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UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL

**ANTI-SEMITIC INSTITUTIONAL HATE-CRIMES:  
SYMBOLISM AND IMPACT**

PAR

**EYAL AZERAD**  
ÉCOLE DE CRIMINOLOGIE  
FACULTÉ DES ARTS ET SCIENCES

MÉMOIRE PRÉSENTE A LA FACULTÉ DES ÉTUDES SUPÉRIEURES  
EN VUE DE L'OBTENTION DU GRADE DE  
MAITRISE ES SCIENCES (M.Sc.) EN CRIMINOLOGIE

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CE MÉMOIRE INTITULÉ

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SYMBOLISM AND IMPACT**

PRÉSENTE PAR

**EYAL AZERAD**

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## ABSTRACT

The prospect of this study is to examine the extent and symbolism of racist vandalism targeting Jewish institutions in Montreal. Specifically, the study focuses on institutions, synagogues and cemeteries, who have been the target of hate motivated vandalism between 1989 and 1996. The extent, symbolism and impact of anti-Semitic vandalism were explored in light of the victims' and perpetrators' testimonies. To this end, twenty-eight respondents from victimized institutions and community leaders from the Montreal Jewish community were interviewed. Given our intended understanding, Skinheads, from Montreal White Supremacist organizations, were also asked to reflect on the purpose and symbolism of the crime.

Contrary to some findings, it was put forth that racist vandalism does not concur with scholarly paradigms, classifying vandalism as an unplanned and spontaneous phenomenon. Instead, our examination set racist vandalism as distinct from its' juvenile counterpart by analyzing its' subcultural context and symbolism. Inspired by both Allport and Bjorgo's work, our analysis viewed anti-Semitic vandalism as stemming from a purposive and symbolically planned behavior. Moreover, the motivational dynamics of racist vandalism, attributed as a modified form of social control, are different from those of their juvenile counterparts.

The impact of anti-Semitic vandalism was found to produce some emotional effect, but little enduring consequences. Whereas rage, frustration, insecurity and the fear of physical assaults were most common reactions, some attributed its impact not to the direct crime, but to other elements resulting from the crime itself. As a whole, our study analyzed these trends and cumulatively examined the impact, symbolism and extent of the problem. It sought to produce the first analysis on the subject

Major findings revealed two sources of perpetrators; One stemming from organized groups, the other from mainstream society. Among organized groups, media coverage of racist acts was found to be a utilitarian tool and a motivational factor in planned and organized racist offences. Among others, instrumental use of racist vandalism was found to create subjective boundaries of limitations, creating of “in-group” vs. “out-group” solidarity, embed white supremacist doctrines, and sow the seeds for a collective conscious. Less sophisticated use of vandalism included venting frustration, thrill seeking, and expressing anger.

Scholarly literature typifying vandalism as an “unmotivated behavior” was therefore challenged in the context of our examination. Instead, our examination viewed racist vandalism as part of a specific ideological context which is not structured around abstract, random, and unplanned activities, but rather around specific aims utilized as a modified form of social control.

## Résumé

L'objectif de cette étude est d'examiner l'ampleur et le symbolisme du vandalisme touchant les institutions religieuses Juives de Montreal. Spécifiquement, notre étude porte sur les institutions religieuses (synagogues et cimetières), qui ont été touchées par un vandalisme motivé par la haine entre 1989 et 1996. L'ampleur et l'impact du vandalisme anti-semitique ont été analysés par l'entremise de témoignages des victimes et acteurs. A cette fin, vingt-huit représentants d'institutions victimisées et des représentants de la communauté Juive de Montreal, on été interviewés. De plus, des Skinheads d'un groupe d'extrême droite de Montréal ont également élaboré sur les buts, les raisons et le symbolisme du crime.

Il a été argumenté que la profanation raciste contredit les trouvailles d'études précédentes qui typifient le vandalisme comme étant spontané. Ainsi, par l'entremise d'analyse subculturelle, contextuelle et symbolique, notre étude classifie le vandalisme raciste dans une typologie distincte du vandalisme juvénile. Inspirée par les oeuvres de Allport et Bjorgo, notre analyse traite la profanation raciste comme issue d'un comportement symbolique, planifié et réfléchi. De plus, la motivation du vandalisme anti-sémitique, analysée comme une forme de 'contrôle sociale' dans une perspective sous-culturelle, diffère du vandalisme juvénile spontané.

Le vandalisme anti-sémitique a un impact émotionnel mais de courte durée. Des émotions telles que la frustration, l'insécurité et la peur d'une agression physique sont les plus fréquentes chez les victimes. De plus, certaines affirment que l'impact n'est pas un produit du crime, mais bien de facteurs résultant de celui-ci. Notre étude visa à analyser ces tendances et en examiner leur impact, leur symbolisme et leur ampleur à Montréal en vue de produire la première recherche sur ce sujet.

Les grandes découvertes ont révélé deux sources d'acteurs: l'une originaire de groupes organisés et l'autre provenant de la société en générale. Au sein de groupes organisés, la diffusion d'actes criminels racistes à travers divers médias prend le rôle de motivateur dans l'organisation et de la planification de nouveaux crimes éventuels. Parmi d'autres, l'utilité instrumentale de la profanation raciste a été trouvée de créer des limitations subjectives d'appartenances, créer un sense d'appartenance de groupe, implanter les doctrines de Suprémacie blanche, ainsi que de semer le pepin d'une conscience collective. Utilisation expressive du vandalisme anti-sémitique inclut l'expression de frustration, le défoulement, et l'expression de la rage.

Les études littéraires typifiant le vandalisme comme un comportement spontané ont donc été remises en question dans le context de notre étude. Notre étude perçoit le vandalisme raciste comme étant issu d'une idéologie structurée autour de buts spécifiques, et non autour d'activités abstraites et irréfléchies.

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## INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

The prospect of this study is to examine the nature and extent of racist vandalism of Jewish institutions between 1989 and 1996. Our thesis will investigate the utilitarian use of racist desecration among Skinhead organizations and analyse the psycho-emotional significance of anti-Semitic vandalism<sup>1</sup> for the targeted community. Specifically, the study focuses on religious institutions, synagogues and cemeteries, that have been the target of hate-motivated vandalism between 1989 and 1996 in the Montreal region. Twenty-eight respondents from victimized institutions were interviewed as a means of attaining greater understanding of the emotional impact of such racist offenses. Four White supremacist neo-Nazi Skinheads were also interviewed as a means of understanding the symbolic and utilitarian use of this particular crime within the examined Skinhead subculture.

For its criminal and ambiguous components, racist vandalism proves a noteworthy topic of analysis. Although numerous examinations have focussed on vandalism as a means of generating theory, the distinguishing component of similar racist offenses somehow eludes the conceptual understanding generated by the existing literature. Whereas some argue that vandalism is a motiveless or ideologically void behaviour (Cross 1979), its racist counterpart, on the contrary, is embedded in a specific ideological context. Additionally, the manifestations of racist vandalism does not concur with some scholarly findings typifying vandalism as an unplanned and spontaneous phenomenon. Our study will demonstrate that racist daubing, distinguishable from its juvenile counterpart, stems from a purposive, symbolic and planned behaviour. Moreover, the social dynamics generating these racist acts does not concur with those

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1- note that anti-Semitic vandalism, within the context of our study, will interchangeably be used with racist vandalism and institutional vandalism. Hence, "institutional vandalism" does not refer to political institutionalized racist behaviours but rather to the unsanctioned practices of racist vandalism.

of similar juvenile offenses. Whereas juvenile vandalism, for example, reflects spontaneous attacks on social environments, the subcultural context and symbolism of racist attacks are quite different.

In sum, racist desecrations proves a valuable point of analysis since such incidents differ from conventional ones. Moreover, by focussing on the utilitarian use of racist vandalism among the Skinhead groupings, an understanding of the crime as a modified form of community social control (Black 1983) may be generated and thus provide greater contextual understanding of the distinction between of ideologically motivated vandalism and its juvenile counterpart.

Theories from diverse scholarly fields have served as a strong foundation for this thesis. While no single study has been found on the symbolism of racist vandalism, a handful of conceptual theories were interchangeably used for the completion of our study. Gibbs' (1989) and Allport's socio-political models of analysis, for example, provided strong inspiration in the context of community terrorism and the formation of a collective bond among subcultures. A modified use of Black's (1983) theory of social control and Hamm's (1993) theory on Skinhead subcultures also proved to be valuable tools of analysis.

Although this thesis is presented within the framework of a Master's degree, the present study defies conventional ways of writing a thesis. Since no scholarly examinations have been undertaken on the communal impact of these crimes, this thesis was developed as an investigation. Although its purpose is to provide an interpretive understanding on the symbolism nature and impact of these racist offenses, its orientation stems from investigative methods as opposed to purely methodological and theoretical ones. In essence, this investigation aspires to present our findings rather than present theoretical underpinnings and interpretations.



## **CHAPTER I**

### **HATE CRIMES AND VANDALISM: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

## **HATE CRIMES AND VANDALISM: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **1. The Conceptualization of Hate Crimes**

Although hate crimes in Canada can be traced as far back as the emergence of the KKK during the 1890's, it was only in 1983 that bias incidents were tackled seriously in Quebec and Canada (Centre d'Etude Ethnique de l'Universite de Montreal 1996; CICVR 1994; Forrest 1995). The lack of governmental commitment to collect statistical data on bias activity has incited numerous communities and civil rights agencies to monitor incidents of hate activity. By 1983, several community organizations became willing to confront the issue, measure the extent and intensity of the problem, and make recommendations to improve the response of the criminal justice system (Dire Enfin la Violence 1997; Faulkner 1997; League for Human Rights 1993).

#### **1.1. Definitional Issues**

The victim's symbolic status is the first step in understanding hate crimes, and the motive stands as the classifying characteristic of the underlying act. Interracial violence, for example, does not imply ethno-violence. As defined, differences in skin colour, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation are not necessarily indicators of bigotry (Karmen 1990; FBI 1997; Cook 1992, Jacobs 1993). Similarly, gang fights between Black and White youths do not conjure enough evidence to suggest 'hatred' as a primary motive. Youth fights may be motivated by limitations of territorial disputes, tests of "manhood" or initiation rites. Hence, in such examples, the victim's symbolic status is disdained and cannot be accounted for as emerging from bias. Similar initiation rights, however, whose victims' selection process stems from the victims' symbolic status may be classified as

emerging from bias since their status is central to the initiation. One such example is the Skinhead initiation of “Docker” boots by the stomping of Jews, Gays, or Blacks.

Further accentuating the conceptual complications of hate crimes are subtle motivational ambiguities between hate crimes and actuarial crimes (Berk, Boyd & Hammer, 1992; Jacobs 1993; Levin & McDevitt 1993). Berk et al.’s analysis, for example, argues that many crimes - although seemingly motivated by a victim’s ethnicity, race or sexual orientation - are motivated by none else but the perpetrator’s risk analysis based on the victim’s actuarial status. The authors present an example of street thugs who mug an effeminate man, not because of his real or perceived sexual orientation, but rather because they apply a stereotype to the victim as being effeminate, and therefore more reluctant to fight. The crime is therefore said to be motivated not by hatred, but the perpetrators’ calculation that one victim is less challenging than another. Hence, according to the authors’ argument, the classification of hate crimes is an ambiguous endeavour since perpetrators of numerous crimes use the potential victim’s symbolic status “as a selective marker of relevant “factual” information, which motivates the crime rather than the marker itself” (Berk et al. 1992:317). Hence, although a perpetrator may select a Gay man as a primary victim, the selection process, stemming from a discriminatory stereotype is nevertheless not one of bias but strategy.

Hate crimes are defined within scholarly literature as crimes which are motivated by the perpetrator’s hatred of the victim’s race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. Hate crimes may either be directed toward individuals or property and may include such offenses as fire bombings, assaults, threats, arson and other incidents where the result of the action is motivated by hatred. Although no consensus exists, all definitions found in the literature emphasize the importance of the symbolic status of the victim (Berk 1990; Berril 1993; Bowling 1993; CICVR 1994; Cook 1992; Mock 1993; Roberts 1995). The symbolic status may either find expression between racial or ethnic groups (e.g., Whites and Blacks, Turks and Armenians, Jews and Arabs, Hutu and Tutsi),

religion (e.g., Jews and Muslims), nationality (e.g., Serbs and Croats), and sexual orientation (Homophobes and Gays).

## **1.2. A Typology of Hate Crimes**

Further complications of hate-crimes rests in typifying their manifestations. The ambiguity has resulted in limited attempts to classify the crimes in terms of subtypes. Levin & McDevitt's (1993) fundamental study however has managed to present a typology of hate crimes in three distinct forms. The authors' unique analysis is the only attestable typology to filter precipitating factors generating distinct forms of a similar phenomenon. Although Levin & McDevitt's examination focuses on more extreme manifestations, their analysis provides an important step in comprehending the dynamics resulting in a specific form of criminality. The theoretical value of the author's analysis resides in its ability to provide greater clarity to the tabulation and classification of bias crimes. By clarifying the dynamics behind each incident, hate crimes are no longer compounded as static events, but rather 'dynamic' phenomena emerging from specific precipitating factors. Although hate crimes produce similar results, the type of crime is either thrill-seeking, reactive or missionary. While the phenomenon itself is objectively similar, precipitating dynamics determine the typological classification the crime will take.

Levin & McDevitt argue that thrill seeking hate crimes are the only type which require no precipitating incident. Victims are randomly chosen and identified by the aggressors according 'identifiable' traits which the aggressor deems undesirable. In essence, the randomness of the crime generates a thrill-seeking momentum, triggering any vulnerable and easily identifiable person or environment. Any member of a vulnerable group will do as a target. Thrill-seeking hate crimes are characterized by groups of perpetrators in search of potential victims.

In sharp contrast, reactive hate crimes require a precipitating incident which the perpetrator(s) see as a legitimate catalyst for their anger. The victimizers rationalize their attack as a defensive and legitimate response to a threat - either a perceived insult, interracial dating, or the integration of ones' neighborhood. Often, the reactive offenders' image of social differences challenge the moral fabric of their reality. Resulting consequences are reactions to personal, social or economic disturbances intended to send messages to the targeted group. In contrast to "thrill seekers" who randomly choose any victim to satisfy primal aggression, perpetrators of reactive hate crimes tend to target a particular set of individuals who are believed to constitute a personal threat.

The third type focuses on hate crimes perpetrated by members of an organized group. According to the authors, "Mission hate crimes" are the most uncommon types of offenses. These crimes are perpetrated by those with a mission. Typically, such "missions" reflect the belief in a struggle between superior and inferior races and a deep rooted desire to rid the world of "undesirables". The perpetrators of "missionary hate crimes" typically regard other races as "subhumans" who are endangering their economy, culture, and racial purity (Levin & McDevitt 1983:89). Perpetrators of such offences perceive themselves as being invested with a higher moral mission imposed by a "Fuhrer". The crime is usually seen as a retribution for individual misfortunes borne by the perpetrator. Thus, the essential distinction between all three typologies is that:

In a thrill-seeking hate crime, an individual joins a group activity so that he will not be rejected by the people who are most important to him - his friends. In reactive hate crimes, an individual believes that he must protect himself from the encroachment of outsiders. And, in mission hate crimes, an individual becomes convinced that his personal problems are a result of some conspiracy involving an entire group of people with whom he feels compelled to get even (98).

In either case however, whether thrill-seeking, reactive or missionary, the fundamental commonality of all three typologies is that they are like acts of terrorism, meant to send a message by means of fear and terror.

### 1.3. Known Perpetrators

Many authors agree that most hate crimes are committed by individual citizens not forming part of an organized hate group (ADL 1992; Berk 1990; Berril 1993; Bowling 1993; CICVR 1994; Dean, Wu & Martin 1992; Faulkner 1997; Herek 1992; Levin & McDevitt 1993). These citizens may resent the growing economic power of a particular ethnic groups and engage in “scapegoating”. Others, on the other hand, react to a perceived threat to the safety and property value of the neighborhood. Either way, they include “thrill-seekers”, “reactor” and “mission offenders”. Though numerous examinations have used this typology of perpetrators (FBI 1997; Hamm 1993; Berk 1990; Herek 1992) one of the most important studies pertaining to hate crimes is that of Levin and McDevitt (1993). According to these authors, perpetrators with a mission only represent a fringe element among those who commit such crimes. They also argue that bias motivated crimes are generally perpetrated by alienated youths who may not adhere to the beliefs of the neo-Nazis, but are *inspired* and *intrigued* by the use of their symbols of power (104).

The Canadian Governmental publication, *Hate Motivated Violence*, (Gilmour 1994) summarizes the findings of American examinations pertaining to hate crimes and ethnviolence. The summarized data focuses on perpetrators and the motives behind their crimes. The data indicates that perpetrators tend to be youths in their teens or early 20's who act out on feelings shared by their families, friends and community. The crimes were found to be committed by groups of four or more, which infuse a determining element in the seriousness of the offense. The crimes were further found to reflect the emotional attachment to one's own kin or friendship group. As the author accentuates:

These deep feelings of group identity are particularly vivid in times of economic and political uncertainty and among people who suffered emotional neglect as children. (Gilmour 1994: Internet)

In a similar study, West Virginia University's Dr. Richard Ball and David Curry have tabulated statistics pertaining to juvenile involvement in hate crimes. The findings revealed that only six states and seven major cities carried age specific data. The data, however, revealed that the percentage of juvenile involvement is so vast (8.5% to 62.6%) that the authors' analysis proves inconclusive.

Similarly, the FBI's Uniform Crime Report indicates that 35% of all arrests in 1993 were adolescents and young adults between 16 and 24. The FBI's data only tabulates reported, processed and terminated incidents (i.e., cases which led to arrests), and do not include reported but non terminated cases. In opposition to Ball & Curry's analysis, the FBI's data indicates that a minimum of 35% of terminated cases are perpetrated by juvenile offenders. Despite the ambiguous age distribution of racist offences, our review of newspaper articles has indicated White juvenile males represent a major proportion of racist offenders. Scholarly literature has traditionally classified vandalism as a juvenile activity, thereby supporting the aforementioned indications.

#### **1.4. The Distinctive Impact of Hate Crimes And Bias Activity**

Several studies and community organizations have indicated that hate crimes are among the most under-reported offenses (League of Human Rights 1996; Mock 1996; Bowling 1994; Saulburry & Bowling, 1993; Roberts, 1995; Levin & McDevitt 1993, Comite d'Intervention Contre la Violence Raciste 1992). Benjamin Bowling's victimization study, performed among immigrants in London's East end, revealed that fewer than five percent of racist attacks were reported to officials (Bowling 1994). Similarly, criminologist Julian Roberts estimates that less than 10% of hate crimes in Canada are reported to officials (Roberts 1995). Explanations for the lack of reported hate crimes are numerous. The most probable reflect the general perceptions that: hate crimes are lesser offenses (Saulburry & Bowling 1993); reports are not processed as

seriously as other forms of crimes (Karmen 1990); and suffering a second victimization as a retribution for reporting the incident (Roberts 1995).

A study undertaken by Maghan & Sagarin (1983) in the U.S. revealed that members of the Gay and Black communities are especially reluctant to report incidents of hate-crimes to police. With the historical antagonistic relationship between police officials and both communities, victims are more reluctant to press charges because they believe the police will respond with indifference (Roberts 1995; Berrill 1992; Dire Enfin la Violence 1997). Maghan and Sagarin's (1983) examination found that members of the Gay community are also reluctant to report attacks due to the socioeconomic consequences of "coming out" and/or publicizing the incident. Studies have demonstrated that victims of hate crimes lose trust in mainstream society and turn to civil groups or to community organizations sensitive to their own experience (Mock 1996; Karmen 1990; Weiss & Ephross 1986).

Other studies have also suggested that victims of hate crimes are more likely to be severely injured, whether physically or mentally (Samis 1994; Bowling 1994; E.G.A.L.E 1994; Herek 1992a). Unlike victims who are attacked for other reasons than their "status", scholars have argued that people who are victimized for no other reason but their affiliation with a distinctive group, suffer greater emotional and psychological repercussions. Some authors contend that the bias motive of the crime magnifies its impact. As a study conducted by the LCEF suggests:

The cruelty of these crimes is magnified because they remind the victims of terrible things that had been done in the past to members of their group, or to them, their families, or their friends -pogroms against Jews, lynchings of blacks, rapes and beatings of women, lesbians and gay men, or grim memories in the minds of either groups (LCEF 1998 : Internet).



Hate crimes targeting communities, also referred to as “community terrorism”, are also believed to result in similar results. Some data indicates that targeted groups feel angry and alienated (Garoffalo & Martin 1995; Mock 1993). The data indicates that because victims are singled out for their personal identity, individual members of targeted communities feel isolated and defenceless (League for Human Rights B’nai Brith Canada 1993; Mock 1993; Barnes & Ephross 1994; Weiss 1990; Equality for Gays & Lesbians Everywhere 1994).

While only a handful of studies have described the extent of hate crimes in Montreal (Roberts 1995; League for Human Rights 1996; CCVR 1994) few have analysed the impact of hate crimes on victims (League for Human Rights of B’nai Brith Canada 1993; Barnes & Ephross 1994; Weiss 1990). Traditionally, research has focussed on the legal implications (Morsh 1992; Martin 1995; Berk 1990; Jacobs 1993), or on the tabulation of the phenomena in terms of type and extent (Bowling 1993; Roberts 1995; Ross 1994; Berrill 1992; Daniel, Stemmler & Stretesky 1995; Dean, Wu & Martin 1992; Martin 1993; Tomaso 1993). Quantitative research on hate crimes and bias activity tends to be purely descriptive and lack theoretical discussion regarding the impact of ethno-violence. Although important in its own respect, quantitative research has been limited by this interest in quantifying bias activity during a given period, in a given environment.

Despite the paucity of research, some authors have examined the emotional and psychological impact of hate crimes. Findings have demonstrated that the psychological anguish of hate crime victims is deep, enduring and very complex (Karmen, 1990). Most victims of hate crimes were reported to feel isolated (Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere 1994; League for Human Rights B’nai Brith Canada 1993), and fearful (Kelly 1993; Mock 1996). They are believed to become distrusting toward the general population (Weiss & Ephross 1986; Garofalo & Martin 1993); they begin to question their own identity (Garofalo & Martin 1993); and, in extreme cases, they experience

changes in behavioural patterns (Barnes & Ephross 1994).

Findings also suggest that when disadvantaged groups are victims of hate crimes, their victimization elicits more complex emotional consequences because their experience enhances their feeling of cultural marginalization (Egale 1994; Ehrlich 1990; League for Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada 1993). Accordingly, a research by the National Institute Against Personal Prejudice and Violence in the United States indicates that "victims of violent hate crimes suffer...more trauma symptoms than other victims of similar [non bias] crimes"(Samis 1994). It is believed that victims of bias crimes suffer more trauma because the characteristics which motivate their victimization, such as their race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation is fundamentally tied to the core of their identity (Faulkner 1997; Mock 1996; Garofalo & Martin 1993; Herek 1992a; Herek 1992b; Berk, Boyd & Hamner 1992; Garnets, Herek & Levy 1992; Ehrlich 1992). Consequently, some authors have suggested that bias victimization results in a process of questioning one's identity. It has also been suggested that hate crimes, by their nature, are more serious than non-bias similar crimes because not only do they reinforce the negative stereotypes of an already disadvantaged group but also affect a broader spectrum of people than the victims themselves (Ehrlich 1992; Roberts 1995; Mock 1996; Bowling 1993; Egale 1994) .

