

Victimhood Gone Viral:
Portrayals of Extra-Lethal Violence and the Solidarity of Victims in the Case of
South African Farm Violence Activists

Carolyn E. Holmes
Mississippi State University

Accepted Draft, Pending Copy Editing

Abstract:

In her 2013 paper, Lee Ann Fujii proposes the concept of “extra-lethal violence,” which explores the ways that actors use violence over and above a standard of lethality to achieve group goals, like in-group cohesion. This paper, in an extension of Fujii’s work on extra-lethality, looks at the multiple audiences that such violence engages. Utilizing cases of rural violence in South Africa, this paper argues that the brutality of extra lethal violence provides an opportunity for mobilization not only by perpetrating populations, but also victim populations, even when it is infrequent. Organizations representing those who perceive themselves to be connected to the victims of such violence—White, mostly rural, and largely conservative South Africans—stand to benefit from focusing on the brutality of such violence. Victim groups benefit from exaggerating the scope and frequency of extra-lethality of such violence, not least because organizations representing White farmers draw more members and funds in increased threat environments. Activist groups overcome the barrier to mobilization presented by the rarity of extralethal violence by focusing on a small number of cases, and through repetition of the details.

A photo of a smiling red-haired toddler, Wilmien Potgieter, was posted on Twitter on 28 March 2018 by Ian Cameron, the Head of Community Safety of Afriforum.¹ Marked by the hashtag #FarmAttack, the tweet accompanying her picture tells the gruesome story of how she and her parents were killed on their farm in the eastern Free State in South Africa, saying “Her footprints were found in her fathers’ blood where he was murdered with a garden fork & panga [machete]. Mother was executed too” (Cameron 2018).

The same incident was referenced in a parliamentary floor statement by P.J. Groenewald, a parliamentarian of the Freedom Front Plus (FF+),² on 14 March 2017 (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa 2017, 8:02). Groenewald characterized the incident as “not normal criminality” saying that the family, and Wilmien in particular, had been “tortured to death.”

A 2018 book, published by the Deputy CEO of Afriforum is dedicated to the memory of Wilmien, and includes her picture as well as a detailed recounting of the incident using words like “execution” and saying that the box in which her body was thrown was “half full of her blood” (Roets 2018, 8). On 16 October 2018, Cameron referenced the attack again in an address to the Western Australian Parliament, which he described as “torturous” and “brutal” (Afriforum 2019).

¹ Afriforum styles itself as a civil rights organization that aims to protect “the rights of minorities” with specific reference to Afrikaners. Journalists and scholars have characterized it as a right-wing organization (Godinho 2014) that has championed the Afrikaner cause, including protection of apartheid monuments and the Afrikaans language in higher education (Modiri 2013). Max du Preez, a major news media figure in South Africa, has said that Afriforum “trades in fear and ethnic mobilisation...It has demonstrated repeatedly that intolerance, ethnic chauvinism, intimidation, crude propaganda, confrontation and provocation are part of its strategic arsenal”(Du Preez 2016), while scholars have compared the organization to the alt-right and White nationalist organizations in the United States and Western Europe (van der Westhuizen 2018).

² A right-wing party that has primarily represented Afrikaans interests. The main causes for which the party fights are self-determination for cultural minorities, including a *volkstaat* for Afrikaners, maintenance of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in public education, the anti-farm murders campaign, and devolution of power to local communities.

In January 2019, Afriform announced the establishment of the Wilmien Potgieter Fund to support children who had been “affected by farm attacks” (TimesLive 2019). In July 2020, Afriform released a dramatic reenactment video of the December 2010 attack, narrated by Wilmien’s aunt Susan Nortjé. The family is described as helpful, loving, charitable and kind, emphasizing the horror of the attack. Nortjé recounts the violence, saying:

Wilmien just wanted to help her dad. Wilmien’s footprints in his blood were found all over the veranda as she ran around her dad. Her little handprints covered his shirt with blood...Wilmien screamed terribly, and [the attackers] could no longer take it. They killed Wilmien with a shot in the head. They took her and threw her body in a box like that of a mad dog...According to the pathologists and the forensic people, Attie was still alive. He was literally lying there; he saw how his child was shot dead and how his wife was taken into the house. Of course...the first thing you think of is that they are going to rape your wife.³ I think Wilna thought that too. They took Wilna to the safe; walked her past her handbag. The only money that they got from her were their own salaries. There was no other money. She then started reciting The Lord’s Prayer. And I hope and believe that Jesus heard her and made what was to come more bearable for her (Afriform 2020).

The film’s release was accompanied by a press conference in which Afriform representatives called for “rural communities to fight back and arm themselves” (Citizen reporter 2020).

The murders of this White, farm-owning family made front-page news for months in South Africa, in no small part because of the tragic death of two-year-old Wilmien. In their June 2011 trial, five of the six defendants were convicted of charges related to the murders, while the sixth was convicted on a lesser charge of robbery with aggravating circumstances (*News24* 2011b). Two of the convicted perpetrators received multiple life sentences, an additional perpetrator received a single life sentence, and the last two were each sentenced to 30 years in prison, while the perpetrator convicted only on robbery charges was sentenced to serve 7 years (SAPA 2011b). At sentencing, the judge described the murders as “gruesome, barbaric and detestable,” and argued that “the brutality of the attack makes all the mitigating arguments insignificant” when meting out maximum sentences to the perpetrators (SAPA 2011a).

³ There was no evidence or charges of sexual violence in any of the court proceedings in this case.

While the murder of the Potgieter family is, of course, horrific, there is no clear reason why the event has come up with such frequency in the years since. The legal case has been concluded and the convicted perpetrators are serving their sentences. These references do not pertain to any ongoing legal battle, or any updates on the case itself. Indeed, the responsibility of the state, in terms of investigation, prosecution, and meting out of punishment, was fulfilled within a year of the violence.

Additionally, the attack on the Potgieter family is a relative rarity. While violent crime is a problem in South Africa, attacks on farm owners happen less often than in the general population when scaled for population size (“FACTSHEET: Statistics on Farm Attacks & Murders in SA” n.d.), and farm attacks are, by some estimates, at a 20 year low (Burke 2018). White South Africans are significantly less likely to be victims of violent crime (Kriegler and Shaw 2016, 105, 114–15). Extra-lethal violence in the commission of farm attacks is also rare, with even activists’ statistics claiming such violence occurs only in a small minority of cases (Roets 2018, 53; Claasen 2017).

Given that this event is relatively rare, a subset of a declining subset of violent crime, why does it come up with such frequency? I argue that stories like the Potgieter murder case become points of continual reference for activists because of the emotional draw of spectacles of extra-lethal violence, which allows for activists to curate a sense of victimhood among a potential target audience, both reflecting and creating an environment of increased interracial tension. The potential obstacle to organization presented by the relative rarity of such violence is overcome through continual reference, as demonstrated above in the case of the Potgieter family. By emphasizing a small number of cases, and repeating them frequently, activists have been able to seed the idea that farm attacks, as a matter of course, are both common and excessively violent

(see, e.g. Pogue 2019). There is little evidence to support the idea that they are more violent than crime on average, and are in fact rare in the overall context of violent crime in South Africa. However, by focusing on single cases of extra-lethal violence and couching them within a larger framework of “farm murders,” activists have been able to translate single incidents into a pervasive sense of threat for sympathetic populations. The extra-lethality, while rare, creates a political opportunity on which self-identified victims capitalize.

Scholarly investigation of extra-lethal violence often focuses on the motives of the perpetrators, including in disciplining civilian populations (Kalyvas 1999), as mass spectacles of violence that bond perpetrators, or as singular display of power (Fujii 2013). The violence, then has utility for perpetrators not because of its lethality (if the object is to kill), but because it has effects on the behavior of both perpetrators (bonding and empowering) and victims (disciplining and socializing).

What is often missing from such accounts is the ways that self-defined victim populations draw on stories of extra-lethal violence in order to achieve their own political ends, like in-group cohesion and constituency engagement. This paper attempts to bridge the literatures on both extra-lethal violence and the dynamics of threat perception in order to understand the ways in which victim populations use incidents of violence to achieve political goals. This paper argues that while extra-lethal violence may have a disciplining and in-group bonding effect among perpetrating populations, such effects may also be seen in populations who see themselves as targeted by such violence, to the extent that they have salient group identities and the ability to reach potential audiences with their framing of events. While it may not be unexpected that groups use spectacle to mobilize potential constituents, it is surprising how successful these activists’ have been at translating a relatively rare occurrence into an international movement.

