

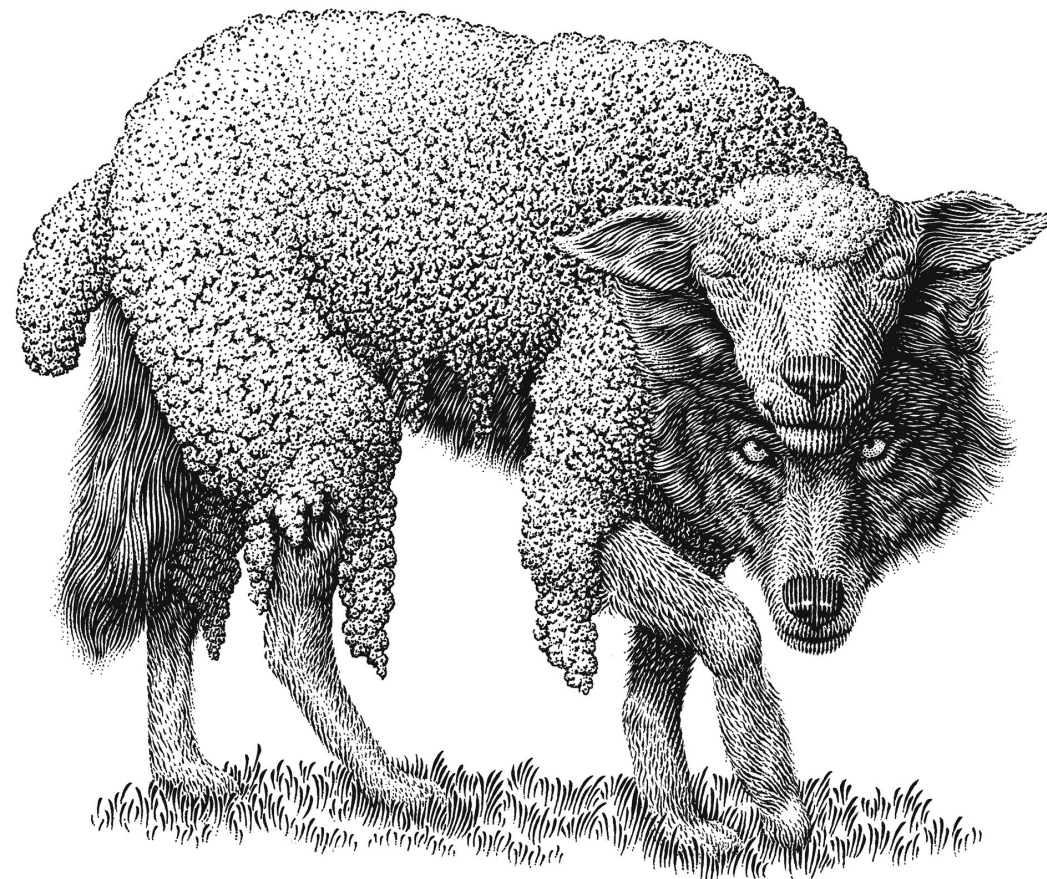
Over recent years, a host of new organizations and projects have surfaced in the U.S., attempting to rebrand fascism for new audiences. For several decades fascist organizing has been associated with the hijacking of “skinhead” fashion and culture, but increasingly the fascist Right moves in other scenes as well. Fascist organizers intend to build countercultural visibility and appeal to disaffected working class whites, who may already be active in a subculture of some form. Fascist counterculture attempts to build in settings such as the neo-folk and black metal music scenes; religion in the form of “folkish” heathenry or Asatru; and independent publishing projects mixing political and “nonpolitical” content. One manifestation of this Alt-Right countercultural/“spiritual” organizing in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) is called the Wolves of Vinland Cascadia.

These articles authored by Rose City Antifa and Shane Burley respectively, and autonomously formatted by 1312 Press.



WOLVES OF VINLAND

*A Fascist Countercultural “Tribe”
in the Pacific Northwest*



These articles have been printed here first and foremost to contribute to the spread of information about fascist groups in the Pacific Northwest. They've been reprinted from Rose City Antifa (rosecityantifa.org) and Shane Burley (politicalresearch.org). The online versions of these articles are accompanied with many links, videos and footnotes that are highly recommended.

More information on Pacific Northwest anti-fascist organizing can be found at:

itsgoingdown.org

pugetsoundanarchists.org

Spencer's 2017 speaking event at Auburn University. Waggener also promotes Wandervögel, a loose U.S. organization named after the volkisch German nature group, which focuses on blood and soil rhetoric.

This August, Waggener announced that Operation Werewolf will shut down as an entity at the end of 2020, having previously shown some dissatisfaction with his lack of control over those flying the Operation Werewolf flag. But in his announcement, he also clarified he is just shifting his attention to other enterprises, and intends to bring his network of followers with him as he focuses on his other companies, which purvey the same message. He's maintaining the pay-for-play online community centered around the Virtuous Circle, where artists from the Operation Werewolf network can pay \$50 a month to be a part of a Facebook Group. In other words, this particular name may be retiring, but what it represents will live on, as Waggener continues to profit off his position as a sage to his community, to mobilize men to follow his example, and to seed his philosophy, including White and male supremacism.

The Wolves' rhetoric is about turning inward and creating a revolutionary counter-culture, a dual-power situation where participants retreat from the world. This perspective, echoed by Evola, where spiritual, anti-modern men stand apart from the world, waiting to inherit a new world when the current order collapses.