In many respects, authors argue that the impact and symbolism of hate crime is unlike any other form of criminal activity (Karmen 1990; Egale 1994; Samis 1994; Kelly 1993; Levin & McDevitt 1993; Garofalo & Martin 1993). While crimes in general may provoke a physical or psychological response from a victim, hate crimes tend to be interpreted as symbolic affronts to all members of the victims' racial, ethnic, religious or sexual preference group (FBI Uniform Crime Report 1997).

One of the most significant studies on the impact of hate motivated violence targeting minority groups was conducted by the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence (Ephross Barnes, Ehrlich, Sandnes & Weiss 1986). The study explored the nature of hate attacks on 59 victims and examined the victims responses to their experience through the use of focus groups. The sample was obtained through contacts between members of the Institute's staff, officials from human rights agencies and special units of police departments in nine states. A total of ten focus groups and complementary individual interviews were used during the study. The findings revealed that half of the subjects had experienced a series of attacks rather than a single incident. Among victims anger (68%), fear (51%) and sadness (36%) were the most frequent emotional responses. Behavioural changes, including moving from the neighbourhood or purchasing a gun accounted for 33.9% of the sample. In comparison to the emotional and behavioural responses of victims of similar non-bias crimes, the findings revealed that feelings of intense rage and anger (Bard & Sangrey 1986); of fear of further victimization (David & Friedman, 1985); and depression (Shapland, Willmore & Duff, 1985; Ochberg 1988) were accounted for by victims of hate crimes.

One Jewish victim who had a swastika painted on his mailbox reported having "mostly a feeling of anger". Indeed, the data showed anger as the most common response (68%), followed by fear of repeated victimization (51%) and sadness (36%). Reactions such as a decrease in social participation, firearm acquisition and an increase in personal security were also accounted for. In comparison to non bias impact related studies however, Barnes & Al. concluded that:

...to some extent, the predominant emotional responses of hate violence victims appear similar to those of victims of other types of personal crimes....A major difference in the emotional response of hate violence victims [however] appears to be the absence of lowered self-esteem. The ability of some hate violence victims to maintain their self-esteem may be associated with their attribution of responsibility for the attacks to prejudice and racism of the perpetrators. (Barnes & Ephross 1994: 250).

The somewhat contradictory findings in regards to the impact of hate motivated crimes emphasizes the need for further investigation. Although an examination performed by the Minority Advocacy Rights Council (MARC) identified hate crimes as a central concern for minorities in Canada (Internet.1.) there is a paucity of material on the subject. The more important research stems from ethnographical accounts (Hasselbach 1996; Ezekiel 1995; Hamm 1993; Kinsella 1994; Solicitor General of Canada 1994). Few authors have explicitly focused on the sources of violence, effects on victims, or motives of perpetrators. Racism stands as a 'taken for granted' assumption while the effects of the crimes are generalized as 'profound' and 'enduring'. Moreover, those analyzing racist violence have traditionally taken one racist incident to explain its manifestation in one situation and one country (Gordon 1990; ADL 1993; ), or in one community (Bowling & Saulberry 1994; Bowling 1993; Cooper & Pomeyie 1987).

Most examinations of the phenomenon tend to discuss racism, right wing extremism and fascism without specifically analyzing the cause of violence (Hainsworth 1992; Batterwegge & Jagger 1992). Only three major ethnographical accounts have brought insight to precursors of right wing violence (Hasselbach 1996; Ezekiel 1995; Kinsella 1994). In the end however, readers are limited to explanations of racist violence via traditional arguments of economics (Moore 1993), immigration (Katkin, Stemmler & Stretesky 1995), simple xenophobia (Von Throtha 1995), and culture (Albertch 1995). Generally, such theories are not based on ethnographical studies, but rather presented as the author's analysis of the event without empirical validation. Studies have focused on statistics, legal issues, the perpetrators of violent crimes and on the impact of such crimes. Little is done in terms of interviewing perpetrators and victims to corroborate scholarly interpretations. It should further be noted that the ambiguity of impact related studies of ethnviolence is enhanced when examining the impact of racist vandalism. Perhaps the physical crime can be eliminated with soap and water, but the emotional scars lay deep beneath the skin.

### **1.5. Hate-Crime: Scholarly Orientations**

Although there exists a shortage of data on the emergence of hate crimes, scholarly findings have focussed on a variety of explanations for the manifestations of ethnoviolence. Sociopolitical explanations of this violence point to five global trends:

In one explanation the level of racist violence is seen as directly linked to the size of certain minority populations (Katkin, Stemmler & Stretesky 1995). According to this popular argument, society is infused with a natural threshold limiting the number of 'acceptable' foreigners within a given society. Once the social subjective threshold has been surpassed, forms of intolerance and cultural discomfort unfold and conflict erupts. This conflict is either the result of economic competition, scarce resources or political and cultural clashes.

Following the standard theoretical paradigm, Katkin, Stemmler & Stretesky's analysis explains German based hate motivated violence as resulting from their ambivalence towards multiculturalism. While examining the problems of German ethnoviolence, the authors contend that German racist violence stems from the perception that "...their country is being inundated by foreigners whose ways of living are alien, and whose presence threatens the German way of life". Hence, the reactive and missionary offenses perpetrated by neo-Nazi organizations are argued to be fueled by the arrival of millions of immigrants (from 1.3 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1993) who not only threaten the German way of life, but also generate economic strains resulting from work shortage and economic strain.

Maybe the theory provides explanatory power regarding incidents of violence in Germany, but it fails where numerous foreigners were received without much reaction. During the 1950's, for example, the independence of Indonesia resulted in the influx of 300,000 immigrants from the Netherlands without serious retaliation from citizens. In sharp contrast, in numerous southern American communities, brutal and violent reactive crimes emerge when Black families move in all White neighbourhoods.

Proponents of this hypothesis support their stand by indicating that political measures limiting the influx of minority population have resulted in a decline in racist violence. In many cases, however, racist violence has increased shortly after politicians implemented or propagated measures to restrict immigration. The first emergence of the British Skinhead movement during the late 70's, for example, followed shortly after the Thatcher administration implemented strict immigration laws for non-Europeans. Similarly, hate motivated violence, cemetery desecration and race riots followed the last elections in France when LePen declared that the survival of French culture required the strict implementation of measures to limit the numbers of residents born outside European soil. Given this ambiguity, the theory's inconsistency stems from its lacking emphasis on cultural, and thereby fails to explain why political immigration policies result in racist violence in one country but not another.

Closely following this primary explanation, a second popular paradigm of analysis proposes that the level of racist violence flourishes in times of economic depression. In particular, this theory argues that during times of economic crisis the level of hate crimes rises as a result of unwelcomed competitors. Although there are few theories which contest the relation between economic crisis and the rise of racist violence, the causality linking the two is not as direct as some theories seem to indicate. Some studies have demonstrated that the most influential variable for racist violence is education. Education was found to have a great impact on ones' self control and economic prospect (Hernes & Knudsen 1990). Bjorgo for example indicates that:

The example of Denmark - which has had a high level of unemployment throughout most of the 1980's - has shown a relatively low level of racist violence. Thus, socioeconomic factors such as education level and social security systems, may be more important than unemployment as such. The relation between socioeconomic circumstances and racist violence is therefore far more complex than generally perceived (1994: 8).

Opposing this popular view, some argue that times of economic strain do not result in hate crimes, but that some racists rather use these times to ferment racism by manipulating popular sentiments and discontent (Kinsella 1993; ADL 1993; League for Human Rights 1994). Political and economic strains have been used in numerous cases to numerate scapegoats liable for personal failures.

The most utilized explanation of racist violence focuses on the perpetrator's or victim's cultural or national traits (Kinsella 1993; Hasselbach 1996; Katkin, Stemmler & Stretesky 1995; Albretch 1995). A high level of racist violence throughout Europe is often explained in terms of 'national character'. In Germany for example, the strong surge of racist violence which emerged during the early 90's following the fall of the Berlin wall is widely explained in terms of nationalism, hence the call "Germans for Germany". This violence, often based on a history of dominant and subordinate relationships between two groups, is also attributed to the violence between Bosnians and Muslims, and Croats and Serbs, Jews and Arabs. From a conflict perspective however, it is argued that disputes among racial and ethnic groups are not really about ethnic or racial differences, they are about the use of such differences to create and preserve inequality. Thus, whenever different groups compete for the same resources, Blacks and Whites for power and wealth in South Africa, settlers and indigenous tribes for possession of the Brazilian hinterland, Israelis and Palestinians for the same territory, intergroup hostility may result. In particular, if the distribution of power is unequal and one is able to control and subjugate the other. Moreover, theories of nationalism become somewhat ambivalent when examined in the backdrop of the perpetrator's belonging to a subcultural group.

A fourth explanation focuses on subcultural theories of belonging. These examine the process of identity formation and the search for personal 'belonging'. Hamm's (1993) Levin & McDevitt's (1993) and Ezeikel's (1995) analysis of American Skinheads for example indicate a strong relationship between ideological formation and the search of identity among young members of racist groups. Their findings were further

corroborated by Kinsella's (1994) analysis of Canadian Skinhead groups and Hasselbach's (1996) ethnographical explanation of racist violence as one of Germany's top neo-Nazi leaders. Conclusions typically explain that racist violence stemming from members of hate groups are perpetrated by the younger fractions of the organization. The data further suggests that perpetrators join such organization due to a lack of social ties. This theory argues that alienated violent youth search for identity and define themselves in accordance to group beliefs. In Germany for example, the trend among many youths is to define their identity in terms of 'natural characteristics' such as 'race' and nationality.

Other (less utilized) theories contend that there is a direct correlation between the number of hate crimes and the response of local police, politicians, and anti-racist organizations (Bowling 1993; Kelly, Margham & Tennant 1991; Witte 1994; Throtha 1995). They argue that the lack of police and political response ferments further hate motivated acts of violence. Moreover, some of the theories draw direct links between the number of rightist political parties and the increase of racist violence in a given environment. While examining the issue, Bjorgo & Witte (1994) state that:

If [a right wing] group is deprived of the chance to express itself through the regular political channels, with no opportunity to 'let off steam', this may lead to an explosion of violence, being the only alternative left. On the other hand, others argue that the emergence of racist violence is the result of parties and organizations of the extreme right being able to propagate their racist message unhindered, even having it legitimized by being represented in parliament and other public offices. Violent groups, it is argued, just carry things a bit further than the politicians. (Bjorgo & Witte 1994: 11).



This position has received considerable attention (Sprinzak 1995; Williems 1995; Wilkinson 1995). Although the debate whether social expression encourages similar crimes is far from over, valid arguments are provided for both sides. Although ideological repression is believed to result in violence, unrestricted boundaries of freedom of expression has tended to result in severe instances of hate motivated violence. Through Internet channels of communication, virulent neo-Nazi organizations around the world are able to propagate their message of hate to millions of homes. Propaganda, music, bomb recipes and images can be downloaded in seconds by anyone capable of tuning on a computer. Paralleling the rise of Internet use throughout the world, human rights agencies have noted a dramatic increase in hate crimes since the early 90's (ADL 1992; CICVR 1994; Cook 1992; League for human rights B'nai Brith Canada 1996; Mock 1996). Therefore the argument for unchecked freedom of expression resulting in a decreased frustration - and ultimately violence- begs to be examined.

### **1.6. Anti-Semitism in Canadian History**

Anti-Semitic sentiments have long been part of Canadian history. The first settlers to Canada already brought their French European clerical assumptions regarding Jews and Judaism. Although Jews were barred from migrating to new France by clerical laws, religious anti-Judaic ideologies made their trans-Atlantic voyage. Anti-Judaic notions were propagated by the Christian church. Its' notion found expression in clerical works aimed at improving the general educational level in Quebec. Richard Menkis notes, in his analysis of pre-confederate Canada, that the "Cathechisme du Diocese de Quebec" of Monsignor de Saint-Vallier (1653-1727), became the primary educational tool of Catholic education until the 1750's (Menkis in Davies, 1992: 18). Describing the character of the Jews, the book painted the role of the Jews in the crucifixion of Christ. Saint-Vallier characterized the Jews as spawns of Satan and murderous immorality. Saint-Vallier

promoted a traditional Christian view of the old Israel as obstinate, and post-biblical Jewry as without divine favour. His text emphasized the sins of Jews and the temporary nature of the old covenant; after Sinai, Israel rebelled against God 10 times in the desert, and frequently abandoned God for idols even in the Promised Land. God subsequently established a more noble alliance with the Christians. The rejection of the Jews occurred with their rejection and murder of Jesus; Jerusalem was destroyed as a consequence (Menkis in Davies, 1992: 17).

Along with the conquest, Jews began to emigrate to the new British colonies. Following the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1749, a scheme was concocted to settle poor Jews in Nova Scotia in the hopes of contributing to the province's economy. According to Dr. Karen Mock however:

emancipation was a mixed blessing for the Jews. Previously denied the vote, land ownership, or access to trade, industry, or education, they were now permitted both citizenship and access to the benefits it conferred. Such benefits, however, did not give Jews equality. Rather, Jewish progress inflamed anti-Semitism. Fear and hatred of Jews festered and took on a racial rather than a religious dimension. That is, Jews were now resented simply for being Jews, and even changing their religion did not help (Mock 1999: Internet 3).

Anti-Semitism reached its peak in Canadian history during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1910 and 1940 prominent Canadians like Edouard Plamondon, Adrian Arcand, Goldwin Smith, Henri-Bourassa, and Mackenzie King promoted anti-Semitism and the Russian pogroms against Jews, openly glorified Hitler and denied Jews entry into Canada during Nazi persecution. Denied access was openly displayed in Montreal's old port with signs indicating "no dogs or Jews allowed". During the same period, McGill university imposed special admission requirements and quotas limiting the numbers of Jewish students. Banks, insurance companies, hospitals, law firms, and department stores also instituted quotas excluding Jews from their organizations.

Sporadic attempts were also made to harass and discourage Jews from staying in Quebec (Brown, in Davies 1992: 57). These measures included the levy of special taxes and fines for early closures to store owners. According to Brown:

the latter were particularly onerous for observant Jews, who already kept their stores closed on Saturday because of the Jewish Sabbath and on Sunday because of the Sunday blue laws (57).

The anti-Semitism of the twentieth century therefore shifted to form of economic racism based on competition. The church used this advantaged and propagated that the Jews were morally inferior to Christians and were therefore unworthy of same liberties. The end of the second world war and the coming of the seventies however improved Canada's moral outlook of Jews. Under the works of Trudeau, anti-Jewish and ethnic racism, was gradually stripped. Trudeau's vision began an era of greater acceptance of minorities and favoured the development of diverse cultural communities.

## **2.1. - Vandalism**

General scholarly examinations of vandalism provide greater insight into the motivational paradigm of our subject. Although no findings on ideological vandalism have materialized, classical works by Cohen (1973), Matin (1959), and Cross (1979) elucidated motives by typifying them according to distinct typologies. Akin to the definition of hate crimes, the definition of vandalism varies considerably. In its most elementary form, vandalism has variously been described as an intentional hostile behaviour aimed at damaging environmental objects (Feshbach, 1964; Christensen et al., 1992; Harrison, 1976; Ducey, 1976; Moser, 1992). Somewhat more elaborate definitions enumerate motives, innate or void, central to vandalism. Cross's (1979) study for example, defines vandalism as "the wanton and apparently motiveless destruction or

damage to property without any clear advantage accruing to anyone, least of all the perpetrators.” according to him, the thrill venture is an intentional non-expressive act, motivated by nothing else than the exhilaration of the moment. In sharp contrast to Cross’s definition, the FBI’s Uniform Crime Report (1997) defines vandalism as:

The willful or malicious destruction, injury, disfigurement, or defacement of property without the consent of the owner or person having custody or control by cutting, tearing breaking marking, painting, covering, with filth, or any such means as may be specified by local law.

Yet other definitions import a more complex view of the phenomenon by singling out the behavioural source. This tendency has placed motive as a core element in the definition of vandalism and as such vandalism must be a motivated behaviour.

## **2.1. Scholarly Typologies**

Although there is an abundance of theoretical works addressing vandalism, scholarly data has been criticized for its lack of theoretical underpinnings and for its spontaneous interpretations of given events (Goldstein 1996; Leboyer 1984; Richards 1976). Goldstein for example, criticized existing literature as deriving from informal and unsystematic intuitions offering speculative insight as to the causes of the given phenomena (Goldstein 1996). Nevertheless, motivational typologies found in scholarly theories of vandalism substantiate the importance of motive or intent. In essence, research is segmented in terms of enjoyment, aesthetic and equity control theories. The most important theories pertaining to our subject of choice however, derive from the works of Martin (1959), Cohen (1971), Thaw (1976), Zeisel (1977) and Coffield (1991).

Martin's paradigm (1959) catalogues motives as deriving from material gain (predatory vandalism), from anger or animosity (vindictive vandalism), or senseless malicious destruction (wanton vandalism). Each perpetrated by different types of actors, motivated by 'disturbed' vandals with emotional problems, from 'law-abiding' vandals who, due to temporary anger resort to vandalism to vent frustration, and 'subcultural' vandals, who engage in acts of vandalism as a normative activity or as initiation within the cultural community.

Thaw's (1976) typology characterizes three types of motives. According to him, vandalism is a *hostile directed act* whose purpose is revenge, change or gain. The act may also be characterized by *thoughtlessness* or *carelessness*. Similarly, Coffield's (1991) study uses four central motivational bases to explain vandalistic behaviour. According to Coffield's paradigm, vandalism is motivated by *financial gain*, *peer pressure*, *pleasure*, or *excitement*. Zeisel's (1977) typology offers environmental design (*misnamed vandalism*), playfulness (*malicious property damage*), poor location (*hidden maintenance damage*) and malice (*malicious vandalism*) as motivational factors.

Cohen's (1973) fundamental study, being the most utilized in the literature, consists of six motivational subtypes. Cohen was among the first scholars to criticize vandalism theories calling the behaviour irrational. The author sought to shed light on the motives by examining the selective perception of the vandal. In Cohen's typology, perpetrators are motivated by financial gain (*Acquisitive vandalism*), by revenge (*vindictive vandalism*), by playfulness (*play vandalism*), by utilitarian means (*tactical vandalism*), by the need to perpetuate a social message (*ideological vandalism*), or express anger or frustration (*Malicious vandalism*).

The model differentiates vandalism in terms of types of acts and motive. Vandalism is not only explained in terms of the actor's psychological state, but the act itself is differentiated in terms of its utilitarian vs. expressive nature. With the exception of play vandalism, all incidents are said to derive from an underlying sense of injustice. As candidly expressed by Baron & Fisher (1984):

...perceived inequality, defined formally as a perceived imbalance between one's own inputs and outcomes and those of some comparison other, can subsume the broad array of vandalistic acts captured by Cohen's categories of nonplay vandalism. Perceived inequity sets up a motivation either to achieve *actual* equity through objective action-induced changes (e.g., changes in one's own actual inputs / outcomes or those of others), or to restore *psychologically* equity via changes in one's perceptions (e.g., restructured beliefs about one's contribution or other's outcomes). Viewed in this way, vandalism becomes a means of restoring equity by modifying one's own inputs (e.g., making them negative rather than positive), changing another's outcomes (e.g., by lowering the value of his or her property through damage), and / or by augmenting one's own outcomes (e.g., by looting). (65)

Cohen's typological analysis is used within our examination to explain perpetration of anti-Semitic vandalism. As will be demonstrated, his motivational typology will shed light on the expressive and instrumental use of vandalism. The authors' model will further be analysed in the backdrop of Allport's analysis strengthening conceptions of in-groups vs out-group solidarity and the formation of common beliefs. Our analysis however will explain how the collective process of common action, being racist vandalism, is rendered meaningless with the lack of a secondary response from the media.

### **3. Analytical Themes**

Our thesis is divided into two segments. The first, based on scholarly findings, the second based on our own investigation. Whereas chapter II will present the research strategy and methodological elements used throughout the study, subsequent chapters, consisting of our findings, will present the analytical sections of this thesis. Chapter III will examine the nature and extent of racist vandalism targeting the Montreal Jewish community between 1989 and 1996. Chapter IV will investigate the symbolic and utilitarian use of racist vandalism among Skinhead organizations. Chapter V will analyse the emotional impact and symbolic significance of anti-Semitic vandalism. Chapter VI will conclude and analyse the findings and offer possible methods of intervention. It will also offer a concluding discussion on possible avenues of research.

**CHAPTER II**  
**Methodology and Research Strategies**



## **Methodology and Research Strategies**

### **1. - Research Objectives**

This thesis was initially designed to investigate the quantitative extent of hate-crimes targeting the Jewish, Gay and Black communities in Montreal. The goal was to examine and analyse geographical patterns of hate crimes along with a qualitative comprehension about the emotional impact. A lack of police cooperation, however, has limited the potential for quantifying the extent of hate crimes in Montreal. Within an eight month period, three faxes were sent to the SPCUM requesting access to police files. As explained to officials, the purpose of our study was to investigate patterns of hate-crimes between 1993 and 1996. We sought to describe the nature and extent of the problem, the social context of bias activity and recurring patterns of territorial victimization. Specifically, the research aimed at investigating the sequence of relate / unrelated assault in a same area (when and how racist violence is occurring in a given territorial area); related / unrelated types of victims (in relations to age, territory, and religious or sexual orientation); and the extent and significance of multiple victimization patterns.

Being a criminological study, police were informed that a primary importance would be given to police files. Their analysis would constitute the central part of the thesis. Police were assured that names would be withheld and access was only required to statistically validate information. With the lack of response by the SPCUM, and consequent lack of cooperation from the Montreal urban police force, a redirection of objectives was necessary. Accessibility was key to our report. Minimal access to the Montreal Gay Lesbian and Black communities further limited the number of qualitative interviews with victims of hate crimes. A representative analysis for all communities therefore, could not be achieved. Essentially, the researcher was required to use the available data and redefine both the objectives and the intent of the study. That left us with the Jewish community as a source.

Unfortunately, with our limited resources and precious few contacts with the Montreal Jewish community, we were curbed to work with the most functional available data at hand. Furthermore, the confidentiality of anti-Semitic reported incidents to B'nai Brith led to similar ends. Ultimately we opted to focus on hate-motivated institutional vandalism. Given the paucity of previous research on anti-Semitic vandalism, some segments in our study cannot be anything but exploratory. It is therefore important to note that although a significant portion of our examination is analytical, some segments are largely reduced to purely descriptive levels.

While the objectives of this thesis are straightforward, the methodological approach used to collect the data was given considerable attention. The overall aim was to present a qualitative and quantitative analysis of anti-Semitic vandalism while presenting both sociological and criminological explanations. Our methodology also sought to present the views of both victims and perpetrators.

