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‘Broadening our Understanding of Anti-Authority Movements in Canada’

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Authors:

Barbara Perry

Professor, University of Ontario Institute of Technology
barbara.perry@uoit.ca

David C. Hofmann

Assistant Professor, University of New Brunswick
dhofmann@unb.ca

Ryan Scrivens

PhD Candidate, Simon Fraser University
rscriven@sfu.ca

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For more information, contact the Director of the Network, Lorne Dawson, Department of Sociology and Legal Studies, University of Waterloo (ldawson@uwaterloo.ca) or Elizabeth Ford, Project Manager of TSAS (ec2ford@uwaterloo.ca).

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List of Acronyms

CERI	Church of the Ecumenical Redemption International
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
FOTL	Freemen-on-the-Land
OPP	Ontario Provincial Police
OPCA	Organized Pseudo-legal Commercial Arguments
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RWE	Right-wing extremism
SSNG	Sovereign Squamish Nation Government
TSLIC	Tacit Supreme Law in Courts

Executive Summary

Academic explorations of anti-authority movements are virtually non-existent in Canada. We have no reliable primary data or empirical insights into Freeman-on-the-Land (FOTL) or other similar contingents. What we do know comes largely from Associate Chief Justice Rooke's decision in *Meads v. Meads* (2012). He refers to the loose collection of individuals and small cells as "vexatious litigants." In the absence of any academic assessment of these movements, we embarked on a one-year pilot project, bringing an exploratory and multi-method approach to this first such study, grounded in interviews with law enforcement, lawyers, judges, notaries, and movement adherents (n = 32), along with analysis of open source data which included media reports, court documents, and movement websites.

In terms of distribution of the movement, the largest concentrations appeared to be in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario. Quantitatively, participants noted the challenge in measuring how expansive adherence to the movement might be. Most, however, roundly rejected the oft-cited estimate of 30,000, suggesting instead numbers closer to 5,000 to 10,000. Another shift in thinking that emerged over the course of our study was that the "movement" we were examining was slightly more diffuse than simply the FOTL bloc. It is, instead, a broadly based anti-state or anti-authority movement consisting of many diverse, and frequently contradictory arms. In fact, some adherents explicitly distanced themselves from the FOTL label, while others embraced ideologies and practices that bore only passing resemblance to FOTL specifically. We identified five distinct variants of anti-authority adherents in Canada:

1. Detaxers
2. Freeman-on-the-Land
3. Sovereign Citizens
4. Moors
5. Indigenous groups

Additionally, we were able to identify diverse levels of commitment to and motivation for adherence to any of the above noted factions:

1. Fantastical Believers
2. Conspiracy Theorists
3. Escapists
4. Dabblers/Opportunists
5. The Committed
6. Violent Extremists
7. Entrepreneurs
8. Established/Emergent Gurus

Finally, and in contrast to expectations going into the project, there has been very little violence associated with the anti-authority movement in Canada. Indeed, many adherents in our study explicitly rejected the very notion that violence could in any way advance their agendas. Certainly they pose very little threat to the general public. Participants indicated the public risk associated with anti-authority groups is rare, and typically very specifically targeted toward those whom adherents see as connected with "illegitimate" authority: law enforcement, judiciary, and notaries, in particular. Nonetheless, any such violence was rare, the obvious

exceptions being Justin Bourque's murder of three Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers in Moncton, and Norman Raddatz's murder of an Edmonton police officer. We were able to identify three distinct classes of violence:

1. Offensive/Extremist Violence
2. Defensive/Reactionary Violence
3. Harassment and Intimidation

We did note two emerging areas that cause some concern and that are worthy of close monitoring. The first is that there are some adherents who subscribe to the belief in an unrestricted right to bear arms, and to defend themselves with lethal force where necessary. Some, like Robert Menard, have taken this a step further to lobby for and in fact establish a cadre of civilian "peace officers." Second, emulating trends in the US, is the risk that some elements of the Canadian anti-authority movement might potentially blend into an emergent militia movement. While not technically Sovereign Citizens or FOTL, militia groups share their anti-authority positions. Moreover, the US experience suggests a cautionary tale. In that country, it appears as if the line between the two movements is growing ever narrower, and that they are far more likely to endorse and engage in extremist violence. We have yet to see that level of violence in Canada.

We close with a set of recommendations that revolves around the following cluster:

1. The Role of Law Enforcement
2. Education, Awareness, and Violence Reduction
3. Acknowledgement of the Violent Potential of Canadian Anti-authority Movements
4. Further Research

1.0 - Introduction

The threat posed by anti-authority¹ movements was brought to the attention of Canadians on June 4th, 2014 when Justin Bourque opened fire on Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers in Moncton, New Brunswick, murdering three and injuring two others during a 28-hour rampage. Within the space of a year, another violent attack occurred on June 8th, 2015, when Edmonton Constable Daniel Woodall was shot and killed by Norman Raddatz. Authorities later learned that both shooters held staunch anti-authority positions. As early as 2012, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) identified one part of the movement – Freeman-on-the-Land (FOTL) – as domestic terrorists, describing them as a major policing problem (Quan, 2012). This viewpoint was substantiated in Perry and Scrivens’s (2015) study on right-wing extremists (RWE) in Canada, where interviews with law enforcement revealed that the FOTL were a primary security concern.

However, academic explorations of the FOTL and related anti-authority movements remain virtually non-existent in Canada. Perry and Scrivens (2015) refer to right-wing adherents of this movement in their Public Safety report on RWE in Canada. David Hofmann (forthcoming) has written a chapter on Canadian Freeman – grounded in open source materials – in an upcoming volume on terrorism. Donald Netolitzky (2016a; 2016b), legal counsel for the Alberta Court of Queen’s Bench, has published two articles from a legal perspective that describe and assess the backgrounds, tactics, and methods of several prominent Canadian anti-authority movements. Lastly, Stephen Kent (2015; see also, Kent & Willey, 2013) has published a pair of analyses on FOTL through the lens of cultic/new religious movement studies. Although these first studies provide important insights, there is still a paucity of scholarship on the motives, nature, and methods of the FOTL and similar anti-authority movements in Canada that is informed by primary data. The most systematic analysis grounded in primary data to date is a ground-breaking legal decision penned by Associate Chief Justice Rooke’s decision in *Meads v. Meads* (2012), which he wrote in response to his experience with loose collections of individuals and small cells known as “vexatious litigants”: members of movements who

¹ We opt to use the term “anti-authority” for this research, as opposed to other commonly used labels (e.g., anti-statist, anti-government, anti-system) that describe movements akin to the Freeman-on-the-Land. We believe that “anti-authority” is the most inclusive definition when describing the myriad movements currently operational within Canada, since not all of these groups entirely reject the state, government, or certain systems. In contrast, with almost no exceptions, the movements described in this study reject some or all forms of authority.

employ “Organized Pseudo-legal Commercial Arguments” (OPCA).² However, Rooke’s decision is descriptive rather than analytical, and fails to account for the worldview and viewpoints of the OPCA movements and their adherents. In short, the current literature on the Canadian FOTL and similar anti-authority movements suffers from significant gaps in knowledge and methodological shortcomings.

In the absence of academic assessments of the FOTL movement in Canada based upon quality primary data, we embarked on a one-year exploratory and multi-method pilot project where we reached out and interviewed anti-authority movement adherents, as well as government, police, and legal officials who have come into contact with the larger anti-authority community in some form. Informed by our systematic archival research into the Canadian FOTL, we were particularly interested in answering the following questions:

1. What are the core elements of FOTL ideologies and beliefs in Canada?
2. What personal, professional or legal conditions draw individuals to the movement?
3. How deep/strong are adherents’ connections to the movement?
4. What activities are likely to follow from adherence to FOTL credos?
5. How likely is it that FOTL ideologies will shape violent extremism?

At the outset of the data collection process we were somewhat surprised by the heterogeneous nature of the Canadian anti-authority community. Up until that point, we were using the FOTL as an umbrella term that encompassed the larger anti-authority phenomenon within Canada (e.g., Hofmann, forthcoming). However, it became rapidly apparent to us that while the FOTL is perhaps the most publicized and prominent anti-authority movement in Canada, we could not ignore the ideological and methodological diversity that we encountered. As a result, we made a conscious decision to broaden the study’s focus beyond the FOTL to encompass the many distinct movements that make up the larger Canadian anti-authority community.

² We use the term “OPCA movement” and anti-authority movement interchangeably throughout this paper. The difference in nomenclature stems largely from disciplinary viewpoints, with legal scholarship tending to use the OPCA term, and academic scholarship using other descriptive terms such as “anti-authority,” “anti-system,” “anti-statist,” and/or “anti-government” to describe these types of movements.