The paper will set out to define the utility of extra-lethal violence as a framing device to understand the ways that farm attacks in South Africa have become a *cause celeb* of the international White right, as well as domestic constituencies, despite their relative rarity. It will examine the debate over how to define farm murders, and to understand their frequency in the larger context of violent crime. The next two sections will then examine the utility of threat perception in mobilizing populations in support of causes. The penultimate section looks at media coverage of farm attacks, both in relation to the overall crime rate, and in terms of the tone and character of the discussion. This section also traces the ways in which the oft-cited cases of farm murders have resulted in swift justice for convicted perpetrators and questions the additional responsibilities of the state in these matters. The conclusion suggests that this strategies, using small numbers of sensationalized cases in a campaign, can help to understand the emotional draw of other relatively rare, but politically charged kinds of violence, like violence committed by economic migrants and refugees in Europe as well as undocumented immigrants in the US.

Extra-Lethal Violence

Extra-lethal violence, defined by Fujii as “physical acts committed face-to-face that transgress shared norms and beliefs about appropriate treatment of the living as well as the dead,” (2013, 411) is politically useful. It helps to bind perpetrating populations through the participation in or observance of transgressive acts while also disciplining victimized populations through fear. This form of violence is used in a variety of different perpetrator-bonding activities, from collective revelry to singular performance.

Such violence can involve either physically or psychologically injurious activities, like being forced to watch while family members are hurt or killed. The effects of such violence go beyond simple lethality and serve as an extravagant display of power. In bonding perpetrators and disciplining victims, these acts of violation are a multi-faceted performance that can be expressive or instrumental (Fujii 2013, 411).

Violence also has the capacity to serve as a bonding tool for self-identified victims of such acts. Cross-national analysis suggests that victims of crime are often politically mobilized in the wake of their experience (Bateson 2012), large-scale violence lends itself to in-group cooperation among victims (Bauer et al. 2016), and communally-framed violence hardens negative attitudes toward out-groups (Beber, Roessler, and Scacco 2014). Extra-lethal violence, then, has the capacity to serve many of these same functions, with the added dimension of sensationalizing the victimhood experience.

Plaasmoorde (Farm Murders): Definitions and Debates

Conceptualizing farm murders as a discrete kind of crime in South Africa is highly contentious. Defined by Human Rights Watch as “assaults and murders of the owners and managers of commercial farms and their families,” the idea of farm murders’ distinctive character is partially because of the ways that victims and perpetrators are raced and classed in the definition (Human Rights Watch 2001). The assumed victims of this violence are White and relatively prosperous, while the perpetrators are assumed to be poor, Black men. But the extent to which these attacks represent a unique phenomenon, as violence motivated by racial and class resentments against White landowners, or if they are simply part of the larger environment of violent crime within South Africa, is contested. There are certainly links between this violence

and histories of land dispossession under apartheid (South African Human Rights Commission 2014; “Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Farm Attacks” 2003). Indeed, the extreme focus on crimes against White landowners distorts the reality of rural crime and violence in South Africa (Kriegler and Shaw 2016), and even specifically crime on commercial farms (Abdulla 2017), which primarily effects poor, Black, and underserved populations.

Crime rates in South Africa have remained remarkably high in comparison to both world averages and Southern African averages at least since the advent of multiracial democracy (Seedat et al. 2009), and likely before that, although apartheid-era statistics are notoriously unreliable (Singh 2016). Current issues around crime, and the perceived threat of crime, have their roots in the apartheid era, during which the government routinely brutalized Black, Asian, Coloured, and dissident White South Africans in the service of minority rule. Policing under apartheid was closer to counterinsurgency in Black areas, with crime prevention and public safety being reserved for the White population (Kriegler and Shaw 2016, 55). As such, there is a fraught relationship between policing, laws, legitimacy and violent crime in the post-apartheid era which, along with high levels of inequality, creates both the environment for violent crime and perceived threat of crime that is also disproportionate to actual incidence (Lemanski 2004).

Rural areas in South Africa experience at least as much violent crime per capita as urban areas, with the largely rural provinces of the Eastern Cape, Free State, and the Northern Cape reporting crime rates on par with more urban provinces, like Gauteng (Statistics South Africa 2017b). Some evidence from the Institute for Race Relations points to murder and sexual assault rates actually being higher per capita in rural areas than in urban areas (*News24* 2011a). In part, the phenomenon of rural crime is made worse because of the inaccessibility of law enforcement personnel in rural areas, the high value of assets, and relative poverty of rural areas (South

African Police Service 2011). Recent studies have also suggested that even in the specific cases of violence against White, landowning families, incidents of violent crime are at a 20 year low as of late 2018 (Burke 2018).

Perceived threat of crime remains very high, with many South Africans reporting increased subjective feelings of threat from criminal activities in the last five years, even while some areas of violent crime have decreased (Chingwete 2017; Statistics South Africa 2017a). Perceived threat from crime has a direct impact on South Africans' evaluations of their life satisfaction and their evaluations of governmental performance (Møller 2005). Crime statistics, in the context of media coverage of specific crimes, are perceived as collective and individually important, as they “circulate and are mediated...statistics reduce a mass of faceless incidents, disturbing things that happened elsewhere, into the object of first-person affect: fascination, revulsion, pain” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006, 211). All citizens are framed as potential victims of perceived rampant crime. Farm murders particularly are a source of discontent with the government for White South Africans (Steyn 2004, 157). For White South Africans, the perceived threat of crime is central to racial othering of the majority population, and further, to the formation and bolstering of racist tropes regarding their own victimhood and purported genocidal campaigns against them (Steyn 2004; Verwey and Quayle 2012).

Racialized rates of crime have fluctuated significantly throughout the last decade. In the 2017 Victims of Crime survey, White-headed households are marginally more likely to experience crime in general—though they experience lower levels of house burglary, assault or robbery—than households headed by other population groups (Statistics South Africa 2017b). Crime in general, and violent crime in particular, disproportionately affects poor, Black South Africans (Silber and Geffen 2009).

Yet, advocates for farmers, as well as many White South Africans, characterize the phenomenon of farm attacks as a targeted campaign of violence against White landowners, with some going so far as to call these symptomatic of genocide (Verwey and Quayle 2012; Steyn 2004). In an October 2017 plenary session of parliament, MPs from the FF+ and other conservative political parties in South Africa cited statistics which purported to show that farm murders occurred at a rate of 97 per 100,000 people involved in farming, which is almost three times the national average of 34.1 per 100,000 in the total population (Abdulla 2017). Afriforum, a civil rights organization that engages in activism on behalf of Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, independently released statistics one week later which claimed the rate was 156 commercial farmers killed per 100,000, or 4.5 times the national average (*Times Live* 2017).

These statistics have been called into question methodologically and substantively, in large part because of the conceptual difficulty of defining the “farm” population, as well as “farm murders” as a class of crime. The definitional flexibility of the targeted population, which could include a population of up to 11 million South Africans living in households involved in agriculture in some way, could indicate a rate as low as 0.4 per 100,000 (Wilkinson 2017). The same flexibility can be used to frame statistics regarding the crime of “farm attacks.” If all attacks on farm owners and their dependents are compared to specifically house robberies of non-agriculturally associated households, the rate of attacks on farm-owning families is nearly 8 times higher, while if comparing based on specifically on the rates of murder and violent assault, the rate is roughly comparable for commercial farmers and the general population (Cronje, Holborn, and Sethlatswe 2012).

