American Terrorism

In the 1960s, H. Rap Brown, Justice Minister of the Black Panther Party, famously said, "Violence is American as cherry pie." (He also said, "If America don't come around, we're gonna' burn it down." Now Jamil Al-Amin, he's serving life in prison after killing a deputy who tried to arrest him on a traffic warrant.)

Americans like to view their country as exceptional among nations; in Puritan preacher John Winthrop's sermon (1630): **"We shall be like a City upon Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us."**

But, does history reveal that the U.S. actually resembles many other nations with deep social divisions – along racial, ethnic, religious, and political lines – that periodically erupt into terrorist violence?

Armed Struggles on American Soil

Nonuniformed groups fought on U.S. soil in the 18th and 19th centuries
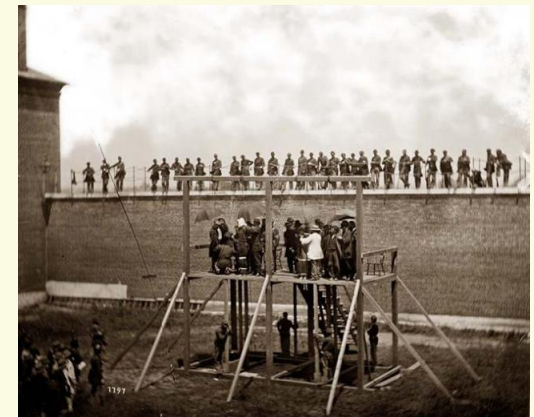

In the American Revolutionary War, several irregular militias attacked British soldiers from ambushes:

- ✓ **Ethan Allan's Green Mountain Boys of Vermont**
- ✓ **Minutemen at Concord & Lexington, Mass.**
- ✓ **The Liberty Boys of Georgia**
- ✓ **Francis Marion, South Carolina's "Swamp Fox"**

In the Civil War, pro-Union Jayhawkers, Regulators, & Redlegs and pro-Confederacy Bushwackers & Border Ruffians deployed terror tactics. In 1863, Quantrell's Raiders massacred 200 men & boys in Lawrence, KS.

John Wilkes Booth assassinated Pres. Lincoln as part of a larger conspiracy. At right, the hanging execution of conspirators David Herold, Lewis Powell, George Atzerodt, and Mary Surratt.

Anarchism Comes to America

Some Anarchists tried to spark the Revolution by violent means

In 1886, a bomb killed eight policemen at an Anarchist rally held in the Haymarket Square, Chicago. Four radicals were executed, one committed suicide, and three were pardoned. None were ever directly connected to the actual bombing.
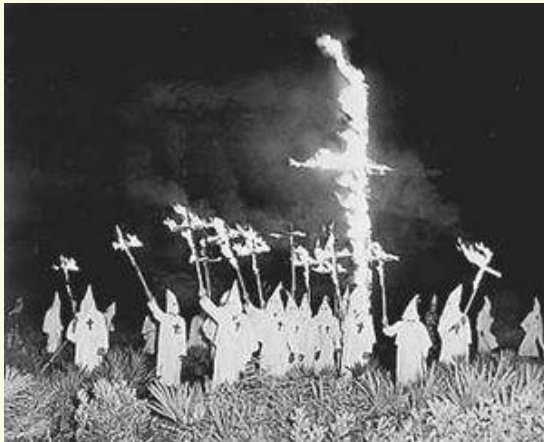
Anarchists, often European immigrants like Emma Goldman, were active in labor, feminist, & anti-fascist movements. But, their media image as bomb-throwers & the 1919 "Red Scare" crackdown diminished Anarchy's appeal.

Many late-20th c. American terror bombings – by the "Uni-bomber" Ted Kaczynski; at the Atlanta Olympic Games by Eric Rudolph; Oklahoma City by Timothy McVeigh – seem acts by tiny conspiracies or a "lone wolf," rather than by ideological organizations.

White Supremacy

Watch the segment about American **white supremacist groups**, from *Terrorism: A World in Shadows,* tracing the 1866 roots of their terrorism to Ku Klux Klan & Nightriders who used beatings, burnings, & lynchings after the Civil War to intimidate blacks and white supporters. These terror organizations operated in both the North and former Confederacy.

Why did social & political changes demanded by the 1960s Civil Rights Movement trigger terrorist attacks by a revitalized KKK?

Did the 1960s white supremacists evolve into today's Christian Identity Movement?

Are they new groups with same-old ideology?

A right-wing paramilitary **militia movement** arose from confrontations with federal agents, such as the 1992 Ruby Ridge shootout & 1993 siege and burning of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, TX.

Drawing their supporters from survivalist, tax-protester, and Christian Identity churches, the militias have an estimated 20-60,000 members.

Christian Identity Movement

Martin Durham describes the **Christian Identity Movement**'s doctrine, offering religious justifications for racism, anti-Semitism, and terrorism.

- ➤ "British Israelism": White Europeans are the true descendants of the ancient Israelite tribes, hence Protestants are God's chosen people
- ➤ Christ's second coming & destruction of world (Armageddon) are near
- ➤ U.S. government backs New World Order conspiracy to destroy Whites
- ➤ Polygenist human origins: Only the Whites are created in God's image
- ➤ White supremacy: Because Jews, blacks, nonwhites are not humans, they must be exterminated in the coming race holy war (RAHOWA)

Two Christian Identity Movement orgs that used terror strategies are:

Richard Butler

The Order – covert cell inspired by *The Turner Diaries*; robbed & counterfeited, bombed theaters & synagogues, killed radio host Alan Berg in 1984. The FBI took used RICO to destroy it.

Aryan Nations – neo-Nazi org led by Richard Butler in Idaho, aimed to create a northwest homeland. AN splintered in 2000 after a $6.3M legal judgment for attacking a mother & son.

Assignment #2

Chose one of two theories, **either** <u>human security theory</u> (Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens 2006) **or** <u>pure terror theory</u> (Black 2004), and discuss how well or poorly that theory explains U.S. domestic terrorism – by such violent groups as The Order and the Aryan Nations – whose ideologies are based on Christian Identity (CI) religious beliefs. CI is described in the article by Martin Durham (2008) and the class lecture.

How well does Christian Identity terrorism fit with your chosen theory's propositions (e.g., either about human-rights conditions or social-geometric distances)? Discuss which theoretical propositions, if any, are consistent with CI violence and which ones are less-well supported.

Does that theory identify the social settings from which people are likely to be recruited into CI domestic terrorist orgs? Why / why not?

Be sure to cite all sources you use; e.g., articles, books, lectures, conversations

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Due WEDNESDAY, November 3 (also submit to SafeAssign)

<u>**Maximum**</u> **word limit = 750**. Include name & student ID#, "Word Count = __".