2.0 - Methods

As outlined above, there is a dearth of information on Canadian anti-authority movements. The available research is largely anecdotal, fragmentary, and unsystematic in its review. Therefore, a more comprehensive and systematic approach is needed to better understand the ideology, commitments, activities, and methods of FOTL and other similar anti-authority movements in Canada. To begin addressing this lacuna, we chose to employ a blended methodological approach that used archival and primary research to construct a robust picture of the anti-authority community in Canada.

The protocol for this study closely followed that used by Perry and Scrivens (2015) in their three-year study of RWE in Canada. The following means of data gathering were utilized:

2.1 - *Websites, Message Boards, and Social Media*

Given that most Canadian anti-authority movements are voracious users of the Internet, we were able to directly access the bulk of the rhetoric that they employ to attract, educate, and inspire potential and committed adherents. We identified and analyzed the websites and message boards (i.e., web-forums and blogs), as well as social media sites (i.e., *Facebook* and *YouTube*) established by Canadian FOTL adherents and those who subscribed to anti-authoritarian beliefs. This included analysis of the many “instructional” videos created by FOTL members, online discussions on specific web-forums, and discussions on *Facebook* – a social media site that was actively used by adherents. In total, we analyzed approximately 140 online sources that were created by members of the Canadian anti-authority movements. We were also interested in gaining insight into the online social networks that formed around key gurus³ of the Canadian FOTL movement. In turn, socio-metric data were mined from *Facebook* pages of prominent and active Freeman ideologues using a data-mining program called ‘Netvizz’ (Rieder, 2013).

³ Observers and analysts of the FOTL have historically dubbed movement ideologues as “gurus,” perhaps in reference to their perceived “spiritual authority” as a teacher, akin to gurus within the formal practice of Sikhism. We use “guru” throughout the report to reflect the common usage of the term by adherents, police, security agencies, and scholars who have examined the FOTL in some form.

2.2 - Court Records

In recent years, there have been several prosecutions of OPCA adherents in Canada, most notably in *Meads v. Meads* (2012). Reviews of court transcripts from the long list of available legal cases provided direct insight into the motives and beliefs associated with the Canadian anti-authority community, as well as the decisions made by those judges presiding over the cases. In his review of OPCA activity in Canada, Netolitsky (2016a) identified more than 700 cases involving adherents. Not all of these cases were relevant to our research (i.e., those that lacked detail, focused on cash-for-nothing schemes, or those cases that were filed by dabblers who quickly abandoned OPCA tactics upon failure). Using legal repositories such as *CanLii* to gain access to key documents, we focused our efforts on a select number of legal cases earmarked by Justice Rooke (*Meads v. Meads*, 2012) and Netolitzky (2016a; 2016b) that provided us the most insight and information into the ideology, methods, and motivations of the Canadian anti-authority community. We examined approximately 50 court documents related to those who were associated with the Canadian anti-authority movements.

2.3 - Media Scan

Media venues, particularly online news reports, can be valuable sources of information on extremist activities. They often include detailed descriptions of the alleged events and actors, as well as background details. Using comprehensive online media databases such as *Lexis-Nexis* and *Factiva*, we drew from an array of news sources that provided us with useful information on events related to FOTL and other anti-authority movements, identifying information about important adherents, and the extent of anti-authority activity across Canada. Here we analyzed approximately 50 Canadian news stories, most of which were published between 2010 and 2016.

2.4 - Interviews

At the outset of the project, it appeared that the FOTL were most active and visible in Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia (Canadian Security Intelligence Service, 2012; Quan, 2012). Our initial fieldwork, then, was piloted in those three provinces, but we also conducted fieldwork in New Brunswick because of the proximity of one of the study researchers. Interviews were conducted from September to December of 2016.

2.4.1 - Interviews with Public Officials

We interviewed Canadian police officers, notaries, lawyers, and one judge. The first two, in particular, tend to bear the brunt of anti-authority attention. These interviews provided us with an insider look at the activities, membership, and ideologies associated with the movement. Most of these conversations took place at police stations and court houses where the officers were assigned, or in other public places (e.g., cafes), and a small portion of the interviews were conducted over the telephone.

During the recruitment process, we reached out to our contacts across the country, with a particular focus on Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, and New Brunswick. A large proportion of the police officers we interviewed were those who participated in our previous study on RWE in Canada (see Perry & Scrivens, 2015). Overall, a convenience sample of 17 police officers, two notary publics, two lawyers and one judge were attained through “word of mouth” tactics and a letter of invitation through email communications. All interviews were semi-structured and conducted with an interview guide (see Appendix 1). Interviews ranged from 20 minutes to 120 minutes in length, with an average of 45 minutes for law enforcement officials and 90 minutes for notaries, lawyers, and the one judge. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

2.4.2 - Interviews with Adherents of Anti-Authority Movements

The core of the project consisted of interviews with those who identified with the Canadian FOTL movement or broader anti-authority movements with similar worldviews, tactics, and methods. After some preliminary research, it became evident to us that Canada is home to a wide array of anti-authority movements similar to the FOTL, but which cannot be lumped under the FOTL umbrella term. We made a concerted effort, then, to reach out to a wide-range of adherents of anti-authority movements across Canada, particularly the rank-and-file membership. While we did manage to interview committed members of the FOTL movement, we also interviewed an array of Canadian anti-authoritarians – some of whom were former FOTL activists – on their perceptions of the broadly defined anti-authority ideology and activities. With the help of law enforcement and notaries who were in contact with local

activists, paired with an in-depth analysis of court records and media sources, we identified 75 adherents whom we hoped might participate in the study.

Gaining trust and access to anti-authority and anti-government groups was a significant challenge for us, given their conspiratorial worldviews and distrust of perceived authority figures. We were aware of this fact at the outset of the project, since similar studies of clandestine and closed-groups have faced similar challenges (McGrath, 2015). However, one of the lawyers interviewed during our study suggested that we reach out to Canadian adherents through an informal means of communications, and one in which they were especially active: *Facebook*. Our attempts to connect with and recruit interview participant through *Facebook* was met with a surprisingly high level of success. Whether (or not) adherents ultimately chose to participate in our study, the vast majority were at the very least comfortable communicating with us on *Facebook*. The familiarity of this platform was less intrusive and more informal in comparison to emails or telephone calls, and gave us unprecedented access to movement adherents.

To recruit participants for interviews, we used our personal *Facebook* accounts to “friend” adherents, often by sending them an informal introductory message asking if they would be willing to speak with us to provide insight into the movement (for an example of our introductory message, see Appendix 2). Given adherents’ distrust of different forms of authority, we kept initial conversations and contact as simple and straightforward as possible. We were extremely careful to avoid using certain “trigger” terms and terminology shunned by anti-authority adherents, or the overt appearance of any sort of connection with any form of government or similar authoritative institutions. However, if confronted by adherents, we did not lie or withhold information about the nature of the study or our formal academic affiliations (which were also readily visible on our respective *Facebook* pages or through a simple *Google* search). For the most part, once the more suspicious adherents were satisfied that we did not have actual or perceived affiliation with the government, most were willing to continue speaking with us. At this point, we encountered five different scenarios: (1) oftentimes, a considerable amount of time passed before receiving a response from adherents; (2) adherents friended us on *Facebook* but, for one reason or another, did not respond to our initial invitation or subsequent messages; (3) respondents agreed to participate in the study but became non-responsive closer to the time of the interviews; (4) a number of adherents communicated with

us about the project, but “strung us along” by not providing a clear answer as to whether or not they would participate in an interview, and; (5) after a vetting period anywhere from several days to several weeks, a small number of adherents agreed to be interviewed by one of the researchers. There were also several cases where, at the end of an interview, the study participant offered to speak on our behalf and share our contact information with other potential interviewees, netting us two additional study participants. Despite these challenges, *Facebook* was an ideal tool to build a two-way relationship. Adherents were given access to our personal lives (i.e., through our pictures, list of friends, likes, interests, and hobbies), and we too were given access to their lives, thus building a level of trust that is of utmost importance when studying hidden populations that may view outsiders with suspicion. This also served to build informal credibility as the study went on, since *Facebook* friend requests can inform the approached adherent of in-common friends. In total, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 anti-authority adherents, either face-to-face, over the telephone, or through *Skype*. Two additional adherents indicated their willingness to speak with us, but were too late to include in this report. Interviews ranged from 55 minutes to 1 hour and 48 minutes in length, with an average duration of approximately 60 minutes. All but one participant agreed to have their interview audio recorded, and all other audio recordings were transcribed (for an example of the adherent interview guide, see Appendix 3).