Our research is unique in many respects. Not only is this the only report on the impact and symbolism of hate-motivated vandalism, but it is the only found study to encompass both qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve these ends. Similar victimization studies have either focused on victims, or perpetrators of hate crimes. They have generally been limited by their understanding of the triggers of victimization. As noted by some authors, victimization studies have had difficulties in attributing the cause of crime with how routine activity interact with the increase or decrease of victimization (Fattah 1991; Karmen 1990). In reference to hate crimes however, and more specifically to religious institutional vandalism, the role of the victims in the perpetuation of the crime is symbolic, and therefore subjective.

Hate crimes target people or institutions belonging to groups which the perpetrator deems undesirable (Roberts 1995; Karmen 1990; B'nai Brith 1995). In this sense, hate crimes are symbolic since the victim's characteristics are secondary to the victim's relationship or belonging to a given social group (Hamm 1994; Hubert & Claude

1991, Herek & Berrill 1990; Karmen 1990; Mock 1996; Faulkner 1997; EGALE 1994; Roberts 1995). Our study further stands apart from traditional studies because they examine personal or institutional characteristics quantitatively for the purpose of generating theory. Although a quantitative application is utilized within the framework of our paper, the greater aim has been to generate a qualitative understanding of the symbolism behind anti-Semitic institutional vandalism and provide further understanding on the precipitating factors.

There is a veritable dearth of existing literature on hate-motivated vandalism. Extensive unremitting research has not revealed scholarly documents pertaining to neither the impact of institutional hate crimes, the extent of anti-Semitic cemetery or synagogue vandalism in Canada or elsewhere, nor the possible sources of instigation construing the phenomena. This being said, the only remaining functional source of reference were newspapers and unrelated theories of environmental vandalism (Greenberg 1969; Howard, 1978; Garbarino, 1978; Goldman, 1961; Kingston & Gentry, 1977; Stefanko, 1989; Vestemark & Blauvelt, 1978). Using field interviews and news coverage in daily and weekly publications as infrastructure, we were able to decipher several patterns and shed light on triggers contributing to the emergence of racist vandalism.

## **2. Methodological Approach**

During the initial development of the present study, three inter-related objectives emerged from the relevant literature and from our exploratory interviews with members of the Montreal Jewish community. The three objectives inevitably led to a detachment of distinct levels within our research. Each level formulating an objective which jointly embodied the present report. As interviews progressed, patterns began to emerge and certain issues, previously overlooked, materialized. Incorporating our primary objectives with the responses collected during exploratory interviews, our research questions came into being. As our objectives were defined and restructured, three levels of examinations

came to be. The first, aims at quantifying the breadth of anti-Semitic institutional hate crimes in Montreal. This level will also forward plausible explanations as to the emergence of such phenomenon. The second level, examines known perpetrators. This level seeks insight into the causes of hate-motivated vandalism, and explains the symbolism and utilitarian perspective of such crimes for the perpetrators. The third explores the impact of institutional hate crimes and the reactions of affected community members.

Given our objectives, the researcher sought to use the most diversified and dynamic options available. Three levels were created and further divided between diverse and complementary methods. Our **first level** sought to examine the extent of the given problem . A table listing of all synagogues and congregations in Montreal was created and codified with the frequency of vandalism, date of incident, and type of vandalism. The number of witnesses, caught perpetrators, and police response, detailed in newspapers and interviews, were also codified. At the end of the study the results were compiled and correlations examined in terms of dates, locations and types of vandalism.

Our **second level**, which examined sources of possible perpetrators and the applicable symbolism, involved direct and indirect qualitative methods. Direct qualitative interviews were engaged with Skinheads to explain the symbolism of the act as well as the utilitarian and expressive nature of anti-Semitic vandalism from the perpetrator's point of view. Interviews were supplemented with indirect qualitative segments largely consisting of testimonies in newspapers and other written sources. Our **third level** consisted of qualitative interviews with cemetery and synagogue officials in order to address the impact of hate-motivated vandalism. To this end, interviews and newspaper articles pertaining to community reactions were utilized.

As a whole, the examination of statistical reports, personal interviews, and various articles were deemed to be the most pro-active methods. A purely quantitative study was quickly rejected as it would not elicit further understanding on the impact or symbolism of the given form of criminality. Additionally, it would dehumanize the issue by reducing such emotional crimes to mere statistics. That being said, the inherent scholarly theoretical framework has unintentionally dehumanized some elements within our examination.

### **3. Making Contact And Soliciting Potential Interviewees**

During the preliminary steps of our study, we sought to examine the nature and extent of institutional vandalism. To this end, we got the list of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues from the Canadian Jewish Referral Center's database (CJRC). Six Jewish cemeteries and forty-five Synagogues on the Island of Montreal were recorded. As some synagogues were no longer in operation, they were eliminated from our database. Others were discarded due to language barriers or due to their refusal to participate in the study. As a result, our sample was reduced to six cemeteries and thirty-three Synagogues.

Initial contact with officials was made by phone. I introduced myself, as a University of Montreal student writing my master's thesis on institutional vandalism in Montreal specifically targeting synagogues and Jewish cemeteries. After establishing the intent of the study I proceeded with the interview. Our exploratory interviews began in May and ended in August 1997. Rabbis and cemetery officials proved to be very difficult to reach. Difficulties also emerged due to the sensitive nature of the studied topic.

Interviews with cemetery and Synagogue officials consisted of a standardized set of exploratory questions pertaining to vandalism frequency and nature of the event. Interviewees were only questioned about their own institution. Complementary questions were generated by the feedback received from subjects. Each preliminary interview lasted approximately 15 minutes. Respondents generally seemed responsive to the questionnaire and the topic being studied. The purpose of our initial examination, and therefore our **first level**, was to determine if a problem of institutional anti-Semitic vandalism exists in Montreal, and therefore determine if the issue is worth pursuing.

Given the paucity of scholarly examinations on perpetrators of institutional hate crimes, our **second level** - aiming at providing insight on the types of offenders inclined to perpetuate this type of criminality - was achieved through an examination of articles and qualitative interviews. Whereas the interviews provided in depth information as to the motivation, planning and organization behind the incident, collected newspaper articles provided the date and facts of the crime.

These articles were provided by the archives of the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Jewish Public Library. Both organizations systematically collect newspaper articles pertaining to hate crimes and are believed to have the most complete collection on the subject in Montreal. Each article was dated, classified by subject, according to year and month, and placed in their respective archive. An exhaustive search in both organizations was conducted. Only clippings specific to the White Supremacist movement, to ethno-violence and to "personal" and "institutional" victims of hate crimes were utilized. Articles concerning broader issues of race relations, such as institutional racism or discrimination in employment positions were considered beyond the scope of our topic. The methodology of our second level of analysis led us to discover substantial activity relating to neo-Nazi Skinhead groups. We therefore opted to include interviews with three members and one former founding member of a Montreal Skinhead group.

Congruent with McCracken's (1988) argument, it was agreed that an efficient and practical method of obtaining knowledge about the function and propensity of Skinhead activity is to ask the actors themselves. The challenge then became not where the information would derive from, but rather how it would be obtained. Since accessibility was a major concern, a decision was made to rely on what was made available. In the end, the decision to interview one Skinhead rather than another was not within the researcher's control. Initial response was elicited through numerous Neo-Nazi Skinhead websites. Although most refused, a respondent was ultimately found from an active Skinhead group in Montreal. With a primary respondent, a snowball technique was used which eventually resulted in the "recruitment" of three further respondents. As was done for the Jewish community leaders, Skinheads were made aware of the subject under investigation. The interviewer presented himself as a Master's student in Criminology at the University of Montreal and elaborated on the topic. Since Skinheads were mainly concerned about legal issues, potential respondents were guaranteed total anonymity.

Given the focus of our *third level*, aiming at an understanding on the impact and distinction between anti-Semitic and regular juvenile vandalism, interviews discussing the symbolism and impact of institutional hate crimes were undertaken. These interviews consisted of structured and semi-structured questions pertaining to the symbolic significance of the Swastika and the symbolic impact of racist vandalism on the targeted community. Given our orientation, we did not feel that a quantitative analysis would provide the details needed to understand the issue at hand.

Various methodological options were available to the researcher in regards to the impact or 'perceived severity' of such crimes. One option was to distribute questionnaires among Jewish schools to assess response to such cases. Since we did not feel that questionnaires would seize the subtleties of formal interviews however, so we opted to discard this method of operation. Typically, questionnaires provide little opportunity to expand on issues deemed important to the respondents. Multiple choice

or true or false format would do little in the advancement of our research and were therefore discarded.

Similarly, interviewing random members of the Montreal Jewish community, would not ensure a 'quality' sampling. Given the studied topic, informed respondents were selected. We opted to interview Rabbis and community leaders who have considerable contact with other community members. Although, granted, the Rabbis and community leaders are not representative of the entire community, it must be indicated that our aim is not so much representation as qualitative explanation on the symbolism and possible impact of hate crimes.

### **3.1. Choice of Interview Methods**

Given our ends, our examination consisted of semi-structured open-ended interviews. We believe that this not only permitted a deeper understanding of issues brought out by respondents, but also enabled the interviewees to express matters which were of greatest concern to them. Although closed-ended questions may have generated the needed information, the advantage of open-ended questions is that they generated "a greater degree of catharsis...[and] an atmosphere of greater mutuality in the interview interaction" (Kadushin 1990:184). Hence, we contend that since semi-structured questions, by their very nature, impose few constraints on the respondents, interviewees had greater opportunity to personally answer the research questions at hand (Schulthess 1992; Kirby & McKenna 1989).

In fact, Kadushin (1990) claims that the strength of the interview lies in its ability to provide the interviewee with an "opportunity to reveal his own subjective frame of reference and of selecting those elements in the situation which he regards as of greatest concern" (p. 183). Consequently, semi-structured questions were chosen because they encourage respondents "to reveal in their own words their feelings about the



subject"(Clader 1977). A further advantage lies in the fact that they provide:

...the interviewee greater discretion and thus permit the interviewee to introduce significant material that the interviewer may not have thought to ask about. The interviewer may...learn more of pertinence about the interviewee's situation than if... {the interviewer} ...had asked a series of closed questions (Kadushin 1990: 183).

Although other forms of research techniques such as surveys (Berrill 1992), may be utilized for studying the community impact of hate crimes, such techniques may not yield the valuable data pertaining to the dimensions of emotions which are only revealed through direct interaction.

### **3.2. - The Personal Interview**

As we completed our initial quantitative survey, a qualitative approach was preferred for the remainder of the study's data collection stage. Whereas prior scholarly examinations remain consistent towards the use of quantitative methodologies, given the humanitarian element of the study, it was deemed that qualitative personal interviews were essential for furthering comprehension on the emotional response and symbolism of the crime. To this end, interviews with victims and perpetrators were found to be the most pro-active methods of providing insight into their reality.

Hence, we believe that semi-structured interviews were most suitable. In agreement with some authors, qualitative methods are more appropriate when studying certain realities that could not otherwise be measured (Pourpard 1980; Strauss & Corbin 1990). Such techniques, Poupard contends "allow the in depth exploration of the real life experience of the person" (1980: 169) and therefore clarify issues that are difficult to grasp through quantitative methods. Although quantitative analysis is useful

within the context of our first objective, we agreed with Strauss & Corbin (1990) that qualitative methods would fill in details needed to understand the impact and symbolism of the issue at hand. Granted, the advantage of a larger sample is greater representation, but as the aim of our study is not to unravel how many victims hold similar beliefs, but rather to provide an understanding as to possible reactions, impact, views and meanings behind the victimization. In essence, our research follows McCracken's argument.

Whereas the quantitative project requires investigators construct a "sample" of the necessary size and type to generalize to the larger population, in qualitative [studies]...the purpose...is not to discover how many, and what kinds of, people share a certain characteristic. It is to gain access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which one culture construes the world (McCracken 1988: 17).

In essence, it was found that personal interviews offered important advantages as a methodological instrument. First, it allowed a view of the phenomenon from the respondent's perspective (McCracken 1988). This allowed both victims and perpetrators to offer insight into their world view and interpretation of the given phenomenon. In the case of Neo-Nazis Skinheads, personal interviews allowed perpetrators to pinpoint aspects which may not have been scrutinized through self-administered questionnaires. Moreover, it was deemed that elements which were not previously considered by the researcher were more likely to be exposed within the context of a personal interview.

### **3.3. Selecting Interviewees**

In line with our three levels of analysis, we have chosen to interview cemetery and synagogue representatives of victimized institutions. To Supplement our exploratory interviews, we also selected eight prominent community members. While the initial interviews revealed the extent of the problem, in-depth specific interviews revealed the

symbolic significance of anti-Semitic vandalism and provided insight on the impact of institutional vandalism.

Our exploratory interviews led us to eight ‘best’ respondents. Preference was given to interviewees who demonstrated a considerable interest in the topic and manifested a sense of critical thought. Considerable weight was also attributed to community workers who were referred on numerous occasions.

Our initial exploratory interviews therefore enabled us to form four criteria of selection for our specific oriented interviews. Each respondent had to have a significance within the Montreal Jewish community; had to play an active or leading role within the studied subculture; had to be knowledgeable in the given topic, and must be regarded as a significant member by other key figures within the community. In the end, our sample consisted of six Rabbis and two representatives from the targeted cemeteries.

Four Skinheads were also interviewed within the framework of our study. The interviews sought to probe into institutional vandalism and possible patterns associated with the crimes. Given the secretive nature of the sub-culture, numerous Neo-Nazi Skinhead organizations were contacted by e-mail for a period of two months until members of a Montreal Skinhead group agreed to participate. Given the paucity of willing respondents the researcher had to be content with the available respondents.

### **3.4. Interview Format**

The interview format remained largely uniform throughout the data collection stage. Minor modifications and new questions derived from our exploratory interviews. To ensure that all issues were covered, a checklist was utilized during each interview. The initial checklist used during our exploratory interviews proved somewhat

constraining and was therefore reorganized. Ultimately, a liberally used checklist proved more helpful.

Having performed initial interviews with all thirty-three synagogue and cemetery officials, our checklist was constructed accordingly. It became evident that officials knew little in regards to perpetrators. Responses were largely construed around suppositions. Exploratory interviews enabled us to counter this surprise by formulating questions around issues of suppositions in the hope of generating theory. Ultimately, having pre-established knowledge of possible responses proved advantageous for the insertion of prompts and generated a sense of dynamic conversation during interview sessions. Hence, the theory that the interviewer must remain in control was held throughout interviews. Open statements asking the interviewees to discuss their respective experience and beliefs would have remained somewhat incomplete and would lack the essential elements of our objectives. For this reason, each interview began with an explanation of how the discussion would proceed.

Once respondents agreed to participate, the interviewee was asked whether the discussion could be taped. All respondents were assured that only the interviewer would have access to this tape and that it would be erased once the verbatim was registered. Respondents were further informed that their names would be withheld, that reference to their testimony would be transcribed as a case number (for example, the first interview would be referred to as **001**, the second as **002** ).

### **3.5. Interview Analysis**

As per McCracken (1988), the analytical process was dichotomized in four stages. In the first stage, interviews were to be conducted and transcribed. Second, interviews were to be summarized in the respondents words. In the third stage, interviews were to be vertically analysed, and were therefore scrutinized for significant

themes elicited by each individual interview. Finally, all interviews were transversely analysed. We therefore filtered out similar themes and ideas among the respondents. A transversal analysis enabled us to classify common themes or thoughts found throughout the different interviews and therefore created a deeper analysis of the available literature. It was our belief that through the synthesis of vertical and transversal analysis, we would be able to provide an explanation as to the different realities, reactions and effects testified by different community leaders and ultimately enable us to determine the nature and extent of anti-Semitic institutional hate crimes targeting the Montreal Jewish community; examine the symbolic significance of anti-Semitic institutional vandalism; examine the impact of anti-Semitic institutional vandalism on the targeted community; and examine trends and patterns among known perpetrators in order to gain a better understanding of the types of offenders inclined to commit this type of crime.

#### **4. Limitations Of Our Study**

As with all studies, the researcher must be aware of the limitations a Master's thesis impose. Due to the limited time frame attributed to our degree, the present study had to be specific and could not therefore study the nature and extent of hate crimes targeting all minority groups in Montreal.

Given such time constraints, the Jewish community was chosen as an indicator of the possible impact of institutional hate crimes on a given community. Investigating all hate crimes throughout Montreal is beyond the scope of this report. It should further be noted that the study will not be, and does not claim to be, representative of the Montreal Jewish community. Being a qualitative study the purpose of the report is to provide insight into the possible impact of hate-motivated activity targeting a specific group.

**Chapter III**  
**Vandalism frequency of Jewish cemeteries**  
**and Synagogues in Montreal**  
**1989 - 1996**

## **Vandalism frequency of Jewish cemeteries and Synagogues in Montreal 1989 - 1996**

### **1. Contextual Perspective**

The prospect of this chapter is to investigate the nature and extent of anti-Semitic vandalism targeting synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in Montreal. More specifically, it will examine the frequency of desecrations between 1989 and 1996. Our examination yielded that among the six Jewish cemeteries, five experienced a minimum of twenty-six counts of vandalism. Our investigation further imports that among thirty-three synagogues, a minimum of twenty-two have been vandalized, accounting for no less than forty-three incidents within the studied time frame. Forty were anti-Semitic in nature and typically echoed the presence of Swastikas. Only three cases were reported as gang-style graffiti. Whereas non anti-Semitic vandalism is also accounted for, the concern with bias motivated incidents reflect not only their very nature. Serious concern is also generated by the belief that their emotional, psychological and physical side effects are more severe (Karmen, 1990; E.G.A.L.E, 1994; Kelly, 1993; Weiss & Ephross 1986; Garofalo & Martin 1993; Ehrlich 1990; Samis 1994; Faulkner 1997; Herek 1992a; Berk, Boyd & Hammer 1992).

### **2. Jewish cemeteries and Synagogues in Montreal**

The Canadian Jewish Referral Centre lists six Jewish cemeteries and thirty-six synagogues in the Greater Montreal area. The first synagogue was founded as early as 1768 by Sephardic Jews of the region. Since then, the establishment of the first congregation generated a greater influx of Jews to Montreal and surrounding areas (Smith 1997:190). As Montreal became more cosmopolitan, other synagogues and

community centres gradually emerged. Although no central control is exercised on individual synagogues, there exists a synagogue council composed of twenty-eight representatives responsible for informing rabbis of issues of concern. In addition to the Canadian Jewish Referral Centre, *The Montreal Synagogue Finder* (1993) lists thirty Orthodox, six Conservative, one Reformist, one Reconstructivist and nineteen Sephardic synagogues. During exploratory interviews however, it was revealed that many have since closed and are used by other religious groups or social institutions. To date, there remains thirty six synagogues.

We added six Jewish cemeteries to our database thanks to the *Canadian Jewish Referral Centre's* list. According to a cemetery official, they are owned and operated by ten unions or associations such as funeral homes and cemetery maintenance corporations 006. Since files pertaining to general incidents of vandalism have not been maintained by cemeteries and synagogues, the following portrait is largely based on interviews conducted with executive directors, rabbis and public relation managers. Having said that, the data gathered reflected the contact's memory of the incidents rather than documented facts. Thus, although numbers gathered on the *frequency* of vandalism can be considered as reliable, more specific information, such as *dates* of vandalism and numbers of toppled tombstones or painted Swastikas, for example, were regarded as being more subjective in nature.

To compensate for the discrepancies and/or absence of details, an exhaustive search was made to support the data with articles published in the *Gazette*, *La Presse*, *The Globe and Mail*, and *Le Journal de Montreal*. Internal memos from the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), archives summarising and translating articles from other countries, were also used to shed light on paradigms of similar phenomena.



### 3. The Monitoring of Jewish Religious Institutional Vandalism

Officially, the decision to monitor incidents of religious vandalism stemmed from a conference among cemetery, synagogue and police officials, the Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights Canada. The conference came as a reaction to the 1993 New-Years anti-Semitic vandalism attacks on seven Montreal area synagogues. The assembly was particularly concerned over the fact that the attacks were spread over six distinct geographical areas (CJC Internal Report). During the committee hearing, both cemetery and synagogue officials put forth concerns that incidents of vandalism were not being monitored. Further grievances were over geographical responsibilities between different police departments, resulting in inconsistent information exchange in regards to the perpetuation of vandalism. As a consequence, racist vandalism was not monitored and largely left unchecked. This shortfall prompted an alliance between the Canadian Jewish Congress and the League for Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada. Leading to the creation of the Magrebin Committee, whose purpose is to monitor incidents of religious vandalism (CCRV 1994:11.) Although theoretically, the collection of data by this new body was planned for 1993, at the time of our study, in 1998, not a single document could be found. Reported vandalism and desecrations were according to one source, simply used to create B'nai Brith's yearly *Audit of anti-Semitic Incidents*<sup>2</sup>. Occasionally, cemetery officials either reported the incidents to local police departments, the Canadian Jewish Congress or the League for Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada. The unsolicited exchange of information between the three institutions however was infrequent **022**.

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2- The audit is a yearly statistical report published by the League for Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada. The audit is published each year since 1982. It examines the extent of anti-Semitic incidents throughout Canada.

### **3.1. Cemetery Vandalism**

Our research attested to the lack of information pertaining to religious vandalism in Montreal. Not only are perpetrators largely unknown, but their patterns, motives and numbers remain enigmatic. The findings in the present report are not only the only functional sources of information at the present time but certainly the only available report questioning possible precipitating factors.

We found that five out of six Jewish cemeteries on the Island of Montreal have reported *at least* one incident of vandalism between 1989 and 1996. The nature of such incidents ranges from minor vandalism, such as toppling flowers and dumping garbage, to serious anti-Semitic offenses like painting Swastikas and White Supremacist symbols and rhetoric on grave sites and toppling tombstones. Of the five cemeteries reportedly vandalized only the Back River cemetery experienced serious multiple victimization. In only two cases were cemetery or judicial officials aware of the perpetrator(s) involved in the incident, and only once were they apprehended.

### **3.2. Chronological Incidents**

Interviews with cemetery officials revealed that the Eternal Gardens cemetery did not report any form of vandalism within the time frame of our study, while the Back River memorial Garden, Montreal's oldest Jewish cemetery, reported having suffered three major incidents between 1989 and 1996. Each of these reflected anti-Semitic overtones and were believed to be perpetrated by a single group of people. Although unable to recall specific numbers, the Back River Memorial Garden's Public Relation Director maintained that the three incidents resulted in approximately 250 broken or toppled tombstones and numerous others dubbed with Swastikas. Due to the nature and extent of the incidents, both police and cemetery officials concluded that neo-Nazi Skinheads were responsible for the vandalism. On the 26th of November 1990, three

Skinheads were arrested, accused of mischief, and found guilty for the desecration of the Back River Memorial Garden.

The three youths, two of whom were 14 years old, and the other 16, were charged with conspiracy and mischief. The two younger Skinheads were on a weekend leave from a correctional facility. The third had been released from the same institution. When interviewed, the Skinheads admitted vandalizing the cemetery for the sole reason of belonging to the Jewish community<sup>3</sup>.