A 2007 survey of commercial farmers puts the population of South Africa directly involved in commercial farming and those who are residents of commercial farms at 818,503

(“Census of Commercial Agriculture, 2007: Financial and Production Statistics” 2010; Wilkinson 2017). If this is considered the “farming population,” then the rate of farm murders falls significantly below the rate for the population as a whole (see Fig 1). The same disparity holds true for the comparison of farm attacks, and the rate of contact crimes (attempted murder, assault and robbery) in the general population (Fig 2).⁴

Extralethal violence in farm attacks is itself rare. According to Afriforum’s own internal statistics, in 2016/2017, there were 13 incidents of torture in the course of farm attacks, and 357 total attacks, meaning that about 3.6% of farm attacks involved such violence (Roets 2018).⁵ Similar rates were reported in an Afriforum report on farm attacks in 2019, in which 22 cases of torture were reported in the course of 552 farm attacks, or a rate of 3.99% (“Farm Attacks and Farm Murders in South Africa: Analysis of Recorded Incidents, 2019” 2020). A 2003 government report on farm murders in South Africa even found that, “media focus on horrific attacks gave the wrong impression that all farm attacks were extremely violent, when in fact victims were often unharmed or just slightly roughed up” (Carroll 2003; “Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Farm Attacks” 2003). SAPS does not collect data on extralethal violence in the commission of violent crime in the general population, so a direct comparison cannot be drawn about the relative frequency of torture in farm attacks as compared to violent

⁴ Data on farm murders and attacks was not available from state sources in 2007/2008, 2008/2009 or 2009/2010. (“Explaining the Official Crime Statistics for 2012/2013” 2013; South African Police Service 2018; 2017)

⁵ Roets reports in his book that the rate is 17.6% because he takes the number of torture reports as a subset of farm attacks where murders took place (N=74) (2018, 53), despite the fact that he later recounts the individual stories (2018, 59) and includes at least one victim who reported torture but was not killed, Nicci Simpson, who is also referenced in the parliamentarian’s speech discussed below. It is more appropriate, therefore, to calculate the rate of extralethal violence and torture as a subset of farm attacks overall, rather than specifically farm murders.

crimes generally. However, even statistics collected by activists show that, in fact, within the subset of crimes labeled as farm attacks, extra lethal violence is exceedingly rare.

The power in leveraging these isolated incidents comes from the sensational nature of the violence. There are incidents where violence perpetrated in the course of attacks on farm owners in South Africa is extra-lethal, and these are covered extensively in news media, including details of prolonged sexual assault, torture, and acts of mutilation (*BBC News* 2017; Evans 2017; Saunderson-Meyer 2017). However, the coverage of these events is far in excess of their actual occurrence (“Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Farm Attacks” 2003; Carroll 2003). This media focus, in tandem with active “victimization” framing by activist groups has led to the idea that farm attacks are pervasive and extremely violent. This narrative, in turn, has been picked up by other right wing activists, groups and political parties in South Africa and abroad, and has coalesced into a “popular narrative that South Africa’s White farming minority is under siege” (Abdulla 2017), despite empirical evidence to the contrary, even using statistics from activist groups.

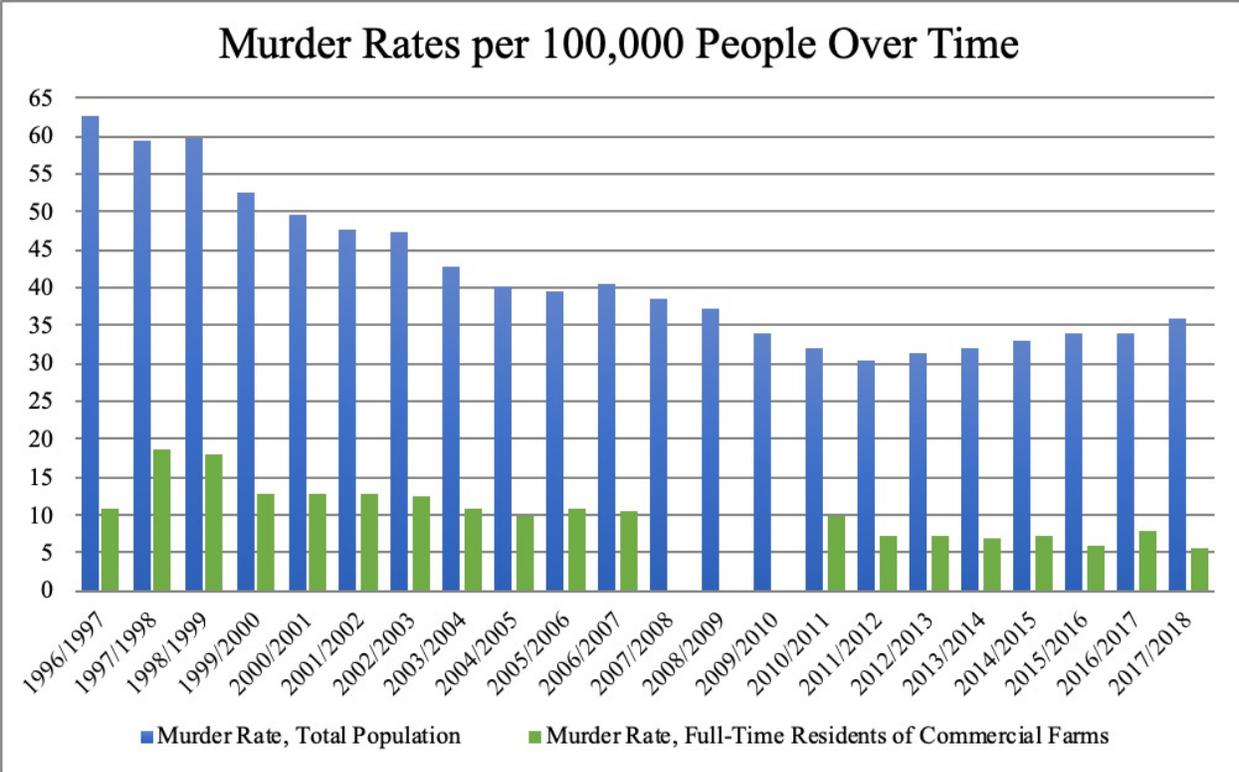


Figure 1 - Murder Rates

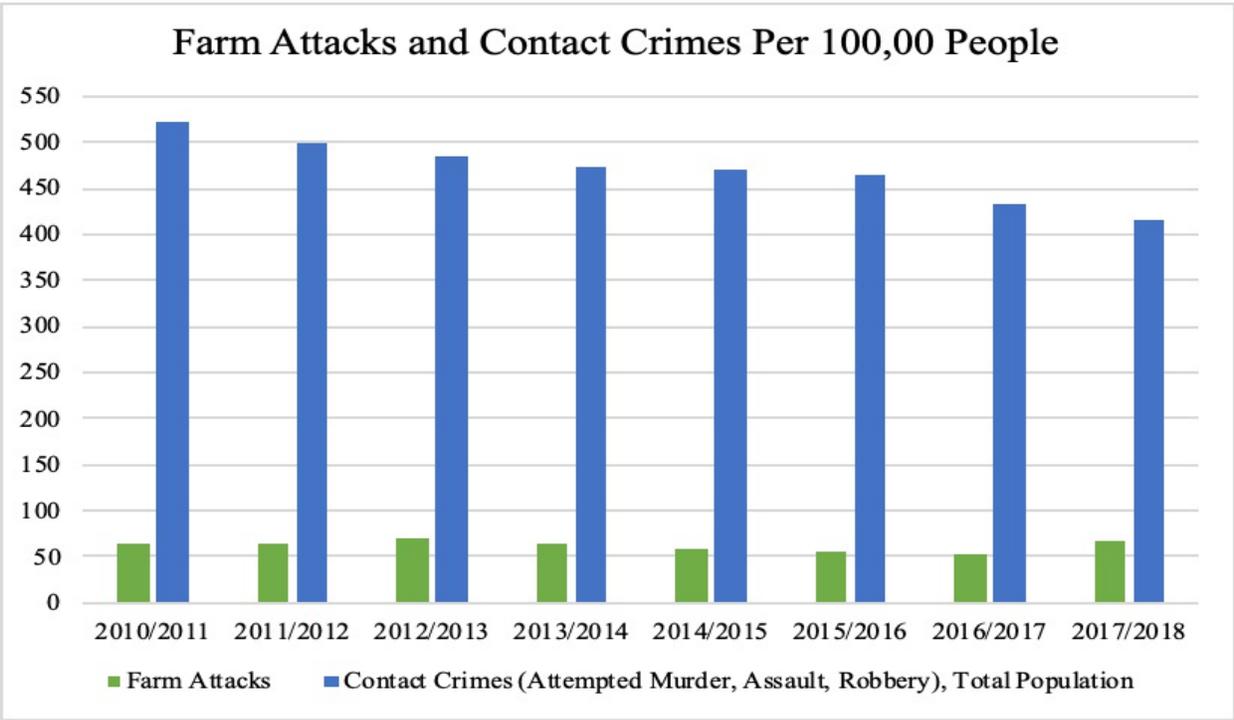


Figure 2 - Farm Attacks and Contact Crimes per 100,000 People

Case Selection: Organizations and Topic

In examining the case of farm murders in South Africa, this article specifically looks at two groups that have been vocal proponents of the narrative of White victimhood and are aligned with right-wing causes. The groups under examination, Afriforum and the Suidlanders, are two of the largest right-wing White identity groups in South Africa (Stanley-Becker 2018). Both have gone on international media tours to promote their messages and both feature prominently in international alt-right coverage of the issue of rural violence in South Africa (McKenzie and Swails 2018). While the groups themselves do not always get along, they have been the most prominent advocates for their cause both in South Africa and abroad, appearing frequently in media in the United States, Western Europe and Australia (see, e.g. Chothia 2018; Pogue 2019).