3.0 - History of the Anti-Authority Community in Canada⁴

In his expansive analysis of the history of OPCA movements in Canada from the 1950s until the mid-2010s, Donald Netolitzsky (2016a) provides an extremely comprehensive legal perspective on anti-authority movements that have plagued the Canadian court system. Below, we complement Netolitzsky’s analysis with our own research into anti-authority movements in Canada to provide a brief social-scientific perspective on the history of the movements in Canada, with a particular emphasis on the more recent origins and activities of the Sovereign Citizen and FOTL movements.⁵

⁴ We are indebted to Donald Netolitzsky, Legal counsel for the Alberta Court of Queen’s Bench, who through his published work on Canadian OPCA movements and regular correspondence with the authors of this report, helped guide and inform much of the content of this section. Any errors or opinions in this section are solely those of the authors.

⁵ There is a tendency among police, legal professionals, and academics to use “Sovereign Citizen” and “FOTL” as interchangeable terms in the Canadian context. While there is a sharp divide between these two groups

3.1 - *Sovereign Citizens in Canada (late 1990s)*

The Sovereign Citizen movement first emerged in the US Pacific Northwest in the late 1960s, and was most closely associated with the Posse Comitatus, a loosely-connected violent extremist group best known for committing bank robberies, armored car robberies, homicides, and cop killings (see, Coates, 1995; Levitas, 2002). Among the many different variations of anti-authority movements present in the US and Canada, Sovereign Citizens tend to be the most militantly opposed to formal government structures, and often employ antisemitic conspiracy theories to explain and justify their worldviews and actions (see section 6.3 for more detail). One of the earliest references to the Sovereign Citizen threat in Canada arose in a memo circulated within the RCMP in 2000, which warned of signs of activity in western Canada (Kent & Willey, 2013). Spurred by the ease of access to anti-authority ideas and arguments provided by the Internet, small groups of adherents self-identifying as Sovereign Citizens sprung up across Canada during the early 2000s, mostly in the prairie provinces. By 2002, Sovereign Citizens were appearing with some regularity within the Canadian court system, espousing a distinct agenda aimed at challenging the fundamental legitimacy of the government (see, Kent & Willey 2013).

While the Sovereign Citizen movement managed to achieve a relatively sizeable amount of support in certain parts of the US, it struggled to achieve similar successes in Canada, largely due to socio-cultural attitudes and differences on key issues such as gun ownership, race, notions of government, freedom of speech, and so on. As a result, anti-authority gurus such as Robert Arthur Menard seized upon this opportunity in the early 2000s to “Canadianize” core elements of Sovereign Citizen and other OPCA movements like the Detaxers (see section 6.1) to provide a more palatable “product” for the Canadian anti-authority community. The rebranded movement called itself “Freemen-on-the-Land,” and managed to achieve a certain measure of success and popularity in Canada that Sovereign Citizens were not able to achieve. As a result

within the larger US anti-authority community, the lines have become blurred between Canadian Sovereign Citizens and FOTL. This is likely due, in part, to the fact that the Canadian anti-authority community tends to import and selectively borrow much of their ideology from their American counterparts (see, Hofmann forthcoming). This means that certain elements of Sovereign Citizen ideology manifest in various forms among Canadian FOTL, and vice versa. Despite the ideological “bleed” between both groups in Canada, we treat Canadian Sovereign Citizens and FOTL as distinct groups from one another, differentiated mainly by the tone of their rhetoric as well as their stated methods and goals for achieving “sovereignty” from various forms of authority.

of this shared ideological heritage, the organizational line between the Sovereign Citizen and the FOTL movements in Canada has become blurred and muddled, and the two movements are often conflated with one another in government, police, and scholarly analyses.

3.2 - Origins of the Freeman-on-the-Land in Canada (Early 2000s)

Netolitzsky (2016a, pp. 624-627) traces the origins of the FOTL in Canada to "...the extremes of politically leftist, "green," anti-globalization, marijuana advocacy, social activist, and anti-government communities" active in Canada during the early 2000s. He notes that the movement was the sole creation of a British Columbian street comedian, Robert Arthur Menard, who cobbled together the ideological basis for the Canadian Freeman by borrowing from previous anti-government thinkers like Mary Elizabeth Croft (2007) and from the core teachings of the Canadian Detaxer movement. Although the Canadian Freeman emerged from the far-left of the political spectrum, they are also indelibly influenced by the core tenets of American right-wing anti-government ideology – especially the Sovereign Citizens, as noted above – that "trickled up" into Canada via the Internet and seminars offered by American anti-government ideologues (see, Hofmann, forthcoming).

3.3 - Spreading the Message: Seminars, YouTube, and the World Freeman Society (Mid-to-late 2000s)

It is important to highlight the role of Robert Menard in "establishing" a temporarily viable presence for the FOTL in Canada specifically. He became widely recognized as the face of the movement, until his proposed – and largely unsuccessful – strategies began to lose credibility. Menard built much of his early following in the mid-to-late 2000s by capitalizing upon the communicative power and reach provided by the Internet. Menard was an early adopter of *YouTube* and began posting instructional videos and recordings of face-to-face seminars to the site as of 2008.⁶ Around the same time period, he founded and appointed himself as the Director of the World Freeman Society website,⁷ which includes a web-forum for Freeman affiliates, adherents, and sympathizers to exchange ideas by submitting and commenting on written posts.

⁶ Robert Menard's *YouTube* channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/mrmittee/videos>

⁷ See: <http://worldfreemansociety.org/>

Menard effectively used these widely accessible online platforms to introduce his Canadianized interpretation of “Common Law” (described in section 5.3) to individuals curious about anti-authority and anti-government ideas. In many of his early online videos, he presents himself to his viewers as an authoritative and impressive source of esoteric knowledge by blending together comedy, pop-culture references (e.g., “notaries are the Jedi of the legal system”), impressive sounding legal-jargon, and an affable manner. His videos and seminars are woven with colorful narratives of his encounters with a hostile government and various agents of the state, as well as how he defeated their unlawful attempts to infringe upon his sovereignty by properly employing various techniques drawn from Freeman Common Law. Often seen standing in front of a white board covered in diagrams and impressive-looking legal and intellectual terminology, Menard then offers up his wisdom to the viewer (i.e., how to deal with police, the right to travel, how to defeat the legal system, etc.) and shares conspiratorial worldviews about the “true” nature of society, government, freedom, and so on. Menard’s masterful use of online media, coupled with a carefully cultivated image as an “expert” willing to freely teach his ideas and methods to individuals seeking alternate ways of dealing with legal and civic problems, was an effective tactic that resonated with his viewing audience. As a result, his efforts gained him a devoted following, as well as a measure of credibility and respect among members of the anti-authority community. Menard’s burgeoning popularity in the late 2000s allowed him to deliver a number of face-to-face seminars for adherents and sympathizers in Canadian towns such as Bancroft, Bolton, and Kelowna.⁸

3.4 - *The Rise and Fall of Dean Clifford and “Muscular Freemanism” (2010-2015)*

Menard’s popularity peaked within the Canadian anti-authority community during the late 2000s, but has since suffered a steady decline from 2010 onwards. Frustration and disillusionment arose among adherents after Menard’s teachings and promises repeatedly failed to deliver tangible victories in legal and civil arenas, and when Menard’s grand plans to mobilize different forms of socio-political action did not materialize. As Netolitzsky (2016a) describes:

...years of in-court failure have unsettled many Freeman, and post 2010, Menard’s status is much reduced, particularly after his persistent failure to produce results or follow through on his many schemes including a vigilante police force – the Canadian

⁸ Menard recorded these events and uploaded them to his *YouTube* channel.

Common Corps of Peace Officers, “Freeman Valley” – an alternative community and government structure, a consume note based money-for-nothing scheme, and “The Cirque De Soul, Eh?” – a touring arts and crafts event (p. 626).

The Canadian anti-authority community’s disillusionment with Menard provided an opportunity for Dean Clifford, a former Sovereign Citizen from Manitoba with a background as a white supremacist, to step in and fill the void. In contrast to Menard’s largely defensive approach (i.e., using Common Law to protect individual rights when confronted by the government), Clifford’s rhetoric centered on themes of personal resistance more akin to American militia and Sovereign Citizen movements. Clifford wove a narrative of how he used aggressive pseudo-legal tactics and physical force to repel and humiliate efforts by police and government to infringe upon his sovereignty. To use Netolitzsky’s (2016a) term, this brand of “muscular Freemanism” resonated with Canadian anti-authority circles who were hungry for the legal and civic successes that a more aggressive form of Freeman Common Law promised. Like Menard, Clifford used his burgeoning popularity to conduct a series of face-to-face seminars in Ontario and British Colombia where he promoted his particular interpretation of Common Law and anti-government resistance. In a similar situation to Menard, Clifford’s popularity among Canadian anti-authority circles waned after the Common Law tactics he advocated failed to prevent his 2013 arrest and subsequent 2015 conviction for firearms offences and the production of narcotics.