The Baron de Hirsh cemetery, recognized as the largest Jewish cemetery, suffered three counts of vandalism between 1989 and 1996. While two reflected minor non anti-Semitic incidents, the third was of greater concern. Forty tombstones were overturned while another ten were daubed with Swastikas and White Supremacist Skinhead slogans on Sunday April 1<sup>st</sup> 1990 (*Coalition of Rights groups plans to study Racism*, in the Gazette, Friday April 6<sup>th</sup> 1990, p A4). The words "Skins" and "die Jews" were also found on some monuments. Due to the impact of the crime, a coalition of six human rights groups condemned the desecration and agreed to set up a task force to study the roots of racist violence. A coalition believed a "marginal group of neo-Nazi Skinheads" were responsible for the attack which came only days after a group of Skinheads forced themselves into a private party, shouted anti-Semitic epithets, and started a brawl in the Cote-St-Luc district (*CJC blames neo-Nazis for attack on Jewish cemetery*, *The Weekend Suburban*, Saturday/Sunday April 17:18 1990 p. 3).

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3- The testimony of the three Skinheads contradicts Cross's (1979) conceptualization of vandalism which defines the act as "the wanton and apparently motiveless destruction or damage to property, without any clear advantage accruing to anyone, least of all the perpetrator." The desecration however does not diminish Cross's conceptualization but rather manifests the clear schism between "regular" and racist vandalism. More precise would be the FBI's Uniform Crime Report's conceptualization which defines the act as "the willful or malicious destruction, injury, disfigurement, or defacement of property without the approval of the owner or person having custody or control." Moreover, the testimony of the youths provide contradictory testimony to Goldstein's (1996) analysis which maintains that "youngsters prone to vandalism appear to have a poor understanding of the impact of their behaviors on others." (p24)

The Mount Royal Cemetery Co., is the most victimized Jewish cemetery in Montreal<sup>4</sup>. They reported having two to three cases of vandalism per year which have been classified as regular “juvenile vandalism”. According to the Public Relations' Director, “the cemetery has only suffered minor vandalism, but none anti-Semitic in nature“ 040. Both the Sha’ar Hashamayim Cemetery in cote St-Luc and the Kehal Israel Memorial Park, reported one incident in 1989. Both times groups of Skinheads toppled several gravestones as spectators watched. One experienced thirty broken tombstones and dozens daubed with Swastikas and White Supremacist symbols, the other had 53 headstones overturned and painted with Swastikas (*Monuments damaged in Attack by Vandals*, in Canadian Jewish News April 12<sup>th</sup> 1990). No arrest was made In either case. The Eternal Gardens in Beaconsfield is the only Jewish cemeteries not having reported any vandalism within the time frame of our analysis. All they suffered was a minor break in by "a juvenile on a motor cycle" 038.

***Summary board of cemetery vandalism  
between 1989 and 1996***

Table 3.1

<b>Cemetery</b>	<b>Frequency 89-96</b>	<b>Nature of the Vandalism</b>	<b>Date of Incident</b>	<b>Know Perpetrators</b>
Baron de Hirsh	2 minor counts 1 major incident	non anti-Semitic Anti-Semitic	April 1 <sup>st</sup> 1990	
Back River Memorial Park	3 major counts	anti-Semitic	September 1 <sup>st</sup> 1989 November 4 <sup>th</sup> 1990 August 12 <sup>th</sup> 1991	Neo-Nazi skinheads
Mount Royal Cemetery co.	2 to 3 Minor incidents a year	Non anti-Semitic		
Kehal Israel Memorial Park	One count	anti-Semitic	November 1989	Neo-Nazi Skinheads
Eternal Gardens	none			
Sha’ar Hashamayim	one major incident	anti-Semitic	August 1989	neo-Nazi Skinheads

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4 - The types of vandalism experienced by the Mount Royal cemetery includes toppled garbage, destruction of flower arrangements and the theft of small decorative monuments. It should also be noted that the Mount Royal cemetery is a mixed burial ground.

### 3.3. Analysis of Cemetery Vandalism

Although five out of six cemeteries were vandalised, accounting for twenty-six incidents, only six counts could firmly be established as anti-Semitic. In all six incidents numerous gravestones were toppled by Skinheads. In the Back River cemetery for example several headstones were daubed with swastikas. On the 26th of November 1990, two Skinheads were arrested, accused of mischief, and found guilty for the desecration. Although many witnessed Skinheads desecrating the Kehal Israel Memorial Park and the Sha’ar Hashamayim cemetery, no one was ever apprehended for the crime. Whereas the total counts of vandalism in Jewish cemeteries in our examined time frame fall between 20 to 26 incidents, only eight of those incidents are known to be anti-Semitic in nature. Three of these incidents occurred in the Back River Memorial Garden.

#### Anti-Semitic Cemetery Vandalism (1989 - 1996)

Table 3.2

1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0

### 3.4. Synagogue vandalism

The trends in synagogue vandalism incidence is similar to cemetery attacks. Among 33 synagogues, a minimum of 22 have been vandalized at least once between 1989 and 1996, for a total of forty-three incidents. Forty were anti-Semitic in nature and consistently included for the use of Swastikas. Only three cases were reported as “regular juvenile vandalism”.

Unlike cemetery defacements, our data suggest that synagogue vandalism is largely limited to the use of Swastikas. Between April and September of 1991, for example, the Chadad House synagogue was vandalized three times with Swastikas. The message was painted in black spraypaint on the front windows, walls and doors of the synagogue every time. Officials also received threatening hate-mail. The poorly written letter expressed hatred toward Jewish people and pinned the Jews with all the evils of the world 007. Although the letter was taken “as a potentially serious threat to the synagogue and the surrounding community”, synagogue officials felt that such incidents were “not serious enough for police” and therefore opted not to report it 007.

Similarly, on May 7<sup>th</sup> 1994, two teenage boys, 16 and 17, broke into the Young Israel of Montreal synagogue and defaced it with Swastikas 019. As the teens proceeded to vandalize the library, both were apprehended by police. No affiliation was found linking the boys to White-Supremacist, neo-Nazi or other racist organizations. They were not part of a distinct community, nor did they present any sign of being politically motivated. Further examples occurred in January 1992 when the Chevra Kadisha and the Shaare Zion Congregations were hit with three large Swastikas on their front doors. Due to community reactions, synagogue officials arranged for the immediate posting of guards. As expressed by a respondent “When members of the community call the Congregation and speak of their fears of coming to the congregation, or speak of fears of being victimized because of recent incidents, then you know that it is no longer a case of vandalism....but one of public security” 013.

Events listed above confirm that the use of the Swastika is a consistent paradigm in synagogue vandalism. Messages are typically unoriginal, simple, and present little symbolism apart from the historical political interpretation. Given the rather large sample of our study, we have opted not to present a full chronological narrative of synagogue incidents, but rather focus on one significant event, occurring on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1993, which resulted in the desecration of seven synagogues in Cote-St-Luc, St-Laurent, Chomedey, Mount Royal, Hampsted and the Snowdown area. Each incidents is meaningful due to

the apparent premeditated and predatory nature.

On September 1<sup>st</sup> 1993, Swastikas and White Supremacist rhetoric were found scrawled over seven of the synagogues' doors and walls. The Beth Ora Synagogue in St-Laurent, however, was the only one to contain a message, accounting for the words "Judens Raus", or "Jews out", a slogan used by the Gestapo during the Second World War. The choreographed and malicious nature of the incidents, prompted the formation of a conference in which cemetery synagogue, and police officials joined forces with the Canadian Jewish congress and B'nai Brith. The assembly was particularly concerned that the vandalism was spread over six geographical areas within Montreal's Jewish communities, though almost half were concentrated in the Cote St-Luc district. The apparent coordination of the attacks, coupled with the use of neo-Nazi slogans, led the Canadian Jewish Congress to conclude this was probably the work of a neo-Nazi group in Montreal.

The targeted synagogues in Cote-St-Luc were the Beth Israel, Beth Zion and Beth El Congregations. Vandalism was first witnessed by members at the Beth Israel where about 70 members were emerging from prayer on Saturday after 5 p.m. to discover a Swastika on the front of the building **024**. Soon afterwards, the synagogue received hate-mail propounding the "total annihilation of all Jews" **024**. At Beth Zion Congregation, vandals spray-painted Swastikas on the front doors. Similarly, the Beth-El Congregation on Lucern Road was vandalized with two swastikas, also painted in red.

The Beth Ora Congregation in St-Laurent was vandalized with five Swastikas sprayed throughout the synagogue walls. Consistent with aforementioned, the symbols were daubed in red and measured approximately five feet. The similarities between the seven incidents led community leaders to assume that a single individual or group was responsible for the attacks. Between 1989 and 1996, the Beth Ora Congregation accounted for five cases of vandalism. The Netibot Congregation and the Haim Congregation in St-Laurent were also vandalized with Nazis and White Power symbols.

In neither incidents were police called and no one was apprehended for the offence. On the same night, five miles from St-Laurent district the Anshei Ozerrof congregation was hit. Three large red swastikas were found on the front walls. Unlike other incidents however, perpetrators broke in and vandalized the synagogue.

Subsequent to the New-Year's spree and an investigation which led to no arrests, the Laval district was hit on Wednesday January 27<sup>th</sup>. Less severe, these incidents left a community center, a synagogue, two cars and two homes vandalized with swastikas and white Power symbols (*Les Neo-Nazis frappent de nouveau a Laval*, in La Presse, Jeudi 28 Janvier 1993 A1).

### Summary of Synagogue Vandalism Incidents (1989 - 1996)

Table 3.3.

1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	Total
4	1	3	2	8	6	6	10	40

#### 4. Environmental Strategies

Location and environmental circumstances are strongly emphasized in academic examinations of vandalism (See Goldstein 1996). Generally, authors have argued that the physical environment provides perpetrators with "releaser cues" which encourage the onset of destruction. Vandalism is therefore viewed as a person-environment interactional event in which site characteristics such as size (Goldman, 1961; Kingston & Gentry, 1977; Garbarino, 1978; Stefanko, 1989); physical appearance (DeBunza, 1974; Pablant & Baxter, 1975); and site accessibility (Vestermark & Blauvelt, 1978) play a determining role in its onset.



#### 4.1. Implemented prior solutions

##### 4.1.2 Guards

Our interviews revealed that whereas *all* synagogues reported hiring a guard during weekends and holidays, only two out of seven cemeteries (Baron de Hirsh and the Mount Royal cemetery) reported having consistent overnight security patrolling the cemetery. According to respondents guards seem to have little, if any effect on the frequency of vandalism. Most respondents felt that the size of the terrain made it difficult to ensure adequate surveillance. Case in point, the Mount Royal cemetery maintains the most sophisticated surveillance equipment, yet it is the most targeted cemetery on the island of Montreal. According to one informant:

[...] the use of guards has little deterring effect on youngsters looking for "joy-rides". We see this with kids who come in the cemetery at night and play mind games with our guards. We have the most sophisticated surveillance system in Montreal. We have patrol cars 24 hrs a day. Yet we still have youngsters breaking into the cemetery. I am no longer certain our patrol units are functional. I am not as convinced that it provides an adequate deterring element (040).

Contrary to scholarly studies (Goldmand, 1961; Kingston & Gentry, 1977; Garbarino, 1978; Stefanko, 1989; DeBunza 1974; Pablant & Baxter 1975; Bestermark & Blauvelt, 1978), respondents revealed that guards may be a motivating rather than deterring factor in cemetery vandalism and break-ins. As expressed by another informant:

[...]we previously implemented guards in the cemetery and would generally say that guards do have an effect on youngsters. This effect however is not unanimous and therefore varies. Whereas for some I am sure it provides a deterring effect from “joy-riding”, for other however it becomes an incentive. We have had cases where kids broke into the cemetery at night, made noise to attract the guards, run away, and then show up in another part of the cemetery. So the effectiveness of guards is quite difficult to determine (042).

If you combine the premise that people generally do what is gratifying with the respondents' testimony, one may suggest that cemetery desecration provides some sort of pleasure or excitement for the perpetrator(s). Be that as it may, the presence of guards may therefore produce for perpetrators the opposite effects than those intended. Supplementing the perpetrators' experience with a game of "cat and mouse", the guards may inadvertently heighten the excitement and magnify the thrill. The effectiveness of security guards has therefore been found to be ambiguous. If their presence creates an illusion of security, their absence does not translate into greater incidents. In comparison to the Eternal Gardens cemetery which has reportedly never been vandalized between 1989 and 1996 even without human surveillance, the Mount Royal cemetery has been vandalized three times a year. Contrary to scholarly findings, the relationship between vandalism and security is therefore inconsistent and does not have a uniquely deterring nor motivating effect for perpetrators. We found the use of lights as a possible deterrent or invitation that explains cemetery and synagogue vandalism.

#### 4.1.3 Lights

Motion detector lights are consistent within synagogues in Montreal and do not seem to have deterring effects on perpetrators. Among cemeteries, although half have attempted to use lighting systems as a deterring factor, there is a lack of confidence among officials with such measures. As one respondent explains “there is simply too

much ground to cover” 040. Most maintain that the use of lights is obsolete. With numerous trees, the vast surface covered and the number of tombstones, cemetery officials generally believe that lighting systems would not significantly deter juveniles from vandalism. Having said that, three out of six cemeteries have never tried lighting systems around the cemetery grounds.

Baron the Hirsh is presently the only cemetery reported to use lighting systems while the Back River Memorial Garden is the only one that has *tried* lights as a deterring factor. Both cemeteries have repeatedly been vandalized. None reported having cameras. As with the use of lighting fixtures, cemeteries that have tried the use of cameras have mentioned the inefficiency because of the numbers of trees and tombstones, not to mention the vastness of the terrain. Besides, the installation of numerous cameras and lighting systems would result in a tremendous increase in price. Neither preventive measures proved effective anyway. When lighting systems were used to deter break-ins, a massive shade was generated by the abundance of trees and tombstones. Most cemeteries have therefore abandoned or discarded the use of lighting and surveillance equipment.

## **4.2. Environmental Dynamics**

### **4.2.1. Schools, Bars & Community population**

While none of the cemeteries were located in Jewish communities, only the Back River Memorial Garden has bars and clubs in its immediate environment. Four out of six cemeteries reported being near<sup>5</sup> a minimum of one school, ranging from grade school to university. Since there are only seven Jewish cemeteries in Montreal however, it is difficult to link a pattern between vandalism with the number of schools.

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5- "Near" in the context of this study refers to no more than a 15 minute walking distance.

#### **4.2.2. Location**

Location seems to be a determining factor in cemetery vandalism. Whereas the majority of cemeteries are inaccessible or distant from major avenues of transportation (Baron de Hirsh, Kehal, Eternal Gardens, Beth Israel), or indistinguishable from non-Jewish cemeteries (Mount Royal), the Back River Memorial Garden is easily accessible. The Back River is located near a subway, on two major streets (Berri and Lajeunesse), and with minor fencing (5 feet high), the Back River could be seen as an easily accessible and conveniently located target. Moreover, being near a neo-Nazi Skinhead store called "IXL", located on 4367 St-Denis at the time, the Back River is possibly a primary target.

The store in question, "IXL" was opened by Alaric Jackson, founder of the United Skinheads Of Montreal (USOM). They are affiliated to the St-Foy, Quebec branch of the KKK known as "Latitude 68", and participate in demonstrations and White Supremacist gatherings throughout the province. During its operation, the store sold Skinhead fatigues and Third Reich Nazi paraphernalia. The increased traffic of neo-Nazi Skinheads created by IXL could very well have been a contributing factor to the criminal activity manifested at the Back River Memorial Garden. Indeed, since Skinheads were apprehended for the vandalism at the cemetery, one could only assume that the location of the cemetery in relation to the location of Skinhead hang-outs (IXL) is a determining factor in the probability that it will be vandalized.

### **5. Vandalism Patterns and Theoretical Perspectives**

With six cemeteries in Montreal, determining if definite regional patterns are forming is almost impossible, besides, with a low frequency base, an analysis of regional vandalism patterns would be speculative at best. At first sight, the gathered data not only indicated that a minimum of six incidents were anti-Semitic in nature, but that the hate-motivated vandalism of Jewish institutions does not reflect societal trends. They are

manifestations of a few marginal extremes. Given this data, one can deduce five regional schematic possibilities to explain the interconnection between the examined incidents:

1. That the incidents are related and perpetuated by the same group of individuals, whether organized or disorganized, reflecting anti-Semitic sentiments (related & organized).
2. That the incidents are related but perpetrated by different groups of individuals reflecting anti-Semitic sentiments (related & disorganized).
3. That the incidents are related, perpetrated by the same group of people but do not possess anti-Semitic sentiments (related, organized but non-ideological).
4. That the incidents are not related but reflect anti-Semitic sentiments (non related & organized).
5. That the incidents are not related and do not reflect anti-Semitic sentiments (non related & non organized).

Since no scholarly examinations have materialized on the possible interconnections between such incidents, those interested in the nature, extent and geographical location of racist cemetery vandalism are to a large extent directed toward the printed media. Using daily newspaper reports as a basis of our analysis to test our five-point schematic, we filtered out incidents of racist anti-Semitic vandalism to bring forth certain correlations. An examination of news reports permitted us to create a chronology of anti-Semitic vandalism reports in Montreal and therefore filter two definite patterns in 1993 resulting in ten distinct victimization incidents. Our examination also permitted us to filter international patterns and thereby scrutinize on possible effects of international media reports on encouraging similar incidents.

Since certain mechanisms have different effects on different people, and only a small minority of people will be influenced by the media to participate in violence activity, it is difficult to generate any definite answer to the question of whether media focus on racist vandalism begets further acts of vandalism. It is not our intent to provide a definite explanation on the contribution of the media on racist vandalism but propose a partial

answer based on reported empirical cases in order to identify some trigger explaining sudden outbursts of similar incidents. Indeed, our data revealed that religious vandalism tends to occur in waves or clusters in different geographical settings.

In light of this conclusion, our research could be said to draw on the results of two timely paradigms. Those influenced by psycho-social oriented studies evaluating whether the exposure to violence on TV generates violent behaviour (Andison, 1977; Hewitt 1992), and those examining the relationship between terrorism and the media (Schmid & Jongmann, 1989; Paletz & Schmid, 1992; Heradstveit & Bjorgo, 1992). Our extensive review of articles points clearly towards patterns of "copy-cat" religious vandalism particularly on an international level. The following segment will present a partial chronology based on our findings. This chronology will demonstrate some examples corroborating the mechanism of contingency.

### **5.1.1. May 12<sup>th</sup> 1990 - May 29<sup>th</sup> 1990**

Our examination showed that the Carpentras incident had a domino effect resulting in a wave of serious anti-Semitic attacks against cemeteries and synagogues as well as members of Jewish communities around the globe. During the May 12<sup>th</sup> incident in Carpentras France, the perpetrators, allegedly neo-Nazis according to news sources, daubed thirty-four gravestones with Swastikas, "ZOG"<sup>6</sup> and White Power slogans while numerous others were toppled over. Graves were also pried open and two corpses were exhumed and mutilated. One corpse was impaled on an umbrella (*French try 4 in Jewish cemetery rampage*, in the Detroit News, National News section p 1 Monday March 17, 1997). Fearing further incidents and "copy-cat" desecrations, French police set up a task force to patrol existing cemeteries (*French Decry Vandalism of Graves in the Globe and Mail*, May 15<sup>th</sup> 1990 p. A3). Within days police suspicion materialized.

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6 - "ZOG", or Zionist Occupied Government, is a slang internationally used by Neo-Nazi groups and organizations who are convinced that Jews control Western governments.

The massive publicity generated by the Carpentras incident culminated in a wave of similar incidents in France and beyond (*Swastikas appear in French towns in wake of cemetery vandalism*, in Montreal Gazette May 16<sup>th</sup> 1990). On May 16<sup>th</sup> 1990 for example, a mere four days later, the only Jewish cemetery in Ste-Foy Quebec was vandalized. Twenty-five to thirty gravestones were reportedly dubbed with Swastikas, “ZOG” and White Power slogans. The following day, a Jewish cemetery in Gloucester Ontario was also desecrated (*Memoires of Horror* in The Ottawa Citizen, May 24<sup>th</sup> 1990 p A1). Similar to the Ste-Foy incident, sixteen headstones were overturned while several others were spray painted with Nazi Symbols (*Jewish Cemetery Vandalized* in the Montreal Gazette, Friday May 18<sup>th</sup> 1990, p. A5).

The air time dedicated to the Carpentras attack prompted a rash of similar anti-Semitic incidents throughout France and abroad. On May 14<sup>th</sup> 1990 for example, red stars of David were painted on 17 Jewish-owned stores in Quimper. In Nancy (May 16<sup>th</sup>), Bayonne (May 19<sup>th</sup>), Wissembourg (May 22<sup>nd</sup>), Grazac (May 22<sup>nd</sup>) and Dole (May 29<sup>th</sup>), seven Jewish cemeteries were vandalized between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 29<sup>th</sup> of May (*Eruption of the ancient, ugly level*, in Time Magazine, May 28<sup>th</sup> 1990 p 22). Additionally on May 26<sup>th</sup> 1990, thirty-seven graves were vandalized with Swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans such as “morts aux Juifs” - Death to Jews - in Ecault France. As in the Carpentras incident, graves were pried open, headstones smashed and the corpse of a Jewish man was exhumed (*Graves Desecrated*, in The Financial Post May 29 1990). In total, seven Jewish cemeteries were reportedly vandalized between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of May. Attacks, spread out in France, West Germany and England, incorporated the use of similar slogans such as “Live Hitler”, “Dachau” and “Death to Jews” (*Metro Jews Watch Cemeteries*, in The Toronto Sun Tuesday May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1990 P 28). On June 9<sup>th</sup>, in Clichy-sous-bois, a suburb of Paris, Swastikas were also drawn on more than a dozen headstones only to be followed by a period of subsistence. The Carpentras desecration is also believed to have influenced similar incidents in York where vandals spraypainted Swastikas and anti-Semitic messages on gravestones and an almost identical desecration following five days later in Scotland Yard (ADL 1991).

During the same timeframe a similar trend took off in Poland, Germany, England and Sweden after news reports (ADL 1991). As in previous incidents, cemeteries in each country were vandalized with spraypainted neo-Nazi slogans and similar inscriptions: “live Hitler” and “Death to the Jews” (*Metro Jews Watch Cemetery*, in Toronto Sun, Tuesday May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1990 p A1). The attacks subsided only to reemerge in April of 1991.

### **5.1.2. April 11<sup>th</sup> 1991 - April 24<sup>th</sup> 1991**

Similar to previous incidents, the April 16<sup>th</sup> 1991 vandalism of the Chadad House Congregation in Montreal occurred days after a Jewish cemetery in Ziattau Germany was vandalized with Fascist, White Supremacist and anti-Semitic symbols (CJC Internal Memo). Four days following the media coverage of the Montreal incident and then days after the German desecration, 111 graves were desecrated in Buenos Aires and a synagogue was vandalized in San Salvador in very similar manner. The tombstones were overturned and spraypainted with White Supremacist slogans and Swastikas (ADL 1992). In almost identical fashion, on April 24<sup>th</sup>, a Jewish cemetery in Warsaw Poland was desecrated (ADL 1992). Seventy-nine tombstones were overturned and painted with red Swastikas and White Power slogans. This pattern is consistent with other incidents. Five days preceding the Poland incident, vandals broke 110 tombstones in a southern Buenos Aires cemetery. The headstones were hammered to pieces (*Jewish Cemetery Attacked by Vandalism*, in the Toronto Star, May 1<sup>st</sup> 1991). Soon after news reports, similar anti-Semitic patterns occurred in Poland, Germany, England and Sweden. In each country cemeteries were desecrated with spraypainted neo-Nazi slogans and the words “live Hitler” and “Death to the Jews” (*Metro Jews watch cemetery*, in Toronto Sun Tuesday May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1990 pA1).