Threat Perception and Identity

Perceived threat is a powerful political motivator. When successfully framed as collective, threat can help to overcome collective action barriers to individual participation in conflict (Shesterinina 2016). Threat perception can activate pre-dispositions to authoritarianism (Feldman and Stenner 1997; Fordham 1998) and affect media consumers' ability to interpret factual information (Gadarian 2010). Perceived threat also shapes individuals' perceptions of the passage of time and their understanding of when events occur (Tipples 2011; Bar-Haim et al. 2010). The emotional content of threat is a unique political phenomenon because it is, by nature, future-oriented and vague. Threat is "what might come next. Its eventual location and ultimate extent are undefined...It is not just that it is not: it is not in a way that is never over. We can never be done with it...Threat is not real in spite of its nonexistence. It is superlatively real, because of it" (Massumi 2010, 53). As such, the motivations to action that are galvanized by this affective political orientation are durable, multi-faceted, and emotional (Eriksen 2002).

Many schools of social psychology also recognize the ways that threat can activate social identities and foster in-group cohesion. Threat can give rise also to group identities and out-group hostility, especially in contexts of survival threats (Brewer 2007), and group defense is often a key factor in articulating group identity (Brewer and Caporeal 2006). Whether the threat is material or symbolic, it can serve to bind a community together (Stephan and Stephan 2017), especially when such threats elicit anger, as opposed to sadness or anxiety (Huddy 2013). These phenomena are especially observable in the context of perceived threat of violence and especially violent crime, which motivates a range of protective behaviors, and affiliative psychological orientations toward in-groups (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006).

Victimhood Gone Viral

Extra-lethal violence, as a performative and extravagant form of political behavior, has a potential to activate threat perception not only under conditions of wide-spread violence, but also in relatively isolated incidents. The audience for extra-lethal violence can be shaped by those aligned with perpetrators of violence, as is established in the literature, but also those aligned with the victims, as discussed in this case. These groups have taken a relatively rare phenomenon, and selectively amplified it through publicity and recall, thereby making the threat of this violence more pervasive, even when the violence itself is infrequent. Indeed, preliminary evidence suggests that the Afrikaans-medium media tend to cover farm violence more frequently and using more extreme terms (Jansen 2017). Afrikaans media also covers stories of farm violence and farm murders more frequently than English-language media in South Africa.

This increased coverage is not correlated with an increase in the absolute number of farm murders, or indeed a change in the level of violence committed during the course of these crimes. Between 2013 and 2018, even with a growing population, the absolute number of farm murders declined somewhat. English-language media articles from News24, the largest news conglomerate in South Africa, declined over that same time frame. But in both activist media, specifically the Afriforum-hosted sites of MarulaMedia and AfriforumNuus, and in the Afrikaans press, stories about farm murders became more frequent, even as the incidents themselves did not (Fig 3.). At the same time, self-reported membership in Afriforum grew by more than 160% (“Afriforum Now 210 000 Members Strong” 2018, 200).

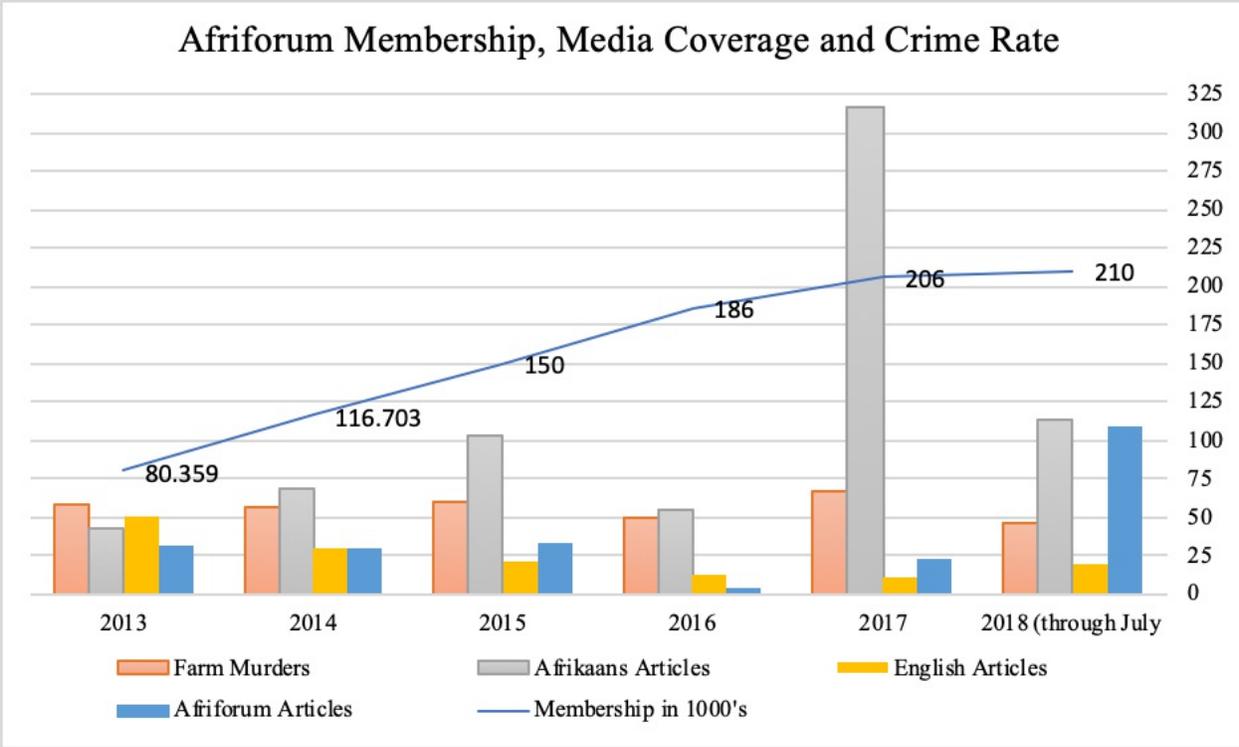


Figure 3 - Media and Membership⁶

These issues have been touted outside of South Africa by activist groups, who have interviewed with major outlets of both mainstream right-wing and alt-right media. Representatives from these groups have been interviewed on FOX, InfoWars, at the American Renaissance, and by Breitbart News.

The narrative presented by these organizations is finding traction. In addition to their increased audiences, their message is being amplified by alt-right online personalities. No less than three documentaries have been released in 2018 alone about the issue of farm violence, and all feature representatives from either the Suidlanders, Afriforum or both. The documentaries produced by Canadian (Lauren Southern 2018a), Swedish (Palaestra Media 2018), and British

⁶ The spike in Afrikaans media mentions of the term “plaasmoorde” came almost entirely from coverage of the November “Black Monday” protests in late October of 2017. The protests, specifically calling for government intervention to prevent farm murders, were held throughout the country and resulted in several major motorways being blocked (Jordaan 2017).

(Rebel Media 2018) alt-right personalities have garnered thousands of dollars in crowd-funding, and millions of views on video sharing platforms, like YouTube and Vimeo. In videos appealing for support and funding for these projects, these personalities claim they are seeking to save “Western Civilization” and “free speech” as their motivations (Lauren Southern 2018b). These appeals echo the language of what Brubaker has called “civilizationism,” in which the nationalism of individual groups operating within national contexts is reconstrued “not in narrowly national but in broader civilizational terms” (Brubaker 2017, 3). There is an irony in nationalist, anti-globalization activists adopting an international cause disconnected from their own national contexts, in becoming “globalized anti-globalists” (Grumke 2013), but as Cainani and Kroll have noted, this is a trend throughout the alt-right and White supremacist online ecosystem, as individuals and groups “become entrepreneurs of a sort of transnationalization of the right-wing movement itself” (2015, 343).

Sensational Violence and Selective Amplification

Because the violence on which these groups focus is itself is sensational, it is more likely to capture the imagination, and the attention, of audiences, through traditional or social media. In the South African case, we can see that in fact, the social movement organizations associated with the Afrikaans community, like Afriforum and the Suidlanders, are deeply invested in playing up the extra-lethality of farm violence because of the political utility of activating threat perceptions in terms of mobilizing and engaging potential constituencies. Members of these groups often speak specifically in terms of “brutality” when addressing the need for public attention to be brought to the issue.