3.5 - The Current State of the Canadian Freeman-on-the-Land (2015-2017)

The failure of the Canadian FOTL’s “old guard” leadership (i.e., Menard and Clifford) to deliver real-world successes using pseudo-legal Common Law tactics has left the anti-authority community fractured and in disarray. While Menard and Clifford still retain small devoted followings, many of their adherents have shifted their attention to other gurus and their teachings. Both gurus remain active online, but lack the popularity they once had within the Canadian anti-authority community. Menard has since toned down his online presence and now largely communicates to his followers from *Twitter* and the World Freeman Society website. Upon his release from prison in March 2017, Clifford has resumed his online activity, primarily through his *Facebook* page. As of April 2017, Clifford has launched the “Earth Steward

Cooperative,”⁹ a members-only social networking site whose mission is to connect like-minded individuals looking to “divest from the “rat race” towards more meaningful work and ethical production systems to enable happier and healthier lifestyles.”

As a result of this leadership void, a number of emergent gurus have sprung up to offer their own “superior” anti-authoritarian interpretations of the state of society, conspiracy theories, and pseudo-legal techniques based upon their understanding of Common Law. The common narrative among many emergent gurus is that it was Menard and Clifford’s interpretation and execution of Common Law that failed, and the method/worldview is still a viable way of asserting individual sovereignty from government and other forms of authority. For example, one anti-authority guru expressed the following to us during email correspondence:

...I was introduced to [the guru’s alternative interpretation of Common Law] on my own through trying to defeat the freeman on the land position (belief system). I was given a DVD [by] my one of my friends who informed me that he watched the dvd [sic] and could not understand it. He asked me if I would watch it and explain to him what was being brought forth. The dvd [sic] was titled bursting government bubbles by Robert Menard. While that video brought forth many misconceptions, many false pretences about the government position towards us what it did do was show me that there were classes of persons in the law to which this had a huge effect upon me. This is what launched me into my search for personal understanding about the laws that govern my life. I realized that there were many laws that claim to be governing me yet I had no idea about them. Through research and study I came to understand the operations of law that abide in our society both statutory and inherent.

With the increased popularity of social media platforms like *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *Instagram*, much of the online outreach done by established and emergent Freeman gurus have now moved to these types of online platforms. An illustrative example of the reach provided by social media can be seen in the sociogram of the various connections between Robert Menard’s *Facebook* page and those of his followers (see Appendix 6). The vast majority of emergent Freeman gurus we encountered during this study tend to use *Facebook* as their primary “pulpit” to communicate with followers and sympathizers, largely by posting commentary on contemporary world events and providing links to conspiratorial blogs and websites that confirm or reinforce their overall message.¹⁰ Other gurus have modeled their social media

⁹ See: <https://earthsc.org/>

¹⁰ For example, see Mika Rasila’s *Facebook* page: <https://www.facebook.com/sirmika.sovereign>

activism after Menard's previously successful approach of providing easy-to-access instructional *YouTube* videos to promote their version or interpretation of Common Law.¹¹ There has also been a shift among Freeman gurus with an active online presence towards embracing "meme" culture (i.e., easy-to-digest captioned images or photos) to promote the Freeman worldview or ridicule detractors or opposing viewpoints (for examples, see Images 1-4 in Appendix 4). Whether one guru among the many current contenders will emerge as the titular head of the Canadian FOTL has yet to be determined. We profile some of the "original" and "emergent" gurus in section 7.9 of this report.

4.0 - Canadian Anti-Authority Adherents

4.1 - Estimating the Number of Anti-Authority Adherents Active in Canada

It is an exercise in futility to attempt to provide an exact number of anti-authority adherents and sympathizers that are operational in Canada. There is no central mechanism for identifying and counting adherents. Providing a concrete number of members requires a consistent and widely accepted definition of what an anti-authority adherent is and/or is not. As we discovered during our interviews with law enforcement and anti-authority adherents, this is not the case, and there is a decided lack of consensus among both groups on what qualifies an individual as an "adherent." As one adherent in our study claimed:

It's probably bigger than some think and not as big as others think 'cause...I don't know...it's hard to say. There's no count or number on it. I mean, how many people are questioning government? A lot. How many people are going to court and standing up and makin' these claims or are challenging government? You could gauge it that way. You know, how many people are fightin' that CRA [Canada Revenue Agency]. You know, who knows? How many people are fed up with everyone? (Participant 5)

Consequently, the best we can do is offer the estimates provided regionally and locally by law enforcement and intelligence communities in our study. We contend that the movement does not amount to anything like the 30,000 figure that is often cited by Canadian law enforcement, policy makers, and media (e.g., Canadian Security Intelligence Service, 2012; Moore, 2013). This figure has murky and dubious origins. It seems to have made its first public appearance in

¹¹ For example, see John Spirit's *Facebook* page: <https://www.facebook.com/eternallyaware>

either a story on CBC's *The National* (CBC News, 2012) or a similar *National Post* (2012) story that cited a CSIS report. Regardless, from this point on, the number seems to have been taken at face value with little critical assessment. It was also generally discounted by most official observers with whom we spoke, as one lawyer noted:

I would say...much, much lower like something around 5,000. Now we're talking people who sort of took active steps like in a public domain as opposed to just talking about it. Five to ten [thousand] tops. (Participant 29)

Lawyer Donald Netolitsky (2016b), who has closely followed OPCA movements across Canada, offers some insight into how we might measure the movement. He observes that:

...there are a relatively limited number of forums where Freeman-on-the-Land and other OPCA affiliates discuss their concepts. These communities typically have dozens of active participants, rather than hundreds, let alone thousands. Similarly, a typical OPCA guru seminar attracts only dozens of attendees, a few hundred at most. This suggests the 30,000 figure is a substantial overestimate (p. 93).

He has also suggested that the 30,000 number is a derivative of US reports of 300,000 adherents in that country, the assumption being that since Canada has one-tenth of the population of the US, we likely have one-tenth the number of anti-authority adherents (email correspondence, May 10, 2017). Yet given the very different historical and political contexts of the two countries, this assumption is deeply flawed. Other study participants generally suggested that there were no more than 150-200 adherents in any given province, with possibly more in Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. One participant suggested in the region of 700 nationally, although this seems to be at the opposite extreme, that is, rather low. Other reports suggest that in 2011, there were at least 160 Freeman known to police in Ontario (Vandenbrink, 2011), and close to 400 legal cases involving Freeman filed in the Canadian Tax Court in 2013 (Humphreys, 2013). As of 2016, Netolitsky (2016b) identified over 700 court judgments on OPCA related issues alone. Law enforcement officers interviewed for this study from half a dozen specific cities and municipalities suggested, in addition, up to 50 "de-registrations" known to them. Based upon this information, we conclude that the figure noted above (5,000 to 10,000) is likely the best estimate.

Examining the online activity of the Canadian anti-authority community provides another perspective on membership numbers. As of mid-2017, the Canadian Freeman *Facebook*

group¹² had approximately 4,250 followers, a significant increase from 2,000 followers in 2010 (Bell, 2010). The online message board of the World Freeman Society, operated by Canadian Freeman guru Robert Menard,¹³ has close to 5,000 members, and the smaller and largely defunct online community of The Freeman Society of Canada¹⁴ has 108 formal registered users. There is likely a great deal of overlap between these two platforms. In terms of distribution across Canada, publically available location information for each of the registered members of The Freeman Society of Canada website indicates that the majority of their users lived in Ontario (27%), followed by Alberta (18%), British Columbia (9%), Maritime Provinces (7%), Manitoba (6%), Quebec (5%), and Saskatchewan (3%). The remainder of user profiles did not identify their location in Canada (16%), live outside of Canada (8%), or did not disclose their geographic location (1%). Although these data cannot be taken as representative of all Freemen in Canada, they do suggest that the Freemen have sympathizers in almost every province, and are mainly concentrated within Ontario and Alberta.