### 5.1.3. July 1<sup>st</sup> 1992 - October 24<sup>th</sup> 1992

More “copy-cat” crimes later materialized in 1992. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, three synagogues were vandalized in Toronto in what was believed to be a retributory reaction to the arrest of White Supremacist Tom and John Metzger (*3 Toronto Synagogues Vandalized after arrest of White Supremacist*, in JTA Daily News, July 3 1992 p 3). Tom Metzger, the founder of the California-based White Aryan Resistance Movement (W.A.R) and former grand dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, came to Canada to participate in a conference organized by Toronto’s White Supremacist group “The Heritage Front”. He was arrested for violating immigration laws that bar entry to Canada to anyone likely to incite racial hatred. Metzger was subsequently deported to the U.S. where he faced a jail sentence for violating the terms of his probation. The vandalized synagogues were within a three miles radius of each other and were painted with Swastikas and other slogans such as “Die Jews”, “Hitler lives”, “PLO” and “Arab Rules”.

By August 26 1992, vandals attacked a Jewish cemetery in Munich. Fifteen gravestones were overturned and others damaged (*Vandals hit Munich Jewish Cemetery*, in JTA daily News September 1<sup>st</sup> 1992 p6). The desecration, although not clearly anti-Semitic, was shortly followed by a similar incident in Alsace France where, on September 1 1992, almost two hundred tombstones were vandalized. Fifty headstones were broken while another 143 were damaged or knocked over (*Vandals in Alsace hit Jewish Tombs*, in The New York Times International, Wednesday September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1992, P A4). As in the Munich attack, no anti-Semitic graffiti or messages were found at the cemetery. Police wondered whether the extent of the damage is indicative of anti-Semitic motives. The desecration was followed by a wave of German incidents. On October 6<sup>th</sup> 1992, vandals spraypainted Nazi slogans on 15 Jewish gravestones in Karlsruhe (*Vandals desecrate Jewish cemetery in Germany*, in Toronto Star, October 8<sup>th</sup> 1992). This occurred six days after vandals painted Nazi slogans on Jewish tombstones in Stuttgart, southern Germany and two weeks after a series of anti-Semitic incidents broke throughout Germany, including arson in the

barracks of a memorial to Jewish Holocaust victims at a former Nazi concentration camp in Sachsenhausen, northern Berlin. The rash of anti-Semitic patterns continued in Germany.

Following the attack of the former concentration camp in north Berlin on October 20<sup>th</sup> 1992, the Ravensbrueck concentration camp for women was firebombed on October 23<sup>rd</sup> (*Ex-concentration camp firebombed in Germany*, in the Montreal Gazette, October 24<sup>th</sup> 1992). This second attack on former concentration camps within four days was followed the next day by the October 24<sup>th</sup> desecration of the Holocaust victims' cemetery in the Dachau concentration camp (*Cemetery for victims of Dachau is desecrated*, in Toronto Star, October 25<sup>th</sup> 1992). Fifty graves were overturned and defaced with Swastikas and neo-Nazi slogans. The three attacks on former concentration camps, between October 20<sup>th</sup> and October 25<sup>th</sup>, came on the heels of other international incidents as well as numerous anti-foreign attacks in Germany. In Griefswald, northern Germany for example, police intervened as during a battle between 60 foreign students and 100 Right-Wing Extremists (*Cemetery for victims of Dachau is desecrated*, in the Toronto Star October 25<sup>th</sup> 1992). The attack was a result of accumulated frustration and tension after the assault of a Moroccan student. In Ingolstadt, north Munich, two men threw five firebomb at a shelter for asylum-seekers. According to the same article, similar attacks occurred throughout a half-dozen German cities. Between October 1992 and January of 1993, no further incidents were found to be reported in the media.

#### **5.1.4. January 1993 - January 27<sup>th</sup> 1993**

By January 1993, the seven Montreal area synagogues demonstrated similar international patterns. After the Montreal area vandalism spree, similar events occurred in France where on January 7<sup>th</sup> 1993 four synagogues were vandalized overnight in Lyon, France (ADL 1994). Swastikas were spray painted in red on the front doors of

the synagogues. The following week three synagogues were also vandalized in Strasbourg (ADL 1994). By January 27<sup>th</sup>, the vandalism returned to Laval leaving a community centre, a synagogue, and two homes vandalized with Swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans.

#### **5.1.5. August 15<sup>th</sup> 1993 - September 8<sup>th</sup> 1993**

Other noteworthy incidents were manifested in Southampton England, where on August 15<sup>th</sup> 1993, 200 gravestones were defaced with Swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans (*Tombstones defaced in Jewish cemetery,* in New York Times September 22 1993). Four days following the attack, 243 graves in the Netherlands were vandalized. In an almost duplicate manifestation of the Southampton incident, the desecration resulted in the defacement of tombstones with White Power symbols and Swastikas. Police at the time were aware of both incidents and concluded that the case was partly motivated by hate and influence (ADL 1994). Similarly, on September 8<sup>th</sup> 1993, in Berlin, vandals desecrated a Jewish cemetery in the eastern town of Wriezen (*German Jewish Graves hit,* New York times Thursday September 9<sup>th</sup> 1993). Dozen of tombstones were vandalized with Swastikas and White Supremacist slogans while 17 more were toppled. The graffiti included the letters F.A.P., the initials for the free workers party, an active neo-Nazi White Supremacist organization in Germany.

#### **5.1.6. May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1994 - May 25<sup>th</sup> 1994**

In parallel, the Young Israel Of Montreal Congregation and Hekhal Shalom synagogues were both desecrated less than ten days after the Hillel College in St-Laurent was defaced with Swastikas (*Montreal Sephardi school daubed with Swastikas,* in the Canadian Jewish News, Thursday May 12<sup>th</sup> 1994 p1). Six months following its opening the College was vandalized with over ten Swastikas and the words “Go home

jeews". The college also received hate messages soon afterwards (*Montreal Jews outraged over latest anti-Semitic act*, in Montreal Gazette May 13<sup>th</sup> 1994). During the same month, a Jewish cemetery in Buenos Aires was desecrated in Mar del Plata for the 10<sup>th</sup> time in two years and in Belarus, on May 11<sup>th</sup> 1994, 65 tombstones were vandalized with Swastikas and Extreme Right slogans (ADL 1995). During the previous month, incidents outside Canada reflected similar trends. On April 10<sup>th</sup> 1994, following threatening phone calls, a Ukranian synagogue in Kremenchy was burned down while Jewish gravestones were broken and defaced in a cemetery in Tulchin. On April 14<sup>th</sup> 1994, a Madrid synagogue was vandalized with anti-Semitic symbols. The vandalism was believed to commemorate Hitler's death. One week following the Madrid incident, 21 graves in the Moravian town of Prevov were desecrated with anti-Semitic graffiti after an estimated 500 Skins chanted racial and anti-Semitic slogans in Prague.

The May 5<sup>th</sup> 1995 desecration of the Communaute Sepharade synagogue in St-Laurent was followed by the vandalism of Hradec Kraloue cemetery in the Czech Republic. By May 8<sup>th</sup>, 14 gravestones in a Jewish cemetery in Chisinau, Moldova, were destroyed. By May 18<sup>th</sup>, the Clubavitch Commemorial Center in St-Denis-Sur Seine was vandalized and soon afterwards, anti-Semitic graffiti were found on the walls of Bratislava synagogue in Slovakia. On May 25<sup>th</sup> 1995, a synagogue in the Netherlands was vandalized as well (ADL 1996).

Here in Montreal, specifically, four patterns were found between 1982 and 1996 and three between 1989 and 1996. In 1982 for example, numerous anti-Semitic incidents were linked to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and later in 1991, anti-Semitic graffiti was linked to the war in the Persian Gulf. According to Karen Mock, National Director of the League of Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada, incidents of political instability such as these are used as "an excuse to scapegoat minorities, especially the Jews" (*Anti-Semitism at highest level in decades, B'nai Brith reports*, in Toronto Star February 11<sup>th</sup> 1992 P A3). Further to her point, at the height of the Persian Gulf crisis for example, as Iraq launched scattered missile attacks against Israel, the Jewish

student's union at York University and the Jewish Studies department at University of Toronto received 2 bomb threats a day.

## **5.2. Theoretical Explanations of Contingency**

The foregoing segment has shed some light on international patterns of similar ideologically-motivated vandalism incidents. The data indicates distinct waves or clusters in divergent geographical locations shortly after similar incidents are reported in international media. Furthermore, cases of cemetery vandalism tend to be similar in terms of time (in cluster or waves) and nature (in form). That being said, there are four possible explanations attributable to the wave patterns:

- 1 The clusters of similar incidents of vandalism are random.
- 2 Waves of similar incidents are caused by similar tense socio-political climates in their respective countries. This may place minority groups in a negative light, thereby fermenting incidents of scapegoating by individuals who regard these actions as a natural way to react.
- 3 Coverage of anti-Semitic ideological vandalism in the mass media encourage or begets further incidents of violence.
- 4 A concerted international terror campaign is coordinated by an organized group or movement which systematically deploys incidence of ideologically-based vandalism as a means of perpetuating a message.

Given our findings, the most considerable explanation of contingency rests in the influence attributed by the media. News reports indicate that incidents occur either in clusters - at the same time in different or same geographical locations, or in waves - in different or same geographical locations but in short intervals. As indicated, media reports attest to the wave pattern of similar incidents of vandalism. Our analysis indicates that news coverage of racist, anti-Semitic or ideologically motivated vandalism begets further

incidents of violence. Although a random pattern theory may partially explain similar cluster manifestations, it does not construe consistent similar wave patterns as illustrated in previous segment.

Whereas paradigms focussing of the socio-political currents (paradigm 2) or on contagency (paradigm 3) provide greater explanatory elements, random theories (paradigm 1) and terror campaign theories (paradigm 4) are limited since they do not explain how similar incidents targeting the same victimized group and institution may be carried out at various places in only a few days interval. Moreover, a systematic terror campaign by the extreme right requires a highly organized and efficient association and therefore attributes too much organization and power to a marginal movement.

Whereas the ‘terror campaign’ theory points to possible levels of organization in the German attacks in the three former concentration camps, for example, a theory advancing the existence of an international terror campaign orchestrated by a neo-Nazi White Supremacist movement would not only have to illustrate a collaborative existence on an international level, but also explain, in the event of such an existence, why incidents of organized hate-crimes do not materialize more often given their ideological and organizational base. This argument does not exclude global interconnection of white supremacist groups, it does however argue against a systematic explanation of the studied phenomena as being rooted in such explanations.

Although all four points are valid on their own, it has been the point of this segment to shed light on the findings enumerated in our own investigation. Given the relation between incidents in terms of time and space, it has been our argument that the most plausible explanation for “wave” and “cluster” patterns is that the heavy media coverage surrounding sensational incidents begets similar events and therefore furthers the contagion effect. Our hypothesis is further supported by police testimony concerning the murder of a 51 year old man in Angrignon Park on November 29<sup>th</sup> 1992 (*Youth charged in Murder had neo-Nazi membership card*, in Montreal Gazette, Wednesday

January 27<sup>th</sup> 1993, P A3). The man, believed to be homosexual by his six assailants carrying baseball bats, was ambushed by youths between the ages of 15 to 17. According to police, one of the perpetrators, a member of a NSDAP/AO<sup>7</sup>, kept a scrapbook of newspaper clippings of similar incidents of racist attacks in Germany (*High time to counter vandalism*, in The Montreal Gazette, Friday January 29<sup>th</sup> 1993 p B2).

Given the contagion hypothesis, the assumption that certain *seemingly* anti-Semitic incidents do not only reflect overt anti-Semitic sentiments must be taken into consideration. Given the inconclusive report pertaining to the targeting of nine Jewish institutions during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon for example, one must not rule out the possibility that the contagion effect supplemented with certain socio-political currents, push more extreme individuals to be influenced by the actions of others and therefore commit similar acts. Certain alleged anti-Semitic desecrations may reflect a form of social control<sup>8</sup> utilized by different self-proclaimed "delegates" who feel, in different political and sociological currents that a powerful message, ie; anti-Semitic Vandalism, will send a warning of dissent to the general targeted community. In this respect, further reflexion should be given to matters of motivation.

In retrospect, it could be argued that anti-Semitic or ideologically motivated vandalism can serve three purposes for perpetrators. First, it provides the perpetrators with a tangible act against the targeted victim while maintaining personal anonymity. Second, it lends itself to terrorizing the given target (i.e, the Jewish community), and third, it clearly manifests frustration pertaining to one's motivational factors associated with the crime. Whether perpetrated by organized hate groups or disorganized non ideologically motivated youths, these three functional explanations of anti-Semitic vandalism are applicable.

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7- a U.S. based neo-Nazi group referring themselves as the National Socialist German Workers' Party-Overseas Organization

8 - see Donald Black

## 6. Perpetrators

Interviews with community members (see chapter 6) revealed the belief that incidents of vandalism generally stem from two divergent sources; the Arab community and the neo-Nazi fraction of society. Unfortunately, within our examined sample no data was found to substantiate this hypothesis. Whereas the majority of respondents maintained that their synagogue was vandalized by members of the Arab community during times of confrontation in the Middle East, it was found that only one respondent was able to support this allegation. Although others maintained that: “it is generally at times of extreme circumstances in the Middle East that we are targeted” (008) and that: “whenever there are conflicts between Jews and Arabs, synagogues experience incidents of vandalism” (017) or that: “Middle Eastern conflicts have a determining effect on us” (012), none were able to provide evidence for their assumptions and our examination of incidents during times of Israeli-Palestinian conflicts did not substantiate their claim. Not only did incidents of synagogue vandalism remain relatively constant during times of Israeli and Palestinian conflict (ie, infrequent), but the lack of vandalism during the largely controversial celebration of Israel’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary among Jews and Arabs in both Israel and Canada casts doubt on pointing fingers towards Middle Eastern conflicts as a trigger for vandalism. This however does not negate the possible contributory factor of Middle Eastern affairs on a few incidents of vandalism, as seen with the Goldberg incident. The Arab community’s extreme reaction to the celebration of Israel’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 30<sup>th</sup> 1998, would stray from the Jewish community leaders’ perception only to question the lack of synagogue vandalism during a time of extreme frustration among radical members of the Arab community.

In contrast to this analysis, our examination of reported incidents has led us to identify two emerging patterns for Montreal’s synagogue and cemetery vandalism. First, like Europe, there appears to be a high level of neo-Nazi activity in cemetery vandalism; second, there appears to be low level of activity involving Arabs as opposed to a greater level of activity among non-affiliated youths from so-called ‘mainstream’ society. This



paradigm is based on the numerous White Supremacist neo-Nazi slogans in cemetery vandalism. In one incident a neo-Nazi group was apprehended by police, while another group was seen vandalizing the Kehal Israel memorial Garden.

Let us assume that the large social majority is not familiar with neo-Nazi Skinhead rhetoric such as Z.O.G (Zionist Occupied Government); “Juden Raus” or the symbol of White Power. The manifestation of White Supremacist slogans, generally found in neo-Nazi propaganda and Internet sites, may either account for the attribution of a neo-Nazi Skinhead group’s responsibility for the act, or reflect the perpetrator(s)’s direct or indirect contact with White Supremacist ideology. In either case, the ideological tenet may therefore be directly or indirectly responsible for incidents of anti-Semitic vandalism in cemeteries (see Chapter 4). Contrary to this hypothesis, however, one notices the absence of White Supremacist slogans in synagogue vandalism. With the exception of Swastikas, a symbol virtually known by all fractions of society, there is little evidence accounting for Skinhead activity in synagogue vandalism. Apprehended perpetrators largely came from mainstream society and were found to have no affiliation with neo-Nazi groups or contacts with the Arab community. The perpetrators from the Young Israel synagogue for example, were found to have no links to such organizations and were not part of the Arab community. Their crime was a case of influence which bore no concrete anti-Semitic sentiments.

Given our previous five point paradigm pertaining to possible perpetrators of anti-Semitic vandalism, it is clear that perpetrators of anti-Semitic vandalism in cemeteries are mostly accounted for by neo-Nazi skinheads. Synagogue vandalism offenders, although they may stem from any combination of points, reflect more points four and five of our paradigm. This being said, incidents of synagogue vandalism were largely found to be non-related and reflect anti-Semitic or influential elements. Assuming the non-affiliated element among apprehended perpetrators in synagogue vandalism, the “escalating momentum” hypothesis must be taken into context. The presence of Swastikas, extremely symbolic for the Jewish people especially when accounted for in

synagogues and cemeteries, may not necessarily imply anti-Semitic sentiments. Elements of peer pressure, the theory of “escalating momentum”, the need to be provocative, the need to impress peers with taboos or the “courage” of indifference must be taken into context.

An emphasis on juvenile crime and psychology may perhaps bridge the gap between the motive and the act. It is from that perspective that the true nature and meaning of the act may be scrutinized in terms of the agent’s desired effect or understanding. Whereas this does not contest the racist message, it is put forth that the ‘symbolic interactions’ must be examined to decipher the subjective motive and intent of the crime. Hence, whereas an act perpetrated by white-Supremacists may represent one message, the symbolic meaning of the Swastika by a non-affiliated youth, or a member of the Arab community, may be intended as a different message, not necessarily symbolizing hatred, but rather frustration or ignorance.

## **Chapter IV**

### **The First Emergence of the Skinhead Subculture And the Symbolism of Racist Vandalism: The Reflections of Four Neo-Nazis Skinheads**

## **Chapter Four**

### **The First Emergence of the Skinhead Subculture And the Symbolism of Racist Vandalism: The Reflections of Four Neo-Nazis Skinheads**

The foregoing chapter has indicated that anti-Semitic vandalism stem from various sources. Whereas cemeteries reports indicate high levels of neo-Nazi activity, non affiliated or influenced youth were found to perpetuate synagogue vandalism. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the symbolic significance and function of cemetery desecrations from the viewpoint of the perpetrators. To this end, the founder of a Montreal neo-Nazi Skinhead group and three current members were interviewed.

Since vandalism in synagogues was found to be perpetrated by divergent sources, the reasoning behind the motive may be multiple and therefore inconsistent. Providing a common explanation pertaining to such behavior may therefore be frivolous and assumptive. Motives may be so vast, yet include elements of simple influence, peer-pressure, juvenile rebellion (LeBlanc 1983), vindictiveness (Cohen 1973) or political motivations (Bjorgo & Witte 1994). The wide array of explanations indicates that unanimous encompassing theories are difficult if not impossible to generate. As exemplified in the previous chapter, cemetery vandalism among neo-Nazi Skinheads are not only consistent in Montreal, but throughout the globe. It is put forth that the ideological reasoning and motive is congruent among similar incidents limited to cemetery vandalism perpetrated by the same subculture. It is further advanced that since there appears to be an influential element in some incidents of vandalism, or rather vandalism perpetrated by people not part of the skinhead movement, interviews with neo-Nazi Skinheads provide explicative analysis on the tactics of promotion, influence, and mobilization among White Supremacist Skinhead groups.

Given our orientation, it is the purpose of this chapter to examine the symbolic significance of racist vandalism among the examined subculture and investigate the plausibility of contagency. To this end, ideological tenets, tactics of promotion and the role of ideology will be explored. The chief aim of this approach is to put the movement in a socio-ideological context, or social environment, which explains the symbolic significance of Jewish institutional vandalism within the given subculture.

Although there exists a handful of field studies about Skinhead organizations (Kinsella 1994; Svoray 1994; Hamm 1993; Hasselbach 1996), examinations have traditionally avoided to investigate the symbolic significance of cemetery and synagogue vandalism. Existing data typically reveal hierarchical structures and operational paradigms among similar agencies. As a consequence, there is a lack of literature on the symbolism of the subculture, and a lack of explicative theories pertaining to routine activities within the given group. This chapter will examine racist vandalism from the group's perspective and analyze the origins, ideology and goals of the Skinheads. In light of our examined topic, our goal is to present a lucid analysis on the symbolism and function of cemetery desecration among the given fraction.

## **1. - The first Emergence of the Skinhead Subculture**

The first emergence of the skinhead phenomenon can be traced back to the early 70's in England where gangs of youths with shaved heads and combat boots began to emerge. Their style symbolized a tough and patriotic working class opposed to the pacifist views of the hippies (ADL 1993). During the early 1970's the skinhead subculture, not yet associated with Hitler's Nationalist Socialist creed, was largely composed of dock workers who listened to Ska music, a form of African reggae, and associated freely with East Indian and African co-workers.

By the late 70's however, the neo-Nazi Skinhead subculture began to emerge as economic depression and increasing immigration set forth. The era witnessed a schism among newly emerged neo-Nazi Skinheads and the traditional non-racist skins. The new breed of racist Skinheads saw increasing immigration as a source of falling economy and blamed immigrants for monopolizing available positions (Hamm 1993). As employment became scarce and the standards of living plunged they designated immigration as the source of social problems. Poverty, crime, drugs and prostitution were all attributed to minorities and to a continued flow of immigration (Kinsella 1993). The racist and chauvinistic attitudes that prevailed at the time among many skins evolved into a crude form of Nazism. From the beginning, skins drew public notice for their bigotry and taste for violence exemplified by their frequent assaults on Asian immigrants, known as "Paki-bashing"(Hamm 1993).

In the years that followed, the Thatcher government of Britain took the country down a path of fiscal conservatism and trickle-down economics. The Skinhead movement spread from England to Canada, the United States and beyond. By the end of the decade, neo-Nazi Skinheads throughout Europe amassed a highly publicized record of racial assaults, vandalism, and murder (ADL 1993). In England alone, the number of attacks reportedly increased from 5,000 in 1979 to 10,000 in 1982 and 70,000 a year between 1985 and 1988 (Bowling 1993). A study undertaken in London's east end found that one-fourth of all black residents had been the victim of some form of racial harassment by skinheads in the previous 12 months (London Borough of Newham, 1986). By the mid 1980's racist Skins were found in almost every industrialized country whose majority population is of European extraction (ADL 1993). Neo-Nazi ideology combined with the gang life-style provides skinheads with a seductive sense of strength disproportionate to their actual numbers, a sense of group belonging and superiority over others who are not white (Kinsella 1993). Perceiving themselves as racial warriors, Skinheads tend to glorify Hitler and aspire to create his vision of a worldwide pan-Aryan Reich. The sense of power, belonging and destiny combine to appeal to rebellious youths. By the mid 80's neo-Nazi skinheads appeared

on the streets of Canada. From a membership of approximately one-thousand in 1988, their ranks grew to approach four thousand by 1993. According to the Anti-Defamation League's 1994 quantitative report "*Skinhead International*", Canadian cities with largest contingents of skinheads are Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and Vancouver.