But while part of the TLR program celebrates male stoicism, it simultaneously cultivates male violence. Recruits are required to undergo combat training, and are encouraged to own and train with firearms. Building on Jack Donovan's essay "Violence is Golden," Waggener argues that violence is the essential force by which men apply their will to situations to determine human events and that men should be prepared for violence from anyone from state authorities to antiracist activists. His work has included guides to improvisational weapons, including how to hurt people with Maglites, loose change, bottles, and pens. "Why do we humans feel that we can demand equal treatment with mewling words? We must obtain respect with our actions, not as a right, but with a cold fury...we have to be prepared to fight for our place in this world, to kill for it, if necessary," writes Waggener.

Although Waggener has made efforts to sanitize his rising professional profile, the Wolves' rhetoric has continued to be radical. Recently Waggener has discussed rehabilitating the memory of Charles Manson as more spiritual outlaw or "shaman" than serial killer—an argument similar to that used by neonazi accelerationist groups like Atomwaffen Division. (One Wolves member sells art and clothing adorned with apocalyptic war imagery, images of guns, and Charles Manson's picture through a project called Wolfchild A.D., and recorded a YouTube video with Waggener.)

Waggener's various brands have also become a catch-all for White nationalists looking for a more publicly acceptable presentation. The American Front, historically one of the most violent skinhead gangs, tied to numerous murders and acts of terrorism, has started promoting Operation Werewolf. Two high-profile American Front neonazis from Oregon, the brothers Jake and Gabriel Laskey (at least one involved in desecrating a synagogue), began flying the Operation Werewolf banner on social media; they also worked out of a weapons store outside Eugene, Oregon, called Wolfclan Armory, owned by their parents, using the werewolf aesthetic. A founding member of Ravensblood Kindred, an Atlanta heathen group that's openly supportive of White nationalism, has been photographed wearing Operation Werewolf apparel. The group is affiliated with both the folkish heathen Asatru Folk Assembly and the neonazi Wotan Network and its members attended Richard



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Drawing upon a mix of motivational speaking, weightlifting, hand to hand and tactical arms training, hyper-masculinity and pre-Christian Germanic religion, the Wolves of Vinland (WoV) have situated themselves as the group du jour on the countercultural Right. The group expresses an elitist and patriarchal worldview, much of which is copied from the philosophy of Julius Evola. (Evola considered himself to be to the Right even of fascism; however Evola was attracted to the Nazi SS as a model of the sort of "elite" he wished to cultivate, and moved to Nazi Germany after the fall of Fascism in Italy).

Dressing in motorcycle club style vests, painting their faces, and building a "tribe," the WoV have successfully and quietly organized two other chapters across the United States. Despite the claims to be inspired by historical pre-Christian Germanic people, the WoV tend to organize similarly to outlaw "1%er" biker gangs. They have a proper group (the official WoV) and feeder clubs, from which they draw in new members. These feeder groups are part of "Operation

Werewolf”. In the last year or so, a third WoV chapter has begun organizing in the Portland area under the leadership of self-proclaimed “anarcho-fascist” and gay anti-queer militant Jack Donovan. WoV has recently been listed by the SPLC as an active hate group, which suggests just how far they have gone.

The WoV have received attention from both militant antifascists and watchdog organizations, but for many people this group has largely flown under the radar. “Crypto-fascism”—that is, fascist messaging when dog-whistled or veiled with esoteric references—is harder to spot and confront than some buffoon marching around with a swastika flag. This, arguably, also makes such a current more dangerous; we believe “crypto-fascism” must be both uncovered and directly combatted. In this article, we expose the history of the Wolves of Vinland, their use of Operation Werewolf as a recruiting tool, the nature of Evola-influenced worldview, and the activity of the Cascadian Pack of WoV, their leader Jack Donovan, and his allies.

The Wolves of Vinland: Origins and Belief

The WoV organization was started roughly 10 years ago by self-styled fitness coach, motivational guru and white supremacist Paul Waggener along with his brother Mattias. Drawing from Nazi era Norse imagery, total misreadings of Germanic and Scandinavian paganism, Men’s Rights Activist ideology, and drawing on the power lifting and black metal subcultures, they have cobbled together a “tribalist” Evolian cadre organization. These guys have gotten a lot of press due to their competent use of social media as an outreach tool and their ability to craft a very specific übermensch countercultural cool.

Mattias and Paul Waggener

The theories of Julius Evola (1898 - 1974) are a primary influence on WoV. Scholar Franco Ferraresi correctly stated that “Evola’s thought can be considered one of the most radically and consistently anti egalitarian, anti liberal, anti democratic, and anti popular systems in the twentieth century.” (“The Radical Right in Postwar Italy,” *Politics & Society*, 1988 16:71-119, Pg. 84) The esotericist Evola believed that the world, specifically the West, has been and is going through a decline rooted in materialism, a lack of spiritual awareness,

gym in Portland, Oregon, called Kabuki Strength Lab.)

In the martial arts world, former skinhead and Atlanta-area Jiu Jitsu instructor Joshua Buckley has become a high-profile supporter of Operation Werewolf. Buckley is known for his work with frequent American Renaissance author and speaker Sam Dickson in manipulating tax liens for financial gain. He’s also authored books on folkish paganism in collaboration with Michael Moynihan, editor of the 1993 book *Siege: The Collected Writings of James Mason*, which inspired the accelerationist terrorist organization Atomwaffen Division. The Waggeners themselves have been influential in martial arts circles, and own their own Jiu Jitsu gym in Lynchberg called Devotion Jiu-Jitsu.

Pagan circles have also been influenced by Operation Werewolf, partially because of Waggener’s complex esotericism. The Wolves’ offerings in terms of heathen magic, runework, ritual, and “ecstatic rites” are attractive to many men alienated by more conventional pagan organizations, which they dismiss as “historical re-enactment” groups lacking real vitality. Well-known occultist Craig Williams, of Anathema Publishing, joined Operation Werewolf and had Waggener write a foreword for his book on gnosticism. This caused enough controversy that a campaign to remove Williams and another Operation Werewolf associate from the lineup of a Montreal occult festival forced the entire event’s cancellation.