4.2 - (In)Coherence of the Canadian Anti-Authority Community

Do anti-authority actors active in Canada constitute a singular, cohesive “movement” per se? Law enforcement, legal practitioners, and FOTL adherents interviewed for this study agree that this is not currently the case. The Canadian anti-authority movement was at one time a more cohesive movement, with one lawyer suggesting that the FOTL movement was much more unified during its early days: “...[The early iteration of FOTL was] centrally organized. It was collecting fees. There was a single authority; there were a number of websites and communities that you went to get that stuff” (Participant 15). However, the consensus amongst study participants is that this is no longer the case and that anti-authority activists in Canada are now best characterized as a loose collection of ideologically linked individuals – “a bunch of lone wolves” or a “lone wolf grouping”, according to several sources. As one official put it, “It’s hard to even really call it a movement. To say it’s a movement is sort of misleading. It’s an ideology” (Participant 6). Furthermore, none of the different types of anti-authority adherents (as outlined in section 7.0) constitute the majority within a single “group” or a formal

¹² See: www.facebook.com/TheFreemanMovement

¹³ See: <http://worldfreemansociety.org/forum/socialweb>

¹⁴ See: <https://web.archive.org/web/20150709002607/http://freemansocietyofcanada.webs.com:80/>

“movement.” Even anti-authority adherents and sympathizers interviewed for this study acknowledged this reality. One suggested that there was no identifiable “group,” just several individuals who share a similar view of the world. He further claimed that “You don't meet at a weekly meeting, you know? Monthly meeting. I mean, there's online things and groups like that, but you're just exchanging ideas and stuff” (Participant 5). Perhaps it is no surprise, given the resistance to authority, that adherents eschew bureaucratic hierarchies, instead opting for decentralized and loose organization. Several study participants went so far as to say that adherents were “internally fractious” and thus unable to collectively organize, with the odd exception such as the anti-authority group known as the Tacit Supreme in Law Courts (TSILC)/United Sovran Nations who opted to adopt a distinct hierarchy modeled as an independent “court” headed by a Senior Chief Justice, and enforced by an internal peace officer corps. Most recently active in Alberta, TSILC are closely aligned with the Sovereign Citizen worldview. Their “leaders” typically establish “embassies” through fraudulent occupation of homes, as with Andreas Pirelli, who is discussed in section 8.3 of this report.

A key reason for the looseness of anti-authority movements in Canada is that they are also ideologically disparate. As one study participant reminded us: “When you're talking ideology, it's also very heterogeneous. There's a lot of variety there in terms of what people claim to be acting on” (Participant 9). Of particular interest is where movement adherents fall along the political spectrum of left- to right-wing. Ironically, we originally proposed this investigation of the anti-authority movement in response to the numerous references made to FOTL while conducting a study of RWE in Canada (Perry & Scrivens, 2015). When asked about the extreme-right movement in Canada, many police and intelligence officers noted their concerns with FOTL rather than with white power/white nationalist adherents and other anti-authority movements. As we came to learn in the current study, however, the larger anti-authority community within Canada cannot be attributed to a single end of the political spectrum. In other words, while we came into the study thinking that the bulk would or could be identified with right-wing political affiliations, it soon became clear that they were just as likely to reflect left-wing sentiments. Some adherents professed to be apolitical, eschewing affiliation with either the right or the left. One participant stated, quite simply, that “I'm not really all that political really.” He further claimed that:

I don't know what that [right-wing ideology] is. I think it's just people looking for answers. We're not looking for left-wing, right-wing, you know? We want

accountability. We're straight down the middle. There's not grey area. It's black and white. (Participant 5)

A law enforcement official interviewed for this study drew a similar conclusion from their experiences with anti-authority movements:

In Canada, it is more reflective of the political landscape here. I would say...sort of both right and left wing. From what I have seen typically, if you don't like the government, there is a place for you. But you don't have to be...it is not exclusive to anybody on a racial or cultural basis. I would say it is a lot more inclusive in Canada. (Participant 6)

Nonetheless, Hofmann (forthcoming) has suggested that the Canadian FOTL movement is best characterized as right leaning, given its derivation from American far-right entities like the Montana Freeman. Consequently, they share core themes revolving around individual liberty, a “threatening” and corrupt state, and defence of “inalienable” rights by any means. Indeed, there is a great deal of this sort of rhetoric in the documents and online narratives associated with many arms of the various active anti-authority movements. In the Canadian context, the anti-authority adherents who self-identify as members of the Sovereign Citizen movement are probably most closely aligned with these worldviews.

With respect to demographics, there appears to be limited diversity among anti-authority adherents in Canada. Virtually all of those interviewed for this study indicated that the movement was largely a White male enclave. The notable exceptions were the Moorish factions, consisting of Black members, and some scattered Indigenous groups. While the most visible actors tend to be found in urban areas, participants agreed that there was also a large rural contingent, although they generally fly under the radar. Auguring our discussion of the ideological diversity below, one study participant suggested that urban and rural anti-authority activists come to the movement for quite distinct reasons:

For the urban people, it might be financial issues, whereas in the rural areas it might be because they want to be left alone to live off the land like west coast hippies to make their own food and so forth. So, they try to establish their own sovereign rural place. They bought this place...people's land, up north. (Participant 8)

Because many Canadian anti-authority movements can trace their lineage, in part, to American far-right movements, some vestiges of racism and antisemitism remain embedded. Interestingly, this did not arise much in our interviews with anti-authority adherents and sympathizers. However, our open source analyses did yield some evidence of a bigoted or

racist worldview. Norman Raddatz, for example, had a history of antisemitic rhetoric and action. In fact, Constable Woodall of the Edmonton Police Service was shot by Raddatz as he was serving documents related to antisemitic hate crimes. Dean Clifford was allegedly an active member of a white supremacist group before transitioning first to the Sovereign Citizens movement, then to FOTL. He maintains a relationship, at least online, with Canadian white supremacist Bill Noble, a fixture on racist social media venues (see, Perry & Scrivens, 2015). So, too, is one of the emerging gurus, Mike Rasila (see section 7.9), known for his racist and antisemitic posts on *Facebook*. Lastly, the “fake” Indigenous movements that have adopted an anti-authority approach and worldview may be informed by latent – or at least unexpressed – hostility toward Indigenous communities. It is hard to imagine, for instance, that the Sovereign Squamish Nation Government (SSNG) (described in section 6.4 below) would target the legitimate Squamish Nation if they did not hold some antagonism against the community. To appropriate one’s culture and then attempt to challenge its validity seems, at root, a racist endeavour.

In spite of these reactionary and occasionally racist narratives, many of our participants suggested that if there was any political “bent” associated with the movement, it was as likely to be of the left-wing brand. In British Columbia and Alberta, in particular, the community was thought to be leftist-libertarian with specific agendas that revolved around the “freedom” to use marijuana. As one study participant noted:

...the Freeman are a subset, in my opinion, of a much broader group of leftist, basement dwelling, and pot smoking . . . The original forums in which Freemanism is being expressed is the cannabis culture forum often out of BC [British Columbia]. So, it is a combination of cannabis traffickers, cannabis producers, and cannabis activists. (Participant 15)

This was but one dimension on the broader spectrum of leftist politics. Several adherents interviewed for this study spoke of their own commitment to progressive rather than reactionary principles. Indeed, they shared a vision very much grounded in social justice narratives. One interviewee spoke about his own personal biography that referenced prior involvement with popular socialist and anti-globalist social movements. A common narrative among adherents interviewed for this study was that dissatisfaction with government corruption is a secondary concern to the role that the state plays in supporting systemic inequalities. One study participant with an anti-authority worldview highlighted the need for

“...recognizing the dispersion, and the difference between...the wage gap between the wealthy and the non-wealthy.” He further noted that “...I guess over the years I’ve seen that margin grow, grow, grow, grow” (Participant 11). Another adherent shared similar sentiment:

The problem we’re having here, I say, is racism against the poor. The poor is not a race. Classism, elitism...its discrimination. It’s not right. We’ve got some neighborhoods that are poor. The people on the less fortunate side are treated like shit. (Participant 12)

In brief, the anti-authority community in Canada manifests remarkable diversity in their political and social orientations.

It is interesting to note that the leading decision on the anti-authority movements in Canada – delivered by Associate Chief Justice Rooke decision in *Meads v. Meads* (2012) – also made the argument about its relative diversity. In his decision, Rooke, coined the phrase “Organized Pseudo-legal Commercial Argument litigant” as an umbrella term, and highlighted the heterogeneity of the OPCA community, observing that they:

...do not express any stereotypic beliefs other than a general rejection of court and state authority; nor do they fall into any common social or professional association. Arguments and claims of this nature emerge in all kinds of legal proceedings and all levels of Courts and tribunals.

This group is unified by:

- 1) A characteristic set of strategies (somewhat different by group) that they employ,
- 2) Specific but irrelevant formalities and language which they appear to believe are (or portray as) significant, and
- 3) The commercial sources from which their ideas and materials originate.
- 4) This category of litigant shares one other critical characteristic: they will only honour state, regulatory, contract, family, fiduciary, equitable, and criminal obligations if they feel like it. And typically, they don’t (p. 2).

