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## Radicalization Pathways among Women in U.S. Far-Right Extremist Networks and Implications for Deradicalization

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### *Abstract*

Radicalization of women within far-right extremist networks is a timely issue. Evidence suggests women's participation in terrorist activity is likely to grow in the next few years, as extremists continue to find new ways to recruit women. Women's involvement in far-right extremist networks is greater than frequently thought, yet the underlying radicalization pathways are often understudied. At times, radicalization pathways of women are stereotyped; or women are dismissed due to the perceived complexity of understanding their support for extreme misogynistic networks. Exploring these radicalization pathways is important in understanding deradicalization and preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) practices. Existing research often regards radicalized women as anomalies, deviating from traditional gender norms, meaning policy considerations relating to deradicalization are still based on outdated stereotypes. Far-right extremism is one of the most significant domestic threats currently facing the United States. Leveraging the extant literature on gender and radicalization, this paper provides an overview of women's presence and radicalization pathways within the contemporary American far right. I present case studies of two women, who have participated in contemporary American far-right extremist networks, providing an in-depth content analysis of their personal social media accounts and secondary sources. I find that these women are motivated by, and radicalized through, perceived threats to their status. Such threats need not be real and can be derived from real political and cultural events, or conspiracy theories. I conclude by arguing that this evidence provides avenues for our understanding of deradicalization pathways.

### *Article History*

Received Feb 15, 2024

Accepted Mar 14, 2024

Published Mar 29, 2024

**Keywords:** Radicalization Pathways; Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism; Far-Right Extremism; Gender; Deradicalization

### Introduction

Domestic far-right extremism is seen as one of the most pressing threats to the United States. Since 2005, the annual reported number of terror incidents committed by far-right extremists has increased from just 7 between 2005-2007 to 40 in 2020-2022 (Anti-Defamation League,

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2023). However, since the 9/11 terror attacks, Western countries have mainly focused on Islamist and Jihadist extremism, radicalization, and deradicalization, while neglecting to address far-right extremism. Radicalized individuals become more extreme in their beliefs, and may cross the threshold to undertake extremist or political violence (McCauley and Moskaleiko, 2008). The study of radicalization pathways offers critical insights into counterterrorism and deradicalization efforts. Much of the extant literature attempts to identify the characteristics of terrorism or violent extremism offenders (Wolfowicz et al. 2020) and other scholars focused on radicalization pathways (Horgan, 2008; De Coensel, 2018/2019). While there has been a long and continued interest in women of the far right, this research often addresses the roles of women in far-right organizations, instead of their radicalization pathways (Blee, 2003; Ebner and Davey, 2019; Champion, 2020; Leidig, 2023). This is a particularly noteworthy gap in scholarship, given that women defendants make up 13% of the 776 federal cases related to the January 6<sup>th</sup> Capitol Siege (Matfess and Margolin, April 2022).

Women's participation in far-right extremist movements is often molded to fit into a stereotypical narrative, despite evidence that women "join terrorist movements for many of the same individual clusters of psychological, personal, social, economic and political reasons that men do" (Orav et al., 2018:3). Evidence suggests that women should not be viewed as naive followers or passive actors within extremist networks, though these gender constructions are reproduced in the field of deradicalization (Bösing et al., 2023; Samuals and Shajkovci, 2023; Corcoran-Nantes, 2011). For women, the reasons to join extremist organizations are varied, but all too often rely on stereotypes. These stereotypes assume that women are not credible violent actors. Women are relegated to their traditional roles as mothers and are seen as nurturing, and therefore inherently peaceful (Marway, 2011; Sjoberg and Gentry, 2007; Bloom, 2011; Schmidt, 2022). This assumption is dangerous for at least two reasons. First, violent extremist groups use these pervasive stereotypes to their advantage, by integrating women in their operations (Nacos, 2006; Cunningham, 2003). As an example, a female suicide bomber once mimicked pregnancy by wearing a bomb belt in her abdomen area (Bloom 2005: 54), as women assuming motherly roles are perceived by others as non-threatening. As a result, extremist groups are increasingly including women in their tactical

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operations, to evade detection or capture (Bloom, 2011). Second, women can use these gendered frames to leverage their perceived innocence or lack of culpability within the judicial system. In doing so, the “effect of these appeals can be to depoliticize women’s activities in support of far-right movements” (Matfess and Margolin, April 2022: 5). While more men than women have joined far-right extremist groups overall, women’s representation may certainly increase. Pilkington (2017) argues that while the far right remains dominated by men, “it is no longer a closed or ideologically inhospitable environment for women or LGBT activists.” (253). It is therefore timely to examine the motivation of women to join far-right extremist groups, as the number of women who participate in these groups is likely to continue to increase.

This paper focuses on women for two reasons. First, the increasing activity of women within the far right and their roles within these networks requires more attention, as to understand their influence. This is particularly important since social media plays an increasing role in the recruitment of new members for extremist far-right networks, and social media has “given women new on ramps and ways of acting as a spokespeople of far-right movements, often making their messaging appear more palatable to mainstream audiences” (Matfess and Margolin, April 2022: 4). Second, there is a persistent narrative that “women in far-right extremist movements do not commit violence as blindly as men, that there are factors outside of their hateful beliefs that can explain their destructive behavior” (Samuals and Shajkovci, 2023: 222). By using these biases and perpetuating stereotypes, the roles of women within these organizations are reduced and deradicalization policies are based on pervasive stereotypes. For example, in their preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) policy “the UK government demonstrated basic presumptions about Muslim women when they developed their counter radicalization policies, including believing they were disempowered in their communities, questioning their loyalty to the UK state, and were often simply viewed as an instrumental sense as a means of access to vulnerable men” (Cook, 2020: 78). While this example relates to Jihadist and Islamist extremism, similar presumptions are highly likely for women’s involvement in far-right extremism.

Existing literature falls short of explaining the radicalization pathways of women toward far-right extremist groups, because of a dominant focus on Islamic extremism and the

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overall neglect of the role of women. In turn, there exists a lack of knowledge about deradicalization and P/CVE efforts for women. Reinares and Vicente (2023) acknowledge the importance of understanding radicalization pathways to identify deradicalization pathways. Understanding and addressing radicalization pathways is therefore instrumental in uncovering pathways for deradicalization and other P/CVE efforts. Building on the existing literature, I identify three drivers of radicalization. I find that individuals feel a perceived or real threat to their status or existence, internalize this threat, and look for supporting evidence to confirm that their status or existence is under threat. They find evidence in two different streams. The first stream results from contemporary political, cultural, or social events, such as presidential or local elections, proposed laws, or political leadership changes. The second stream involves conspiratorial thinking. I develop a preliminary approach to understand radicalization pathways toward far-right extremism, analyzing the radicalization pathways of two women, to highlight the trajectory. This leads to the following two research questions:

1. What are the radicalization pathways of women who join a far-right extremist group?
2. How can our understanding of these radicalization pathways help us understand and inform deradicalization efforts?

This article proceeds as follows. I briefly address radicalization pathways and the far right. Then, I discuss deradicalization and P/CVE efforts in relation to the far right. Subsequently, I discuss the methodology and provide an in-depth analysis of the two case studies. I end with brief concluding remarks.