Radicalizing Men and the Wolf-Nazi Pipeline

While Waggener is profiting off the radicalization of his fans, and his militant rhetoric at times seems like just another extension of his branding mentality, his relative consistency in interviews and his writing suggests he’s still a true believer. But either way, whether Waggener’s ultimate aim is ideological or financial, he is cultivating an apocalyptic us vs. them mentality among his followers. Matthias Waggener suggests they are an “Odinic Wolfcult”; members see themselves as the resurrection of an ancient ideal: sitting at the edge of civilization to protect it, and thus beholden to the morality and strictures of contemporary society. Within this model Operation Werewolf adherents are encouraged to ready themselves for revolutionary situations, when the outside world tries to interfere with their tribe—a message that can both radicalize some associates while providing cover to those already embracing White nationalism.

a CBD company in Colorado, Waggener has hawked CBD products to his followers. And following an obsession with gender roles common within Operation Werewolf, Waggener has also urged his followers to consider testosterone therapy. Waggener takes a more pragmatic approach, saying that it doesn't really matter if falling testosterone is intentionally caused by some nefarious actor or "just a product of living in the modern world." Arguing that testosterone governs men's ideology, Waggener has said, "If your test levels are crashed you are perceiving the world like a fucking female." Operation Werewolf has also argued that recruits should get their testosterone levels checked and consider getting on Testosterone Replacement Therapy (TRT) to maintain "maximum high" levels of the hormone. The group has also promoted a Colorado provider, Brian Komleske, working with a clinic called Sculpted Med, which Waggener says he coordinated with to get his supporters on testosterone, suggesting he gets some type of financial support for doing this. (Komleske did not respond to requests for comment.)

Infecting Subcultures

Waggener's reach has been profound in several intersecting subcultures where his brand of toxic tribalism has gained currency, including weight-lifting, martial arts, and pagan circles. The #OperationWerewolf hashtag has been used around 25,000 times on Instagram.

One such subculture is among the followers of Greg Walsh, a weight trainer who has worked with Operation Werewolf. His fitness company, Wolf Brigade, has provided private workshops for attendees of Operation Werewolf's Conclave events, along with other fitness and athletic companies, including Norse Fitness (known for adding Nordic pagan symbolism to their workout clothing). Another example is Vengeance Strength Kvt, a Nashville gym that matches Operation Werewolf's style, branding, and rhetoric, and the owner of which has worked directly with both Paul and Matthias Waggener. In 2017, the gym gained notoriety when it posted a message to its website that seemed to echo Alt Right ideology: "Instead of becoming victims to life's circumstances, join the rebellion against the world's complacency and sloth. Take the Profane Oath to do battle against that force which degrades humankind into the disgusting, diseased, incapable, grey masses that you see before yourself." (Former Wolves member Jack Donovan also tried to establish a presence in the power lifting community by setting up a tattoo studio in a popular weight lifting

and opposition to "masculine" principles. This final phase of decay and collapse is called the "Kali Yuga" (Evola borrows the concept from the Hindu cycle of Yugas.) This phase would be ended by willing individuals (called "aristocrats of the soul") bringing about a rebirth by implementing a "Traditional society" — basically a return to some imagined Golden Age. Evola wrote about Roman society with regard to this theory, but Evola's claims been applied to other western cultures as well.

The myth of rebirth from the ashes is key within fascist ideology. What set Evola apart from standard fascist ideology was his aversion to large political party organizing and populism. Evola also scorned nationalism as not being elitist enough. Such opposition to nationalism may place Evola outside of "fascism" narrowly defined—if one believes that fascism is necessarily nationalistic, then Evola clearly falls outside that "fascism" (and to its right). However functionally Evola and Evolian thought have generally aligned with fascist political movements — as demonstrated by Evola's efforts to gain favor with select Italian Fascists and then German Nazis during his own lifetime. Evola's ideas have also been useful to more recent neofascist movements. These ideas are best known in Europe but dovetail neatly with American notions of the tough, heroic individual as well as anti-state sentiment among disaffected whites who feel their power in society slipping. Nothing is more astutely "American" than calls for cleansing violence without a party mechanism and a "dictator" in charge.

The Wolves of Vinland leader Paul Waggener — like many Evolians — is trying many things to see what will get traction for his political goals. Those goals are the creation of a cadre organization capable of surviving the immanent western decline and emerging as leaders of the next "traditional society" in the next cycle of Yungas. Waggener is responsible for a series of cultural projects which he uses to express themes of western decline and emasculation. These projects range from "outlaw" country (Paul Waggener & the Howling Grimness) and black metal bands (Cladonia Rangiferina), to an awful "Film Studio" (Anarchist Films) and his many esoteric and fitness e-books online. Waggener's interest in a plethora of subcultures is part of a strategy of 'fishing' — casting out lines into different areas of social life until something (or someone) gets hooked. In this case, the religious influences and hyper-masculinity of the Wolves of Vinland have come to dominate the values of the organization.