5.0 - Core Ideological Concepts of the Canadian Anti-Authority Community

Much like the political affiliations of the larger Canadian anti-authority community, it is impossible to describe a single unified ideology embraced by the many different anti-authority groups active in Canada. As noted by Hofmann (forthcoming), individual anti-government adherents and small groups of like-minded individuals tend to take a “bricoleur” approach to their worldview, borrowing heavily from the wide availability of teachings of gurus, journalists, blogs, and radical opinions on the Internet. As a result, Canadian anti-government adherents tend to cobble together individual viewpoints that resonate with their own personal experiences

with the government and other authoritative bodies. It is more productive to conceive of Canadian anti-authority ideology, then, as a collection of common beliefs of practices, rather than a monolithic ideological body. Below, we discuss several of the more prominent ideological pillars that we have identified across a myriad of different writings and teachings proffered by Canadian anti-authority gurus.

5.1 - *The Strawman Argument*

A near universal ideological component across multiple interpretations of anti-authority ideology is the concept of the “Strawman,” which is said to be a government-created legal persona that is distinct from the actual physical representation of an individual. In other words, adherents believe in a double/split person: the “Strawman” is a legal-fiction that is beholden to the laws and authority of the state and its agents, while the living/natural person is only subject to natural law. Anti-authority gurus argue that severing the connection between the “Strawman” and the actual human being to which it is attached means that they are no longer beholden to the laws and obligations that are solely attached to the shed legal fiction.

In his analysis of the “Strawman” argument in Canada, Netolitzsky (2016b, pp. 4-6) notes six important motifs that adherents generally accept as fact:

- (1) Individuals are tricked or deceived into accepting and associating with the “Strawman.” This begins typically at birth, when parents register their child for a birth certificate, and only becomes stronger as the living/natural person becomes further entangled with government documents and bureaucracy (e.g., Social Insurance Numbers, driver’s licenses, passports).
- (2) The “Strawman” is a parasitic entity which attaches itself to the living/natural person, and acts as a conduit for government and legal authorities to exercise control over individuals. Adherents use certain naming conventions to distinguish between the “Strawman” and the natural/living person. The “Strawman” identity is typically represented as a name in all capital letters (e.g., ROBERT ARTHUR MENARD), while many adherents use the dash-colon naming structure (e.g., Robert-Arthur: Menard) or a “of the family/clan” notation (e.g., John of the family Smith) to denote the living/natural person.

- (3) The primary purpose of the “Strawman” is to deny the individual access to natural or inherent rights and freedoms (i.e., “natural law”). In essence, by consenting to be associated with the “Strawman” persona, the vast majority of people are willingly participating in a master-slave relationship with government and other authoritative bodies.
- (4) The existence of the “Strawman” is concealed from public knowledge, but is known and exploited by government/legal authorities and their agents.
- (5) Individuals can purposefully sever the connection between their natural/living person and the “Strawman.” As a result, the individual is no longer beholden to conventional government and legal forms of authority and are therefore exempt from legal and civic obligations tied to their “Strawman” identity.
- (6) Once freed from the “Strawman,” the natural/living person is only subject to some alternative form of law. What shape and form this alternative law takes depends on the particular individual interpretations of anti-authority gurus and adherents. For example, some adherents believe they are only subject to “God’s law” (i.e., the Bible), while others cobble together highly subjective interpretations of what “natural” laws and rights apply to natural/living persons.

5.2 - Joinder: *Everything is a Contract*

Adherents believe it is relatively easy to re-enter into a contract with the government if they are not wary, and that the government is constantly attempting to trick them into doing so. Therefore, adherents are on guard against entering into any sort of verbal or written contract with the government which puts them at risk of “joinder:” the re-combination of the double/split person into a single entity beholden to the authority of the government. Joinder may occur from a simple act such as acknowledging and claiming to be their “Strawman” identity when queried by a police officer or judge. As a result, adherents typically eschew the possession and use of any form of official identification and documentation (e.g., Social Insurance Numbers, driver’s licenses, license plates, passports, and so on). They will also employ formulaic pseudo-legal documents, canned phrases, and guarded language when interacting with the government, legal courts, and their agents meant to shield them from inadvertently engaging in joinder.

5.3 - Common Law and Pseudo-Legal Tactics

The basis of the alternative legal system espoused by the majority of Canadian anti-government adherents, dabblers, and sympathizers is called “Common Law,” which refers to their particular interpretation of an idealized foundation of modern law developed in 13th century England that subsequently spread to its colonies. Based upon a distorted interpretation of common law, adherents believe that, as natural/living persons, they hold equal status with judges before the law. Therefore, they believe that they have the ability to negotiate with the government and other legal entities/individuals as to which laws they are obliged to accept and follow. Adherents believe that case law (i.e., legal precedent set by courts and judges) and statutory law (i.e., legal decisions made by an executive or legislative body) only apply to the “Strawman” identity, and that any attempts of government and legal authorities to exercise these laws over their natural/living person is illegitimate and unjust.

In simpler terms, adherents believe that their interpretation of Common Law means that the government must negotiate with them on any point of dispute. The failure to do so is perceived as the government acting ‘in dishonor’ and will result in an automatic default judgment in their favour. In order to advance their rights and claims under their interpretation of Common Law, anti-authority gurus advocate a number of pseudo-legal tactics and methods (i.e., use of notary publics, sending claims/disputes by registered mail, and the use of pseudo-legal fill-in-the-blank forms). An example of this line of thought on Common Law can be found in the following excerpt from Robert Menard’s *Bursting Bubbles*:

Canada is a Common Law jurisdiction. What this means is you have the ability to establish rights merely by claiming they exist. Give proper Notice [sic] to those who may be affected and they have 30 days to raise an issue or express a dispute. If they fail to do so, they agree the rights mentioned exist and may be exercised lawfully. Any court in the land will recognize and support your rights, if properly established. Actually all the rights you have exist because they went through this process in one way or another (cited in Netolitzsky, 2016b, p. 6).

Adherents have used a variety of semiotic and ritualistic pseudo-legal tactics to make claims for the free use/possession of drugs and firearms (Bell, 2013), to make claims for the free use and possession of land/homes owned by other individuals (CBC 2013; Graveland 2013a), avoid paying taxes, loans, or other financial obligations (Humphreys, 2013), and threaten government, legal officials, and private individuals (Vandenbrink, 2011). An excerpt of pseudo-legal

document employed by the TSILC anti-authority movement is available in Appendix 5 of this report.

Ironically, a member of our research team experienced these strategies first-hand. The incident emerged during the initial outreach portion of this study, while recruiting interviewees among adherents. One particularly active and vocal adherent who was contacted by one of the study researchers placed an unsolicited call to their workplace number (which was found through the University online directory). During the call, the adherent stated that the researcher was obliged to serve as an expert witness in a number of upcoming litigations they were involved in since he “paid their salary” as a taxpayer, and that he “would see them in court” prior to abruptly hanging up. As a result, the researcher broke off all contact with the adherent, and no subsequent pseudo-legal actions or threats ensued.

6.0 - Canadian Anti-Authority Factions

The *Meads v. Meads* (2012) decision provides important insight into the diverse nature of the anti-authority community in Canada, identifying five core iterations: (1) Detaxers; (2) FOTL; (3) Sovereign Men or Sovereign Citizens; (4) Church of the Ecumenical Redemption International (CERI); and (5) Moorish Law. While each of these has a slightly unique focus, the core that holds them together is the rejection of the authority of the state. They are bound, they say, only by the principles of “natural law,” not human law. Below, we discuss the details of each of these anti-authority movements, adding in an additional cluster of Indigenous – or fake Indigenous – adherents.

6.1 - Detaxers

The Detaxers are the most narrowly focused anti-authority movement among those that we have identified in Canada. As the label suggests, the core *raison d’être* of this faction is the avoidance of tax payment of all kinds, but especially income tax. One study participant identified an observable division within this particular anti-authority movement: “...you have the Detaxers who are more consistent with Freeman ideology but then very specific to tax stuff” (Participant 6). As suggested, some Canadian Detaxers – like Eldon Warman in British Columbia, who widely shared his particular ideology with his followers online – derive their arguments from Sovereign Citizen models. Their rationale is that, as “sovereign” and

independent entities, they were not bound by governmental rules and regulations, including the responsibility to pay taxes.¹⁵ Others focus more on legal arguments revolving around tax loopholes, division of powers, and use of tax dollars. For example, Gordon Watson, also of British Columbia, challenged taxation on the basis that it funded abortions, a practice to which he was opposed (Netolitsky, 2016a). In any event, the core motivating factor is likely greed more than a true ideological opposition to the concept of taxation. Several study participants, especially lawyers and notaries, shared this perception, indicating that it was apparent to them that there was limited adherence to any structured belief system underlying Detaxers' motives. Furthermore, the leaders of the Detaxer movement made a considerable amount of money by offering seminars, and even legal representation for a fee. Like Sovereign Citizens, it appears that much of the Detaxer movement has been integrated into the broader FOTL movement (Kent, 2015).