### **Radicalization Pathways and the Far Right**

Because deradicalization programs are often rooted in radicalization pathways, it is imperative to have a thorough understanding of such pathways (Gøtzsche-Altrup, 2018). In general, scholars have identified a variety of push and pull factors, although they often focus on Jihadism (Koehler, 2014; Horgan, 2008; Wolfowicz et al. 2020). Radicalization drivers towards the far right are frequently identified as hate, stupidity, ignorance, or anger (Pearson,

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Brown, and Winterbotham, 2020). Often, this is because the far right is ideologically congruent, but consists of a variety of groups with different foci. Other factors that have been identified frequently are a sense of belonging or community (Miller-Idriss, 2009; Miller-Idriss, 2018), the need to be near violence (Tanner and Campana, 2014), a sense of anti-elitism or the need to challenge the legitimacy of the established order (Schultze et al., 2022), a quest for significance (Kruglanski et al., 2014) or a real or perceived status threat: their perceived relative superiority to others (Emmelkamp et al. 2020). Here, it is important to note that this status threat is frequently related to immigration, the number of immigrants in the region or country, and the perceived decline of White people in a country or region. As a result, far-right extremist groups are often pro-natalist and anti-immigration. These factors are closely connected to conspiratorial thinking. Conspiratorial thinking involves individuals voicing their dissatisfaction with the established order, seeking alternative explanations to make sense of their environment (Garry et al., 2021).

### **Women and the Far Right**

Women take up a variety of roles within far-right networks (Blee, 2003). According to Mattheis (2018), “popular and media notions about women’s importance to extremist movements portray women’s participation as passive – as wombs for the cause or caretakers of men – or, if women are seen as more active, it is believed that they are duped or coerced by men into participation” (129). When women participate in far-right networks, they are associated with supporting roles, such as fundraising (Gordon, 2017) or recruitment (Darby, 2020). However, some women undertake violent action, or at least attempt to do so (Samuals and Shajkovci 2023). The roles women take on can be divided broadly into four categories. First, women take on the role of recruiters within far-right extremist networks. This is especially more common in contemporary radicalization efforts of the far right, where White women are using social media to share their lives, and homemaking skills while including insidious hashtags relating to far-right extremist networks (Leidig, 2023; Leidig, 2021; Ebner and Davey, 2019). A second role for women centers around the role of motherhood. Blee (2003) found that women often are assigned the role of mother within American far-right

supremacist groups, as mothers are viewed responsible for the future of the White race. When women “become pregnant or nurse babies, they fulfill their racial destinies” (118). The importance of procreating and assuring the future of the white race is an important one, as this role is often referred to by the women who have joined a far-right group. Belew (2018) found that women were first and foremost responsible for mothering and caring for children and men.

Third, women often support far-right extremist networks through logistical tasks. For example, women in the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) have helped to organize barbeques, picnics, and social events, to integrate the White supremacist far-right ideology further into the community (Gillespie McRae, 2017). Last, women take on the role of martyrs. When White women are part of far-right networks, they are protected from other groups that the far-right perceives may want to harm them. When this fails, they are often turned into martyrs. This was the case of Vicki Weaver, who was shot and killed during the Ruby Ridge Siege in 1992, and she became a martyr for the White supremacist movement, the image of a ‘White goddess’, a prized woman in need of protection (Campion, 2020). This helped cement the far-right ideology. Here, women not only take on an active role within far-right networks but also uphold stereotypes that are important for recruitment and the division of labor and roles within far-right extremist networks. By recruiting women into far-right extremist groups, these groups are not only growing in numbers but are also legitimized through the representation of a larger portion of society. It is evident that the extant literature addresses the roles of women and positions they held within far-right extremist networks, instead of the radicalization pathways resulting in the participation of women (Travis, 2023; Roose and Cook, 2022; Pitcavage, 2019; Kimmel and Ferber, 2000). In short, the extant literature does not highlight the core beliefs of these women, nor does it address the narratives these women espouse.

### **Gender and Deradicalization**

Deradicalization processes can be best understood as “the social and psychological process whereby an individual’s commitment to, and involvement in, violent radicalization is reduced

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to the extent that they are no longer at risk of involvement and engagement in violent activity” (Horgan and Braddock, 2010: 280). Disengagement processes can be best described “the process whereby an individual experiences a change in role or function that is usually associated with a reduction of violent participation” (ibid.) Reinares and Vicente (2023) argue that “attending to the main dimensions that drive radicalization can, in cases where motivations are markedly stable throughout engagement, offer insights into understanding the subsequent disengagement process” (107). Liguori and Spanierman (2023) identified a variety of outsider relationships that could help facilitate deradicalization processes. Among these, they identified the role of romantic, maternal, and platonic relationships (44-46). Taking a broader lens, Silke et al. (2021) identified eleven major themes in extant deradicalization literature and found that within these themes, actor, psychological, and environmental catalysts play interconnected roles in disengagement and deradicalization efforts and encompass this within their Phoenix Model (312-313). They further found that, aside from these catalysts, it is important that individuals perceive a “credible, positive and sustained opportunity” to deradicalize (Silke et al. 2021: 313). A key factor is identity transformation, as this is the foundation for deradicalization and disengagement processes. This does not have to be an entire new identity, but could also be the re-emergence of alternative identities (Silke et al. 2021: 314). The previously identified themes are all catalysts to this identity transformation. The Phoenix Model is agnostic of gender and does not provide a gendered approach.

In general, scholars and policymakers alike have identified primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention programs. Drawn from public health assessments, these models can be useful in assessing and developing deradicalization or P/CVE models (Brouillette-Alarie et al. 2022). Broadly speaking, primary prevention programs target a large audience with counter narratives and are not necessarily focused on those already radicalized, but on the wider public (ibid.). Secondary prevention programs are targeted at individuals who are at risk of radicalization, and tertiary prevention is targeted at known extremists or convicted terrorists (Cherney, 2024; Brouillette-Alarie et al. 2022). The findings of this paper are particularly interesting for identity transformation and secondary and tertiary P/CVE efforts. To counter women’s involvement in far-right extremist organizations, women need to be centered in

P/CVE and deradicalization efforts. According to Winterbotham (2020), P/CVE efforts can be divided into four separate streams or efforts: interventions focused on mothers and their capacity to recognize radicalization, efforts focused on economic and social empowerment of women, efforts to inform and consult women participating in P/CVE efforts and efforts to counter the recruitment of women and girls (11-34). In assessing these common strategies, she finds that it is not possible to draw any conclusions from an assessment of these strategies. Additionally, due to a lack of data about the effectiveness of P/CVE programs, it is impossible to shine a light on their effectiveness (Winterbotham, 2020: 36-37). Existing P/CVE efforts therefore uphold and strengthen stereotypical and gendered notions of women and radicalization. In doing so, it is impossible to accurately account for the experiences of radicalized women and to accurately identify useful P/CVE efforts. Winterbotham (2020) notes that there is a need for “better mechanisms and infrastructure for women-specific prevention and deradicalization programmes” (35).

Some scholars have suggested that gender inequality and oppression are drivers for radicalization (Praxl-Tabuchi, 2019; Idris, 2019; Ingram, 2021). However, when there is relative gender equality, as is the case in the United States, it becomes difficult to explain these drivers for women. Instead of escaping gendered constraints, these women may be motivated by the desire to instead adhere to traditional role patterns, contribute to the household through homemaking, or resisting contemporary feminist movements, especially when these advocate for a different set of choices and values. This means that the existing literature on the impact of gender equality initiatives on P/CVE efforts may not be sufficient in explaining the deradicalization of women in far-right extremism. This also means that the radicalization drivers for women towards the far right must be centered in understanding best practices for deradicalization.