### **1.2. The Rise of the Canadian Skinhead subculture:**

According to Daniel Hubert and Yves Claude's analysis "*les Skinheads et l'extreme droite*", the skinhead movement initially emerged in Canada through the influence of racist punk music of bands like Skrewdriver. Consistent with this analysis other authors contend that music became a determining factor in both recruitment drives and mobilization within the white supremacist movement (Hamm, 1995; ADL, 1994). The Anti-Defamation League's "*Skinhead International*," for example argues that music holds a central role within ideological construction and recruitment drives within the movement. Skinheads are devoted to White Power music, also known as Ska, Oi! and White Power rock, whose message is filled with racist lyrics and religious bigotry, repeating consistent lexicons of hate. As explained by the ADL (1993) report:

No other means of communication - neither the spoken or written word - compares with oi music's influence on their outlook and behavior. Music is the Skinhead movement's main propaganda weapon and its chief means of attracting young recruits into its ranks. Skins maintain universal ties through their music, distributing records internationally and organizing concert tours and music fests that feature both domestic and foreign bands.

Organizers and propagandists of the movement know that the music is powerful and influential. The medium is used to great effect, securing loyalty of those already in the movement and encouraging and mobilizing others to join.

Paralleling its British and American counterparts, the Canadian Skinhead movement arose out of a specific mix of postwar cultures and the punk phenomenon (Hamm 1993). Punk music rose from the values of narcissism, nihilism, gender confusion, and sadomasochism inherent in what is known as glam rock. The subculture is clearly expressed by Johnny Rotten, frontman and singer of the Sex Pistols:

...it's a question of style. Call it the style of Fuckyouism: *fuck you, fuck off, "don't waste my time"* Not some precious, aesthetic response to the world, but something they have to feel: *fuck you, fuck off, "don't waste my time."* Without it these Sex Pistols (or punk music) would merely be one more musical fad. (Bromberg, 1989: xiv-xv)

Through their musical style, and therefore through symbols of nihilism, sexism, anarchy and violence, punks defined their subculture (Dancis 1978; Hebdige 1979). Their clothing came to symbolize confrontation while punk music provided followers with "a voice that denied all social facts, and in that denial affirmed that everything was possible" (Marcus, 1989:2).

Put simple, punk was deliberately meant to shock and offend everyone. "We're into chaos" said Johnny Rotten, "not music". This anarchy was expressed in the names of the original punk bands (generation X, the Unwanted, Rejects, Damned, Dogs, Sex Pistols) and in the titles of their songs: "If you don't want to fuck me, Fuck off," "I Wanna Be Sick on You," "Anarchy in the U.K.," "Kill Me Today," "Blank Generation", "No Fun", "Submission" and "No Feelings." (Hamm 1993: 28)

By the end of the decade, the Thatcher government implanted reconstructivist measures aimed at ameliorating the lot of the working class. Thousands of low skilled, low paying jobs were created while the Thatcher administration took a conservative stand to immigration. Within this specific cultural context rose the new breed of punk music influenced by conservatism and extreme nationalism aimed at limiting and discouraging immigration. The conservative orientation of the Thatcher government provided the subculture with a political context in which to embed their message. The new breed of music, White Power music, emerged with new records, such as Skrewdriver's *Hail the*



*New Dawn*, celebrating a new era in music and culture. With the ideological context of the white supremacist movement now following political conservative orientations in England, America and Canada, White Power music and more specifically the first skinhead group, Skrewdriver, created a skinhead subculture associated with violence.

Criminologist Mark Hamm argues that the new White Power music brought about “a tight fit between subcultural values (Nazism), style (Paki bashing, hippie bashing, queer bashing, Nigger bashing)...and music (White Power rock)” (Hamm 1993: 35). By 1983, White Supremacist Oi! bands began to expand throughout England, Germany, Belgium, Sweden, France, Australia, America and Canada (ADL 1988). Through the prism of music, the skinhead movement learned to perceive itself as the victim of social injustice. Oi! Music portrays racial minorities, immigrants and Jews as agents in a conspiracy aimed at undermining the survival of the white race. Substantiating previous research (Hamm 1993; ADL 1993), our respondents confirmed the determining role of music within the skinhead movement.

*The whole (skinhead) music scene is directed to the advancement of the Aryan cause. Our music is our message. Our music sends messages to skins around the world. The purpose is to have fun, but most importantly, to remember our heritage. Remember who we are and never give up the struggle...The music is a message, it's a wake up call to all right wingers to feel proud and to fight for their survival. It advocates violence, survival and our Arianism 002.*

Typically, respondents furthered insight into the recruiting aspect of Skinhead music:

*The music is the first thing that appealed to me. It has the aggressive edge I needed at the time. When I was first introduced to the music by a friend, I was blind to the movement's cause. Music introduced me to the cause, and the music opened my eyes to reality. 001*

With music, skinheads were able to spread their philosophy. The element of indoctrination within skinhead music is clearly explained by prominent Canadian white supremacist leader and propagandist George Burdi:

I would say that 95% of the youth movement around the world today is because of the music. Mass media, television, flashing images, quickly changing all the time. In the age of mass media you can't place flyers on cars and expect to reach the population. You need to get efficient, you need to use the mass media and that's where music comes in. Music is the most efficient and appealing media we can afford for our target population (Kinsella 1994).

Additionally, Burdi contends that once interested in the music, the power of repetition provides the basis of ideological indoctrination and strength.

Take the slogan "White People Awake, Save Our Great Race". You place that chorus in a song and repeat it two times per chorus, eight times in an entire song. If they play that tape only five times a week, and only listen to that one song, they listen to "white people awake save our great race" forty times in that one week, and 160 times in one month, and you do the math beyond that (Kinsella 1994).

Supplemented with recruiting drives of American right wing groups, such as White Aryan Resistance (W.A.R.), the Ku Klux Klan and the Aryan Nation, Canadian skinheads were pulled toward the racist ideology of the white supremacist movement in Canada. By 1986, W.A.R. established a Canadian affiliated group in B.C., and W.A.R (White Aryan Resistance) created its Montreal based Canadian spin-off group, the Aryan Resistance Movement (A.R.M.). With exchange and contact, American skinheads attended Canadian rallies while Canadian Skinheads underwent military training in the Aryan Nations' paramilitary camp in Lake Hayden, Idaho. By the end of 1986, the American based Aryan Nation established its first Canadian branch in Alberta under the

leadership of Terry Long, who eventually established the first Canadian White Supremacist paramilitary camp. Skinheads are trained for the coming of the “Racial Holy War”. In his internal white supremacist publication, *Canada Awake* (n.2 Spring 1989), Terry Long ordered skinheads to prepare for the racial war and the survival of the white race. Members were told to stockade on food, munition and weapons. With the implementation of the younger skinhead fraction, the structural base of the White supremacist movement experienced changes. No longer were older fractions responsible for recruitment drives. Founding members like Terry Long and Ernst Zundel, now became the propaganda writers while the younger skinheads were used to disseminate the propaganda, attract attention, and recruit new members. Other skinheads were implemented within the Canadian Armed Forces in order to learn military assault methods as learning tools for the general movement.

### **1.3. The Development of the Skinhead Subculture in Quebec**

According to Hubert and Claude’s analysis “*Les Skinheads et l’extreme droite*”, the Montreal skinhead movement first emerged in the Anglophone fraction of NDG during the early 1980's (Hubert & Claude, 1991). Consistent with Hamm’s analysis, the authors confirm that racist music served as the catalyst for the movement and thereby provided skinheads an insertion within the white supremacist subcultural community. The initial skinheads were attracted to the decadence and rebellious imagery of racialist music as well as the cultural clicks of music, bondage and discipline associated within the subculture. While parties were organized as subtle recruitment drives, a sharp rise in skinhead membership was recorded by anti-gang police squads in Montreal (Service de Police de la Communaute Urbaine de Montreal 1989). By the mid 80's, skinhead groups were found in Montreal regions of Plateau Mont-Royal, the south eastern and western parts of Montreal, as well as in Pointe-aux-Trembles, Laval, Longueuil, Sherbrooke, Trois-Rivieres, Joliette and Val d’Or, (Hubert & Claude 1991: 51). In 1993, Montreal accounted for no less than twelve active white supremacist neo-Nazi organizations (CCVR 1994; The Link September 14<sup>th</sup> 1993 p 5).

## 1.4. Organizational Funding

The funding of skinhead organizations is largely left to the leaders of individual groupings. Leaders are responsible for securing the financial existence of the group. As such, propaganda, racist music sales, video cassettes, audio cassettes, books, stickers, and concert promotions are utilized as means of generating funding. Internet sites with support logs also prompt sympathizers to mail donations. Some telephone based hate lines charge per call, thus increasing the organization's capital. For more popular organizations, further sources of funding rests in monthly distribution of propaganda flyers. These flyers are mailed on a monthly basis to sympathizers who donate funds to the organization.

On a more serious level, larger White supremacist organizations have also received considerable funding from political regimes of other countries. The Heritage Front for example, constituting Canada's largest white supremacist organization, received a reported one million dollars from Mommar Khadafi (Solicitor General of Canada 1994). There also exists an international network of lawyers who provide legal assistance to Klan and neo-Nazi groups. The organization is referred to as "CAUSE", which stands for Canada, Australia, United States, South Africa and Europe. CAUSE's headquarters is located in Nashville, North Carolina, and is lead by Kirk Lyons and Sam Dixon. The Goal of CAUSE is to create an international neo-Nazi organization among lawyers. The organization is primarily concerned with defending "free" or hate speech, and Holocaust denial. It should be noted however that not all skinhead groups receive funding from White Supremacist organizations. The majority are left to their own initiative.

## **2. - Interview Findings**

### **2.1. Recruitment And Ideological Construct**

Given our intent, the purpose of our interviews was to analyze the goals of the White Supremacist Skinhead subculture from the viewpoint of symbolic interactionism. To this end, we sought to elicit discussion around group structure, influence, routine activity and more importantly, the symbolic significance of the studied form of criminality. Our respondents explained that the Skinheads are part of the larger White Supremacist movement which has attracted youths through the means of music, gatherings and propaganda. During the early 90's a growing number of Skinheads have joined the Canadian based white supremacist movement and have created communication ports with old-line Canadian hate-mongers like Ernst Zundel, Terry Long, and Tom Metzger (Kinsella 1994; B'nai Brith 1995). Since their adherence to the movement, skinheads have taken part in virtually every hate movement rally across Canada. The attraction of Skinheads, also known as the "racial" or "frontline warriors" of the movement, stems from the White Supremacist militant stand that favors outright violence. This philosophy also infused Skinheads with a legitimizing philosophy centered around violent anti-governmental beliefs.

Skinheads profiled by the sampled interviewees came from divergent socio-economic backgrounds favoring the middle class. According to respondents, members were typically between the ages of 17 and 25. Only a minority were females and they were usually initiated through their male counterparts. Whereas the majority of members resided with their biological families, parents were reported to disapprove of their son's affiliations. Remaining members lived together in large lofts, payed for through welfare subsidies or factory work. All members are said to have come in contact with White Supremacism through music or internet propaganda.

## 2.2. The emergence of the Skinhead subculture in Montreal

Substantiating relevant literature, our examination revealed similar trends regarding the emergence of the skinhead subculture in Montreal. Respondents maintained that the Montreal skinhead “scene” emergence during the early 80's, primarily limited to the Anglophone districts of Montreal and surrounding areas. Music, maintain the interviewees, was a determining factor in the emergence of skinhead groups.

*I would say that music started it all. There were punk stores with imported skin labels (records). This caught attention and gradually made people dress and believe certain things, just like the black rap thing today. I would say it had an important role for us. 002*

The emergence of the skinhead subculture was influenced and accentuated by such films as Stanley Kubrick’s “Clockwork Orange”. Underground record stores like Dutchies and Labyrinth became cultural icon spots for skinheads. Dutchies record store on St-Laurent street gradually emerged as a gathering point for skinheads. The store imported Punk and skinhead records, sold skinhead patches and logo stickers. Concert promotions were also advertized on Dutchies’ billboards. Concerts became recruiting tools to perpetuate skinhead and far right ideology. Skinheads also gathered in Downtown Montreal at Xo2 on St-Denis street. The clothing store sold skinhead paraphanelia such as white and red Doc Martins laces, Boots, skinhead bomber jackets with Swastikas, SS and Stormtrooper logos. Doc Martin boots were sold in traditional Black or red, symbolizing racism of White Supremacism and the extreme right.

The gradual emergence of underground stores fermented the creation of the Skinhead subculture in Montreal. The proximity of these stores to “Foufounes Electrique”, Montreal’s best known underground club at the time, resulted in the influx of skinheads to the bar. Gradually, skinhead music replaced the traditional punk and alternative music played at Foufounes. By the mid eighties the Skinhead fashion

movement was given another push by Pink Floyd's film "The Wall". Although the film's message is anti-Fascist, the film nevertheless attracted youth to the tough imagery of Skinhead gang and philosophy portrayed in the movie. Following the release of the film, community groups such as Bnai Brith and CJC noticed an increase in Skinhead groups and activities in and around Montreal. With the progression of the skinhead fad of the late 80's Foufounes Electrique became a cultural spot for skinheads groups and bands alike. By the early 90's IXL, Montreal first all White Supremacist Neo-Nazi store emerged. It's owner, Alaric Jackson, founded the United Skinheads of Montreal. As skinheads were gradually thrown out of stores like Dutchies and Foufounes due to increasing police raids and excessive fighting, IXL became the central location for the Skinheads of Montreal. IXL sold everything from Nazi daggers and uniforms to Third Reich flags, boots, paraphenalia, skinhead music, taped, written propaganda and videotaped skinhead and white supremacist gatherings. By the early 90's the skinhead subculture in Montreal was firmly established.

### **2.3. The media and the Creation of neo-Nazism**

Respondents revealed that during the mid 80's, the initial emergence of the skinhead subculture in Montreal was influenced by style. The style of music, clothing, and imagery. Interviewees maintain that although some of the initial skinheads wore traditional Third Reich regalia and clothing, the style was void of meaning or symbolism.

*Back then we were just a bunch of guys who looked to shock people. We were rebelling against society and the order. We didn't care about Hitler or shit. It had nothing to do with anything except for music and provocation. Next thing we know, each time there was a fight between skinheads or shit, newspapers articles called us Nazis. I guess eventually that got to us and we just said "O.K. I guess we're Nazis" and it went from there. 01*

The labeling articles, according to respondents, promoted the creation of the racist skinhead subculture. As articles focused on the racist emblems of the newly emerged groups, racist youths compelled by the imagery of the skinheads, began to propagate. As expressed by a further informant:

*...joining the group was about style, not ideology. No one fucked with them. People saw skinheads and crossed the street. Everyone knew they were fucked up. Everyone knew not to mess with them. The first skinhead group I joined was "The Brotherhood". I joined because of the look and the reputation. I wanted to be in a gang of some type. The Brotherhood looked cooler, tougher, more violent. They had that "Pink Floyd" military look. No one fucked with them. 003*

When prompted on the gradual infusion of racist and Nazi ideology, the respondent explained that the racism of the skinheads was always present. Although style initially defined the subculture, racism was an integral element during the 80's. As expressed:

*It was society's focus on the symbols, on our clothes, that gradually made us what we are. We were racists, maybe even fascists, but we were not Nazis. The dress was about look and intimidation. It was also about our music. It was not about our beliefs. We had none. We didn't give a shit about politics. 001*

The gradual propagation of the movement led to the creation of other skinhead groups within Montreal and abroad. As the creed of the Nazism intensified a downward spiral progression within the subculture ocruide. Emerging communication between skinhead groups and white supremacists were forged through concerts, parties and festivals. The fermentation led to the creation of an ideology, clearly defined in the music and internet sites of the racist neo-Nazi right.



## 2.4. Recruitment And Ideological Construct

Skinhead affiliation with White Supremacist organizations were formed through propaganda pamphlets and web sites. As expressed, the sporadic creations of neo-Nazi groups are attributed to the ease and accessibility of White Supremacist neo-Nazi web sites:

*The group was created in 1992 after I initiated contact with the Northern Hammerskins in the States. For a while I remained in contact with the group, sending letters to their P.O. Box in the states. A year later, the Northern Hammerskins offered to make me the leader of the Montreal cell under conditions that I recruited about five or six friends and formed the group.[...] They sent membership forms and we became the Montreal cell of the Hammerskins. We remained in phone contact and were invited to concerts in the States, they sent publications, videotapes, and directed to their website to print copies of The Turner Diary. The diaries showed us how to initiate the movement.[...] We eventually created firm rapport with other white supremacist organizations in the States and especially strong ties with the Heritage Front. 002*

The newly emerged cell, referring to itself as “the only true skinhead brotherhood”, was mainly composed of 18 to 21 year old Anglophone residents in Beaconsfield, St. Anne and Chomedey. Skinheads perceive themselves as the chosen “warriors of the Fourth Reich, responsible for securing the existence of our [white] people.” 004. Given their lack of resources, Skinheads perceive violence as the only available means “to secure the existence of the Aryan race”002.

*From the standpoint of multiculturalism, we must use any means possible to reverse this [...] From my standpoint, the pan-Aryan movement is faced with extraordinary challenges, obstacles and enemies. This calls for extraordinary countermeasures, weapons, and soldiers. Does this mean terrorism, yes; bombing, yes; assassination, yes; chemical and biological terrorism, yes. In the end, we must secure the existence of our race.004*

Concern over multiculturalism is at the core of skinheads philosophy. As depicted by a Skinhead:

*If massive non-white immigration continues and welfare keeps encouraging high birth rates among Asians and blacks, whites will soon become a minority in Canada. This would be irreversible change to our entire way of life. We must encourage immigrants to leave our territory and discourage others from coming into our land. Violence is the best method of achieving this end. 004*

Further 'legitimizing' this element of Skinhead philosophy are the notions of competition and scarce resources. Skinheads typically hold traditional myths that immigrants or non Europeans, are invading Canada and monopolizing job opportunities. As typified in the following response, skinheads believe that:

*...you have these fucking immigrants who come in here when we already don't have enough jobs to support us and create more unemployment because of overpopulation. I know of many whites who don't have jobs now because it's politically correct to hire immigrants and blacks. And those people are less educated than whites. They're hired because of their color not because of their experience. And then people say that we're prejudice. Fuck that. If they want to come in here and start something, we will make sure to finish it....in a time when there are not enough jobs for everyone we need to be radical. We need to preserve our rights. 003*

The role of the skinhead movement is to produce perceived 'legitimate' change within the structural order through violence. As expressed by one skinhead respondent:

*...of course I get emotional when I begin to talk about the end of my culture. Hate is an emotion of action. When a soldier prepares for a battle for which he has moral cause to fight he can't think about how his enemy loves his children too. [...]I know that there are exceptions in other races, I know that other races have made some contributions to knowledge of mankind, but I know most importantly that my race may perish if I don't do something about its' imminent demise. 003*

In addition to the ideological notion of “race”, our data revealed that skinheads hold little real interest or comprehension in mainstream politics. In their opinion, social change is sought not by political means but rather by destabilizing society through violence and intimidation:

*We fuck politics, that is not what we are about. The whole system is run by Jews anyway. It's not that we don't want positions of power, we just know we won't get them. Instead we fight the fight of the loyal. We are the beginning and the end for the race we defend. We obey the first and highest law of nature. That is the protection of our own race. 001*

The long term goals of the skinhead movement calls for the initiation of a global ‘Holy Racial War’ and the establishment of an Aryan homeland along the border of Canada and the United States (Kinsella 1996). A fascist society rid of Jews, Blacks, ethnic minorities and “race traitors.” Within this utopian society, an Aryan government will be established to “reverse the racially devolutionary course of the last few millennia and keep it reversed” (Klanwatch 1995). Skinheads, however, show no clear evidence of common goals. As explained by the founder of the Montreal Skinhead group:

*90 to 95% of young skinheads and racists don't have a clear definition of what they are trying to achieve. [...]many define themselves by who they hate. Many of these people do however round out their political ideology over time and eventually understand the greater cause. Unfortunately they tend to do this while sitting in jail on an assault charge. 002*

Consistent with this testimony, respondents were not able to clearly define the structures of a pan-Aryan society. Typically, interviewees expressed that they knew of no real protocol or outline for a White state or were unable to explain the aims or structure of a future White state in concrete terms. As one respondent expressed "...its establishment seems so remote to most of us that we don't even think of it. We just continue our routine activities and see where it goes" 003. In essence, skinheads were not found to have a clear political agenda. The merge with White Supremacists essentially revolved around messages that are particularly inviting to skinheads. These messages legitimize the use of extreme violence against Blacks, Gays, ethnic minorities and especially Jews, who are symbolically perceived to be responsible for the lot of the skinheads.

*What the movement brought to us was an explanation for our failure. [...]The movement presented us with a vision of the crucified skin....It's imagery appealed us because it represents how we've never had a fair chance by no one and we've been crucified by the general public from day one. From the very beginning, the Jewish controlled media, music industry and society, everyone has generally crucified the very thought of skinheads. And that in itself was enough for counteraction. 002*

## **2.5. Modus Operandi of the Skinhead Gang**

Cemetery as opposed to synagogue vandalism was reported to be of greater tactical concern for the Skinhead subculture. A crucial instrumental criteria of cemetery desecration was found to be linked to the media response. Our examination revealed that motive behind anti-Semitic institutional vandalism was consistent. Not surprisingly, the primary criteria of "ethnicity" or "religion" categorized the site as a legitimate target. The nature of the motive however was found to be either expressive or instrumental. While the actions perpetrated by individual members were found to be expressive, those executed by whole groups and orchestrated by leaders of the organization were instrumental.

Individual members view vandalism as an expressive act aimed at venting hatred against a group perceived to bar them from achieving positions of power. The rationalization of the act is justified as a retributory response to a feeling of subjugation. The act is seen as “fun”, “justified” and gratifies basic animal aggression (Fromm 1973). In sharp contrast, the instrumental use of cemetery vandalism is attributed with a primary function by the leader of the organization.

*Organized action is important. It forms the seed of beliefs. When a group acts together, to a common end, the act itself becomes important in creating a bond. It creates a brotherhood of thought.[...]The action strengthens the ideology. It bonds the idea or belief of a common enemy. And that's important for the survival of White Supremacism. Christianity, like the Nationalist socialists needed the Jews. In the absence of the enemy neither institutions would have survived. It is a matter of pure existence.*

**002**

The instrumental conception and use of ‘distinctions’ among skinhead organizations confirm Allport’s analysis of in-group vs. out-group solidarity. Mobilization of forces toward common ends are strategically manipulated for instrumental motives among leaders and more “intellectual” members. Similar to Allport’s analysis, the strategic use of vandalism among in-groups was found to be used as a means of creating a sense of “brotherhood”, to embed White Supremacist beliefs and, most importantly, to maintain and cultivate the belief in the existence of a common enemy. In essence, the role attributable to such acts hold similar functions as propaganda, being the collective formation of common beliefs.

In terms of strategic or instrumental use of Jewish religious institutions, the “Jewishness” of a given cemetery or synagogue is less important than the effect obtained from its attack. In terms of functionality, the act of vandalism becomes, nevertheless, a psychologically damaging consequence for the victim (see Chapter 5). Although the cemetery’s qualifying characteristic of “Jewishness” is at the basis of the motive, the

media attention and publicity provoked by cemetery vandalism becomes the primary mobilizing factor for White Supremacist groups. The instrumental use of the act is therefore a vital element according to the leader of the organization. Accordingly, respondents view vandalism as a necessary and important activity among Skinheads groups.