6.2 - Freeman-on-the-Land

FOTL are the best known anti-authority movement in Canada, and constitute the majority of Canadian anti-authority adherents. Robert Menard (as profiled in section 3.0 above) was the leading spokesperson of the movement beginning in the early 2000s. Menard leveraged his burgeoning popularity to gather a loyal following after skillfully using the Internet to spread his message. Unlike the Detaxers, which were a single-issue anti-authority movement, FOTL adherents engage in active resistance to government beyond the simple question of taxation. They take the "Common Law" precepts to their fullest limits, challenging virtually every expression of government regulation. For example, a rambling statement of obligations of FOTL adherents on the FreeMan Society of Canada website, urges members and prospective members:

To maintain a non-consent posture as to the Governments Rule - Powers, to Judge, question, approach, demand, any reasons, answers to your Decision to Claim your Rights, under and on behalf of, for the Purpose to Maintain Self Rule Under, on behalf of all members and families of The FreeMan Society of Canada to promote freedom, truth, peace and abundance in Common Law Jurisdiction. Which makes you Free Men on the Land, and not Subjected to any -Statues, Bylaws, Rules of any Governments of Canada or Agencies there in (FreeMan Society of Canada, 2012, p. 1).

¹⁵ For more information, visit Warman's website: <http://www.detaxcanada.org>

During interviews with study participants, law enforcement and intelligence officers tended to reference and identify the larger anti-authority movement under the umbrella term of “FOTL” due to their ideological fluidity, visibility, and relatively large presence in the anti-authority landscape in Canada. On the other hand, some anti-authority adherents interviewed for this study, as noted above, outright rejected the label of “Freeman,” while others accepted it quite readily:

Well, I have been defined as a Freeman-on-the-Land. And it's really...it's kind of...it's just like any other group. It's like belonging to...people, and it's...you know...there's no registry or anything like that. So, it's more of a mindset and a way of thinking. It's kind of hard to say...you know...I don't mind the term 'Free Man on the Land' because it really is a descriptive term. You're supposed to be free. We're standing here on the land, and I'm just a man. I'm not a legal fiction. (Participant 5)

6.3 - Sovereign Citizens

Despite obvious similarities between Canadian Sovereign Citizens and FOTL, there is a sharp contrast between the core beliefs and methods between both movements, although not as pronounced as their American counterparts. Netolitsky (2016a) implies that one distinction may be along the left-right political spectrum. He characterizes FOTL as leftist, often engaging in environmental, anti-globalization, and pro-marijuana activism (p. 624). Sovereign Citizens, on the other hand, are more ideologically associated with their similarly named American counterparts (*Meads v. Meads*, 2012), who embrace right-wing values surrounding issues such as gun ownership, identity politics, antisemitism, and more recently, anti-Muslim worldviews. They also appear to be much more aggressive in their tactics, language, and behaviour (*Meads v. Meads* 2012). In *Winningham v. The Crown et al* (2008), for example, Glenn Winningham (aka, Glenn Winningham of the House of Fearn) brought suit in a Texas court against Canada, Alberta, Justice Rooke and Justice Wittmann, and police officers, among others, alleging a vast government conspiracy against him, as well as misconduct amongst those named. The full list of Defendants is as follows:

The Crown, The Queen in Right of Inc., Her Majesty the Queen Inc., Regina, Inc., Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor, Stelmach, Ed, Ron Stevens, Norman L. Kwong, Lloyd Snelgrove, The Village of Glenwood, Inc., Ardell Hartley, The Hudson's Bay Company, Inc., Jerry Zucker, Canada, Inc., Stephen Harper, Michaelle Jean, The Parliament of Canada, Inc. (2007), The Bank of England, The United States of America⁴, Corp., George W. Bush, The United States Supreme Court, John R. Roberts, International Monetary Fund, Henry Paulson, Internal

Revenue Service, Douglas Shulman, United States Department of Justice, Michael Mukasey, United States House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, US Department of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff, Steve Fickles, Patricia Schmidt, The United States Senate, Richard B. Cheney, Harry Reid, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Inc., Thomas S. Monson, US Airways, W. Douglas Parker, The State of Arizona, Janet Napolitano, The State of Washington, Christine Gregoire, Joy Denton, Marie Hollman, John Doe 1, Jane Doe 2, and other unknown persons and Province of Alberta, Inc.

In documents filed with the court, Winningham warned ominously that:

These criminals are hereby put on NOTICE that with criminal like them in this world, I have a DEATH wish, because this world is NOT big enough for both of us, so had ahead an make MY day, the sooner I am out of here the better, and I shall exercise My God given RIGHT to resist their unlawful arrest with lethal force (sic), if necessary, and then they will have an excuse to **MURDER** Me, so go ahead criminals, **MAKE MY DAY!** (Winningham v. the Crown et al., 2008).

Another potential distinction between FOTL and Sovereign Citizens is overt religious and Christian themes within the Sovereign Citizen worldview, particularly surrounding issues involving identity politics. The core of Sovereign Citizen ideology is founded on the religious principle that God's law, not government law, is supreme. With this comes the corollary belief that the purpose of the law is to promote and protect a Christian Republic, devoid of the "taint" of racialized and non-Christian citizens. In the Canadian context, CERI is one of the few groups that devoutly subscribes to this variant. Posted on one of their Embassy doors in Edmonton was a notice that read in part:

No de facto military or civilian police, bailiff, sheriff's officer or other de facto agent, official or officer of Her Majesty may enter unto this land for any purpose whatsoever relating to any process or any agency or department of Her Majesty without prior written approval. All such men or women who violate this no-trespass notice hereby covenant with either minister [of the church] to be held criminally responsible pursuant to the Criminal Code of Canada and privately liable for all damages as a result (Kent & Willey, 2013, p. 328).

This credo makes clear the links between the assumed "sovereignty" of the "church" and explicit resistance to government intervention.

Fortunately, it appears that Sovereign Citizen groups have not gained much traction in Canada compared to their American contemporaries. A couple of study participants indicated minimal presence in Ontario, but other than that, most adherents seemed to be more closely aligned with FOTL ideology and practice. One observer also suggested that "...many of them

are right-wing and considered to be racist. That sort of faded out as they realized you could sell this better as a commercial product” (Participant 15). However, select elements of Sovereign Citizen ideology and worldviews have trickled into the rhetoric and actions of individuals who identify as FOTL adherents (Bell, 2010).

6.4 - *Moors*

There were some references in several interviews to another small bloc with limited visibility and activity in Canada: Moors. Adherents of “Moorish Law” follow a racially-charged variant of Sovereign Citizenship that centers around issues and ideas involving African Canadian/ American identity. One lawyer interviewed for this study observed that:

...they are a distinct beast. Their pseudo-law is again conventional, but they don’t have [...] the intellectual aptitudes of the Detaxers and they don’t have the Freeman-on-the-Land’s sort of lazy inability to do anything. (Participant 15)

An *Intelligence Report* by the Southern Poverty Law Centre notes the irony whereby a movement founded on explicitly racist and right-wing positions should appeal to Blacks in Canada (Nelson, 2011).

Formally known as the Moorish Divine and National Movement, what seems to distinguish the Moors is that their brand of anti-authoritarianism is more firmly grounded in criticisms of structural forms of racism and discrimination. They insist that they were among the original inhabitants of North America, and thus entitled to self-governing, nation-within-a-nation status (Nelson, 2011). Their strategies, however, are not much different than other anti-authority movements, in that they employ pseudo-legal tactics to challenge the status quo. They appear to favour, in particular, laying false liens that then allow them to occupy homes – typically expensive ones. Yet a lawyer interviewed for our study (cited above) also suggested that anti-authority tenets were “...being grabbed onto by what looks to me to be gang culture, gang and criminal culture. Nasty stuff” (Participant 15). Officers who we interviewed in Toronto concur, arguing that the chapter of Moors who are active in the city are generally thought to be a “smokescreen” for illegal activities. Officers were of the mind that they are hiding their motives behind religious and FOTL ideologies. They also suggest that the estimated 40 to 50 members are virtually all gang affiliated, and most have criminal records for violent offences, including homicide.

