

UP IN FLAMES

Criminal Expertise and Far-Left Extremism

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Today's Agenda

- 1) Review past research on criminal expertise
- 2) Overview methodology
- 3) Present descriptive findings
- 4) Highlight examples of expertise
- 5) Finish with conclusions



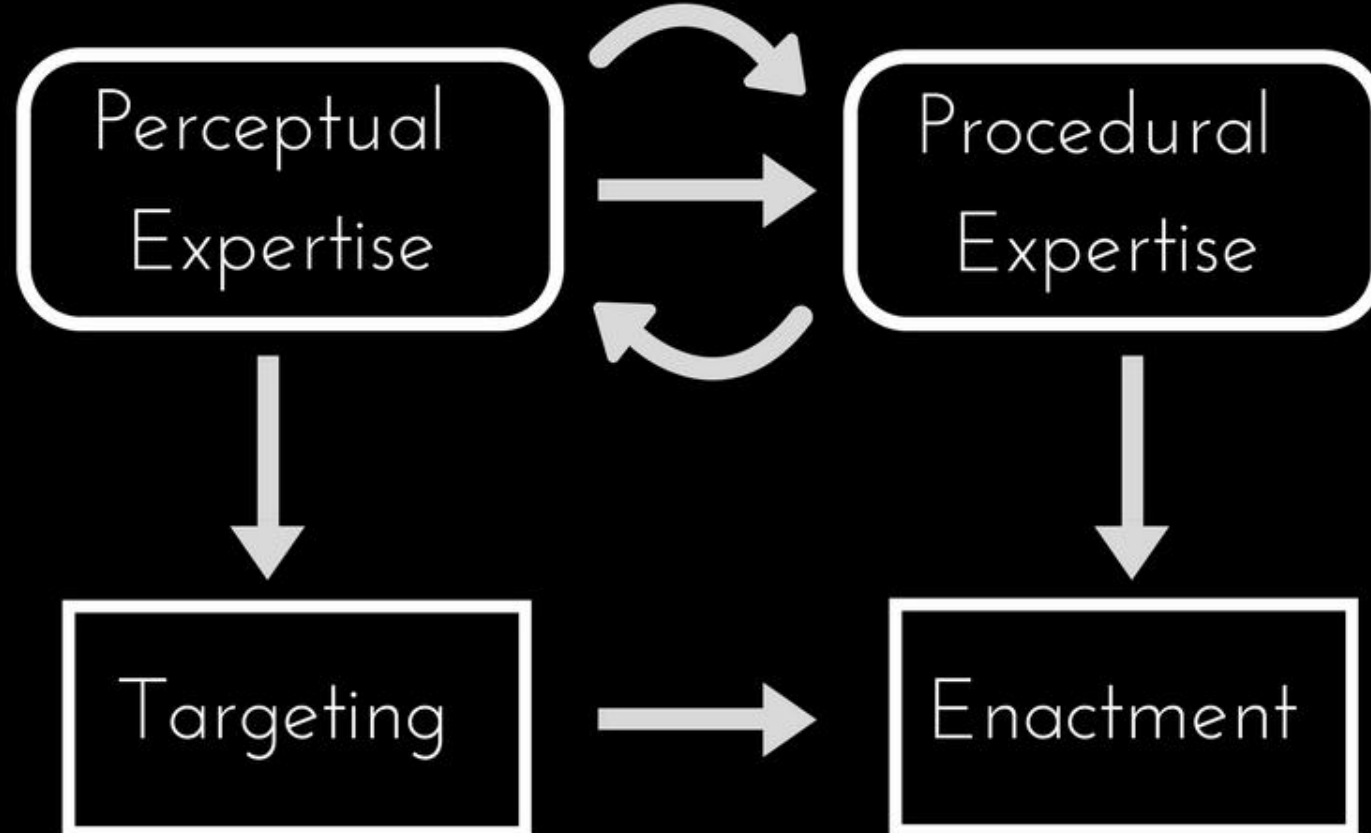
Defining Expertise

Expertise refers to "the acquisition of cognitive processes and consequent behavior that are demonstrably superior to those new to a given domain."



