

Pierson’s narrative and worldview parallel the general RWE prose with its hyperbole, imaging Muslims as an imminent threat to white NZ and herself personally, alongside her repetitive white/Anglo-Saxon superiority statements. Pierson evokes the freedom of speech as an excuse to share “ideas” and attempts to humour attention away from racism and bigotry. Her rhetoric and delivery align with the venerated pseudo civility RWE ideologies present for the mainstream. However, the fallout from her Twitter comments shows NZ is not entirely oblivious or tolerant to extreme RW beliefs. While Pierson is not as high profile as Lokteff, she has a platform to espouse from and an NZ cohort who share her views.

### **Case Study 3: Voice of Zealandia “Featuring Kiz Kardassian.”**

Following a brief introduction to Action Zealandia (AZ), this case study will provide a short synopsis of a 90-minute discussion from the “*Voice of Zealandia*” podcast featuring three RW male Action Zealandia (AZ) members and an American RW female, Kiz Kardassian (KK), dated 21 September 2020.<sup>798</sup> In the podcast introduction, topics of discussion listed for the episode include the state's effect on families, raising children, and women's role in society and femininity.

The podcast discourse reveals these NZ men embrace the worldwide RW rhetoric, lifestyle, and gender beliefs about women’s roles in the WN movement and general society. At the same time, Kardassian’s comments evidence how WN females actively reshape conversations to normalise the WN ideology and activities to influence other women to enlist. The podcast confirms that NZ’s modern RWE groups, regardless of size, have international alliances that collaborate to expand their reach, influence, and potential non-violent or violent tactics in NZ society.

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<sup>798</sup> Voice of Zealandia. *Episode 14 – Featuring Kiz Kardassian*. Speaker. September 2020. Accessed 01 December 2020. <https://www.spreaker.com/user/12326141/episode-14-featuring-kiz-kardassian>

On the AZ website, the familiar RW victimisation rhetoric is on full display, e.g., “We stand against our degradation” and describe themselves as young [male] WN’s dedicated to the “revitalisation” of NZ that has been “under attack” from major corporations, the media, and the government.<sup>799</sup> It continues that as “European New Zealanders,” they discard the system that “works against us” and “ultimately does not want us to exist.”<sup>800</sup> AZ state their ideals are self-improvement, community building, nationalism, sustainability, and the NZ European identity.<sup>801</sup> On AZ’s “actions” page, they attempt to legitimize their WN group through faceless pictures of members participating in outdoor activities (e.g., hikes), fitness, “activism” such as posters (graffiti), and scholarship of “high-quality articles.”<sup>802</sup>

The podcast opens with AZ<sup>803</sup> acknowledging KK was their first-ever female guest speaker. She immediately explains how she uses her online channels to represent women’s “roles” through knitting, crocheting, and happy family images. KK admits she designs her channel to make women “comfortable” and shares her WN ideas more softly, such as socially desirable traits. She encourages women to care about their appearance, take up “feminine crafts” such as gardening, and avoid “social subversion” by the left. Interestingly KK is critical of WN men who get caught up in the meme of a “trad wife trad life” and argues that the pearls and apron trad wife are inaccurate.

KK explains that Lokteff’s content explained that a true traditional wife does everything she does to benefit her husband and family. That femininity is loving your family and being there in every capacity for them. KK said she has decided to spread “good” propaganda because “our brains have been filled” with the “propaganda of our enemies.” She wants to refute feminism’s fake freedom by promoting true femininity and real

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<sup>799</sup> Action Zealandia. *Action Zealandia: Building a Community for European New Zealanders*. N.d. Accessed 15 December 2020. <https://action-zealandia.com/>

<sup>800</sup> Action Zealandia. *Action Zealandia*, N.d.

<sup>801</sup> Admin H. *Action Zealandia Ideals*. 27 May 2019. Accessed 15 December 2020. <https://action-zealandia.com/ideals>

<sup>802</sup> Admin H. *Action Zealandia Actions*. 17 February 2021. Accessed 16 March 2020. <https://action-zealandia.com/category/actions>.

<sup>803</sup> The male narratives have been categorized together due to lack of identifier’s when they were speaking but also in recognition their comments consistently aligned with each other.

happiness as a woman is “just loving.” That when someone bemoans staying home, they should be corrected “No, you are staying home, and you are loving all day.”

KK markets that a traditional woman loves her husband when she folds his laundry or makes his breakfast how he likes it. That doing these tasks saves him energy so he can go out and collect “resources”. KK says the men will provide and all a woman must do is “love him, that’s it.” She then claims any idea that a single mother is a good parent is false because “she “literally failed” at step one having children and not finding a man that would help her.

The AZ men commented that masculinity was about self-respect and discipline because women implicitly look to men for leadership and guidance. One male was adamant that capitalism and the “modern west” aims to defeminize men to the point they are not dangerous and masculinize the women to be good wage slaves. They argue feminism was only about getting women into the workplace. Everything is now miserable because men and women must work and hire a “surrogate mother” to look after the children. But “who wants to put their children with random browns’ who are going to assault your children.” The AZ men believe that if women were asked what they wanted, women would say they just wanted to live with a husband, be a wife, and have children, to which KK agreed.

Notably, the AZ men promoted mothers home-schooling children over sending them to learn in state-based bureaucratic environments and felt NZ should have government-funded home school collectives without dictated content. They believe home-schooling was a way to subvert the state” and their power over children’s education. KK commented modern culture does a lot to separate children from parents and parents from each other. She wishes it could go back to traditional settings where large families worked in a business because college is not the answer. KK believes women need to create and maintain communities and admits that it is her mission with her online and offline friends, contacts, and activities.

The podcast contained numerous references to topics raised in the literature, such as referencing old texts and misshaping history to validate their points and paranoia about the state’s influence on family and education. Also present were the white victimization frameworks, i.e., feminism and capitalism intentionally destroy families. During the

podcast, both genders presented a self-imagery of themselves as noble and righteous but threatened by the mainstream and the state. KK contributed as a well-spoken young woman who focused on a traditional role for herself and her life while actively thinking of ways to influence and ‘soften’ the RW narrative to recruit others.

During the podcast, AZ mentioned mutual RW acquaintances with KK. It was apparent mutual foreign acquaintances was how her guest spot on the podcast came about, confirming the international RWE community acknowledged in the literature. Additionally, in line with the literature, all speakers quoted “studies” or history to ‘verify their ideological beliefs and ridiculed the non-pilled mainstream for being non-believers. The podcast superficially presents like-minded, enthusiastic individuals sharing an edgy, conservative-styled conversation. The irony is once the RWE culture is known to the listener, its actual content is explicitly bigoted and racist. The façade of civil superiority slipped for all panel members when KK announced Ruth Bader Ginsberg's death, a legal and feminist icon, during the podcast. The four reacted with loud whoops of delight, laughter, and comments about Ginsberg being in “hell” before moving on with their conversation.

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