In the speech referenced in the introduction, a member of parliament from the Freedom Front Plus, characterized farm murders in a floor speech on the issue by saying

I say that it is not normal criminality if you look at the Lindley farmers, where Wilmien, a two-year old toddler, a father and a mother were brutally murdered. When asked by state prosecutor Jannie Botha, on his impressions of Potgieter's body, then the coroner said that the deceased had been tortured to death.⁷ I say it is not normal criminality if you look for instance at the Swanepoel family in...Bloemfontein, where the investigation officer, Kobus Coetzee, told the court that the couple were tied to a single bed and tortured for hours. Then took turns to rape Rienie while her husband was forced to watch.⁸ I say it is not normal criminality if you look for instance at the Schutte family at Richmond, KwaZulu-Natal. It says Mrs. Schutte's head was crushed with a heavy object, and all three victims were set on fire.⁹ I say it is not normal criminality if you look at Dan Knight, also from KwaZulu-Natal, where it says that his partner Buchner, were attacked in their home by a gang of five men. Knight was beaten to death with hammers while Buchner was forced to watch.¹⁰ I say it is not normal criminality if you look at the recent case of Nicci Simpson when the perpetrators used a plastic bag, where for instance they cut her arms, broke her ribs, her knee, and even used an electric drill, to drill holes in her feet.¹¹ That is not normal criminality. I also say it is not normal criminality for instance if you look the farmer murdered near Parys, where the murderers actually took out his testicles, boiled them, cook them and then ate it.¹² That is the shocking picture and the inconvenient truth of farm murders (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa 2017).

The murders referenced by the MP, which took place over the course of more than a decade, all resulted in police investigations and the conviction of criminals. A similar tone is struck in the introduction of a book by AfriForum deputy CEO (Roets 2018), in which there are graphic descriptions of murders spanning 15 years, which include descriptions of torture and killing of White farmers. Again, in each of the cases, there is a documented state response in the form of

⁷ Conviction (SAPA 2011b)

⁸ Trial (*News24* 2015)

⁹ Guilty Plea (Regchand 2014)

¹⁰ Conviction (SAPA 2014)

¹¹ Police Investigation (*Randfontein Herald* 2017) This case was also referenced by Afriform in videos

¹² Unsubstantiated claim, but possibly a case from 2016, where a farmer claimed to have been attacked, and set off a panic button. His neighbors joined together in a vigilante group who killed two Black men in response (Pijoos 2016).

relatively quick justice being served through punishment of convicted perpetrators.¹³ In another report, released in June 2014, Roets and co-author Lorraine Claassen also engage with a variety of case studies of extra-lethal violence, some of which are also referenced in the book and the floor speech (Roets and Claassen 2014). Afriforum videos in 2018 also reference all of the cases that were included in the MPs speech, often multiple times.

Indeed, this recitation of a small set incidents, across venues and speakers, is central to the strategy of the groups amplifying this issue. The Word Cloud below (Figure 5), which is compiled from transcriptions all of the videos posted by Afriforum on their own website and their YouTube channel in 2018, demonstrates how often representatives of the organization drop the names of particular victims. When the word NAME was used in place of an individual victim's given name, it was the 9th most often used word overall. Indeed, when analyzed more closely, the majority of the mentions by activists mention six violent incidents, involving the murders of 11 people, and the severe injuries of two more between 2010 and 2017 (Holmes 2019). These incidents are all unconnected, spanning three provinces over 7 years. They share two key similarities, however; all but one (the case of Nicci Simpson) have involved criminal prosecution leading to punishment of convicted perpetrators, and all involve extra-lethal violence. The repetition of the Potgieter family's murders, as discussed in the introduction, was not an isolated occurrence, but rather part of a larger strategy of constantly reminding the audience of the victims of crime in the past, and collapsing the timeline of threat so that the spectacular

¹³ For Redelinghuys farm murder (*Letaba Herald* 2017), for Grobler farm attack (de Wet 2018), for Erasmus farm attack (Muller 2017), for Swart/Greyling farm attack (Hlatshwayo 2005), for van de Heever farm attack (*News24* 2002), for Cross farm murder (Smillie 2006).

a mosaic of horror, depicting a campaign of violence and signals an imminent threat to their constituents.

Other media produced by activist firms echo the same words and similar tactics, like the fictionalized account of farm murders presented in the film “Treurgrond” or “Land of Sorrow,” produced by Valhalla Productions and funded by Afriforum and the Transvaal Agricultural Union, among others. Starring a hard-nosed female detective who specializes in investigating farm murders, the movie depicts life in an ideal rural area, with a farmer and his wife living on a prosperous and socially responsible farm. In training her assistant, the lead detective on a case of a farm murder at the outset of the film says:

What really gets me is how they always find more gruesome ways every time to commit these murders. What happened to a good old-fashioned stabbing or single gunshot? No, they have to torture the people. The bastards think they are very creative...I have seen 30 farm murders this year alone, Sergeant. We've only reached September now. And this is just in this area. If I had to mourn after every farm murder, I would have been in a mental institution long ago. This is our job.

In another scene, in which the lead detective glibly tells a man she has met at a bar about her profession, she recounts that two community members have been killed, and then without recognizing the horror on her acquaintance's face, continues by saying they were “[murdered] Amongst other things...they were tortured first. Betty's hands were cut off...and her ankles. Have you [ever] seen a body without hands and feet? Quite strange, I must say. Blood everywhere you look” (Roodt 2017). This glib reference to the murders, a staple of the police investigative drama, shows simultaneously the horror and the quotidian nature of the horror through the eyes of a career professional. As such, her account both calmly delivers what the supposedly family-friendly film cannot show and reinforces the narrative that such things happen constantly. Yet, as discussed above, the idea that such attacks are as common, or as violent, as this fictionalized account says is empirically unsupportable.

In-Group Cohesion and Threat Perception

The success of the approaches taken by these organizations is evident not only at the organizational level, but also in terms of individual support. As discussed above, both Afriforum and the Suidlanders have been featured in right-wing and alt-right news outlets, as well as in documentaries extensively in the course of the last 18 months. The movie *Treurgrond* [is](#) the 7th most profitable domestic movie in South Africa for 2015 (Staff 2016), and [won](#) awards at film festivals in Amsterdam and Milan, in addition to South African film competitions (Internet Movie Database n.d.).

The paid membership these groups have grown substantially, with Afriforum's self-reported membership growing by 40% between 2015 and 2018 ("Project 200,000" n.d.; "AfriForum Now 210 000 Members Strong" 2018). With reported membership of 210,000 as of July 2018, membership in the group is now equivalent to about 5% of the total White population of South Africa, or 8% of the White, Afrikaans-speaking population. Self-reported membership numbers for the Suidlanders put their membership at 130,000 (Pretoria News 2018), or almost 3% of the total White population, or about 5% of the total White, Afrikaans-speaking population.

There is also qualitative evidence to support the idea that these groups are gaining traction and inspiring support, especially within the Afrikaans community. Afriforum-supported protests on the issue of farm murders, like the Black Monday protests in October 2017, have drawn thousands into the streets (Jordaan 2017). While certainly not representative of the totality of White, Afrikaans-speakers, these groups do command substantial loyalties in such communities and claim, in many ways, to speak on behalf of the whole (van der Westhuizen 2018).

In interviews conducted by the author in 2013 in South Africa,¹⁴ the loyalties of many in the Afrikaans-speaking community to groups like Suidlanders and Afriforum were already evident. In response to the question “Who speaks on your behalf in politics?” many Afrikaans-speakers, from across the political spectrum, noted that it was Afriforum’s role in bringing to light the issue of farm murders that made them feel represented in the public sphere. One middle-aged woman, when asked the question responded that while she votes for center-right political parties, Afriforum is the group that really represents her interests “...Especially with the farmers and the brutality that is going on there. They stand up for those things. It is important for our community.” Another, middle-aged man responded that he eschews politics all together, but that “Afriforum is fighting for the rights of Afrikaners... I support them, fully. They are fighting for all underdogs. They fight for everyone who is overlooked, like farmers.” In a different interview, a young woman also brought up feeling represented by Afriforum, especially as related to farm attacks, by saying,

I do not know if you know about all the farm murders that are going around. You hear about one every week, almost...I drive by the lampposts in the morning with the paper titles, and I see “another farmer murdered” and I can literally feel myself tense up because I wonder “When is it going to be my family?”...if you read a bit deeper about farm murders, you will see that it is the worst murders in the country as well. They do not just kill them. They torture them to death. They burn their eyes out. It is so horrible what they do. So, there must be something else. There is an extra sense of hate that is in those crimes. But someone is standing up for us. Or they are trying.