Two Types of Criminal Expertise

Perceptual vs. Procedural Expertise



Research on Criminal Expertise

Burglary

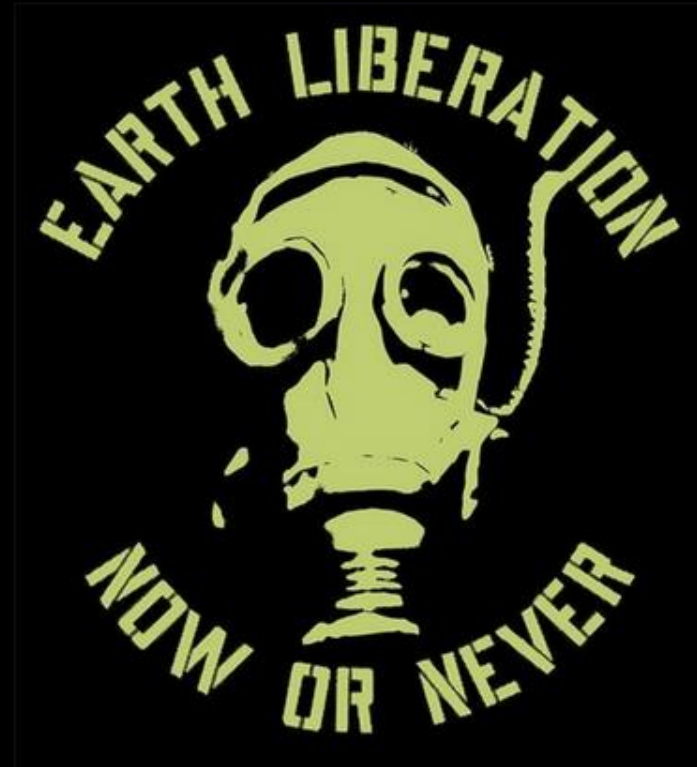


Car Jacking

The Current Study

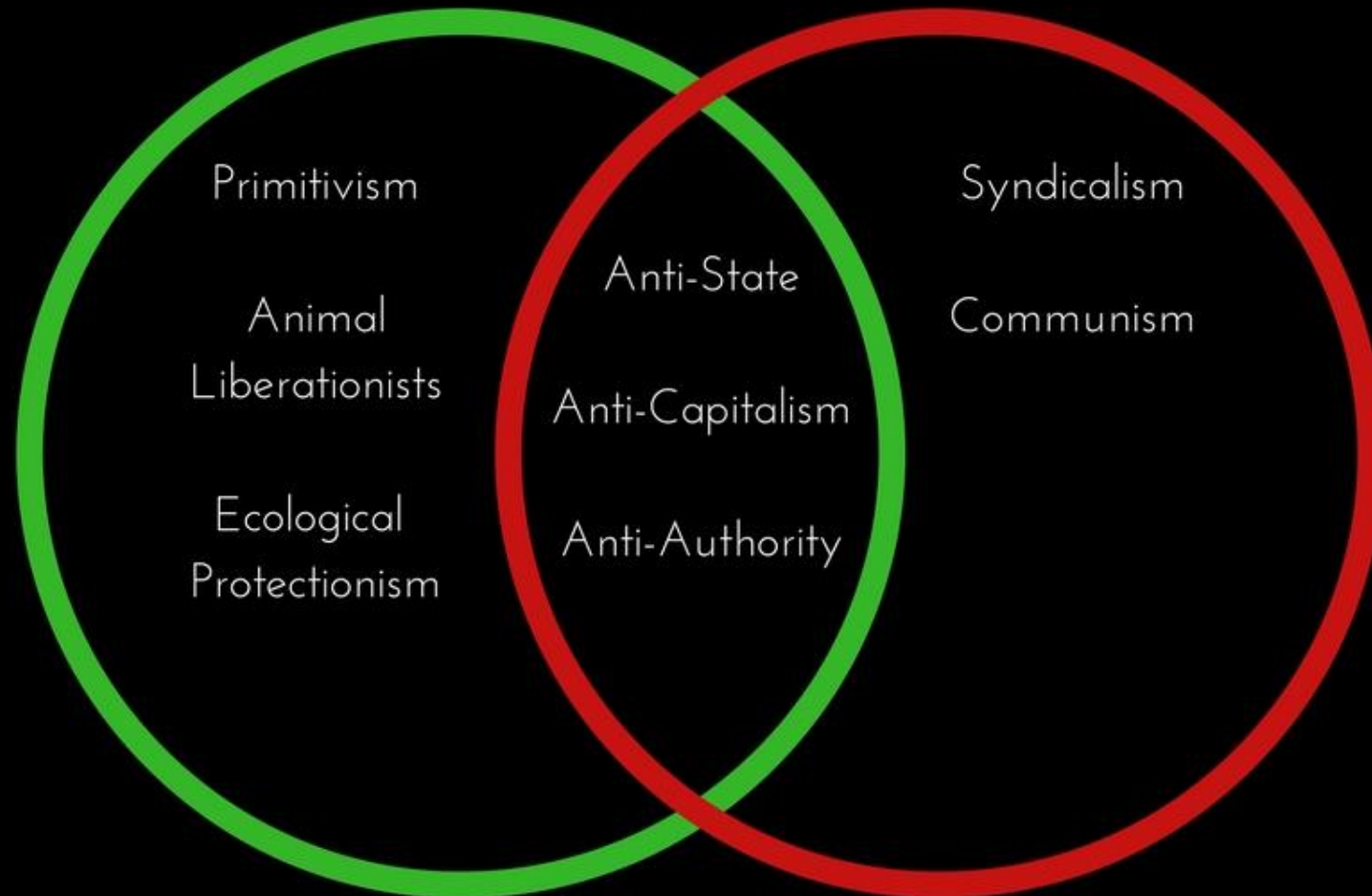
Research Question

Do indicators of perceptual and/or procedural expertise exist in far-left extremist communiques associated arson or incendiary attacks?



What is Far-Left Extremism?

Green vs. Red Far-Left Extremism