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## Research Methodology

The field of terrorism and radicalization is known for its difficulty in engaging with radicalized individuals. To circumvent this issue, this paper utilizes the Twitter<sup>2</sup> posts of two women and secondary sources discussing these women, to identify and highlight their radicalization pathways. Using social media output and secondary sources as a way to identify the motivation of radicalized individuals, is a common way to gain insights into these pathways. In using this method, I consider their social media presence as “life stories.” Peacock and Holland (1993) state that this means that “it does not connote that the narration is true, that the events narrated necessarily happened, or that it matters whether they did or not.” Here, social media posts and output will be considered as a real representation of the motivation of women. Lazzari et al. (2019) use an e-ethnographic approach, in which they use social media and internet blogs to depict and map out the radicalization pathways of women, lone actors, and children. Social media is an important part of the radicalization of women, but it also contributes to the radicalization processes of others. Ebner and Davey (2019) note that “female social media influencers have helped to generate millions of views and media attention for far-right causes, and these figureheads are becoming more and more important in the internationalization of the far right, using their influence to market extreme right-wing ideology to audiences across the Western World” (33).

To identify the case studies, I will use a non-random sampling strategy, because “these specific cases may be “most likely” or “least likely” instances, and they may be chosen because of insights they provide regarding causal circumstances that generate particular outcomes.” (Mosley, 2013: 19). To select the case studies, three criteria are important:

1. Have been radicalized and identified as White.
2. Espouse far-right extremist ideologies.
3. Have joined, or indicated an intention or desire to join, a far-right network.

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<sup>2</sup>In this paper, I refer to Twitter, as the data collected is from Twitter, and not through the rebranded platform X.

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Based on these three criteria, and the use of snowball sampling, I selected two cases. The two women who are the topic of this paper are a woman known under the pseudonym Wolfie or Wolfie James, and Ashli Babbitt. Wolfie James, the wife of a former U.S. State Department official (Hesse, 2019), used to be very prolific on social media. Ashli Babbitt was part of the insurrection on January 6<sup>th</sup> and was fatally shot by law enforcement while storming the Capitol building. Both accounts have been deleted, and to access their deleted Tweets, I used an internet archive, the Wayback Machine. The Wayback Machine archives web content and stores periodic snapshots of various pages (Zannettou et al. 2018). I produced a database of 158 tweets from both women. For James, there are 94 tweets available, covering two years (2016-2018), while for Babbitt, there are 64 tweets available, broadly spanning four years (2017-2021).

I conducted a conventional content analysis (CCA) and developed four different categories. With CCA, “researchers avoid using preconceived categories, instead allowing the categories and names for categories to flow from the data” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). In doing so, it is possible to gain a better, and richer understanding of the text or phenomenon. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) further develop specific guidelines for conducting CCA. First, all tweets were carefully read, to understand the content and the context of each tweet individually but also in relation to each other. Second, the data is read again, to derive codes by highlighting the text that captures key concepts, thoughts, or feelings. Third, the researcher conducts an initial analysis, where the researcher takes note of their first impressions and in doing so, labels for the codes emerge. Next, codes are sorted into different categories, based on similar themes (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005:1279-1280; Stemmler et al. 2021). This resulted in four categories: ‘status threat,’ ‘political or cultural considerations,’ ‘conspiratorial beliefs,’ and ‘other.’ Subsequently, I developed definitions for each category and code (see Appendix A). I use the real name to refer to Babbitt and this decision has not been made light-heartedly. Only recently have the ethical implications of doing so been the topic of research (Golder et al., 2017). Yet, this decision is made because Babbitt has been known online under her real name. For James, I use her pseudonym, even though she has been named in the SPLC report identifying her husband (Hayden, 2019).

Case study research is valuable, especially because this paper attempts to identify radicalization drivers and subsequently, implications for deradicalization strategies. In light of this, Freilich et al. (2018) found that it is important to “identify the unique structural positions and socialization processes” rather than “developing a general theory of radicalization” (44). That one case study can provide valuable insights, is shown by Mattheis’ work on the rhetoric of far/alt-right women and the way they use this to gain entry in these extremist places. She uses videos of Lana Lokteff, an American far-right white supremacist, and states that “her claims and arguments show the current strands of discourse used by women to recruit other women into Far/Alt-Right ideology and groups” (135). Thus, this paper provides us with valuable insights into radicalization pathways, and in turn, helps us gain a better understanding of what is necessary for deradicalization processes.

## Results and Discussion

In this section, I first discuss the backgrounds of both women, addressing their roles within far-right networks. Then, I discuss their outward-facing posts on social media and discuss their relevance to the three radicalization drivers.

### *Wolfie James*

Wolfie James was born in present-day Serbia, but moved to United States at some unknown point. She married Matthew Gebert, after meeting him during a study abroad program in 2001 in Moscow (Hayden, 2019). The couple have three children together and used to reside in Virginia. In 2019, her husband was named in a Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) report, revealing that he was a foreign affairs officer assigned to the Bureau of Energy Resources. Outside of his work, Gebert allegedly oversaw the Washington D.C. area chapter of a White nationalist organization, and often appeared on a far-right podcast (Hayden, 2019). He also participated in the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville in 2017. He too, used a pseudonym and was known as “Coach Finstock,” referencing the 1985 film *Teen Wolf*. After Gebert’s involvement as a White supremacist was revealed in 2019, the U.S. Department of State revoked his security clearance (Hayden et al., 2022). He has been on unpaid leave since.

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It is unknown where the couple currently resides but in September 2022, Gebert filed a claim with the U.S. District Court in Washington D.C., claiming that his First Amendment rights were violated by the revocation of his security clearance (U.S. District Court, 2022).

James was very active on Twitter and alt-right platforms between 2016 and 2018. On Twitter, James discussed various conspiracy theories about Jewish people and tips on how to prepare for a racial holy war (RAHOWA). She also discussed how White women were supposed to act as part of the far-right ideology. In most of her tweets, she shared far-right and alt-right ideals. She also wrote about these ideas on various blogs. Between 2016 and 2018, James tweeted about her fears of a White genocide, the importance of traditional gender norms, the political system and immigration in the United States and Europe. Her tweets are racist and often misogynistic, aligning with popular White supremacist conspiratorial thinking. Since 2018, she has been inactive on social media. The majority of her tweets spoke about a real or perceived threat she felt (see Figure 1).

### *Ashli Babbitt*

Ashli Babbitt was a 35-year-old U.S. Air Force veteran who gained notoriety by storming the United States Capitol during the insurrection on January 6, 2021. After entering the Capitol building, she was fatally shot by the Capitol police, when she tried to get through a broken window of a door inside the Capitol (Barry et al. 2021/2023). Babbitt gained status as a martyr after her death in some far-right circles (Bergengruen, 2021). Here, her martyrdom serves two causes. First, the far right views her as a woman who is an innocent victim of the established order. Babbitt was portrayed as a patriot, who fought for the American people and their principles. This portrayal of Babbitt is evidence of a strong belief within far-right circles that Babbitt was wrongly killed by the Capitol police and is used to argue that the American government is actively waging a war against its own citizens (ibid.). Second, there was a call to action within far-right circles to kill the police officer responsible for her death. Messages that were circulated online stated: “We need to find out who the LEO [Law Enforcement Officer] red coat was today who murdered Ashli Babbitt [sic] and arrest that bum and execute him” (Mandziuk, 2022: 7). By invoking the memory of the American Revolution, the Capitol insurrectionists were able to “become noble and admirable citizens rather than rioters” (ibid.).