For the Wolves, the Golden Age of the past they look to is a hodge podge of pre-Christian Scandinavian, Viking, and Germanic tribalism. They have not been the first to mix heathenry or Asatru with far right wing politics and outright fascism. In fact the origins of organized heathenry in America come from overt

racists: Else Christensen, a Third Positionist Danish immigrant who started the Odinist Fellowship; Stephen McNallen who was a Soldier of Fortune contributor and self-proclaimed founder of Asatru in America under the Asatru Free Assembly (now the Asatru Folk Assembly); and Michael J. Murray AKA Valgard Murray, a former organizer for the American Nazi Party in the 60's and former spokesperson for the Arizona-based National Socialist outlaw brotherhood Iron Cross MC. Despite these origins, an overwhelming majority of heathens or Asatru practitioners in America are currently not racist, racist, or even far-Right politically. Nevertheless, it is easy enough to mix racist politics with pre-Christian Germanic folk religion, since there are precursors to draw on when giving a modern racist inflection to discussions of the gloried past of folk belief.

The Wolves of Vinland push a hyper-masculine image, politics and practice inspired partially by Evola. This has resonance in modern America, where professed Men's Rights Activists (MRAs) have been loudly beating the antifeminist drum over the last decade or so. Simply put: the threat of liberated women has some men pissing in their pants. This panic is due to a failure of imagination in which gains in women's freedom cannot be seen by some men as anything except a loss to their own. As we have stated in a recent article, reactionary hypermasculinity has gained traction with disaffected working class whites in large numbers. The radical solution to the "problem" of feminism posited by Evola and others is a return of heroic masculine warrior-kings or aristocrats, to bring about a rebirth of the currently declining age.

The Wolves of Vinland fully buy into this neo-masculinist, warrior worldview. This can be seen in their many online photographs in which physical fitness, toughness, fight training and "manliness" can be contrasted with the mundane world around the viewer. Many of these photographs are taken by the internationally known professional rock and roll photographer, and local Portlander, Peter Beste.

The Wolves of Vinland are essentially an Evolian cadre group wrapping itself in neo-pagan imagery. Many of the organizers such as Paul Waggenger and Jack Donovan have strong ties, if not partial ownership in popular powerlifting gyms. Paul and Donovan use an extensive network of social media accounts to promote their motivational fitness and strength training regimes, Paul's of course are for sale online.

Their events, such as the ones held at their crowdfunded hall "Ulfheim" in Virginia, are ritually opened with bouts of boxing and MMA style fighting. The Ulfheim compound contains several off-the-grid houses based in rural

heroic archetype to emulate, both physically— his website and social media feature idealized images of him shirtless and covered in tattoos—and financially, as a self-made man beholden to corporate bosses. The problem, though, is that his model of financial independence comes directly from extracting money from his followers. Through his multiple businesses, Waggenger seems able to patch together a reasonable living. The community he's cultivated has also created a series of businesses, from powerlifting gyms to clothing brands, yet there's little evidence they are successful beyond attracting other Operation Werewolf adherents. As with most pyramid schemes, Waggenger is marketing a program promising to make other men as financially and socially successful as he is, while his financial success depends entirely on his followers' willingness to give him money.

Waggenger also runs a copywriting and branding company, the Berkano Initiative, which offers advertising services and branding training. In one presentation, he explains how he built customer loyalty among Operation Werewolf members by cultivating an aesthetic that evokes the "branding archetype of the Outlaw," and much of Waggenger's advice amounts to emulating the marketing techniques of companies like Levi's and Harley-Davidson. This reveals the intentions behind Operation Werewolf, where tone and style are a means of selling a product. The Elite program bills itself as spiritual self-improvement, but ends up as a small business seminar.

While tightlipped about who hires the Berkano Initiative and its associated ad agency, Rogue Advertising, Waggenger claims he's provided support to financial businesses and has done copy work for Joy of the Trade, a high-risk investment training program run by trading guru Jeff Zananiri. Mostly, though, his work is about selling the principles that gained him Operation Werewolf recruits back to the men who have followed him as a sage.

"We will hit the pavement to back alleys and fly to distant locales in order to bring you directly into the room with copywriters and convicts, power brokers and pimps, branding experts and black metal maniacs," reads the Berkano Initiative's initial contact email. A digital copy of the Berkano Initiative's Brand Builder's Bible will run you \$47 (on sale). More recently, Waggenger has announced a new project, the Virtuous Circle Artist Collective, in which members pay \$50 a month to access what is essentially an art-focused Facebook group.

Like many far-right grifters, Waggenger has also focused on alternative medicine. Drawing on a family connection through a brother who works for

process” wherein men transform body and mind through suffering, and become heroes of their stories. As he writes in the primer to the Elite program, It’s Not Enough:

We must impose our own trial of fire and flame so that what emerges on the other end is something entirely new. It will burn away weakness, cowardice, and hesitation. It will also burn away those things that are holding us back - be they unwanted people, unhealthy influences, or unconscious fears. ...[The] goal is to secede from mainstream culture and live a new one...In other words, we propose to create a people.

The different “tribal” groups inspired by the Wolves of Vinland and Operation Werewolf are seemingly independent, bound together only by an informal network and common aspiration, but Waggener’s example looms large.

And their numbers are growing. Operation Werewolf is able to maintain its credibility thanks to the inability (or unwillingness) of tech companies to deplatform them. Although various Werewolf accounts have been suspended, including at Instagram, PayPal, Venmo, Stripe, and video sites including Vimeo, they have a currently active YouTube channel, under Waggener’s name, with over 12,000 subscribers as of this writing. Waggener’s Instagram functions as a primary center of propaganda, where he regularly promotes his brand. The group’s Telegram channel is an active recruiting ground. They wanted to move people to a private, subscription-based message board system where it is harder to deplatform, which is one reason why the Werewolf Elite forums were created. Waggener’s appeal can also be seen in a more recent attempt at crowdfunding (which netted over \$19,000), where he complains they’ve been “targeted in cowardly digital attacks by the enemies of free speech and strength” that shut down their social media pages.

Open for Business

Along with these programs, Waggener sells branded content, including ten self-published books of his writing and a branded notebook, called Master Logs, where you track your progress in his programs.