This young woman, in emphasizing both the prevalence and the violence involved in farm attacks, was directly reflecting Afriforum’s strategies and invoking the community in her use of “us” as a victimized community.

¹⁴ Part of a forthcoming project, [citation redacted]

Such anecdotal evidence, when paired with the international and domestic networks of support signals the draw of this strategy of emphasis on individual stories of extra-lethality in the context of a wider conversation. Bucking both the empirical trend of declining crime rates and the demographic reality that farmers are, in most statistical framings, not more likely to be victimized by violent crime than the population as a whole, the strategy of selective recall and emphasis on rare incidents of violence within the context of a relatively rare kind of crime has allowed groups like Afriforum and the Suidlanders to garner support around the issue of farm murders and White victimization in the absence of a verifiable crisis.

Conclusion

The specific details of individual farm murder cases are graphic and shocking. When invoked in a cascade, as activists often do, the torrent of violent images and stories is difficult to process. This emotional overload has been a tactic used by activist groups to evoke threat perception and garner support by emphasizing the extralethality of farm violence in South Africa. The shocking nature of the violence has become the central plank of the international effort by South African groups to publicize their campaign and to portray themselves as victims of unique and pervasive violence, despite the fact that both the claim of the uniqueness of the violence and of its pervasiveness are largely unsupportable.

But such strategies are employed in a variety of different contexts. President Trump has repeatedly called for government expenditures, on a “border wall” and other immigration deterrents by invoking the names of particular victims of violent crime perpetrated by undocumented immigrants, as he did in the 2018 State of the Union Address (*CBS News* 2018).

These invocations, as with their counterparts in South Africa, while shocking do not seem to be evidence of larger trends, as undocumented immigrants to the US are statistically less likely to commit crime than other population groups (Flagg 2018; Ingram 2018; *NPR* 2018). Similar accusations are made against migrants in Europe by anti-immigration figures from local officials to prime ministers (*The Economist* 2018). This strategy has been particularly electorally successful for right-wing parties, like *Alternative für Deutschland*, who have held rallies in the name of particular victims of crime perpetrated by migrants (*BBC* 2018). The flagging of these incidents of violence seems to serve a similar end in all cases: solidifying a base of support through elevating threat perception and amplifying victimhood.

This strategy is not unique to right-wing causes. Victim populations can be deployed in the service of any number of political ends. Indeed, the victims themselves have agency in the ways that their stories are told and used. This power was evidenced by the reaction of the family of Mollie Tibbetts, a young woman from Iowa who was killed by an undocumented immigrant in 2018, whose family spoke out against the use of her story and her name as a part of a push for stricter immigration laws in the United States (Tibbetts 2018).

By focusing on sensational cases of violence, even in the absence of evidence that such violence is a trend, the groups advocating this narrative have been able to gain support, even while the crimes they tout are becoming relatively less common. The emotional draw of their victim narrative, contextualized in extralethal violence, even if exceptionally rare, is turned into a political opportunity through repetition.

Works Cited:

- Abdulla, Mohammed Jameel. 2017. "South Africa's Farm Murder Statistics Are More Political than Accurate." *The Mail & Guardian Online*, October 30, 2017. <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-10-30-south-africas-farm-murder-statistics-are-more-political-than-accurate/>.
- Afriforum. 2019. "AfriForum Addresses Western Australian Parliament Regarding Farm Murders." *Onteiening* (blog). April 5, 2019. <https://www.onteiening.co.za/en/afriforum-addresses-western-australian-parliament-regarding-farm-murders/>.
- . 2020. *Farm Murders: Murder of Little Wilmiën Potgieter | Plaasmoorde: Moord van Klein Wilmiën Potgieter*. Centurion. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52owrSsG6S4>.
- "AfriForum Now 210 000 Members Strong." 2018. *AfriForum* (blog). July 25, 2018. <https://www.afriforum.co.za/afriforum-now-210-000-members-strong/>.
- Bar-Haim, Yair, Aya Kerem, Dominique Lamy, and Dan Zakay. 2010. "When Time Slows down: The Influence of Threat on Time Perception in Anxiety." *Cognition and Emotion* 24 (2): 255–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699930903387603>.
- Bateson, Regina. 2012. "Crime Victimization and Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 106 (3): 570–87. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055412000299>.
- Bauer, Michal, Christopher Blattman, Julie Chytilová, Joseph Henrich, Edward Miguel, and Tamar Mitts. 2016. "Can War Foster Cooperation?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 30 (3): 249–74. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.30.3.249>.
- BBC. 2018. "Are Migrants Driving Crime in Germany?," September 13, 2018, sec. Europe. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45419466>.
- BBC News. 2017. "British Expat 'Tortured and Killed,'" February 24, 2017, sec. Hampshire & Isle of Wight. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-hampshire-39075212>.
- Beber, Bernd, Philip Roessler, and Alexandra Scacco. 2014. "Intergroup Violence and Political Attitudes: Evidence from a Dividing Sudan." *The Journal of Politics* 76 (3): 649–65. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381614000103>.
- Brewer, Marilynn B. 2007. "The Importance of Being We: Human Nature and Intergroup Relations." *The American Psychologist* 62 (8): 726–38. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.8.728>.
- Brewer, Marilynn B., and Linnda R. Caporeal. 2006. "An Evolutionary Perspective on Social Identity: Revisiting Groups." In *Evolution and Social Psychology*, edited by Mark Schaller, Jeffrey A. Simpson, and Douglas T. Kenrick. New York: Psychology Press.
- Brubaker, Rogers. 2017. "Between Nationalism and Civilizationism: The European Populist Moment in Comparative Perspective." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40 (8): 1191–1226. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1294700>.
- Burke, Jason. 2018. "Murders of Farmers in South Africa at 20-Year Low, Research Shows." *The Guardian*, June 26, 2018, sec. World news. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/27/murders-of-farmers-in-south-africa-at-20-year-low-research-shows>.
- Caiani, Manuela, and Patricia Kröll. 2015. "The Transnationalization of the Extreme Right and the Use of the Internet." *International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice* 39 (4): 331–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01924036.2014.973050>.
- Cameron, Ian. 2018. "This Is Willemientjie Potgieter. This 2yr Old Girl Was Murdered by 6 Attackers during a #FarmAttack in Lindley, FS Province, #SouthAfrica Just a Few Yrs

- Ago. Her Footprints Were Found in Her Fathers Blood Where He Was Murdered with a Garden Fork & panga. Mother Was Executed Too. Pic. Twitter.Com/VnO4gHXE4G.” Tweet. *Twitter* (blog). March 28, 2018. <https://twitter.com/search?q=Willemientjie%20Potgieter&src=tyah>.
- Carroll, Rory. 2003. “South African Farm Attacks ‘Not Racial.’” *The Guardian*, September 26, 2003, sec. World news. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/sep/26/southafrica.rorycarroll>.
- CBS News. 2018. “State of the Union: Trump Addresses Parents of Gang Victims,” January 30, 2018. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/state-of-the-union-trump-parents-ms-13-gang-victim-everyone-in-america-is-grieving-for-you/>.
- “Census of Commercial Agriculture, 2007: Financial and Production Statistics.” 2010. 11-02-01 (2007). Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. <http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-11-02-01/Report-11-02-012007.pdf>.
- Chingwete, Anyway. 2017. “Crime and Insecurity Remain near the Top of South Africans’ Agenda.” *Afrobarometer Dispatch* 154. Afrobarometer. http://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Dispatches/ab_r6_dispatchno154_crime_in_southafrica.pdf.
- Chothia, Farouk. 2018. “The Groups Playing on the Fears of a ‘white Genocide’.” *BBC News*, September 1, 2018, sec. Africa. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-45336840>.
- Citizen reporter. 2020. “AfriForum Calls for More Farmers to Take up Arms to ‘Protect’ Themselves.” *The Citizen*, July 8, 2020. <https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/politics/2317135/afriforum-calls-for-more-farmers-to-take-up-arms-to-protect-themselves/>.
- Claasen, Lorraine. 2017. “Farm Attacks and Farm Murders in South Africa: Statistics Point to Drastic Increase in Farm Murders.” *Afriforum Navorsings-Instituut*. <https://africacheck.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/260417ANI-ENGLISH.pdf>.
- Comaroff, Jean, and John L. Comaroff. 2006. “Figuring Crime: Quantifacts and the Production of the Un/Real.” *Public Culture* 18 (1): 209–46. <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-18-1-209>.
- Cronje, Frans, Lucy Holborn, and Boitumelo Sethlatswe. 2012. “Farm Attacks in South Africa: A New Analysis.” *Research and Policy Brief*. <https://irr.org.za/reports-and-publications/research-policy-brief/Farm%20attacks%20in%20South%20Africa%20-%20a%20new%20analysis..pdf/>.
- Du Preez, Max. 2016. “AfriForum ‘Hijacking the Afrikaner Mainstream.’” *News24*, July 26, 2016. <https://www.news24.com/news24/columnists/maxdupreez/afriforum-hijacking-the-afrikaner-mainstream-20160726>.
- Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. 2002. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. Pluto Press.
- Evans, Jenni. 2017. “Robbers Tortured Woman with Drill in Farm Attack.” *News24*, March 11, 2017. <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/robbers-tortured-woman-with-drill-in-farm-attack-20170311>.
- “Explaining the Official Crime Statistics for 2012/2013.” 2013. Factsheet. Johannesburg: Institute for Security Studies. <http://www.issafrica.org/iss-today/explaining-the-official-crime-statistics-for-2012-13>.