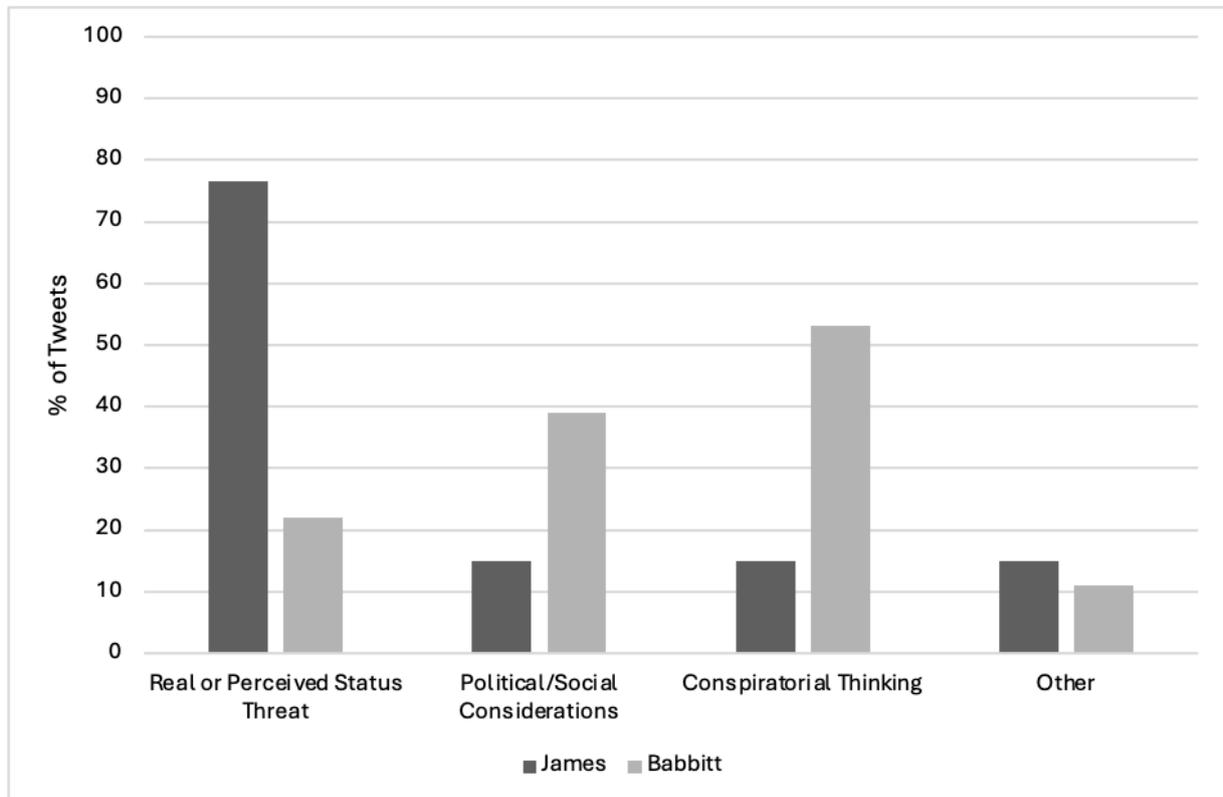
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Babbitt's death became an important rallying factor for the far right, and her death was used to recruit other perceived 'freedom fighters'.

Well before her death, Babbitt tweeted and retweeted false claims by President Trump and pro-Trump lawyers about the so-called 'stolen' election, and she was an outspoken opponent of California Governor Newsom's COVID-19 policies (Beckett and Ho, 2021). Babbitt was born and raised in California and lived near the Mexican border town of Tijuana (Barry et al., 2021/2023). In California, she owned a pool-cleaning company, where her brother had previously worked. According to one of her brothers, she was raised in an apolitical household, indicating no drive towards a certain ideology during her childhood or adolescence (Barry et al., 2021/2023). However, in adulthood, Babbitt became a firm believer of QAnon conspiracy theories, often tweeting about 'saving' children who were allegedly victimized by an unproven conspiratorial sex-trafficking pedophile ring (Beckett and Ho, 2021). This is a popular conspiracy theory in the QAnon movement, arguing that world leaders and wealthy elites are part of a gang of pedophiles, responsible for the disappearance, and in many cases, the ritual sacrifice, of young children throughout the United States. There is no evidence for this conspiracy. According to another news report, Babbitt believed she found a cause that gave her life purpose (Jamison et al., 2021).

While she had been an Obama supporter in the past (Bellingcat, 2021), Babbitt began to radicalize and first tweeted her support for QAnon in 2019. Babbitt was considered "loyal but rebellious, devoted to her country but often unable to get along with those who shared it" (Jamison et al., 2021). As part of her work in the Air Force, she had been deployed at least seven times – and during a deployment in 2014, she challenged the views of a superior officer. According to a former staff sergeant who witnessed the interaction "she was like a dog with a bone. [...] She could never let go of whatever her attention was on, and she was absolutely unafraid of anything" (ibid.). This anecdotal evidence indicates that she has always been vocal and uninhibited in sharing her opinion, acting on what she believed was right. In a similar vein, other Air Force colleagues said that Babbitt fiercely defended the people she cared for. It could be argued that Babbitt was on a significance quest, as those close to her stated that: "she had a new cause, [...] and her cause was QAnon" (ibid.). Between January 2017 and January 2021, Babbitt often tweeted about politics, voter fraud, and QAnon

conspiracy theories. Figure 1 shows both James' and Babbitt's tweets for each of the radicalization driver



**Figure 1:** Radicalization Drivers for James and Babbitt

The biographical information above is mainly based on secondary sources. I will now turn to a discussion of their motivations based on tweets and secondary sources.

### **A real or perceived status threat**

The far right often uses ethnonationalist rhetoric, in which they indicate that there may be a threat against European or Western cultures, their way of living or to their national identity (Marcks and Pawelz, 2020; Caiani and Kröll, 2017). These real or perceived threats often show up in political discourse when immigration, or a change in national traditions or holidays, is discussed. James demonstrates concern about the future of the White race in two ways. On one hand, she is fearful of immigration and mixed marriages as an indicator for the

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decline of the White race. On the other hand, she often tweets about the need for traditional role patterns in a marriage between a White husband and wife, and the need for White women to procreate to save the White race. She expresses fear for a White ‘genocide,’ and tweets about her preparations for an upcoming racial holy war (RAHOWA) and other White supremacist notions. White supremacists and neo-Nazis believe that there is an impending war between the Western World and an alleged Zionist Occupied Government (ZOG). This is closely tied to many conspiracy theories which address the role of a Jewish or Zionist world government. James indicated her worries about the perceived erosion of White culture, a perceived White genocide, and immigration to the United States (James, January 2017; February 2017). She also indicated concerns about immigration into Europe in 2015 and 2016. She tweeted that “by supporting #MuslimBan our kids will thankfully still be around, in a majority white country, saying wew [sic] that was close” (James, January 2017). Here, she expresses fear for future White generations, including her children, faced with the prospect of living in a country without a White majority. There is a perceived threat towards the status of the White race as a dominant majority.

James further notes the decline of the White race through her indignation about mixed marriages. In one of these tweets, she includes a picture of a Black man and a White woman and describes this as “1000s of years of evolution down the toilet” (James, December 2016). She also tweets about the fact that White women need protection from Black men: “Black people: please stop raping and murdering our white women.” Other sources of a perceived status threat relate to the perceived erasure of White history, with James retweeting the following tweet: “White advocates have to remember this and proclaim it: every attack on Southern history and heroes is an attack on white history and heroes” (James, March 2017). James’ fears for a white genocide, both in a cultural sense, due to the alleged erasure of history, and a literal sense, due to the perceived decrease of a White majority, indicates that she experiences a threat to her status. As a White woman in a majority White country, she is worried about a non-White majority altering the status quo.

