

SOCI 360 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

REACTIONARY MOVEMENTS: THE "PATRIOTS" & (WHITE) NATIONALISM

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1

J. Reactionary Movements

1. Reactionary movements thrive in times of large social change.

In *The Power of Identity* (1998), Manuel Castells suggests that identity rather than social role should be the lens we use to see how and why people are organized into social movements today.

There are cases where national identity and racial identity are central to the movement's identity.

While this can be true in cases where a movement seeks social justice or positive civic pride, such as the [Civil Rights movement](#) or the [Movement for Colonial Freedom](#), there can also be a darker, negative side to racial identity and nationalist movements, such as the [Ku Klux Klan](#) or the [Boogaloo Bois](#). Sometimes these movements have a *frame alignment* with a particular political (typically conservative) or religious identity (typically fundamentalist).



2

J. Reactionary Movements: Militias

2. One such nationalist movement that became popular in the 1990s and has resurfaced today is the "Patriot Movement".

In *The Power of Identity* (1998), Manuel Castells identifies the "[Patriot Movement](#)" or, more broadly, [loosely organized "militias,"](#) that typically oppose the established national and/or global order.

a. "Patriot" groups are [para-military in organization](#) (including weaponry and military hierarchy), and,

b. "Patriot" groups are [extreme libertarians,](#) opposing most or all functions of the [federal government,](#) including taxation, business regulations, environmental/land use regulations, federal courts (they prefer "Common Law"), and federal law enforcement agencies (such as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, or BATF).



3

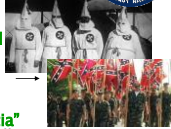
J. Reactionary Movements: Militias

3. A Brief History of "Patriot" militias:

a. Legal state militias were created in the 19th century to protect the states' rights (it is to these 'well-organized militias' that the Constitution's 2nd amendment refers). They have become today the "National Guard."



b. In the later 19th and early 20th centuries, non-legal "militias" (such as the KKK) policed blacks who had been given rights under the 15th amendment, which helps to explain the connection of militias to white supremacy.



c. It wasn't until the 1990s that private "militia" para-military organizations developed. Castells suggests this is due to the changing nature of the global social order and the introduction of a networked society/world, and that explains their affiliation with the ethic of nationalism.



4

J. Reactionary Movements: Militias

4. A List of Militia Groups in the U.S.

a. There are too many to list all 334 U.S. militia groups, and the unorganized (not well-regulated) nature of many make it difficult to provide an exact number, but here are some of the groups with the widest membership:

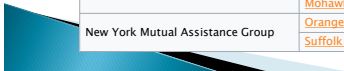
• National Groups:

- The Constitutional Sheriffs
- Oath Keepers
- Three Percenters
- Not Fucking Around Coalition



• New York State Groups

Liberty State Militia	Chenango County
New York Militia TM	Albany County
	Mohawk Valley Region
	Orange County
New York Mutual Assistance Group	Suffolk County

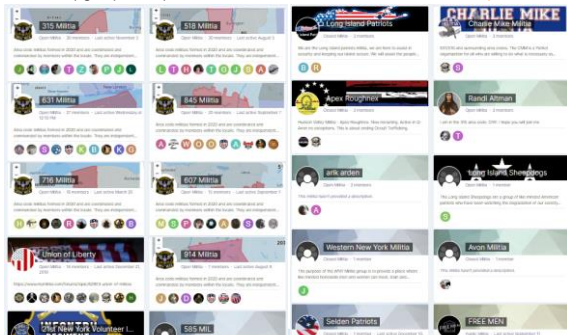


5

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4.b. Other Militia Groups in New York State

Note the organization of many of these groups by Zip Code. Though there are twenty groups, many have fewer than 10 members listed here at www.MyMilitia.com



6

J. Reactionary Movements: Militias

5. What can be done about unorganized "patriots"?

The problem many see with unorganized militias that are not sanctioned by law is that they encourage vigilantism, a form of social order that is typically devoid of law and order – a kind of "mob rule."

Also, the tendency of many "patriot" militias to embrace nationalism, white supremacy, neo-Nazism, and other intolerant belief systems makes them a social menace.

So, what groups have emerged to counter and act as a social-control mechanism on these "patriot" social movements?

Fortunately, many groups exist to track, prosecute, and control these militias. They include (but are not limited to):

[The Southern Poverty Law Center](#)
[The American Civil Liberties Union](#)
[The Anti-Defamation League](#)