- “FACTSHEET: Statistics on Farm Attacks & Murders in SA.” n.d. Africa Check. Accessed August 2, 2018. <https://africacheck.org/factsheets/factsheet-statistics-farm-attacks-murders-sa/>.
- “Farm Attacks and Farm Murders in South Africa: Analysis of Recorded Incidents, 2019.” 2020. Afriforum Navorsings-Instituut. <https://www.afriforum.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Farm-attack-and-murder-report.pdf>.
- Feldman, Stanley, and Karen Stenner. 1997. “Perceived Threat and Authoritarianism.” *Political Psychology* 18 (4): 741–70. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00077>.
- Flagg, Anna. 2018. “The Myth of the Criminal Immigrant.” *The New York Times*, March 30, 2018, sec. The Upshot. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/30/upshot/crime-immigration-myth.html>, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/30/upshot/crime-immigration-myth.html>.
- Fordham, Benjamin. 1998. “The Politics of Threat Perception and the Use of Force: A Political Economy Model of U.S. Uses of Force, 1949–1994.” *International Studies Quarterly* 42 (3): 567–90. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0020-8833.00096>.
- Fujii, Lee Ann. 2013. “The Puzzle of Extra-Lethal Violence.” *Perspectives on Politics* 11 (2): 410–26. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592713001060>.
- Gadarian, Shana Kushner. 2010. “The Politics of Threat: How Terrorism News Shapes Foreign Policy Attitudes.” *The Journal of Politics* 72 (2): 469–83. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381609990910>.
- Godinho, Thorne. 2014. “AfriForum and the Rise of the New Right – Thought Leader.” *Mail and Guardian Online*, January 8, 2014. <https://thoughtleader.co.za/thornegodinho/2014/01/08/afriforum-and-the-rise-of-the-new-right/>.
- Grumke, Thomas. 2013. “Globalized Anti-Globalists: The Ideological Basis of the Internationalization of Right-Wing Extremism.” In *Right-Wing Radicalism Today: Perspectives from Europe and the US*, edited by Sabine von Mering and Timothy Wyman McCarty, 13–22. London: Routledge.
- Hlatshwayo, Riot. 2005. “Killer Gets Two Life Sentences.” *News24*, May 10, 2005. <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Killer-gets-two-life-sentences-20050510>.
- Holmes, Carolyn E. 2019. “Analysis | Tucker Carlson, Those South African White Rights Activists Aren’t Telling You the Whole Truth.” *Washington Post*, May 15, 2019, sec. Monkey Cage. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/05/15/tucker-carlson-those-south-african-white-rights-activists-arent-telling-you-whole-truth/>.
- Huddy, Leonie. 2013. “From Group Identity to Political Cohesion and Commitment.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*, edited by David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Jack S. Levy. New York: Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199760107.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199760107-e-023>.
- Human Rights Watch. 2001. “Unequal Protection: The State Response to Violent Crime on South African Farms.” New York: Human Rights Watch. <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/safrica2/>.
- Ingram, Christopher. 2018. “Two Charts Demolish the Notion That Immigrants Here Illegally Commit More Crime.” *Washington Post*, June 19, 2018. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2018/06/19/two-charts-demolish-the-notion-that-immigrants-here-illegally-commit-more-crime/>.

- Internet Movie Database. n.d. “Treurgrond.” IMDB. Accessed January 12, 2019.
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4786108/awards>.
- Jansen, Jonathan. 2017. “Two Sides to Murder Story.” *HeraldLIVE*, November 2, 2017.
<http://www.heraldlive.co.za/opinion/2017/11/02/two-sides-murder-story/>.
- Jordaan, Nomahlubi. 2017. “#BlackMonday the Biggest Protest Ever against Farm Murders: Afriforum.” *Times Live*, October 30, 2017. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2017-10-30-blackmonday-the-biggest-protest-ever-against-farm-murders-afriforum/>.
- Kalyvas, Stathis N. 1999. “Wanton and Senseless?: The Logic of Massacres in Algeria.” *Rationality and Society* 11 (3): 243–85. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104346399011003001>.
- Kriegler, Anine, and Mark Shaw. 2016. *A Citizen’s Guide to Crime Trends in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers.
- Lauren Southern. 2018a. *FARMLANDS (2018) Official Documentary*.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_bDc7Ffltk.
- . 2018b. *#FARMLANDS South Africa Documentary Q&A*.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwH-sw_Z_i8.
- Lemanski, Charlotte. 2004. “A New Apartheid? The Spatial Implications of Fear of Crime in Cape Town, South Africa.” *Environment and Urbanization* 16 (2): 101–12.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/095624780401600201>.
- Letaba Herald*. 2017. “Redelinguys Murder-One Suspect Caught,” November 29, 2017.
<https://letabaherald.co.za/46693/hoedspruit-redelinguys-murder-one-suspect-caught/>.
- Massumi, Brian. 2010. “The Future Birth of the Affective Fact: The Political Ontology of Threat.” In *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, 52–70. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- McKenzie, David, and Brent Swails. 2018. “They’re Prepping for a Race War. And They See Trump as Their ‘Ray of Hope.’” *CNN*, 2018.
<https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2018/11/africa/south-africa-suidlanders-intl>.
- Modiri, Joel. 2013. “Race, Realism and Critique : The Politics of Race and Afriforum v Malema in the (in)Equality Court : Note.”
http://reference.sabinet.co.za/sa_epublication_article/ju_salj_v130_n2_a5.
- Møller, Valerie. 2005. “Resilient or Resigned? Criminal Victimisation and Quality of Life in South Africa.” *Social Indicators Research* 72 (3): 263–317.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-004-5584-y>.
- Muller, Christal-Lize. 2017. “Amalia Farm Murder – Three Suspects in Custody.” *OFM*, July 13, 2017. <https://www.ofm.co.za/article/local-news/247023/amalia-farm-murder-three-suspects-in-custody>.
- News24*. 2002. “Tzaneen Farm Killers Get Life,” October 23, 2002.
<https://www.news24.com/xArchive/Archive/Tzaneen-farm-killers-get-life-20021023>.
- . 2011a. “Murder Rates Highest in Rural Areas,” January 19, 2011.
<https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Murder-rates-highest-in-rural-areas-20110119>.
- . 2011b. “5 Guilty of Lindley Farm Murder,” June 15, 2011.
<https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/5-guilty-of-Lindley-farm-murder-20110615>.