In her tweets, James also addresses the need for traditional gender roles, even offering prescriptions for how women should behave. Love (2020) argues that “some alt-right women further weaponize femininity against feminism with cosmopolitan-like promotions of fashion

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and makeup, earning them the label ‘fashy femmes.’” (3) In one of her articles, under the pseudonym Wolfie James, she discusses “7 Reasons Why Alt-Right Men Are The Hottest.” One of the reasons she mentions is that these men are family focused and want to see “moar [sic] white babies” and even “invest in each of those children to steel them for the struggles to come” (James, 2016). In the same article, she states that alt-right men celebrate women because they are able to “birth and raise white babies” (James, 2016). The supposed need for White babies frequently comes back in her tweets too. Take, for example, a tweet about New Year’s Resolutions on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Here, she states that one of her New Year’s Resolutions is to “make white baby #3” (James, January 2017). White women take on an integral role in the far-right networks of James, precisely because they can contribute to future generations of supporters and make sure White people continue to exist. At the same time, inherently to this call to traditional gender norms, and the purported need for more White babies, is a perceived status threat. This threat is twofold: on the one hand, James fears the decline of the White race, and on the other hand, rebels against the feminist movement, which threatens the traditional gender norms and traditional role patterns.

While James feels mostly threatened within her personal sphere, Babbitt also discussed threats to the United States as a whole. In her tweets, Babbitt often highlighted her feelings towards immigration, the response of politicians in Washington D.C. to border issues, the local and federal responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2020 Presidential election. Overall, fourteen of Babbitt’s tweets indicated a sense of status threat, discussing the threat to her life, her freedom or her livelihood. In these tweets, she often calls for unity against the incumbent government. Her response to the COVID-19 related Tax Relief Act of 2020 suggests that she holds a strong conviction that the American government is not taking her and her community seriously, as indicated by the following Tweet:

“It is a smack to the gut for everyone of us... you think ppl [sic] are waking up yet?... THEY DON’T GIVE A FUCK ABOUT US...all they want is power and money...we must unite!” (Babbitt, December 2020).

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Based on this tweet, it stands to reason that Babbitt felt isolated and ignored by the people in power. The lockdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic jeopardized her livelihood. Even though she stated her business would remain open in an earlier tweet, it is not enough for her to regain this sense of safety and security. Her government, and her country are failing her and her people. This sentiment, where she believes she is under threat and the American government is unable to help her, is also visible in a response to a tweet by Representative Ilhan Omar, where Omar states that there is no real national emergency at the border. Babbitt responds by stating that: “I live 15 min from Tijuana...I’m telling you what the reality is... TRUMP IS TELLING THE TRUTH the MSM [Mainstream Media] IS LYING. I will not be told by media personnel who work in New York thousands of miles away from my border that my reality is a lie [American flag emoji] #BUILDTHEWALL” (Babbitt, January 2019). This sense of powerlessness while being under threat, may explain why Babbitt eventually went to Washington D.C. on January 6. About this, her brother stated the following:

“My sister was 35 and served 14 years – to me that is the majority of your conscious adult life [...] If you feel like you gave the majority of your life to your country and not being listened to, that is a hard pill to swallow. That’s why she was upset” (Barry et al., 2021/2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, coupled with the border issues, emphasized Babbitt’s perceived status threat.

Babbitt often tweeted about her reality, stating the following on Twitter: “For real though. No one in Tijuana wants them [illegal immigrants] here. They are causing massive issues. I’m tired of being told my reality isn’t happening... bullshit and all of the Mexican citizens who do work here legally can not get to work... our politicians and media need to be Checked [American flag emoji]” (Babbitt, November 2018). Immigration is often named as one of the causes for a perceived status threat, especially in Western Europe and the United States. Trump heavily drew upon the supposed ‘immigration threat’ during his 2016 campaign, referring to immigrants as rapists or drug dealers (Jacobs, 2018). This perceived

threat to the livelihood of American citizens became an important point for Babbitt, and this was repeated during the COVID-19 pandemic and the local and federal responses to it. She accused Californian Governor Newsom of infringing on her rights as an American citizen. Take, for example, her tweet on March 19, 2020:

“I REFUSED TO CLOSE MY BUSINESS. I don’t answer to Commies/Gov. or fear mongering & I sure as fuck will not relinquish my private rights – including the right to assemble & operate my private business! This is disgusting what is occurring! No one is quarantining me- FREEDOM [American flag emoji]” (Babbitt, March 2020).

Even before the COVID-19 lockdowns and the supposed infringement upon her rights, she believed that Californian Governor Newsom was infringing upon these rights. In October 2019 Governor Newsom tweeted about a new law that went into effect regarding the purchase of semiautomatic weapons. Babbitt responded by tweeting:

“Meanwhile here in CA, our illustrious Gov [side eye emoji, woman facepalming emoji, woman gesturing no emoji] and his minions still continue to infringe upon our inalienable rights... because he is a commiee [sic]... However, @GavinNewsom, your days are #’d, and you know this, man! #Trump2020” (Babbitt, October 2019).

For Babbitt, this frustration indicates she may have felt as if she was fighting a losing battle and the people in power were not listening to her. Given the supposed inefficacy of government officials, Babbitt felt she needed to take matters into her own hands, and did so by going to Washington D.C. on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. In doing so, the perceived status threat consolidated into political action, and she was able to latch her fears onto political considerations.

### Political and Social Considerations

Both James and Babbitt felt, or at least perceived a status threat. I argue that this sense of status threat is internalized and strengthened by looking for evidence in the political arena or by looking at social and cultural occurrences. This evidence not only confirms their worldview, but it also justifies their previously held beliefs. These are not necessarily local or American political events, but also international events. For James, this often meant commenting on political events that were occurring at the time. In one case, she commented on a tweet of SBS News, in which it was stated that Marine Le Pen, French Presidential Candidate, and member of the National Assembly refused to wear a headscarf for a meeting with Lebanon's Grand Mufti. James responds by stating:

“Usually not a fan of women in politics but... Le Pen for the win” (James, February 2017).

In this tweet, James correlates her perceived status threat, the threat of erosion of traditional gender norms, with observations about contemporary political events. In one of her tweets, she speaks directly to ‘the liberals.’ In this tweet, she states the following: “Dear Liberals: This is the voice of your ‘resistance’ against restoring law & order to this country. A child was raped. #RockevilleRape” (James, March 2017). This tweet refers to the alleged sexual assault and rape of a 14-year-old student, who accused two classmates of this crime at their school. It is important to note that the two classmates entered the United States illegally in 2016 (Morse, 2017). James was able to connect her perceived status threat, specifically related to immigration and illegal immigration, with this case. Here, she reinforces preexisting beliefs about immigration as a danger. This solidified her belief that the white race is under threat by (illegal) immigration.

In another instance, she specifically targets former White House official Jared Kushner in her tweets. Kushner served as a senior advisor to former president Trump between 2017 and 2021, during which James alleges he was “actively working against America’s

interests and why we voted for Trump” (James, April 2017). In the same tweet, she states that this is not because he is Jewish, but in another tweet on the same day she states:

“Get the meddling, globalist, Israeli dual-citizen, beneficiary of nepotism amateur out of goddam US politics” (James, April 2017).