Much of Waggener’s advice is about becoming independent from the “modern world,” including through self-employment. Waggener offers himself as a

Lynchburg, VA and was crowdfunded with the help of white nationalists cultural networkers Counter-Currents Publishing, as well as a marketer for conservative American political website World Net Daily. Not only is overt violence used internally in the group it is part and parcel of their political warrior ideology. To the point that Jack Donovan’s webstore sells various merchandise stating “Violence is Golden”. Those on the far-Right often celebrate physical violence to assert dominance; for the Wolves, violence has become a holy act.

Not only is physical violence part of WoV ideology; racial violence is part of their practice, as the outcome of their romanticized “tribal” identity. One member of the Lynchburg pack, Maurice “Hjalti” Michaely spent two years in the custody of the State of Virginia after burning down a historic Black church and causing over \$1 million in damage. Despite claims by the group that this event wasn’t racially motivated, members of the Lynchburg group have been photographed numerous times with tattoos and patches on their vests of the Black Sun symbol, Nazi styled swastikas, and “SS” style lightning bolts. In fact their leader Paul has a large Black Sun tattoo on his chest.

Wolves of Vinland and Operation Werewolf: Organizational Structure and Strategies

Despite their claims of having over 300 members the WoV organization itself is rather small. Spread out over 3 chapters: Lynchburg, VA (Ulfheim/Appalachia), Cheyenne, WY/Colorado (Windborn) and recently the Pacific Northwest (Cascadia), WoV have a dedicated following and membership made up of mostly working class white men. Their numbers seem inflated as they seem to be counting hangers on, wives/girlfriends of patched members, and possibly even their children who also wear “cuts” of the organization. These cuts, battle jackets, or vests members wear tell of their open association with the group and role within it. Unlike more disciplined 1%er (outlaw) biker gangs, WoV’s main motivation is political rather than criminal. Jackets are not completely uniform, with members wearing an assortment of handmade patches with slogans on them, often including misspelled Runic words and animal bones.

Similar to biker gangs, though, WoV use “feeder” groups to draw membership into its ranks. The feeder organization is of course run by Paul Waggener and called “Operation Werewolf” (OW). Most new members from the current era of the group are drawn up from the OW ranks, for their dedication to the political

and quasi-religious goals which are preached ad nauseam in OW forums, publications and merchandise. OW subscribers wear “cuts”/battle jackets and are encouraged to form their own local self-organized groups. They have a complicated symbolic language, typically using runes, hand signs, numbers and acronyms. Like the Wolves they enjoy posing for the camera on social media showing off tattoos, muscles, and weapons (knives, swords, pistols, and tactical rifles).

OW participants are essentially cadre wannabes who generally adhere to the ideology but perhaps not in full. Some may be atheists, right wing libertarians, “anarcho-capitalists”, occultists or outright white supremacists who are not in tune with the nuances of the WoV worldview. It is clear that the numbers of OW are substantially higher than WoV. This also means that where there is a WoV pack, there are typically also OW members in the same area. Online photos from participants reveal organized clusters up and down the west coast from SoCal to Washington State. Recently there have also been groupings forming internationally under the OW banner in various European countries thanks to social media.

It is important to note that “Operation Werewolf” shares its name with the guerilla German resistance force organized by Adolf Hitler in 1944 during the decline of Nazi control. OW uses Nordic and Germanic symbols from both before the Christian era and also the Medieval period – one example being the Wolfsangel, a medieval chivalric arm erroneously identified and used by Nazi occultists as a “rune.” This symbol has also been used by the Azov Regiment, a far right Ukrainian neo-Nazi military formation currently fighting Russia under State sanction.

Jack Donovan

In recent years Oregon based Alternative Right writer Jack Donovan (AKA Jack Donovan-Malebranche) has been writing about masculinity, western decline, and white identity. Donovan’s notoriety began with the publication of his book, *The Way of Men*, which has been reviewed and frequently cited by the “men’s movement” that has been growing in many English speaking countries. The men’s movement is a reactionary grouping of ideas best expressed in the narrative that men are being feminized (by feminism, modernity, or even tainted food) and that western civilization is declining because maleness is under

seemed equal parts ideology and business acumen.

Operation Werewolf became a clearinghouse for his writing, but also a business. This began by selling his introductory zines and book *On Magic*, which boiled down his years in esoteric Germanic groups. He designed clothing based on the same rough aesthetic he was cultivating, mixing pagan symbolism with the junkyard appeal of biker gangs. Slogans like “only the inferior strive for equality” were emblazoned online, though he avoided clear-cut White nationalist rhetoric.

Since around 2015, Waggener has built a growing spiderweb of businesses, most drawing on his existing fanbase. He became a personal trainer, created workout programs (such as the powerlifting program *Barbaric Rites*), and released new music in several genres: country music marketed under his own name; neofolk under the band name *Totenwolf* (a combination of the “Death’s Head” symbol worn by the Nazi Schutzstaffel or SS with werewolf imagery); his band *The Pale Riders*, which adopted the basement aesthetic of Nazi black metal bands in Eastern Europe; another black metal band called *Hunter’s Ground*; and his new fashwave project *A Neon Funeral*. His label, *Wolf’s Head Records*, publishes some his music, as well as other artists like the guitarist David Lee Archer, and a Youtube channel called *Anarchist Films* hosts some of his music videos.

In 2020, he started the *Werewolf Elite Program*: a self-help scheme targeted at fans who had started their own tribes on the Operation Werewolf model. For around \$250-\$400 per year, Elite members can access a message board, some spurious investment advice, and five weekly posts from Waggener that amount to a spiritually-infused physical and mental training program.