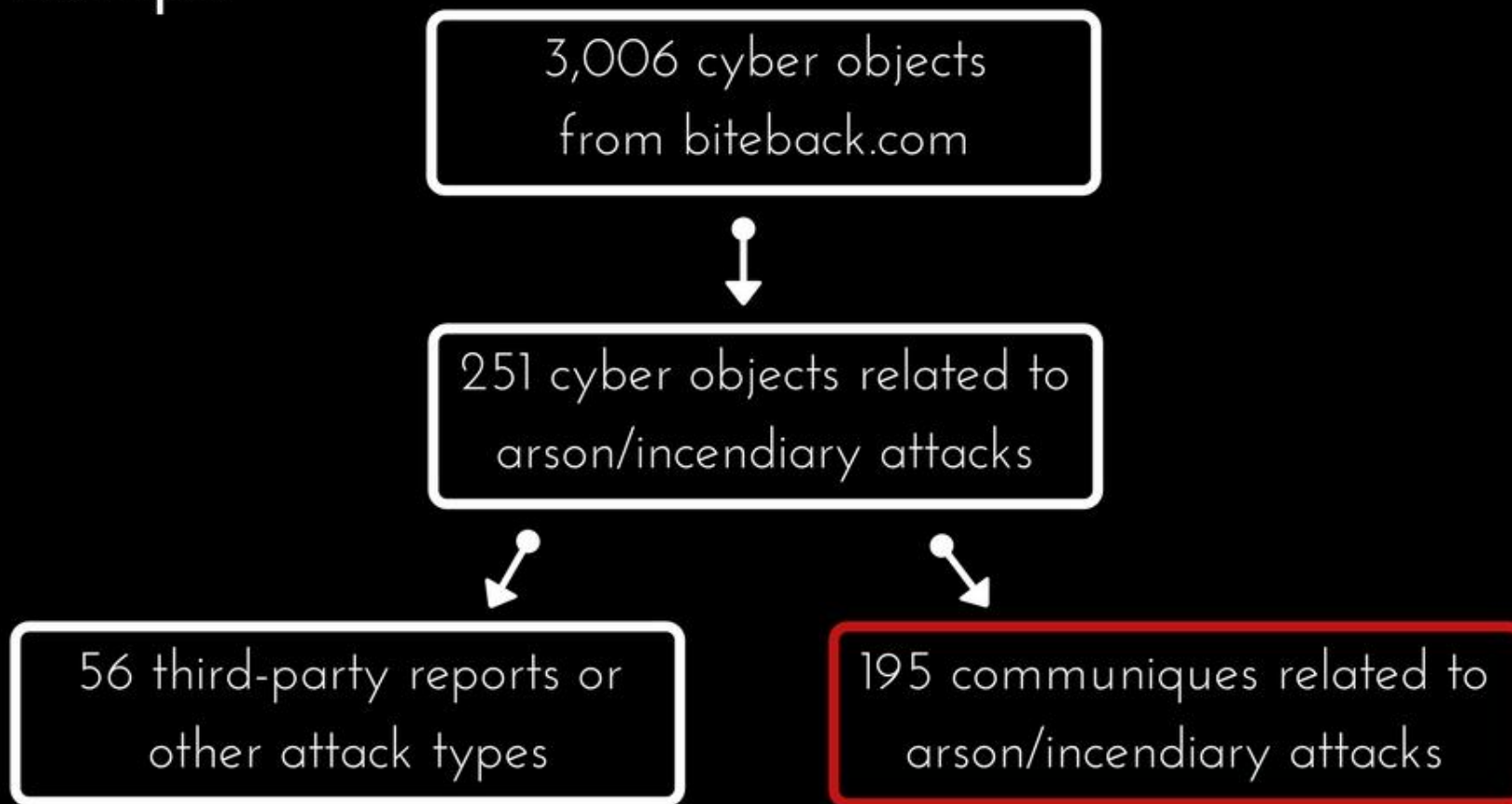
Methodology

Data Collection

- 1) Meta-Search for Far-Left Extremism Websites
- 2) Employ Custom "Web-Crawler" to Collect and Store Data
- 3) Sort Data into Different Strata (e.g., attack type)
- 4) Perform Thematic Analysis

Methodology

Sample



Communiques: What are they?



received anonymously (photo: oberonreview.com.au):

"Public notice: As of 02/12/14 the Oberon NSW slaughterhouse will be out of order.