Even though she states it is not because Kushner is Jewish, a retweet of her own tweet suggests otherwise. In a response to her earlier tweet: “Govt will betray you, & Jews control government. Civic Nationalism is Bullshit” she includes the following: #FireKushner (James, April 2017). On April 6, 2017, just a day before these tweets, the news broke that Kushner had omitted mentioning meetings with foreign leaders. Of particular interest here, were meetings with the Russian ambassador and one meeting with the head of Vnesheconombank, a Russian-owned bank (Becker and Rosenberg, 2017), and these tweets are referring to these meetings. Here, James adeptly connects contemporary government officials to age-old conspiracy theories. She alludes to a larger Zionist conspiracy, by including the fact that Kushner is Jewish. Her worldview, with a place for these conspiracy theories, is confirmed by connecting Kushner and his former role in the American government, to her preexisting beliefs. While James tweets less about her political and social considerations, especially compared to tweets about a perceived status threat, her feelings of perceived status threat are confirmed by looking at political and social events. She finds that the White race is under threat and White people are held to a different standard when it comes to criminal activities, as is exemplified by many of her tweets. She also finds evidence of a larger conspiracy that is behind a perceived White genocide, believing that a Zionist conspiracy has infiltrated the American government.

Babbitt often connected her personal experiences of living close to the border to larger political events. Trump first mentioned the notion of building a wall alongside the American border with Mexico throughout his campaign for the 2016 presidential election. In 2017, then-President Trump signed Executive Order 13767, which directed the American government to begin constructing this wall. In December 2018, far-right political activist and former U.S. Air Force veteran Brian Kolfage started a GoFundMe campaign to solicit donations to build

sections of the wall alongside the U.S.-Mexican border. A tweet mocking the people donating to this initiative received a response from Babbitt, where she stated that:

“Oh you mean the meth that is pouring across the border destroying our communities that we need to secure-but you, the cronies & elite mock and denounce us common citizen wanting security – you sir, are part of the problem #BuildTheWall” (Babbitt, December 2018).

Similarly, Babbitt states that:

“Our elected officials, bureaucracy and elitism is what bothers me- I live 15 min from the Tijuana border and the MSM/politicians are not reporting the truth-ONLY LIES- there R-drugs, rapes, riots, arrets, sickness, ppl who wk [work] here can’t get to wk [work]-2me trump isn’t the [sic] issue [pointing finger up emoji] are.” (Babbitt, December 2018).

She points the finger for these issue to the mainstream media, as her pointed finger emoji refers to a previously shared article New York Times. In doing so, Babbitt connects her perceived status threat to political motivations and a perceived elite, latching onto a Trump policy popularized by the media, and other social initiatives. When the COVID-19 lockdowns were initiated, she connected these to a larger conspiracy and an infringement of her rights. Based on these tweets, Babbitt felt threatened by an infringement upon her rights, an alleged election fraud and immigration. Babbitt’s peers on twitter and social media validated her concerns, often stating that former President Trump would eliminate evil, in all its forms. While she often responded to tweets relating to political events or new legislation, even more of these tweets are peppered with conspiratorial thinking.

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### Conspiratorial thinking

Both James and Babbitt tweeted about pervasive far-right conspiracy theories. Per her tweets, James believed in a larger Zionist scheme, where Jewish people lead the world behind the scenes. Based on these tweets, James believed in a larger, Zionist government that controlled the world. This is a popular far-right conspiracy, often leading to antisemitism and the denial of the Holocaust. This conspiracy theory is often referred to as the Zionist Occupied Government (ZOG) conspiracy and has its roots in the Christian Identity movement (Winter, 2014: 48). In the U.S., the ZOG conspiracy claims that Jewish people are “neither the true Israelites nor God’s chosen people, but the spawn of the serpent (or Satan) who have no legitimate claim on Palestine or America. They have not only occupied Israel/Palestine but seek to extend their power globally and over the USA in particular, leaving the Aryans without a nation” (Winter, 2014: 49). James, an avowed white supremacist, uses antisemitic dog whistles in her blogs and tweets, indicating a belief in this conspiracy theory. An example of this includes her blog post about which PBS TV shows children should watch:

“‘Screen time’ is an inevitability unless you plan to go full 1488 and thoroughly isolate your kids from the degeneracy of television, public schools and major metropolitan areas” (James, 2016).

This sentence may seem innocuous, perhaps referring to the year 1488, but in reality, 1488 is a white supremacist symbol. The number 14 is shorthand for: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children,” while 88 refers to Heil Hitler. In a different blog, titled: “How to Redpill Your Woman,” James not only talks about how to essentially radicalize women, but she also alludes to conspiracy theories about an alleged Zionist government. She writes that “even the Semites have done such a terrific job of convincing the world of their imaginary plight that even hardened ethnonats [ethnic nationalists] think twice about denouncing them” (James, November 2016). Her conspiratorial beliefs are connected to her perceived status threat. She further states that the only thing Hitler did wrong, was losing (James, February 2017), and claims that “#ItsTimeToGetOver the

holocaust” (James, March 2017). These tweets and retweets indicate her beliefs, particularly highlighting the role of the Jewish people, denial of the Holocaust and a Zionist conspiracy.

Babbitt often tweeted about the QAnon conspiracy theory. QAnon gained more traction during Trump’s Presidency. The origins of this conspiracy theory can be traced to the leak of the Democratic National Committee emails in 2016. Adherents of this conspiracy theory incorrectly believe that:

“President Bill Clinton and Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton were operating a child sex trafficking ring in the restaurant’s [a pizza restaurant in D.C.] basement” (Rajan et al., 2021: 3).

Babbitt also believed that Joe Biden played a role in this alleged pedophilia ring, referring to Biden as a “kid raper” (Green, 2021). This conspiracy theory held that a clandestine cabal wielded control over the world. Per this narrative, President Trump was destined to save the world from this cabal.

The 2020 presidential election proved a particularly fertile ground for narratives that framed the electoral contest in stark terms: a clear case of good versus evil. The allegations of voter fraud were already laid in the 2016 election, where Trump stated that he would have won the popular vote had it not been for fraud (Helmore, 2016). Babbitt was especially outraged about the election of 2020 and shared the feeling, with many others, that there had been election fraud, and that Trump was the rightful winner of the elections. Election fraud was an important topic in Babbitt’s tweets, as she also believed there were cases of voter fraud during the 2018 midterm elections. In a tweet responding to alleged voter fraud in Florida and Arizona, she stated that:

“They had to go collect the amount they needed from their vault of the dead [skull emoji] and illegals... this is complete horseshit. And the left is screaming ‘count every vote’. Ya hi -- - [hand wave emoji] the game ended Tuesday -- what kind of malarkey is this? [face with monocle emoji].. the Dems are losing it [flushed face emoji]” (Babbitt, November 2018).

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In these instances, she creates a clear dichotomy between those on the ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ side of history. This is connected to her perceived status threat: she believed her constitutional rights as an American citizen were infringed upon, that democracy in the United States was at stake, and searched for answers and explanations. She found these answers in conspiratorial beliefs and used contemporary political events as evidence.

Based on Babbitt’s tweets, she truly believed in an overarching conspiratorial cabal. She tweeted that:

“Disney is an organized Pedo ring. We all know it.. Epstein’s island much? What about the peeps in FL that were arrested last week in Disney for pedophilia with Kids only a few months old? Anything? Don’t worry, we will wait... Dark to light. God Wins. WWG1WGA [Where We Go One, We Go All] [American flag emoji]” (Babbitt, June 2020).

This abbreviation, ‘WWG1WGA’ is a popular QAnon rallying cry. This is often used as a hashtag to find like-minded individuals online. Another sentence often used within the community of QAnon believers is ‘From Dark to Light’, indicating the notion that the truth will prevail and that QAnon believers know what this truth is. Closer to the January 6<sup>th</sup> insurrection she often referred to this. In her final tweet before her death on January 5, 2021, she tweeted:

“Nothing will stop us... they can try and try and try but the storm is here and it is descending upon DC in less than 24 hours... dark to light!” (Babbitt, January 2021).