- . 2015. “Murdered Farm Couple Tortured for Hours, Court Hears,” February 20, 2015. <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Murdered-farm-couple-tortured-for-hours-court-hears-20150220>.
- Nozicka, Luke. 2018. “Mollie Tibbetts’ Father Says Daughter Would Not Want to Be Face of Immigration Debate.” *Des Moines Register*, September 1, 2018. <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2018/09/01/mollie-tibbetts-search-father-rob-tibbetts-illegal-immigration-cristhian-bahena-rivera-trump-jr/1171714002/>.
- NPR. 2018. “Illegal Immigration Does Not Increase Violent Crime, 4 Studies Show,” May 2, 2018, Morning Edition edition. <https://www.npr.org/2018/05/02/607652253/studies-say-illegal-immigration-does-not-increase-violent-crime>.
- Palaestra Media. 2018. *Boer Project: South Africa a Reversed Apartheid?* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEDU0xIILKA>.
- Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. 2017. *Plenary Session of the National Assembly*. Cape Town. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LeGaS00O4kk&feature=youtu.be&t=178>.
- Pijoo, Ivan. 2016. “Parys Farm Attack Apparently Never Happened.” *News24*, May 24, 2016. <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/parys-farm-attack-apparently-never-happened-20160524>.
- Pogue, James. 2019. “The Myth of White Genocide.” *Harper’s Magazine*, February 15, 2019. <https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/myth-white-genocide>.
- Pretoria News. 2018. “South Africa’s Suidlanders Brace for Race War | Pretoria News.” *IOL News*, November 23, 2018. <https://www.iol.co.za/pretoria-news/south-africass-suidlanders-brace-for-race-war-18234279>.
- “Project 200,000.” n.d. *AfriForum* (blog). Accessed July 27, 2018. <https://www.afriforum.co.za/about/project-200-000/>.
- Randfontein Herald*. 2017. “Farm Attack: Elderly Woman Tortured with Drill,” March 13, 2017. <https://randfonteinherald.co.za/243276/farm-attack-elderly-woman-tortured-with-drill/>.
- Rebel Media. 2018. “*Plaasmoorde: The Killing Fields*”: *Katie Hopkins’ Documentary about South Africa (FULL LENGTH)*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQHtY59PuuE&feature=youtu.be>.
- Regchand, Sharika. 2014. “Trio Plead Guilty to Family Killings on Farm.” *IOL News*, March 26, 2014. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/trio-plead-guilty-to-family-killings-on-farm-1666512>.
- “Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Farm Attacks.” 2003. Pretoria: National Operational Co-ordinating Committee. <https://africacheck.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Final-Report-Committee-of-Inquiry-Farm-Attacks-July-2003.pdf>.
- Roets, Ernst. 2018. *Kill the Boer: Government Complicity in South Africa’s Brutal Farm Murders*. Pretoria: Kraal Uitgewers, Afriforum.
- Roets, Ernst, and Lorraine Claassen. 2014. “The Reality of Farm Tortures in South Africa – Radio Free South Africa.” June 26, 2014. <http://www.radiofreesouthafrica.com/the-reality-of-farm-tortures-in-south-africa/>.
- Roodt, Darrell. 2017. *Treurgrond*. Pretoria. <http://treurgrondfilm.co.za/>.
- SAPA. 2011a. “Life Sentences for Farm Killers.” *Sowetan LIVE*, July 28, 2011. <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2011-07-28-life-sentences-for-farm-killers/>.
- . 2011b. “Lindley Farm Killers Get Life Sentence.” *IOL News*, July 28, 2011. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/lindley-farm-killers-get-life-sentence-1107684>.

- . 2014. “Life Sentences for Underberg Farm Killers.” *IOL News*, November 17, 2014. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/life-sentences-for-underberg-farm-killers-1781712>.
- Saunderson-Meyer, William. 2017. “Our Farm Murder Shame - OPINION | Politicsweb.” *PoliticsWeb*, October 27, 2017. <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/opinion/our-farm-murder-shame>.
- Seedat, Mohamed, Ashley Van Niekerk, Rachel Jewkes, Shahnaaz Suffla, and Kopano Ratele. 2009. “Violence and Injuries in South Africa: Prioritising an Agenda for Prevention.” *The Lancet* 374 (9694): 1011–22. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(09\)60948-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(09)60948-X).
- Shesterinina, Anastasia. 2016. “Collective Threat Framing and Mobilization in Civil War.” *American Political Science Review* 110 (3): 411–27. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055416000277>.
- Silber, Gavin, and Nathan Geffen. 2009. “Race, Class and Violent Crime in South Africa: Dispelling the ‘Huntley Thesis.’” *South African Crime Quarterly* 0 (30). <https://doi.org/10.17159/2413-3108/2009/v0i30a897>.
- Singh, Anne-Marie. 2016. *Policing and Crime Control in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Routledge.
- Smillie, Shaun. 2006. “I Asked Them If My Dad Fought Back.” *IOL News*, August 2, 2006. <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/i-asked-them-if-my-dad-fought-back-287719>.
- South African Human Rights Commission. 2014. “Safety and Security Challenges in Farming Communities.” SAHRC National Investigative Hearing. <https://www.sahrc.org.za/home/21/files/SAHRC%20SAFETY%20AND%20SECURITY%20IN%20FARM%20COMMUNITIES%202015%20pdf.pdf>.
- South African Police Service. 2011. “National Rural Safety Strategy.” <https://www.agrisa.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Rural-Safety-Strat.pdf>.
- . 2017. “Annual Crime Report 2016/2017.” 226/2017. Johannesburg: South African Police Service Crime Registrar. https://www.saps.gov.za/about/stratframework/annual_report/2016_2017/gpw_crime_stats_2017.pdf.
- . 2018. “2017/2018 Crime States Presentation.” South African Police Service Crime Registrar. <https://www.saps.gov.za/services/crimestats.php>.
- Staff. 2016. “These Movies Made the Most Money in South Africa in 2015.” March 9, 2016. <https://businesstech.co.za/news/business/116080/these-movies-made-the-most-money-in-south-africa-in-2015/>.
- Stanley-Becker, Isaac. 2018. “Trump Tweets the Word ‘Africa’ for First Time as President — in Defense of Whites in South Africa.” *Washington Post*, August 23, 2018. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2018/08/23/trump-directs-pompeo-to-investigate-south-african-land-redistribution-after-foxs-tucker-carlson-raises-alarm/>.
- Statistics South Africa. 2017a. “Exploring the Extent of and Circumstances Surrounding Housebreaking/Burglary and Home Robbery: An in-Depth Analysis of the Victims of Crime Survey Data, 2015/2016.” Crime Statistics Series 4. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa. <http://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=9928>.
- . 2017b. “Victims of Crime Survey 2016/2017.” P0341. http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1854.
- Stephan, Stephan Walter, and Cookie White Stephan. 2017. “Intergroup Threat Theory.” In *The International Encyclopedia of Intercultural Communication*, edited by Young Y. Kin.

- Major Reference Works. Wiley Online Library.
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/9781118783665.ieicc0162>.
- Steyn, Melissa E. 2004. "Rehabilitating a Whiteness Disgraced: Afrikaner White Talk in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *Communication Quarterly* 52 (2): 143.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01463370409370187>.
- The Economist*. 2018. "Confusion over Immigration and Crime Is Roiling European Politics," June 30, 2018. <https://www.economist.com/europe/2018/06/30/confusion-over-immigration-and-crime-is-roiling-european-politics>.
- Tibbetts, Rob. 2018. "From Mollie Tibbetts' Father: Don't Distort Her Death to Advance Racist Views." *Des Moines Register*, September 1, 2018.
<https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/opinion/columnists/2018/09/01/mollie-tibbetts-father-common-decency-immigration-heartless-despicable-donald-trump-jr-column/1163131002/>.
- Times Live*. 2017. "Farmers 4.5 Times More at Risk of Being Murdered – AfriForum," October 25, 2017. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2017-10-25-farmers-45-times-more-at-risk-of-being-murdered--afriforum/>.
- TimesLive. 2019. "One Person Murdered Every Week on a Farm in SA: AfriForum." *TimesLIVE*, January 29, 2019. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2019-01-29-one-person-murdered-every-week-on-a-farm-in-sa-afriforum/>.
- Tipples, Jason. 2011. "When Time Stands Still: Fear-Specific Modulation of Temporal Bias Due to Threat." *Emotion (Washington, D.C.)* 11 (1): 74–80. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022015>.
- Verwey, Cornel, and Michael Quayle. 2012. "Whiteness, Racism, and Afrikaner Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa." *African Affairs* 111 (445): 551–75.
- Westhuizen, Christi van der. 2018. "South Africa's White Right, the Alt-Right and the Alternative." *News24*, October 5, 2018.
<https://www.news24.com/Columnists/GuestColumn/south-africas-white-right-the-alt-right-and-the-alternative-20181005>.
- Wet, JayJay de. 2018. "Accused Sentenced to Life Imprisonment." *Klerksdorp News*, August 20, 2018. <http://www.klerksdorpnews.co.za/accused-sentenced-to-life-imprisonment/>.
- Wilkinson, Kate. 2017. "Why Calculating a Farm Murder Rate in SA Is near Impossible." *Africa Check* (blog). May 8, 2017. <https://africacheck.org/2017/05/08/analysis-calculating-farm-murder-rate-sa-near-impossible/>.