Operation Werewolf encourages the use of initiation rituals, based on Waggener’s readings of esoteric traditionalism, so that recruits must advance through different color-coded rankings, similar to belt levels in martial arts. Advancing to each stage requires paying additional fees, attending the Wolves’ “Conclave” in Lynchburg, and rigid tests of one’s physical fitness and achievements in learning various fighting styles, runic spiritual practices, and financial accomplishments, like business creation and micro-investing.

These hierarchies, which Waggener regards as both natural and reflective of individual achievement, also help reinforce the sense that the Werewolf Elite program is worth the time, energy, and money involved. What he’s offering followers who buy into his *Total Life Reform* program is an “alchemical

they had become a social center for the growing Alt Right and were openly welcoming active racist leaders.

As the Alt Right became increasingly supportive of the Wolves, the Waggeners were invited to speak on White nationalist podcasts and radio at outlets like Red Ice Radio, Millennial Woes and Counter-Currents Radio. The publicity helped them raise \$3,000 to build a meeting hall at their Ulfheim compound, and they even received support from Counter-Currents publisher Greg Johnson. Brad Griffin from Occidental Dissent also voiced his admiration for the group, suggesting he had been up to Ulfheim to see what they had built. Swedish nationalist and bodybuilder Marcus Follin, known as the Golden One on YouTube,[30] met and trained with the group when he came to the U.S. to speak at American Renaissance.

When Donovan created the Wolves' "Cascadia" chapter in 2015, the group began holding events on property owned by folkish heathen and anti-feminist author Juleigh Howard-Hobson. Juleigh and her husband David had caught the ire of Portland activists when they tried to attend a 2009 event with Holocaust denier David Irving, and were also allegedly members of European Americans United. All of which is to say that, while Paul may present the Wolves as outside of contemporary politics, they are centered directly at the heart of White nationalism.

The Birth of Operation Werewolf

In 2013, Waggener published a YouTube video of him and DeAnna working out by lifting car parts in a scrap yard. The ad hoc exercise tape marked the birth of Operation Werewolf—a synthesis of Waggener's training regimen and his ideas about tribalism, "militant strength culture," and "rewild[ing]," which he began expressing in the zines Iron and Blood and Rewildyourlife. The Wolves had developed away from the traditionalist heathenry seen in many racial Ásatrú groups, and now focused more on paganism's mystical underpinnings, which Waggener taught were tools men could use to be successful. The "Odinic path," in his teachings, was more about modeling your life on the "Germanic hero aesthetic," where a man aspires to physical excellence through training and discipline. With Operation Werewolf, he would train men to build their own Wolves-like tribes. Following his tribalism for all peoples approach, he included non-White followers in a decision that

attack. The only way to revive manliness and save the West, according to these advocates, is by physical fitness, authoritarian values drawn from an idealized past, and a liberal application of violence. Increasingly, WoV hero Julius Evola has been cited on radical "men's movement" pages as a figure worth studying.

Among Jack Donovan's achievements are extensive writing for the North American New Right, Counter Currents Publishing, Radix Journal, and other far-Right websites and journals. Donovan has openly identified as an "anarcho-fascist", "white nationalist", and "racialist". He has gained a following in the political space where neo-masculinity meets up with neo-fascism. Although gay, Donovan unequivocally rejects modern gay culture. As Anti-Fascist News noted about the National Policy Institute 2015 Halloween conference, where Donovan was a guest speaker :

"Donovan is known for being a gay "anti-gay" author, so to speak, where he writes extensively how queer men should abandon gay identity because it is associated with effeminacy, leftist politics, and feminism. He instead identifies as an "andriophile" and writes about the important (sic) of male tribalism and deeply misogynistic works on the edges of the Men's Rights movement. More recently he has been extending an incredible support to white nationalism, leaning more in the direction of folkish Heathenry in the masculinist and tribalist interpretations. "

In 2014 Donovan started a chapter for the Wolves of Vinland known as the "Cascadia Chapter" or "Cascadia Pack". Previous to this he identified himself as an Operation Werewolf Operative. Donovan and his new cadre have held WoV events near the Portland Metro area, specifically on land owned by local White Supremacists and fellow fascist alt-righters Juleigh Howard-Hobson and her husband David Hobson. Juleigh is a poet and ardent anti-feminist, and propagandist for the North American New Right (as is Donovan). Both her and her husband attended the David Irving Holocaust Denial lecture that Rose City Antifa protested in 2009. At the time, Juleigh and David were members of the now-defunct European Americans United racist organization.

Donovan's recent celebrity has given the WoV a deeper reach into MRA and powerlifting circles. Local strength coach and Donovan ally Chris Duffin of Elite Performance Center (based in Clackamas, AKA Kabuki Strength Lab) let Donovan and the Waggener brothers be his first non-power-lifting interview on his video podcast. Duffin is such a supporter that he lets Donovan run a tattoo studio out of EPC's backroom known as "New Barbarian Tattoo" (14350 INDUSTRIAL WAY, CLACKAMAS, OR, 97015, by appointment only). In this space, Donovan recently gave fascist lawyer Augustus Invictus a large back

tattoo. Donovan also painted the large mural of a bird of prey with “VICTORY” on the interior wall of the gym. We’ve received reports of Donovan openly recruiting out of EPC for his WoV Cascadia group. Sadly, Donovan was given a slight degree of respectability by Fight Club author and former Portlander Chuck Palahniuk, who was interviewed by Donovan on his podcast “Start the World”. This in turn increased Donovan’s profile, which he uses to build an online business selling books, art, decals, and patches to the hypermasculine crowd.