Partly, Babbitt used the QAnon conspiracy theory to justify going to Washington D.C. on January 6<sup>th</sup>, together with her beliefs in the alleged election fraud. In doing so, she likely genuinely believed she was making the world a better, safer place. Conspiracy theories are often used as a “vehicle for the expression and representation of the extreme right’s fears about threats to white supremacy and America and served as justification for their political

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mobilization, activism and violence” (Winter, 2014: 35). It is clear that both James and Babbitt believed these conspiracy theories because they spoke to their perceived status threat, and in the case of Babbitt, were also used as a justification for her own violent mobilization, by storming the Capitol on January 6<sup>th</sup>.

### Implications

The results of these two case studies paint a complicated picture of the radicalization pathways and drivers of these women, and in turn, deradicalization efforts. Three themes are particularly present in the radicalization drivers for both these women: 1) a perceived, or real, status threat, 2) a connection to political or social events, or political and social considerations, and 3) a belief in dominant far-right conspiracy theories. Taking the two women as case studies demonstrates that all three drivers are important narratives in facilitating radicalization. Previous work on radicalization often includes the role of important narratives, focusing on the othering or a clear dichotomous worldview. This paper adds to that literature by identifying the importance of these narratives in radicalization and highlighting the importance of these narratives for deradicalization practices. These narratives are more than the core belief system of these women. They also help inform their worldview, which in turn, makes them presupposed to search for specific evidence. These narratives are important; especially since these are the precise narratives used to recruit other members of far-right networks or organizations. While other scholars have identified the roles of women within far-right networks (Blee, 2003) this paper highlights the narratives and core beliefs of these women. In doing so it is possible to develop avenues for deradicalization and disengagement pathways.

Understanding how these women radicalize and what these drivers are, is useful to deradicalization policies. Radicalization drivers are informative for deradicalization processes in three main ways. First, understanding how radicalization processes work and what drives these processes, helps develop effective prevention programs and helps gain the ability to identify early warning signs of radicalization. This is especially relevant when it comes to a perceived status threat, as the two women continuously sought to confirm their worldview and

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searched for evidence incorporating that sense of perceived status threat. Second, these two case studies show that while the drivers are very similar, ideological sentiments are different. While both women believed in popular far-right conspiracy theories, James was more concerned about the future of the White race and her children growing up, while Babbitt was concerned about the perceived violation of her human rights by the American government. Third, the narratives that are present in the far-right community, particularly related to conspiratorial thinking, are insightful. Far-right radicalization in general, and specifically when it is related to conspiratorial thinking, blurs the lines between fact and fiction. It then becomes increasingly difficult to deradicalize these individuals. Therefore, deradicalization processes need to be handled with exceptional care, especially in the case of conspiratorial thinking.

Based on these findings, there are three important implications for deradicalization and disengagement processes. The first implication relates to identity transformation; the second to the role of the environment and the third to the role of gender stereotypes in these processes. First, as discussed previously, identity transformation is a key part of the deradicalization and disengagement process. Here, Horgan and Braddock (2010) found that deradicalization does not just mean the physical ending of certain behavior, but an inherent change at the cognitive level (280). Because both James and Babbitt continuously confirmed their sense of perceived status threat by incorporating evidence from political and social occurrences or conspiratorial thinking, it is evident that deradicalization efforts need to be all-encompassing. This necessitates ameliorating the perceived status threat, and one of the ways to do this is through education and discrediting the extremist ideology.

When discrediting and educating radicalized individuals, it is important to provide them with viable and believable alternatives (Pearson et al. 2020; Silke et al. 2021). This also highlights the link between identity transformation and deradicalization, since education and ameliorating this sense of status threat could contribute to a change in identity or the re-emergence of an alternative or previous identity. This is particularly important in the case of Babbitt, who, before her radicalization, voted for Obama. This paper found that a perceived status threat and the confirmation of a particular world view is inherently part of the identity of these women. The second implication relates to the role of the environment. This paper

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found that both women were part of a loosely organized network of far-right individuals. In both cases, there was no clear leader and radicalization occurred online and in the private sphere. While the implications from this paper are mainly important for secondary and tertiary P/CVE efforts, the role of the environment is important for primary P/CVE efforts too. Ellefsen and Sandberg (2022) found that interventions in the private sphere, by family, friends, and peers, “build on and use a relationship of trust and care as an entry-point to influence potential extremist out of radicalization processes” (7). Even in the case of P/CVE efforts in later stages, family, friends and peers play an important role (Cherney, 2024). Interventions in the private sphere would be useful, and this is especially important, because “the lines between legitimate discourse and far right discourse are blurring. In absence of a clear community of engagement, this makes countering the far right much more difficult than countering the violent jihad” (Pearson et al. 2020: 271). However, the complicating factor here is the role of online and offline streams of information. Both women lived part of their lives in a far-right online community, which means that this is where deradicalization efforts take place. Taking these two implications together, it is evidence that P/CVE efforts should focus on creating alternative, believable narratives, from a reliable and trustworthy source. These narratives should be accessible online.

A third implication centers around the role of gender stereotypes and the assumption that women In her work on the role of gender stereotypes in deradicalization and disengagement practices in the United Kingdom related to Jihadism, Schmidt (2022) found that women are often viewed as monsters or mothers. They are viewed as mothers because they undertake violence that steers away from traditional gender stereotypes often attributed to women (962-964). They can also be viewed as mothers, who are either met with a greater deal of judgment from the public and in the judicial system because they radicalize their children, or they are held responsible for the actions of their partners and children (Schmidt, 2022: 962-963). Schmidt (2022) further found that in P/CVE efforts, women are not treated as individuals with agency, but rather dependent on their partners (962-963). Similarly, Pearson et al. (2020) found that one of the most important gendered assumptions in P/CVE programs is that women are less likely to be involved in violent extremism (10). The implications from this study are useful in countering these biases and stereotypes, as this study shows that

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women radicalize on their own accord, and their pathways are motivated by a perceived status threat, political and social considerations, and conspiratorial thinking.

In this study, I presented in-depth case studies of two radicalized women, rather than a broader, less-detailed analysis of many radicalized far-right women. This has the advantage of permitting in-depth analysis as I have presented here, which allows me to trace multiple pathways of radicalization, but also presents limitations from the perspective of generalizability. Future research should certainly continue this in-depth approach, but other studies with an increased sample size, as well as comparative approaches across movements (e.g. Islamic extremism compared to far-right extremism), will offer a fuller picture of how women radicalize and de-radicalize more generally, whether they are involved with the far right, or another extremist movement. A second limitation is related to the use of social media. In doing so, we must assume that what the women state online, is true to who these women are, offline. It is impossible to see if their online persona is close to who they are offline. However, by using secondary sources to gain a clearer insight into their motives, it is possible to support the original data.

## Conclusion

This study further provided an in-depth analysis of the radicalization trajectories of two women who have joined far-right movements, showing the complex and intricate social and political context of these trajectories. Drawing upon two case studies, Capitol insurrectionist Ashli Babbitt, and blogger and White supremacist influencer Wolfie James, I presented the radicalization pathways of these two women and showed the implications for deradicalization pathways and P/CVE efforts. This study underscores the importance of the role of a perceived status threat, coupled with the search for evidence in the form of political and social considerations, and conspiratorial thinking. This study also highlights the importance of understanding radicalization drivers in relation to deradicalization processes. Only by understanding what such drivers of radicalization are, it is possible to undo this move toward these extremist far-right networks.

