

All 'Right'? Alt-Right? All White?:

An Analysis of the Political Violence Performed by the Proud Boys

Ethan Brubaker

Why This Topic?

- The News
 - Unite the Right
 - Protecting Roger Stone
- Male Dominated Organization
 - Boy Scouts
 - Fraternities



officialproddbys.com



Lynn Brubaker

Research Question and Thesis

How do the Proud Boys justify political violence towards those with differing political ideologies?

They justify their violence by framing it as a response to attacks by the left and do so as an embodiment of their nostalgic views of manhood.

Political Violence as a ‘Defense’

- Identity as Defenders
 - Protect McInnes and Stone
- Rhetoric of Gavin McInnes
 - Proud Boys were “left to fight” after bottle thrown at them by leftist protestors
 - Under attack by a “left wing city that hates them” in NYC
 - “people now are [like] crazy ex-girlfriends”
- Online
 - “left-wing Antifa terrorists have attacked Americans”



Screenshot Taken by Julia R. DeCook

Utilizing Nostalgia to Justify their ‘Defense’

- Praise traditional gender roles
 - “Venerate the housewife”
 - Traditional Libertarian and protective man
 - Mirrored in online imagery
- Individualism → Distrust of Authority
 - New York aka “left wing city”
 - Progressive Authority (Obama et. al.)

Men fighting for defense and honor



Screenshot Taken by Julia R. DeCook



Screenshot Taken by Julia R. DeCook

Theories Behind Actions

- Social Cognition
 - Unfair social deprivation → demonize the left
 - Leftists responsible for loss of conservative values
- Humiliation-Revenge Theory
 - Humiliated by leftist attacks → fight back
 - Prevent further humiliation from ingroup
- Moral Superiority
 - *Victims* of the political left
 - *Sacrifice* themselves by fighting



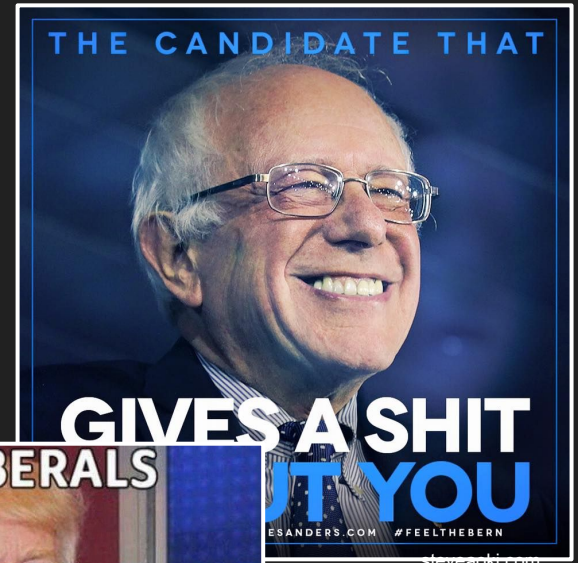
Randy Borum, Ph.D.

Their Political Violence is *Not* Terrorism

- “ [terrorism] perpetrated by individuals and/or groups inspired by or associated with primarily U.S.-based movements that espouse extremist ideologies of a political, religious, social, racial, or environmental nature” - *FBI*
- “ the threat or use of violence against non-combatants to instill fear and influence an opponent in pursuance of a political goal” - *Alexander Clayton*

Next Course of Action

- Policymakers need to use their platform to advocate for greater nonviolence in public protesting.
 - Nonviolent resistance is more effective
 - e.g. Donald Trump & Bernie Sanders
 - Can't “defend” yourself if there is no attack



Conclusion