*Vandalism is part of the groups' activity, in cemeteries more than synagogues however. Synagogues are only buildings. They demand little interaction. Radical skinheads are not interested in vandalizing synagogues because it doesn't feel like you're actually doing something for the cause. It goes beyond painting a wall, cemeteries are more direct. They have greater impact on people, there is more interaction, and there's no mistake about the message. 002*

Testimony indicates symbiosis between the perpetuation of the crime and the response of the national media.

*We used to get kicks watching news reports on tv and brag about it. Reports were sort of trophies I guess, if the media did not report the vandalism, we hit it again. It was our trophy, our reward, our message. It was our game and it had to have an audience. 003*

Clearly, the significance of the act is directly proportional to the reaction of the media. Congruently, the level of disturbance is gauged by its impact and therefore becomes instrumental for the group. Conversely, the greater the desired media focus, the more severe the desecration. Skinheads were also found to be fully aware of the media response to swastikas and hate motivated vandalism. The act is therefore “productive” for the subculture because it not only attracts significant media attention but also because the symbolic nature of the act provides both perpetrators and victims a contact point without interaction. The strategic manipulation of religious vandalism as a “contact point” is induced as a tool for collective bonding. Since there is no contact with living victims

the act provides illusions of “victimless crimes” which facilitate the perpetuation of the act. The contact point is used by White Supremacist organizations as symbolic affronts toward targeted groups while causing little damage to the organization. As the leader of the group explains:

*These [cemetery] attacks are calculated. Since they are less severe than personal attacks, they demand little psychologically, and it's almost impossible to be caught. [...]Some of us may not be ready to beat an actual person. Initiation through cemetery attacks is a gradual process toward that end. They are used wisely. Most importantly cemetery attacks attract publicity, and that tempts others to do likewise.002*

Influence was found to play an important role in the perpetration of vandalism. BBS computer bulletins, newscast reports, and talk among different groups also influence different organizations to mobilize. Pursuant to discussion around the influential impact of reported incidents, a respondent explained:

*The biggest influence was in France a few years back [presumably Carpentras]. We spoke how cool it would be to do the same right here. I know of a few cells in the States who did act after the French case was publicized. So why of course, there is an impact, and I would say that we expect that impact. That is the game. The impact, the attention, the focus. 002*

Participation is also calculated in terms of criminal activity. The *modus operandi* of the group was akin to other criminal organizations. Perpetrators of planned criminal activity were either chosen by group leaders or independently formed among skinhead affiliates.

*At no time do members know all the activities of the group. We have people that are assigned for specific roles. Keeping people from bragging however is a problem. But roles are not assigned like a job. At times they come from above and on other times it may be a member who forms a coalition of three or four soldiers. Information is not spread to members for obvious reasons. 001*

The core of skinhead ideology provides individual members with an infrastructure legitimizing violent activities. The testimonies have shed light on skinhead grievances on the structural order. At the core of their grievances are racist issues, camouflaged by economic concerns. They have generally demonstrated an ambiguous stand towards politics. Whereas they aspire to the establishment of an all White state, and therefore to a revolution of political power, that power is not actively sought since its attainment is perceived as too remote. Jews are viewed as having taken over governmental authority and are therefore identified as responsible for barring Aryans from important social positions. To this end, government agents are under the influence of Jews and cannot be reformed. Ultimately, skinheads believe that the government is no longer able to defend Canadian culture, so they must therefore 'defend' themselves in a multiculturalist society. Contrary to revolutionary terrorists who aspire to the total transformation of the political and social order, Skinheads are political conservatives mainly interested in the official declaration of their 'racial' or national superiority and the informal guarantee of its cultural perpetuation.

The aforementioned testimony has indicated that the Canadian Skinhead movement emerged during the early 80's, as a result of the rise of a new subculture created by film, music and propaganda, largely imported from England. Corroborated by skinhead testimony, music played a key role in the elaboration of skinhead ideology. The activities of skinheads were found to be calculated and largely instrumental. Whereas vandalism plays a large role in Skinhead groups, cemetery vandalism is deemed more "radical" for the movements progression. Whereas synagogue vandalism is not denied by respondents, cemeteries were deemed more functional for the perpetration



of White Supremacist messages through media attention. It is therefore put forth that the activities of the skinhead subculture are calculated and founded in an ideology of racism. The motivation of their racist acts do not exist through abstract and random activities, but rather in a structured philosophical system of basic traditional beliefs called neo-Nazism (Hamm 1993). In the world of the perpetrators, the crime is a rational, ideologically motivated act stemming largely by the prism of music.

Typically, skinheads have indicated undergoing a ‘process of delegitimization’ and therefore a gradual descent into radical activity since the early 80’s (see Sprinzak 1995). Dissidence toward mainstream politics and concepts of multiculturalism led to the rise of a distinct ideological concept leading to forms of symbolic resistance, community terrorism (Bjorgo & Witte 1994) and provocative action aimed at national media attention. Not unlike the workings of terrorist organizations, skinheads were found to undergo a process of ‘conflict of legitimacy’ (see Sprinzak 1995). Within this process, the dissidence of the skinhead group is no longer limited to out-groups, but also questions the very legitimacy of the entire regime. As candidly expressed by Ehud Sprinzak:

...the c\*onflict of legitimacy implies the emergence of an *alternative ideological and cultural system*, one that delegitimizes the prevailing regime and its code of social norms in the name of a better normative political order (Sprinzak 1995:19).

Sprinzak contends that the progression of the conflict of legitimacy is characterized “by intense political action ranges between angry protest (demonstrations, confrontations and vandalism) and the application of *intended low scale violence* against the regime” (1995:19). In essence the vandalism activities of neo-Nazi groups can be said as modified forms of social control. The subculture believes in the concept of Zionist Occupied Government (Z.O.G) i.e. a government controlled by Jews. Using Gibbs’ model of analysis (1989), which argues that “in all instances (i.e., in all settings in which terrorism takes place), “the fist party” (the terrorist group) attempts to punish a third

party (the victim) as an effect to control a second party's behavior (government). The instrumental vandalistic activity of the skinhead subculture is manipulated as a means of modified social control for perceived injustice and as a means of perpetuating their message: that the workings of harmonious multicultural Canada is futile. Although studies of Canadian Skinheads have demonstrated that violence by racist organizations is infrequent (Ross 1992; CICVR 1994), protest and vandalism typically characterize the activities of Montreal skinhead groups.

Consistent with Cohen's theory (1971), the perpetuation of cemetery vandalism within the examined subculture was found to fit both *ideological* and *malicious vandalism* typologies. According to Cohen, in ideological vandalism the perpetrator utilizes vandalism as a tool to achieve other goals than the crime itself. The act is a symbolic and ideological message, directing toward political or social causes. Within the subculture, the instrumental use of anti-Semitic vandalism is not primarily intended as an act of destruction but rather a message dispersed through an available means for perpetrators. Cohen cites for example the breaking of an embassy window as symbol of dissidence, or painting political slogans on a wall. The vandalism therefore takes precedence to the actual intent of the crime. Skinheads testimony further supports Cohen's theory. Interviews revealed that the dual nature of cemetery vandalism is either instrument or expressive. Whereas the symbolic element of the act retains an instrumental character for White Supremacist groups, Skinhead respondents testified that the act, for individual members, is more expressive than symbolic. Beyond symbolism, the crime "vents frustration". Paralleling Cohen's typology, our data indicated that when perpetrated by individual members, the vandalism reflects a malicious character (Cohen 1971). 'Malicious vandalism' described as expressive acts of vandalism emanating from rage or frustration. As such, although the act may be symbolic or instrumental for the actor, the primary motive is to express rage, hatred or animosity toward the targeted group. Similarly, Martin's (1959) typology classifies these practices as vindictive vandalism, in which the conduct is perpetrated to express animosity and to intimidate a particular group.

During either stage however, whether instrumental or expressive, it is found that members of the out-group are depersonalized and dehumanized. The dehumanization of perceived 'enemies' or out-groups serve the important function of preparing one's psychological state for the perpetuation of atrocities or immoral activities. As some cemetery desecrations are perpetrated for the purpose of media attention toward White Supremacist grievances, the three-fold instrumental characteristic of the crime serves as a catalyst to enmesh in-group solidarity and psychologically prepare skinheads for the gradual progression toward physical assaults.

**Chapter V:  
Impact And Symbolism of Institutional Hate Crimes:  
The Reflections of Rabbis and Representatives of  
The Montreal Jewish Community**

## **Impact And Symbolism of Institutional Hate Crimes: The Reflections of Rabbis and Representatives of The Montreal Jewish Community**

### **1. Symbolic Significance of the Swastika**

To capture the subtleties between juvenile and racist vandalism, the symbolic significance of the crime must be examined from the viewpoint of the victim. We felt that simple explanations without the victim's qualitative testimonies would render an "impact" related study meaningless and purely speculative. The psycho-emotional impact of violent and non-violent offences have received considerable attention from scholarly and government studies (Bard & Sangley 1986; Davies & Friedman 1985; League For Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada 1993; Makesteyn 1992; Maguire 1987; Ochberg 1988), but the emotional impact of racist property offenses has remained somewhat unrecognized as a distinct form of criminality. Perhaps the physical evidence of the crime may be cleansed with soap and water, the emotional consequences, however, may be more enduring. It is therefore the purpose of this chapter to investigate the significance of racist vandalism and give insight on its impact on the targeted group. Given our qualitative orientation, it is not the intent of this chapter to inventory side effects but rather establish trends in terms of the fall out.

#### **1.2. Cultural Dynamics of Anti-Semitic Vandalism**

The present chapter is based on interviews engaged with four rabbis and two executive directors from different victimized synagogues and cemeteries. Our objective was to filter the community's response to incidents of anti-Semitic vandalism while determining the impact of racist vandalism. Given the nature of the subject, discussions surrounding the issue proved sensitive and difficult to generate among most respondents.

Both the data presented in our literature review and our research found a hesitance to report anti-Semitic offenses (Saulburry & Bowling 1993; Hamm 1993; Barnes & Ephross 1994; Berril 1992; Bowling 1993). The crimes were also found to be interpreted as affront to all members of the targeted community (Eagle 1994; Ehrlich 1990; League for Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada 1993). Among responses, fear and “unease” were mostly expressed. Although such incidents touch community members differentially, the effects on the elderly and first generation descendants of Holocaust survivors were reported to be especially profound. Corroborating previous victimization studies older segments were reported to feel isolated (EGALE 1994) and fearful (Kelly 1993; Mock 1996). Difficulty in generating response about racist vandalism was tied to issues of culture. Most respondents expressed concern of over-exposure. As one subject indicated:

*As a Jewish individual I must admit that it makes me very uncomfortable to speak of this matter...One element which people have to understand is that the Jewish community, because of our different beliefs, perceived beliefs or attitudes, do not feel totally accepted within the greater society. [...]This being said, we feel out of place and usually negate on making too much noise (005).*

Another respondent expressed similar concerns:

*The funny thing about being Jewish is the feeling that is attached to our identity. Although not implicit, today still, the Jewish community does not feel whole heartedly accepted by society. We feel distinct, apart, and although not rejected, we do not feel as accepted as say a Quebecker coming from other regions of Quebec would be. And because of this, because of this feeling of being distinct, we do not “jump” at every opportunity to respond when anti-Semitic incidents occur. And that in itself has very serious implications in terms of being in a multi-cultural society as well as implications on our communal personal security (006).*

Although the majority expressed concerns of overexposure, respondents attributed importance to instances of racist vandalism. The feeling of “distinctiveness” however rendered respondents reluctant in reporting incidents to authorities:

*We feel out of place when it comes to speaking out against these incidents. There is a fear that society will point a finger at us. A fear that they will respond negatively to our reactions (003).*

The significance of anti-Semitic vandalism however remains vivid. When prompted on the implication of racist vandalism, all respondents pointed to the historical attributes inherent to anti-Semitic vandalism and the Swastika. As one interviewee expressed:

*There is probably little in this world that stirs the emotions and creates greater anger and hurt than that symbol. The Swastika is the symbol of the National Socialist Nazi party of Germany from 1939 to 1945. The party that instituted and carried out the Holocaust, the program of the final solution, which attempted to wipe out the Jewish community as a whole 003.*

The impact of anti-Semitic vandalism is attributed to the historical significance of the Swastikas, imbedded in the Jewish sense of history. The Swastika is a reminder of the days when the genocidal program was instituted by the Nazi regime, resulting in the extermination of six million Jews. The historical attribute of the Swastika lies at the core of anti-Semitic vandalism, and is therefore central to its understanding. The symbolism is interpreted as a vindictive message glorifying anti-Semitism inherent in the ideology of National Socialism.

### 1.3. Characterizing elements of the Nazi regime

The ideological tenant of the National Socialist Regime rejects both the Judeo-Christian and the Enlightenment traditions. Instead, it aspired to create a New World Order based on Racial Nationalism. For Hitler, race was a determining element in the understanding of history. He believed that Western civilization was at a critical juncture. Liberalism was dying and Marxism would inherit the future unless it was destroyed. Under the totalitarian leadership of Adolph Hitler, National Socialism envisioned a racially united Germany, led by men of iron will who sought to construct a vast European empire and destroy the decadent liberal civilization.

Hitler sought to conquer Russia, eradicate Communism, exterminate the Jews and other “inferior races” (Farrar et al. 1953:28). In the tradition of crude Volkish Nationalism and Social Darwinism, Hitler divided the world into superior and inferior races in a brutish mythical struggle for survival. As a higher race embodying creativity, bravery and loyalty, the Germans were entitled to conquer and subjugate other races, acquiring *lebensraum* (living space) by expanding eastward at the expense of the “racially inferior”.

At the core of this *credo*, lied an obsessive and virulent anti-Semitic philosophy. In waging war against the Jews, Hitler believed that he was defending Germany from its worst enemy. In his mythical interpretation of the world, the Aryan race was the originator of a pure civilization. As counterpart, the Jews personified the vilest qualities and were therefore the mortal enemy of racial nationalism. Everything Hitler despised - liberalism, intellectualism, pacifism, parliamentarism, internationalism and communism - was attributed to Jews. The moral outlook of the ancient Hebrew prophets, affirming individual worth, totally opposed Hitler’s morality.



Hitler's anti-Semitism served an instrumental purpose. By concentrating all evil in one enemy, "the conspirator and demonic" Jew, Hitler provided true believers with a simple all embracing and emotionally satisfying explanation for all misery and ills of the world. Anti-Semitism provided insecure and hostile people with powerless but recognizable targets.

Hitler's vision took shape in the form of the Nazi Party. Its symbol, the Swastika, stood for the National Socialist regime and its implicit ideology. Under the Swastika, the Jews were victims of pent up racism from previous eras. The brute racism of the Nazi regime rendered the history and symbol of the swastika a dramatic icon to the collective conscious of the Jewish people. Furthering the special impact of racist vandalism in cemeteries and synagogues are historical attributes marking both religious institutions as traditional targets of anti-Semitism.

To comprehend the impact of anti-Semitic cemetery and Synagogue vandalism, the definition of "Jewishness" and the collective conscious of the group must be analysed. The act, being partly criminal and partly symbolic in nature, proves to be an effective means of touching the community, as respondents will explain. The definition and composition of that collectivity however must be examined in order to interpret the symbolic impact of the Swastika. In short, an examination of the meaning of the 'Jewish identity' must be analysed.

## **2. Collective Conscious, Anti-Semitism, and the Jewish identity**

The history of the Jewish people is mainly characterised by dispersion and persecution. Throughout the centuries however, Jews have maintained a distinct identity despite their exiles, and various cultural and linguistic integrations. For centuries, the Jews lived on a territory which, after their expulsion by the Romans during the second century became known as Palestine (Rodal 1983: 22). As time progressed, the Jews disbanded

and lived in communities or ghettos. According to Rodal's (1983) cultural historical analysis, the identity of the Jews during this period was attributed by none else than religion. Roots were traced and tied by rules and rites, communal principles and laws dictated in the Tora, or from the norms and values of Rabbis during the "talmudic" period.

Rodal argues that centuries of persecutions eventually instilled a sense of history within that identity, and that this history of persecution eventually replaced religion as the determining marker of belonging. Although the Jewish identity persists, elements of history took precedence over religion as a common denominator of "Jewish distinctiveness".

Cette mémoire collective a permis d'entretenir chez les Juifs, pendant plus de deux millénaires, un sentiment durable et puissant d'appartenance à une communauté. Ce sentiment persiste toujours à l'époque actuelle, même si, chez nombre de Juifs, la tradition a subi des transformations radicales et si l'adhésion à la tradition religieuse elle-même a fléchi, voire disparu. (p. 23)

The solidarity of Jews, initially rooted in religion, gave way to shared historical experience which shaped the collective consciousness of the community. Rodal (1983) argues that until 1830, the Jewish identity was principally defined by religion.

Dans cette tradition, l'identité juive, telle qu'on pourrait la déterminer d'après les réponses à des questions comme "qu'est-ce qu'un Juif?" et "quelle sorte de groupe les Juifs forment-ils?" ne posait aucun problème. Selon la loi juive, est Juif qui est né de mère juive ou a adopté officiellement la religion juive dans les règles prescrites par la loi juive. (p 25).

Not only did Jewish identity implicate a belonging to a cultural system but also a root in a traditional religious way of life, stemming from a specific value system. The integration of Jews throughout the world however, compromised orthodoxy in the religious sense. With the advent of the reformist movement Jewish communities integrated in their specific 'milieux' and restructured Judaism in accordance to the greater social environment. During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Reformists restructured Jewish orthodoxy in light of social norms and obligations. Innovations in philosophy and religious practices were redefined in light of compromises between Jewish religious rites and the standards of respective societies (Rodal 1983). The Reformist tradition disguised an ambiguity within Jewish identity. No longer did this identity find itself within the religion of the people, since religion was no longer static, but rather in a common historical experience and heritage. Indeed, Rodal's analysis explains that by the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

...Les Juifs se mirent à se considérer avant tout comme des ressortissants de leurs pays respectifs, ne se distinguant des autres citoyens que par la religion. Cette notion de l'identité juive sous-entendait que le judaïsme n'était qu'une religion, sans aucune connotation d'appartenance à un peuple distinct. Paradoxalement, si les Juifs acculturés ou en voie d'acculturation avaient tendance à se désintéresser de leur rôle au sein de l'identité collective juive, les circonstances historiques et certaines idéologies telles que le nationalisme et les versions modernes de l'antisémitisme contribuèrent à renforcer et à perpétuer le sens de la solidarité au sein du groupe. (1983 : 26)

As the philosophy of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century oriented itself towards concepts of nationalism, the collective ambiguity of Judaism intensified. Philosophical discourse about the identity of the Jews questioned their nationalist identity and their belonging to their respective countries. Since the beginning, Jews defined themselves and were in turn defined as a religious group, a "race", a nation, and an ethnic group. In light of these various definitions, the philosophical debate over identity still attempted to define "who is Jewish?". The ambiguity was exacerbated by the increasing number of mixed marriages which, in numerous circumstances, led to a detachment from the importance

of religion among descendants. Ultimately, the Jewish collectivity was no longer united through common beliefs. Geographical and cultural differences led to a diversification of Jewish identities, bound only by a common history.

[...] Différentes perspectives historiques ont donc donné naissance à différentes façons de percevoir les Juifs: comme un group religieux ou comme une communauté de foi, comme un race, comme une nation ou encore comme un groupe ethnique. Ces notions, prises individuellement ou collectivement, ne semblent cependant pas constituer une base suffisante pour définir la qualité essentielle de l'identité collective juive. Des juifs ne se définissent pas nécessairement par la religion, par l'acceptation des croyances et des pratiques issues du judaïsme traditionnel ou des différentes tendances modernes du judaïsme. Il ne se définissent pas nécessairement par leur attachement à la culture juive, ne considèrent pas obligatoirement comme leur l'éthique, les traditions et la littérature du peuple juif. Enfin, ils ne se définissent pas nécessairement par la nationalité, par un sentiment de solidarité avec tous les Juifs de la terre et, en particulier, avec les Juifs d'Israël ou l'Etat d'Israël (27).

Despite the differences in identification, culture and beliefs, Jews are bound by special emotional circumstances. Whether religious, atheist, anti-religious, Orthodox, Reformist, Conservative, Reconstructivist, Sephardic or Ashkenaze, Jews are bound by a single common uniting element. The plight of the Jews, even for those non religious and antireligious, has a crucial determining impact on the collective consciousness of the modern community. The role of the Holocaust, also known as the Shoah, is the single common element bidding the diversification of Jews. Whether ultra Orthodox in Moscow or antireligious in Montreal, the ideological and cultural elements which one uses to define oneself as Jewish, are mended by nothing else than a common history. The diversification of the Jewish identity is so vast that the Shoah has become an integral element in the subculture and a fundamental element in the identification of the Jewish people. When Jews speak of the Shoah, their description of "what we have suffered" clearly illustrated the collective conscious of the group. The history is expressed in terms of "our" suffering, including the speaker who may have been born decades after the fact.

Given the diversity of today's Jewish people, their cultural dimension is no longer static. This diversification, whether in speech, beliefs, dogmas, or tradition, produced a schism in direct affinity. Large portions of Jews no longer trace their identity to religion or culture affinities but rather to a common historical experience. Consistent with this analysis the collective impact of the Swastika was reported throughout interviews. As expressed by one informant:

*{...} .la croix gammée est encore gravée dans notre esprit. La croix gammée est devenue un symbole anti-juif, et pour nous c'est devenu le symbole de la haine, de la dégradation, de l'impuissance, et de l'extermination de notre peuple. Pour nous la croix gammée n'est pas seulement un symbole,...c'est quelque chose qu'on a vécu, c'est quelque chose qui nous a brûlé vif, c'est quelque chose qui nous a tué pour la simple raison qu'on étaient Juifs.C'est un symbole qu'on ne peut pas accepter, c'est notre point faible, et le pire c'est que ceux qui veulent nous toucher le savent.002.*

Hence, the meaning of the Swastika has become a vivid part of Jewish collective consciousness. When hate vandalism is perpetrated in cemeteries, the impact was reported to be multiplied due to the historical symbolism of persecution.

*{...} if we look back the Nazi Germany in the 30's, it was in the institution where it started. In the cemeteries and synagogues. All the synagogues where torched in Germany, so it's very symbolic. In cemeteries, the symbolism is multiplied...there are few things that move people emotionally like death, dying and the care of the grave of their loved ones. You have that on top of the communal dynamic compounded with the cultural history (003).*

### **3. Symbolic Impact and Emotional Response to Racist Vandalism**

Corroborating scholarly findings (League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada 1994; Mock 1996; Roberts 1995; Weiss 1993), anger and frustration were the most common reactions. Interviewees alluded to the historical attribution of the

symbol and the fear that history might repeat itself. Unease and frustration were also generated by racist vandalism. Generally, respondents indicate that fear and insecurity are common responses to racist vandalism. When prompted on the significance of the crime, respondents recalled a memory of subjugation and uncertainty.