This paper explored the radicalization pathways of women who join far-right extremist groups. I argued that a perceived or real status threat, the search for evidence in political and social events, and conspiratorial thinking are three important drivers towards far-right radicalization for women. By connecting evidence to their worldview, the women I analyzed were further justified and strengthened in their beliefs. That women often take on recruiting roles is of particular importance here. Much of the work these women do takes place online, which is also where these two women found most of the purported evidence to ‘confirm’ their real or perceived status threat. This implies that deradicalization efforts need to not only focus on countering these feelings of status threat, but also needs to take place in the spaces these women frequently visit. This often is on online social media, which means that deradicalization efforts need to take place online too. This also brings me to the second question that this paper sought to answer. To understand and develop deradicalization policies and processes, we need to understand radicalization pathways. As mentioned previously, this paper shows that radicalization processes are connected to a real or perceived experience: a sense of status threat. Thus, actively countering these feelings needs to be the starting point for deradicalization pathways.

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Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] PROBLEMS: 1. Her: maybe 16. 2. Him: black; outlook grim. 3. Ring facing him. 4. Candle on bed; uh oh!. 5. 1000s years of evolution down toilet. December 23, 2016. [Image of a Black man proposing to a white woman] [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] New Year's Resolutions: Strengthen troll game, Unassisted chin-ups, Convert women to AltRight, Wolf paw tattoos, Make white baby#3. January 1, 2017. [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] Jews have been so entrenched in US policy that it's not even considered 'foreign espionage.' January 13, 2017. [Image of a man and a woman with Nazi symbols, and the text: How much more of this jew crap are we going to take?] [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] By supporting #MuslinBan our kids will thankfully still around, in a majority white country, saying wew that was close. January 28, 2017. [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] Dear black people: please stop raping and murdering our white women. February 11, 2017. [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] Usually not a fan of women in politics but... Le Pen for the win February 21, 2017. [Small image of news item about Marine Le Pen] [Response].

Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] #FashyFriday #Ovens. February 24, 2017. [Image of a women with the words: The Holocaust... Never Happened] [Reweeat].

Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] #ItsTimeToGetOver the Holocaust. Uncuck yourself. March 3, 2017. [Image of a teacher and student, indicating a belief that the Holocaust did not happen, and children are subject to propaganda about the atrocities of the Holocaust] [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolfieJames] #PositiveParenting February 24, 2017. [Image of a father with his son, and the text: "What did Hitler do wrong? He lost] [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolffieJames] White advocates have to remember this and proclaim it: every attack on Southern history and heroes is an attack on white history and heroes. March 6, 2017. [Retweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolffieJames] Dear Liberals: This is the voice of your ‘resistance’ against restoring law & order to this country. A child was raped. #RockevilleRape. March 21, 2017. [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolffieJames] Get the meddling, globalist, Israeli dual-citizen, beneficiary of nepotism amateur out of goddamn US politics. #FireKushner. April 7, 2017. [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolffieJames] #FireKushner not expressly because he is Jewish, but because he is actively working against America’s interest and why we voted for Trump. April 7, 2017. [Tweet].

Wolfie James. [@WolffieJames] #FireKushner [in response to her own tweet: [Govt will betray you, & Jews control government. Civic nationalism is Bullshit] April 7, 2017. [Response].

### **Ashli Babbitt**

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] Oh you mean the meth that is pouring across the border destroying our communities that we need to secure-but you, the cronies & elite mock and denounce us common citizen wanting security – you sir, are part of the problem #BuildTheWall”. December 22, 2018. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] Our elected officials, bureaucracy and elitism is what bothers me- I live 15 min from the Tijuana border and the MSM/politicians are not reporting the truth-ONLY LIES- there R-drugs, rapes, riots, arrets, sickness, ppl who wk [work] here can’t get to wk [work]-2me trump isn’t they issue [pointing finger up emoji] are. December 15, 2018. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] They had to go collect the amount they needed from their vault of the dead [skull emoji] and illegals... this is complete horseshit. And the left is screaming ‘count every vote’. Ya hi -- - [hand wave emoji] the game ended Tuesday – – what kind of malarkey is this? [face with monocle emoji].. the Dems are losing it [flushed face emoji]” November 10, 2018. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] For real though. No one in Tijuana wants them there. They are causing massive issues. I’m tired of being told my reality isn’t happening... bullshit and all of the Mexican citizens who do work here legally can not get to work... our politicians and media need to be checked [American flag emoji] November 26, 2018. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] Oh you mean the meth that is pouring across the border destroying our communities that we need to secure-but you, the cronies & elite mock and denounce us common citizen wanting security – you sir, are part of the problem #BuildTheWall”  
December 22, 2018. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] I live 15 min from Tijuana... I’m telling you what the reality is... TRUMP IS TELLING THE TRUTH the MSM IS LYING. I will not be told by media personnel who work in New York thousands of miles away from my border that my reality is a lie [American flag emoji] 3BUILDTHEWALL. January 11, 2019. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] Meanwhile here in CA, our illustrious Gov [side eye emoji, woman facepalming emoji, woman gesturing no emoji] and his minions still continue to infringe upon our inalienable rights... because he is a commiee [sic]... However, @GavinNewsom, your days are #’d, and you know this, man! #Trump2020” October 12, 2019. [Tweet].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] I REFUSED TO CLOSE MY BUSINESS. I don’t answer to Commies/gov. or fear mongering & I sure as fuck will not relinquish my private right to assemble & operate my private business! This is disgusting what is occurring! No one is quarantining me- FREEDOM [American flag emoji] March 19, 2020. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] Disney is an organized Pedo ring. We all know it.. Epstein’s island much? What about the peeps in FL that were arrested last week in Disney for pedophilia with Kids only a few months old? Anything? Don’t worry, we will wait... Dark to light. God Wins. WWG1WGA [American flag emoji]” June 26, 2020. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] It is a smack to the gut for everyone of us... you think ppl are waking up yet?... THEY DON’T GIVE A FUCK ABOUT US... all they want is power and money... we must unite! December 22, 2020. [Response].

CommonAshSense [@Ashli\_Babbitt] Nothing will stop us... they can try and try and try but the storm is here and it is descending upon DC in less than 24 hours... dark to light! January 5, 2021. [Tweet].

**Appendix A: Thematic and Coding Categories**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Codes</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Status threat</b>	Status threat refers to a perceived threat to the perceived superiority of the subject; fear of losing perceived privilege, resentment toward outsiders or comments about social status of the White race versus others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In- and outgroup</li> <li>- Elite as outgroup</li> <li>- Immigrant as outgroup</li> <li>- Racial identity as outgroup</li> </ul>	The 'in and outgroup' code can fall within the same category as conspiratorial thinking based on the content.
<b>Political or Social Considerations</b>	Political or social considerations are social, cultural or political events or occurrences that confirm or add to their worldview, in particular to their perceived status threat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elections</li> <li>- Social Commentary</li> <li>- US/Mexico Border issues</li> <li>- Freedom of Speech</li> </ul>	
<b>Conspiratorial Thinking</b>	A belief in specific patterns and connections that can explain or justify certain political, social or cultural events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- QAnon Conspiracies</li> <li>- Denying of Holocaust</li> <li>- Beliefs in White Genocide</li> <li>- Zionist Occupied Government (ZOG)</li> <li>- Election Fraud</li> </ul>	<p>'QAnon conspiracies' refer to conspiracies such as pizzagate.</p> <p>'Election Fraud' can be double grouped in the political or social considerations category based on the rest of the content of a tweet.</p>

**Table 1:** Categories, Definitions and Codes

### About the JD Journal for Deradicalization

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ISSN: 2363-9849

Editor in Chief: Daniel Koehler