The carefully crafted image of men returning to the ‘natural order’ by painting their faces and howling in caves is reminiscent of new age ‘men’s groups’ with a faux-Viking twist. All the elements of WoV may be in vogue, but they are far from innocent. Creating small groups with a focus on physical prowess and fighting ability (fist fights and wrestling are required of members), combined with the hyper-masculine Evolian worldview instilled in members, all mimic the most militant sectors of the far-Right in Europe. The gang-style organizing found in WoV is also found in the most violence-prone parts of the white power movement here in the US.

Call to Action

Outside of WoV, Evolian and far-Right themes are creeping into a growing number of other cultural and/or “spiritual” spaces. For example, the neo-folk project Changes (white nationalist Robert N. Taylor and his cousin Nicholas Tesluk) named a 2013 tour “Ride the Tiger,” making reference to Evola’s book of the same name. Anti-fascists and anti-racists must be able to recognize and oppose this milieu, even if its catchphrases, themes and iconography differ from stereotypes about what white supremacists do and say.

We do not think that the self-description of Evola-fanboys as “Traditionalists” should be accepted, since this title obscures their radical anti-egalitarian worldview. Functionally, these figures are as much a part of neo-fascist practice as the “national anarchists,” who reject strict state-nationalism while propagating myths of violent rebirth in terms of culture or “tribe” instead. Similarly, claims from WoV and their ilk that they are merely engaged in culture-building should be challenged. While it is true that WoV do not participate in political activity narrowly construed (e.g. lobbying) the point of their “culture-building” is to change society at large, moving it in a patriarchal, authoritarian and racially-

it’s actually an intentional strategy in post-war fascist circles to recontextualize far-right politics as cultural, artistic, or meta-political—a means of influencing culture and identity more than immediate politics, with the hopes of changing politics further down the line.

Apolitical?

In reality, the claims of apoliticism are a smokescreen. Kevin DeAnna was an early Wolves member who joined Waggener’s group while he was organizing the far-right campus organization Youth for Western Civilization (YWC). DeAnna also worked at the Leadership Institute, a major conservative movement organization and the primary training ground for young right-wing activists, as well as a staff writer of the conspiracy-laden World Net Daily.

DeAnna also wrote commentary pieces for Richard Spencer’s Radix Journal, the White nationalist publisher Counter-Currents, the “race realist” organization American Renaissance, and the virulently anti-immigrant webzine VDARE. And from these perches, DeAnna sometimes promoted the ideas surrounding the Wolves. Writing for Radix under the pseudonym “Gregory Hood,” DeAnna argued that the Wolves could help Whites reclaim a tribal identity in a vapid world.

The group doesn’t seem to be for everyone, and pagan blood rituals, boxing, and a “barbarian” ethos is hardly going to appeal to the Orthosphere anytime soon. But for all the talk about Archeofuturism, a new tribalism, or the European New Right’s return to paganism, there seem to be few other groups actually executing these ideas in the real world—even if some of the “Wolves” themselves are blithely unaware about the implications of what they are doing. And more importantly, it’s something that can be done right now—without waiting for a “collapse,” or a metapolitical shift.

DeAnna got other Alt Right figures involved, too, including Devin Saucier, an American Renaissance staffer, and Scott Greer, a contributor with The Daily Caller. A group of them lived in an Arlington, Virginia, apartment they dubbed “the Hate House,” which became a center of Alt Right activity and Jack Donovan’s home base when visiting the Washington, D.C., area. Amanda Prevette also became a member of the Wolves while working at World Net Daily. While the Wolves maintained a public persona of political neutrality,

“They hate Black people,” said Katie McHugh, a former Breitbart editor who dated Alt Right leader and Wolves member Kevin DeAnna. According to McHugh, who publicly renounced the Alt Right in 2019, the Wolves regularly use racial slurs internally, including calling Black people “Unters,” short for the Nazi term Untermensch, or sub-human. Waggener had played and sung in the National Socialist Black Metal band Valhalla Saints in Cheyenne, doing split records with other neonazis and singing songs about skinhead attacks. And as he would argue on the masculinist podcast The Pressure Project, he saw tribalism, including xenophobic racialism, as an inherent piece of the human psyche:

Who wants to live in a world where there’s no differences...tribalism is always gonna be the nature of human beings... I don’t care what this does to my social standing to say that humans are animals and as animals there is a difference in their breeding. And that there’s a difference in their ethnic type. It makes them different, characteristically speaking.

Like many folkish heathens, the Waggeners consider the Wolves’ racial tribalism a positive alternative to the street violence of their skinhead roots. The Waggeners’ ideology is inspired by the traditionalism and belief in male supremacy of fascist philosophers like Julius Evola, who saw the modern world as a degenerated mess that had lost its natural spiritual hierarchies, gender roles, and warrior ethic. Waggener’s goal is to return men to identity segregated tribal groups. They were also inspired by the European New Right’s identitarian ideas, particularly Guillaume Faye’s Archeofuturism, which proposed recreating an archaic image of tribal cultures inside a modern technological setting.

Much of the Wolves’ racial rhetoric follows a popular thread on the Alt Right opposing global “mono-culture,” suggesting those in power want to meld cultures to make people easily controlled consumers. “The mono-culture we refer to is the idea that we, as people, are all the same, no matter what our backgrounds, race, or culture. The reason this is dangerous at the present time is not so much the philosophy as much as it is who is pushing it on us and why,” Matthias said in a 2013 interview with Hunter Yoder, a folk artist who runs the website The Hex Factory. This rhetoric has a certain currency because it tries to echo an anti-capitalist, anti-globalization talking point about the destruction of indigenous cultures, while avoiding explicitly racist language. Like Donovan, the Wolves claim to offer an alternative to what they call the “Empire of Nothing”—the global culture of capitalism—inspired by Evola’s position of refusing to engage in contemporary politics. While they frame this as apolitical,

divided direction. Not only does this project have political ramifications down the line; when combined with militaristic organization it has immediate consequences — the plot against a Black church is not mere coincidence.