*{...} à chaque fois qu'il y a une chose comme ça qui arrive tout le monde est nerveux et il y a aussi une crainte. Il y a un sentiment de rejet et une crainte que c'est quelque chose qui va durer, il y a un sentiment que le Juif n'est pas protégé, et on est pas à l'aise avec ça, parce que lorsque ça arrive on ne sait jamais qu'est ce qui va arriver demain, parce que ça pourrait être toute une période qui pourrait commencer (002).*

Findings further revealed that while anger is a shared response, the level of insecurity is heightened by proximity and age. In other words, those geographically closer to the targeted institutions tended to respond more dramatically. Geographical proximity therefore plays an integral role in determining the level of personal insecurity. Most reactions also came from the older segments of the community who fear being singled out as a target (Bnai Brith 1993; Mock 993; Barnes & Ephross 1994; Weiss 1990). Aspect of community terrorism further enhanced cultural fears by causing insecurity about future events.

*{...}Celui qui pense que ça n'arrivera jamais, c'est une erreur. L'holocauste n'est pas arrivé dans un pays sous- développé, mais le pays le plus développé au monde, soit dans la philosophie, la musique, les arts. Les allemands étaient le peuple le plus développé et pourtant, ils sont arrivés au plus bas niveau. Alors on n'a plus confiance en n'importe quoi, et c'est pour ça qu'il y a un sentiment de peur qui est là...Il se peut que ce n'est pas conscient, mais la peur est là. (002).*

Although somewhat irrational, the fear of extreme manifestations and recurring historical events is summoned by incidents of anti-Semitic vandalism.

Testimonies have indicated that the impact of cemetery and synagogue desecration is rooted in history. When directed towards ‘holy grounds’, the perpetration and message were reported as a historically symbolic threat towards the community at large. The Swastika in such an environment is interpreted as a warning and therefore becomes a source of intimidation against the targeted community (Hamm 1993; Mock 1996; Weiss 1993). Respondents indicated that the targeting of the community characterized the differential impact of hate motivated vandalism and juvenile vandalism.

*{...}The difference is that vandalism does not single out or threaten a community. That is the essential difference between vandalism and what is we are speaking about. What is happening here is not vandalism. It is a symbolic attack on the community. It is a form of intimidation. It is a way of singling out the community, making its members feel vulnerable and alone, and telling them that they are not wanted (006).*

Similarly, another respondent further accentuated the special element of racist vandalism:

*{...} quand le vandal attaque les synagogues et cimetières, il sait ce qu'il fait. Quand on vise une synagogue et on écrit un slogan quelconque ou une croix gammée, il sait qui il a touché. On vous touche, vous comme Juif. Si je suis touché, comme n'importe quel citoyen de la communauté, c'est une chose. Mais quand on me vise parce que je suis juif, c'est une autre chose (002)*

Insecurity is fueled by the fear of an escalation from symbolic to physical offenses. A respondent made reference to a 1983 Buenos Aires incident where synagogue members were killed by Skinheads. Hence, in the minds of those concerned, there is a fine line between symbolic and physical attack, as they dread the day when one turns into the

other. Racist vandalism however is not seen as a purely symbolic phenomenon, it is also physical. Physical, since it objectively threatens the targeted community and therefore creates a fear of possible violence. The subjectiveness of the crime, being its message, transcends the limitations of symbolism by embedding objective fears within segments of the targeted group. Community frustration was compounded by the insensitive manner in which police treat racist vandalism, a feeling which could be alleviated if police dealt with racist vandalism as a distinct form of criminality. As one respondent expressed:

*{...} a large chunk of the community's sense of frustration is tied to the ways in which police have handled anti-Semitic vandalism. That is, police tend to classify and ascribe anti-Semitic vandalism in similar ways to juvenile vandalism. They are not trained to examine clues for hate crimes. They are not sensitive enough to the issue. Of course they are doing their best, but perpetrators are hardly ever apprehended and in the odd occasion, when they are apprehended, the crime is classified under juvenile vandalism. And this truly is a frustrating element because the true nature of the crime is not justified and therefore unaccounted.*  
**006**

Similar concerns over police processing was expressed by other respondents:

*Les gens ne se sentent pas protégés. Pas par la société ni par la police. Et on n'ose pas appeler la police non plus parce qu'ils ne comprennent pas que ce n'est pas du vandalisme. Ce n'est pas du vandalisme. C'est une attaque raciste qui vise à nous intimider. (002).*

Despite said unease and frustration, community outbursts are infrequent. Not only were most community leaders unable to recall specifics, but very few testimonies or newspaper articles examined between 1989 and 1996 point to concrete reactions. Interviewees however attribute the lack of response not to indifference, but to cultural marginalization. As suggested by one respondent:



*{...}It is true that the community has not created long term programs investigating incidents of hate crimes in cemeteries and synagogues, but that does not imply that the impact is less severe. We do react, there are physical demonstration, however, we do it orderly. On the one hand we will let police do their work, on the other we will show support within our community by condemning the attacks (005).*

Further respondents pointed to the role of culture as a source of pacifism:

*{...}Il faut comprendre que ce genre d'évènement arrive, les groupes minoritaires, même s' ils sont touchés, ne se sentent pas confortables de se plaindre. On a une culture et une mentalité différentes. On n'ose pas faire du bruit, parce qu'on a peur que la communauté générale se fâche. Nous voulons vivre en paix et pour cette raison on doit pas trop agiter la population générale (002).*

#### **4. Analysis**

just how serious anti-Semitic vandalism is still begs to be asked. On an emotional stand, respondents have illustrated the emotion and history linking the Swastika and anti-Semitic vandalism. The lack of concrete response from the community however is a serious issue to consider. Whereas the lack of response indicates an absence of objective impact, the reaction to our questions indicates that the impact, although ambiguous, is far from neutral. The vandalism of Christian cemeteries probably generates pain and anger among those people whose loved ones are buried, however, the absence of symbolism associated to the crime renders the act "non specific". It does not target a cultural group. Typically, when a Christian cemetery is vandalized, the crime is regarded as motiveless and classified as juvenile vandalism. The special circumstances generated by a history of racism and historical emblems used during cases of racist vandalism have placed such overt actions in a special category surpassing the limitation of symbolism.

This message, whether emitted by neo-Nazi Skins or disorganized youths, perpetuates a clear message to the targeted group. Due to historical attributes, it is even more resounding when directed in synagogues and cemeteries. Although our analysis found that incidents of racist vandalism create a sense of unease within the community, physical reactions have been difficult to analyse. Actually, their lack has been surprising in view of the emotional feedback generated within the framework of our discussions.

Although psychological impact and tense but short lasting feelings of insecurity are obvious consequences, the lack of more profound reactions remain an enigma to be examined. Specifically, social examinations of cultural creeds may regard sub-cultural marginalisation as an explanation of their unease - an issue clearly expressed by respondents. Until this is analysed in the social arena, however, the low-scale reaction to anti-Semitic vandalism sheds doubt on the seriousness of the offense. Although a large scale community response was generated by the 1993 vandalism spree in Montreal, the infrequency of such reactions in contrast to the rise of anti-Semitic vandalism since 1989 begs an explanation. Perhaps the official initiative of French president Francois Mitterrand (resulting in a massive demonstration of 80,000 people against antisemitism and racism following the Carpentras incident) is a clear example to follow.

Following the Carpentras incident, the reactions of French Jews was divided. An estimated 2000 Jews applied for immigration visas to Israel, while others protested. The lack of hesitation, however, is perhaps the result of official condemnation of the desecration. Granted, incidents in Montreal have not compared with those of France, the subjective feelings and historical attributions generated by the symbolic nature of the act are present, nonetheless.

Furthering aspects of community frustration are generated by the lax response from the Montreal Urban Community police force. Community representatives have indicated that a significant amount of frustration has stemmed from untrained police behaviour in the face of racist vandalism. Classification and misunderstanding of the crime are contributing factors to the increasing in communal stress.

Our chapter has therefore indicated the subjective emotional response generated by the crime. It is clear that the symbolism targets and affects the community significantly. Although the subjective nature of the crime has made the impact difficult to gauge in terms of concrete reactions, responses have corroborated literary findings indicating the under-reporting of such offenses and the lack of response due to fear of reprisal (Mock 1996; Barnes & Ephross 1994; Berk 1992; League For Human rights B'nai Brith Canada 1996). If physical response is to be considered directly correlated to the severity of the alleged effect, then further studies focussing on socio-cultural issues of creed should be conducted in order to understand the ambiguous response emanating from a targeted community.

CHAPTER VI:

CONCLUSION

## Conclusion

### 1. Concluding Analysis

It has been the purpose of this thesis to present the first investigation on the symbolism and impact of anti-Semitic vandalism in Montreal. It was established from the outset that there is a paucity of detail on the extent and impact of the crime. By focusing on both perpetrators and victims, insight was drawn on the motivation and symbolism of racist vandalism. Twenty-eight respondents provided valuable insight regarding the impact, meaning and symbolism of their experience.

Our data has indicated that racist vandalism is sporadic and infrequent. The nature of the crimes range from minor vandalism to serious anti-Semitic offences. Our data has indicated that five out of six Jewish cemeteries in Montreal have been targeted a at least once, totaling eight attacks between 1989 and 1996. While six could concretely be confirmed as anti-Semitic, three occurred at the Back River Memorial Garden on Lajeunesse and Berri.

Multiple victimization of the Back River was linked to its proximity to IXL, a Neo-Nazi Skinhead store. In only two cases were cemetery or judicial officials aware of the perpetrators involved in the incident. Only once were Skinheads apprehended. In regards to synagogue vandalism, similar trends indicated that twenty-two of thirty-three synagogues had been victimized at least once between 1989 and 1996. While forty-three incidents were reported, only three were recorded as “regular juvenile vandalism”.

Not surprisingly, the primary criteria of “ethnicity” or “religion” categorized the sites as legitimate targets. The nature of the motive, however, was found to be either expressive - perpetrated by individual members - or instrumental - executed by a whole

group, but orchestrated by leader(s) of these organizations. In contrast to cemetery attacks, displaying various White Supremacist symbols and rhetoric, the use of swastikas in synagogue attacks present a consistent paradigm. Hence, their daubing is typically unoriginal, simple, and presents little more than the historical political interpretation. Whereas synagogue vandalism provided little clues and can therefore be perpetrated by various offenders, motive within cemetery vandalism was found to be consistent.

Perpetrators of cemetery vandalism were drawn through interviews, newspaper clippings, and the scrawling of White Supremacist slogans commonly and exclusively found in their Websites, music and propaganda. Neo-Nazi rhetoric such as Z.O.G., “Juden Raus”, or the White Power logo clearly indicate some contact with White Supremacist resources, thus ideologically characterizing the act as a “missionary” offense. Contrary to this hypothesis, however, we found a lack of White Supremacist slogans in synagogue desecrations. With the exception of swastikas, a symbol virtually known by all fractions of society, there is little evidence accounting for Skinhead targeting of synagogues. Corroborating these findings, Skinheads expressed greater instrumental interest in cemetery attacks. Heightened interest is tied to the drama of the crime, generating consistent media response.

The contribution of media coverage as a source of influence was therefore analyzed in the context of our study. Our data has indicated that patterns of racist vandalism tend to follow media coverage of similar racist offenses. Consistent with news reports, cemetery attacks are similar in time (cluster or waves patterns) and form (nature). Whereas random, socio-political, and terror campaign theories present limited explanations, our thesis revealed the determining influence of media coverage on the contagency of similar forms of symbolic violence (i.e, racist vandalism).

Skinheads confirmed the relationship between media reaction and the propagation of contagency. Respondents confirmed that the media is used as a utilitarian tool for the subculture, and as such, is a primary incentive for mobilization. The

perpetration of cemetery vandalism was found to direct media attention to Skinhead activities, thus unintentionally highlighting White Supremacist doctrines and grievances. Further utilitarian advantages were reported to stem from media contribution to 'copy-cat' phenomena - or contagency, contributing to the White Supremacist causes. By mobilizing forces, and therefore engaging in a unifying activity, Skinhead leaders use vandalism as an ideological inducing tool targeting "out groups" and government, and thus creating subjective limitation of belonging. These limitations, in turn, serve to create a sense of "brotherhood", indoctrinate White Supremacist dogma, breed the belief in a common enemy, and sow the seeds for a collective consciousness. Further utilitarian elements offer perpetrators and victims a contact point without interaction, thus creating illusions of victimless crimes.

On the flipside, anti-Semitic vandalism is also perpetrated by unorganized youths from mainstream society. This thesis, however, has largely analyzed victimization perpetrated by organized groups. Denied access to police files have made it impossible to provide a representative sample of vandalism perpetrated by both groups. There is clear indication however that cemeteries, as opposed to synagogues, are primary targets for Skinhead organizations. A point established during interviews. The frequency of cemetery vandalism has decreased since 1993 but shown an increase in synagogues. This parallels the demise of numerous White Supremacist groups and the Neo-Nazi fad in Montreal. Numerous theories hypothesize to this phenomenon, but our interviews have suggested that both tendencies result from a White Supremacist tactical change, - transferring from one of recruitment to one of influence.

Supporting our use of Gibbs' analysis, interviews with Skinheads defined "the Jew" within the subculture. Using the basic premise of Z.O.G. philosophy - Zionist Occupied Government - the data has indicated that the use of cemetery vandalism is also intended as a modified form of social control for perceived injustices. The central notion of Z.O.G., (propagating that Western governments are dominated and controlled by Jews who represent the interest of non-Whites, race mixers, and "racial" minorities at

the expense of Indo-European culture), is symbolically acted out via cemetery desecrations. Using Gibbs' model, our thesis indicated that Cohen's concept of "retributational" or "vindictive" vandalism is perpetrated through calculated activities centered around the cemetery's historically symbolic role. From the utilitarian viewpoint, the central tactical use of cemeteries lends itself to victimize a third party (Jews), as an effort to control a secondary party's behavior (government). Hence, their reactive missionary offenses, centered around cemetery offences, are of social orientation - by targeting a specific group - and political, by sending a symbolic message of dissidence to the official order.

Scholarly literature typifying vandalism as an "unmotivated behavior" were therefore challenged in the context of our examination (Cross 1979; Thaw 1976). In essence, racist vandalism was analyzed as being part of a specific ideological context structured not around abstract random activities, but rather around the philosophy of Neo-Nazism. Confirming Cohen's concepts of "vindictive vandalism", "tactical vandalism", and "ideological vandalism", racist vandalism is not only rooted in a specific philosophy. It was also found to provide perpetrators a tangible attack against victims while insuring personal anonymity; terrorize the given community; express the perpetrator's hatred and dissidence toward the targeted group; and psychologically prepare Skinheads for the gradual descent toward physical assaults.

The psycho-emotional impact of racist crimes was found to be inconclusive. Whereas the literature on hate motivated crimes tends to point to severe emotional disturbance, our investigation revealed some emotional effect, but little enduring consequences. It should be noted however that previous impact related studies focus on violent offenses. Hence, this thesis does not negate previous findings, but complements them.



The impact of racist vandalism is nevertheless ambiguous. If anger, frustration, insecurity, and the fear of physical assaults were the most common reactions to racist vandalism, some respondents felt the root cause was not the crime itself, but the lax police response and misclassification of racist offenses as “general vandalism”. If there was an impact, however, it was generally linked to the symbolic attributes associated with National Socialism and the glorification of anti-Semitism. National Socialist rhetoric in religious institutions is interpreted as warning signs, and therefore become a source of intimidation to community members. Insecurity was also reported to be accentuated by the fear of an escalation from symbolic to physical offenses. Ultimately, the subjectiveness of the crime, being its symbolic message, was found to transcend symbolic limitations by imbedding objective fears within the targeted community.

Despite uneasiness and frustration, community reactions are infrequent. Few anti-racist manifestations were accounted for in response to religious vandalism. This lack, however, was not linked to a lesser effect by officials, but to the community’s sense of marginalized status within the greater society. Representatives were ill-at-ease with the potential for over-representation and thus avoid “making too much noise.” Despite this explanation, seeming indifference to anti-Semitic vandalism renders impact-related analysis ambiguous. Assuming that impact and response are directly correlated, community representatives reported that the impact, although ambiguous, is far from neutral. It would an exaggeration however to interpret the impact as dramatic.

## **2. Concluding Discussion**

Although beyond the scope of our paper, intervention is a major concern in criminological analysis. Arguments advancing the “special” impact of racism have been used to support the implementation of Bill C-41. The bill, citing hate motivation as an aggravating factor for sentencing, was enacted into law in September 1996. According to *The 1997 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents*, the amendment to the Criminal Code recognizes the aggravating impact of racist crimes ( League For Human Rights B’nai

Brith Canada: 2). The law is rooted in the argument that harsher sentencing will deter youths from perpetrating hate-motivated offenses. Research however has indicated that suppression of White Supremacist organizations has affected the increase, rather than the decrease, of violent activity. Repression, being an inherent base in White Supremacist thought, has historically been a legitimizing factor in violent activity. In Germany for example, this tendency has led to increasing pogroms against Turks and other asylum seekers during the mid 90's. In essence, repressions and sanctions have had limited effect on the decrease of hate and retaliation in some countries (Hasselbach 1996). Instead, education and mediation have proven to be more functional models of intervention (Hasselbach 1996; Bnai Brith 1994). Legal sanctions and police monitoring of White Supremacists in Canada and the U.S., however, have led to the demise of numerous racist organizations and the downfall of the Heritage Front, Canada's largest racist group. Police monitoring and public attention curbed organized activity and disfavored continued recruitment. Instead, the Heritage Front, as others, established White Supremacist websites propagating racist views and epithets in the hopes of generating influence.

Law suits against racist groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center in the U.S. for example have also had great effect in stopping racist activity. The two million dollar suit against American White Supremacist, Tom Metzger, and his organization, White Aryan Resistance (W.A.R.), for the murder of an Ephiopian man, paralised activities within the movement. Thus, although jail sentence have had an ambiguous impact on racist activity, excessive fines and law suits have had considerable success.

Harsher sentencing camouflages rather than mends the problem. Sentencing, as the end product of all judicial systems, is preceded by reported incidents, police investigations, charges and prosecutions by the Crown attorney. As the federal government strengthens sentencing at one end, it exposes weakness at the other. - a lack of comprehension and civil response to hate motivated vandalism and other hate related offences. Within a social perspective however, the under-reporting of bias

incidents is a serious concern (M.A.R.C). As indicated in the literature review, many hate crimes are not reported to police due to a lack of understanding. For legislation to be effective, minority groups must not only have greater access but greater trust and understanding in all arenas of the judicial system. Should greater rapport be rooted between police forces and respective minority groups, understanding between groups must be created - a development which has recently taken place between the Montreal Gay community and the Montreal Urban Community police.

Where hate-motivated vandalism is concerned, greater understanding between communities and police is important. Police should comprehend and conceptualize the specific circumstances of racist vandalism. Investigation and classification should be taken seriously and viewed as distinct from "juvenile offenses". Minority groups should not have to feel isolated because of their victimization. Understanding is an important closing step for groups who feel distinct from mainstream society. To alleviate the frustration of victimized groups, politicians must publicly condemn and repudiate racial attacks whenever and wherever they manifest themselves. Although it is not disputed that the Federal court should uphold the constitutionality of the Canadian Human Rights act which rules hate messages as illegal, law in itself is not intended to teach positive attitudes or values, but to impose minimum standards of behavior. Said standards indicate to society that all are protected under the Canadian law and send a message that racial intolerance will not be condoned. The Criminal Code - specifically the provision against "false news" and hate propaganda - must remain a primary instrument to deal with *extremist* racist expressions. Criminal sanctions should be used with caution, but must be used nonetheless. Provincial Attorneys General should not only be vigilant but also active in invoking these provisions of the Criminal Code. As in the States however, law suits against racist groups should be enacted to curb resources enabling the mobilization of racist groups.

The false perception of these crimes as victimless should be addressed for the sake of the victims and the consequence to these actions. Since perpetrators have little contact with targeted victims (Levin & Mc Devitt, Hasselbach, Kinsella, ADL), the crimes are not governed by concrete hatred, but rather hatred propagated by social and subcultural stereotypes. The mores of film, music, propaganda and White Supremacist tenets found on Websites, have partly fabricated an environment where bias speech, thought and action are more respondent. By drawing communication lines through direct contact between perpetrators and victimized groups, false perceptions and stereotypes may be challenged. Although laws are important for extreme manifestation of hate crimes or repeated offenders, community work within the targeted group may educate perpetrators about the minority group's culture or way of life and reform bias perceptions. Through the creation of a systematic relationship, greater understanding on both sides may be generated.

Although it is not contested that laws should impose harsher sentences for multiple serious offenders, the imposition of stiffer penalties for perpetrators of hate motivated vandalism somewhat misses the mark. The law should be enforced vigorously as a matter of individual and social justice. But we must remember that the larger battle for people's minds will not be won in the legal arena.

## Glossary

### *The Canadian Jewish Congress:*

The Canadian Jewish Congress, located on Dr Penfield and Cote-Des-Neiges, is dedicated to “develop the highest standards of participation in the democratic process...by encouraging, carrying on and participating in activities of a national, cultural and humanitarian nature.” The Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) also investigates “anti-Semitic activities and devises means of overcoming its influence universally and in Canada in particular, while promoting the growth of a spirit of toleration, understanding and goodwill between all segments of society within a multicultural Canada.”

### *League for Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada:*

B'nai Brith Canada is a national organization dedicated to monitor White supremacist / neo-Nazi organizations and combat racism and bigotry in all shapes or forms.

### *Audit of anti-Semitic Incidents:*

The audit is a yearly statistical report published by the League for Human Rights B'nai Brith Canada. The audit is published each year since 1982. It examines the extent of anti-Semitic incidents throughout Canada.

### *Magrebin Committee:*

The Magrebin Committee was formed in Montreal in reaction to the 1993 week-end vandalism spree of seven Montreal area Synagogues. The committee is composed of a union between the Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith Canada.

### *White Power / White Supremacy:*

White Power is the philosophy of the White Racial national socialists. Perhaps the simplest example for what White Power stands for exists in the philosophy of the “14 Words” coined by David Lane, former member of a White supremacist / neo-Nazi groups called Bruder Schweigen. The “14 Words” effectively explains the basis of White Power by declaring that “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.” White Power is the modern embodiment of the Nazi party and its belief in the superiority of the “White” or “Aryan” race over the Jews, Blacks and other whom White Power supporters choose to blame for the decadence of western civilization. Typically, White Supremacist rhetoric found on grave sites include words as “Juden Raus” (German for “Jews out”), “Death to Jews”, “Kill all Jews”, “Hitler was right”, “ZOG” and other similar dialects.

**ZOG - Zionist Occupied Government:**

ZOG or Zionist Occupied Government, is a slang internationally used by neo-Nazi groups and organizations who are convinced that Jews control western governments.

**Swastika:**

In Nazi Germany, the Swastika was the national symbol. In 1910 a poet and nationalist ideologist Guido Von List had suggested the Swastika as a symbol of all anti-Semitic organizations. When the Nationalist Socialist Party (Nazi Party) was formed in 1919-1920, it adopted the Swastika as its symbol

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