Maintenance work began around 2:00am on the 2nd of December in the roof over the plants main building. Early work was successful, leaving behind only a shadow of the killing machine that originally stood above us. We moved quickly and work best at night anyway, so by the time those who showed up to appreciate our work arrived, we were already on to our next job. We do this for the love of it, the love of liberation, so no payment or gratitude necessary.

Surely this will cause an inconvenience to profiteers of animal abuse, and for this we generously offer any future services to those affected free of charge. No need to leave your name and address, chances are we already know you.

All workmanship is guaranteed, if for any reason the owners decide to rebuild, we will return to complete all original work.

Best wishes and happy holidays from your local handymen.

ALF"



anonymous report, from 325 (photo: Bristol Post):

"Just before sunrise this morning we launched a targeted arson spree along Glebe Road — which meets the main east Bristol thoroughfare of Church Road — and burned out corporate, luxury, private security and hunt-scum vehicles. Wildfire in the arteries of the city-prison! To break the lie of social peace and intensify the hostilities!

Emergency services were too slow to catch the responsible as the empty street was brightened from end to end as by torches. In a few words, the selected vans and cars were active components of the life they represent and also enforce.

Virgin Media supply television and also internet, and a national fibre optic cable network. To keep us enmeshed in the modern information economy and the spectacle of celebrities, video games and advertising is their business. Destroy what domesticates and stupefies us!

A car as fancy as a Quattro is an extra spit in the face for the property-less as well as the earth. In wealthy areas or parts undergoing gentrification they're commonplace, in England as in Argentina, Sydney as in Berlin, and there to be picked off at our leisure.

BWS's security vehicle in ashes is one less to aid their task across the UK of keeping the haves from the have-nots by threat or force and of expanding the matrix of surveillance cameras we pass under hundreds of times in a day. Minions of the established order have chosen their side! Insurrectional action against the constructs of authority above us, around us, within us.

Far-Left Extremism: Groups and Targets

The majority of incidents were claimed by:

- Animal Liberation Front (49.1%)
- Earth Liberation Front (20.3%)
- CCC/FAI/IRF (7.2%)

Around 7% of incidents were anonymous

Most attacks targeted:

- Construction/Industrial Equipment (13.1%)
- Personal Property (12.2%)
- Company Vehicles (9.9%)



Perceptual Expertise

Target Scoping

"In the late hours of the night after watching the manager in one of **the windows**, we went to the target, spraying gasoline inside a small warehouse where the multinational stored various logistical equipment and we set it on fire. **Because of the gas released from the gasoline inside the warehouse it made a noise like an explosion, and immediately we left the area.** Police and firefighters did not delay and they began the search for those responsible, but had no success...**The next day we returned to the scene of the attack...**The expressions of the employees and the manager of the establishment of death and suffering were of stress and confusion (ALF-Mexico, posted on 7/12/2009)."

Procedural Expertise

Tactical Adaptability

"In March we placed a small incendiary device in a Kleider Bauer store in Innsbruck. **The device was designed to trigger the sprinkler system at night, and was so small that we could hide it inside a cigarette pack.** The hand of a wrist-watch completes a circuit and sends electricity to the filaments of a small light bulb, starting a flame (ALF, posted on 5/6/2010)."



Perceptual and Procedural Expertise

Stealth and Adaptability

"So that night, **camouflaged by the darkness** and with only the moon lighting our insurgent steps, we arrived at the property in the late hours of the night. **With some bolt cutters we cut the metal fencing that had protected the farm with much care so that they would not hear us and so that the dogs who were guarding the place would not chase us.** We opened the fencing from top to bottom and entered... Immediately after this we placed an incendiary device made of about four liters of gasoline at the side of the empty shed. **We left it under a lot of wood so that the fire would spread.** We set the timer on the device and left through the torn wire mesh. When we were far away from the target, the fire could be clearly seen as it burned (ALF-Mexico, posted on 7/14/2010)."

Concluding Remarks

Far-left extremists rely on perceptual and procedural expertise to:

- 1) Maximize damage
- 2) Manage victim confrontation
- 3) Overcome deterrence measures

Overlap with violent and non-violent crime types

Policy implications: Target hardening efforts

Thank You

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