We have outlined the history of the Wolves of Vinland; their use of Operation Werewolf as a recruiting tool; the nature of their worldview, and the role of their leaders Paul Waggener and Jack Donovan as well as some of their allies in the growing far-Right creep in the Pacific Northwest. The Trump campaign has certainly galvanized white nationalists and overt fascists alike; however another threat is the growing normalization of far-Right themes and discourse in subcultural spaces, which also contributes to radicalization. Jack Donovan and the Wolves of Vinland are emblematic of this growing infiltration. The need for antifascists to reclaim these spaces is greater than ever.

At end of August-beginning of September the Operation Werewolf website was hacked and various social media accounts shut down. The WoV claim to “Have sorted the identity of the transgressor” but have yet to do anything besides completing an indiegogo campaign “looking to raise 15,000 dollars in 30 days”[1] which actually raised money above and beyond its goal. While tactics like this may not stop WoV from organizing permanently they certainly make it more difficult for them to operate. However, these online approaches are no substitute for opposing racist and far-Right organizing within cultural projects and social spaces, in real life. As such, it should be noted that when they are not working out or reenacting pseudo tribalistic rituals, Donovan and his “pack” regularly attend black metal shows, drink at bars, and eat at restaurants around the Portland area (including Oregon City), and do so typically fully patched up.

Total Life Reform: The Real Consequences of the Far Right's Self-Help Grift

by Shane Burley

Right from the start, the Werewolf Elite program is billed as your last chance. Not just to take control of your fitness, get your finances in order, or meet life goals, but for manhood, for “Total Life Reform” (TLR). The Werewolf Elite program is the latest package for purchase from Paul Waggener, co-founder of the far-right Odinist cult the Wolves of Vinland and proprietor of a growing family of fitness, lifestyle, and spirituality products built around his carefully cultivated outlaw persona. Waggener’s various self-help programs have become a strange pathway to far-right ideas, normalizing them by appealing to insecurities, subcultural signifiers, and the desire to build strong friendship circles. Just as happened in the “pick-up artist” community, where where lonely men were introduced to the anti-feminist ideas of the manosphere when tuning in to learn how to pick up women, Waggener’s programs build on the appeal of strength and loyalty to connect self-improvement with far-right ideas about racial tribalism.

Waggener is infamous not only on the Far Right, where his brand of racialized paganism and male tribalism inspires admiration, but in weightlifting, motorcycle, and black metal circles. He started out founding the “folkish” heathen group Wolves of Vinland in 2007, which mixed the organizational style of outlaw bike crews, such as the Hell’s Angels, with pagan mysticism. Around 2015, seeking to market his ideas and products to a larger audience, he founded Operation Werewolf: a small business empire including a webzine, self-published books, clothing, workout routines, and a growing list of associated enterprises flowing from his tribalist philosophy. In Operation Werewolf, Waggener tempered the Wolves’ open White supremacist rhetoric and opted instead for a sort of “tribalism for all people” ideology, in the hopes of attracting a broader swath of men. It worked, and over the past few years the business has gone international, inspiring other groups and companies. At each step along the way, Waggener has monetized his growing audience, never missing a chance to launch a new product or business. While his project mimics multi-level marketing—a sort of Amway for ethno-nationalists—Waggener draws his customers towards violent fascism by laundering in far-right ideas.

The Odinic Wolf Cult

The Wolves of Vinland began in the early-to-mid-2000s as an outlet for Waggener and his brother Matthias, who as teens were neonazi skinheads in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The brothers’ goal was to flesh out their type of Ásatrú: a racially-specific form of Nordic neopaganism. While most self-described heathens—people reviving pre-Christian Germanic religions—eschew racist politics, a substantial minority see heathenry as intended for people of Northern European descent alone. Waggener eventually became “Grandmaster” of the Caldraguild, a heathen mystic organization focused on runes. Despite his position, he saw the mystical elements of heathenism in metaphorical terms, more about creating discipline, mental focus, and physical transformation than supernatural magic. Dissatisfied with other racist heathen groups, such as the Asatru Folk Assembly (which lacked Waggener’s focus on fitness and personal success), he envisioned the Wolves as a more radical organization, emphasizing ecstatic rituals and pushing members to self-improvement and fight training.

In 2014, Jack Donovan, who would go on to become a significant far-right author and thought leader, traveled to Ulfheim, the Wolves’ compound near Lynchburg, Virginia, to write a profile of the group. He was so impressed by their ritual “Baldr’s funeral” (where members get drunk and set a ship on fire), that he joined the group, which shared many of his ideas about masculinity and the need for identity-based male “tribe[s].” The emerging ideology amounted to what Matthew N. Lyons calls “gang masculinity,” wherein men use extreme fraternalization—building bonds through extreme behaviors such as violence—to exclude women and reinforce toxic masculinity. Donovan cut ties with the Alt Right after the deadly Unite the Right gathering in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017, and parted ways with the Wolves the following year; he now says he wishes “White Nationalists would burn my books and stop following me.” But his time with the group nonetheless left a permanent imprint.

The Wolves’ folkish politics—namely, that only White people were allowed to join—were firm, but not advertised. They viewed race as an essential ingredient to building tribal alliances, but rejected the rhetoric of pan-European collaboration and activism found in much of modern White nationalism. Instead they were fond of saying they were “Wolves nationalist”: loyal to members of their specific organization rather than all people of European descent. Despite this rhetorical sleight of hand, their views were clear.