6.5 - Indigenous groups

The final class of anti-authority adherents active in Canada are those who are either genuinely connected to Indigenous communities or who make false claims to such affiliations. There was a great deal of uncertainty about the identities and status of these actors among our participants with respect to whether they constituted "...a subset of FOTL or are a completely different set of anti-authority umbrella" (Participant 8), as one participant noted, and whether they were authentic or not. Some suggested that parts of the "Idle No More" and other self-governance movements shared many core ideas with FOTL, especially with respect to the role of the Canadian and provincial governments in repressing Indigenous communities. Others suggested that the similarities were coincidental and not attributable to an alliance with FOTL. For instance, as one study participant noted:

...some of their legal issues or some of the rhetoric are not formulated to the FOTL ideology. And some of it is actually stemming from historical grievance about their culture and governance, so it is easy to misinterpret. For example, them saying "no this is my sovereign land," they could just be anti-Indian Act, for example, which you know Canadianized all of them. They want to adhere back to their original First Nation's model and aims and what the land was called previously, so it's not Freemen per say. It just sounds similar. (Participant 8)

What also became apparent during the data gathering portion of this study is that a number of groups have emerged that embrace inauthentic Indigenous identities for their own purposes. The Sovereign (sometimes Sovran) Squamish Nation Government (SSNG) is one such entity, but it should not to be confused with the authentic Squamish Nation in British Columbia. Indeed, the self-proclaimed "Hereditary Squamish Chief Kiapilano" once attempted to usurp the legitimate band council of the Squamish Nation using pseudo-legal tactics and bullying methods. The link to the sovereigntist movement is clear in a vision statement on the "nation's" website:

SSNG members are real sovereign people who know that they live on land and are not taxed Corporations/Persons who are subjects that comply to Admiralty/Maritime jurisdiction governance through man made Acts, Statutes, laws, by-laws, rules and regulations. The ©Squamish / Skwxwú7mesh™ Government has no contract with tax agencies that are governed by Admiralty/Maritime jurisdiction administrators / regulators (<http://www.sovsquamishgov.org>).

SSNG have “established” an independent government in British Columbia, complete with courts and police services. The Kinakwii Nation in eastern Ontario is a similar “fake” sovereign state. According to their website:

Kinakwii is a modern Sovereign, Indigenous, Aboriginal Nation patterned on the heritage, roots, values and beliefs of the Indigenous Aboriginal peoples of Turtle Island (North America) as they existed prior to the 1500s. It’s a Nation that will become a confederacy of Nations (<http://kinakwii.net/c5/index.php/about/>).

In addition to attempting to establish a nation of their own, they filed a typically pseudo-legal motion against the Government of Canada, attempting to claim the bulk of eastern Ontario. The motion was entitled, collectively, “Notice of Lien, Notice of Amotion [sic], Notice of Revocation of Power of Attorney and/or delegation of representation.”

7.0 - Typologies of Anti-Authority Adherents in Canada

Regardless of ideological differences across Canadian anti-authority groups, adherents and sympathizers are attracted to one or more of these movements for a variety of different reasons. The broad consensus amongst study participants, however, was that most are initially drawn in because of an immediate crisis of some kind. As one adherent interviewed for this study argued:

They’re just people with a problem and they found a solution. It may not work perfectly, but what they’re doing is saying, “this is better than the society that I live in right now. At least I have choice. I can make up my own mind.” (Participant 2)

Other adherents that we spoke with confirmed this position, suggesting that it was repeated frustrations and roadblocks during their interactions with government that drove them to seek out alternative ways of dealing with (or defeating) a major perceived antagonistic force in their lives.

In terms of a more systematic legal review of anti-authority adherents currently active in Canada, Netolitsky (2016b) created the following typology of “members” based on his lengthy experiences with and inquiry into OPCA litigants specifically:

- (1) *Accidental OPCA Litigants*: individuals who employ OPCA strategies in litigation but are unaware of their unorthodox character;

- (2) *Mercenary OPCA Litigants*: individuals only interested in the tangible material benefits and pseudo-legal advantages offered by OPCA strategies and not their political and social context;
- (3) *Cheerleaders*: individuals attracted to the conspiratorial and political ideas and false history of an OPCA movement, but who have no personal interest in putting OPCA concepts to the test; and
- (4) *Fighters and Believers*: individuals who are attracted to the ideas and ideology of an OPCA movement, but also intend to implement its pseudo-legal concepts.

Building upon Netolitzsky's (2016a) typology and informed by the results of this study, we offer a social-scientific (rather than legal) classification of Canadian anti-authority adherents divided into nine distinct types: (1) Fantastical Believers; (2) Conspiracy Theorists; (3) Escapists; (4) Dabblers/Opportunists; (5) Sympathizers; (6) The Committed; (7) Violent Extremists; (8) Entrepreneurs; and, (9) Established/Emergent Gurus. These categories are not mutually exclusive of one another, and a single adherent may fall into one, several, or all of the above types. Below, we discuss each classification in detail.

7.1 - *Fantastical Believers*

In the *Meads v. Meads* (2012) decision, Justice Rooke explicitly stated that some among the vexatious litigants facing the courts might well be suffering from some form of mental impairment. More specifically, he argued that many are "delusional" in their assessment of their situation. Kent (2015) concurs, indicating that "...they come across to most people as having left the normal range of reality" (p. 12). There is a distinct possibility that some small proportion of adherents fit this description, although we caution not to fall into the easy trap of type-casting all forms of anti-social behaviour as a form of mental illness. We do not possess the expertise to properly comment on the collective mental health of the Canadian anti-authority community with any certainty, and we are by no means suggesting that all anti-authority adherents suffer from mental illness or instability. It is unlikely that most anti-government actors are suffering from anything that would be considered, clinically, mental illness. In assessing legal "fitness," Pytyck and Chaimowitz (2013), for example, caution against dismissing adherents as "psychotic" or "demented." They remind us that within the community, what seem to outsiders to be bizarre or even nonsensical notions are culturally

normative. At worst, they are engaging in “psychotic mimicry,” but in ways that are consistent with beliefs, standards and scripts derived from the historical legacy of anti-government practices. To an outsider, the language may appear irrational. But to those “in the know,” there is a recognizable and standardized pattern.

However, given the sometimes bizarre and erratic behaviours and beliefs of the anti-authority community, it is quite easy to understand how outsiders can cast aspersions on the mental health of adherents from an uninformed, popular perspective. The idiosyncrasies of the language and symbolism used by certain adherents can, in fact, appear to mimic various signs of mental instability. Even adherents interviewed in this study reinforced this suspicion: “Some of these people, especially when I was on *Facebook*...that *Facebook* really brings out the weirdos, I tell ya [sic]. Yeah, some of these people are just out there man...” (Participant 4). A lawyer whom we interviewed also questioned the stability of some anti-authority actors, inappropriate language notwithstanding:

Well some of them are definitely actually crazies. That’s actually something I’ve been looking into is...there’s a very poor understanding, currently, in our Canadian court about people who misuse court apparatus, and there’s been...the courts have guessed at what it is they’re [anti-authority adherents] doing, but they’ve never actually sat and dug a little bit deeper. But we’re now starting to get some information out of the psychiatrists, psychologists, which is saying “actually what you’re looking at here is categories of mental disorder.” (Participant 15)

One interview with an adherent revolved around the mental health and cognitive challenges that the participant had experienced across their lifetime. They claimed that, early on it was clear that: “There was something wrong with me but nobody knew what the hell it was. Nobody knew...nobody knew. I was just known as a fool and that’s it” (Participant 12).

Whether or not an individual adherent suffers from mental illness, we use the term “fantastical believers” to describe this genre of adherent: someone who has constructed an alternate/fantastical reality or frame of reference that disconnected from the way in which the real world operates. This differs from conspiracy theorists who take this alternate reality further by blending it with conspiratorial explanations and justifications.

7.2 - Conspiracy Theorists

Kent (2015) suggests that “paranoia” is another common characteristic associated with anti-government adherents. This reflects the tendency to assign blame to entities and figures outside of the self – the state, court officials, law enforcement, etc. In fact, this is inherent in the belief systems of the majority of adherents and, as such, not to be taken as a sign of mental incompetence, but a “rational” outcome of subscribing to the core values of the movement. Central to most variants of the conspiracy theory community, the government is wilfully, knowingly, and illegitimately infringing on individual rights through the imposition of varied forms of regulation. From this perspective, the state and all its representatives are understood as wholly corrupt and morally bankrupt. They deprive citizens of their social and fiduciary rights. One of the most interesting of these conspiracy theories held by Canadian anti-authority adherents revolves around the notion that the Bank of Canada holds secret bank accounts, tied to birth certificates. We need only find the “magic number” to access those accounts to collect millions of dollars that the government would otherwise hold for itself. Robert Menard sums up this line of thought for his followers:

Placed on every new born infant as a Birth Certificate which also gives ownership of the new born infant (body and soul) to the Corporation of Canada. Putting the new born child in debt to that Fictitious Person a Corporate Entity which then borrows under line of credit, then those borrowed funds are invested in stocks and bonds then put on the Stock Exchange and Traded. The amount borrowed could be up to \$1,000,000 . . . I claim the right to use the funds either in my bond (evidenced by the bond tracking number on the Birth Certificate issued to me by the government) or to use the funds generated by the bond to either pay off any loans if I do have any, or to pay directly for my wellbeing.
(<http://freemansocietyofcanada.webs.com/infodocs.htm>).

Another related conspiracy theory revolves around registration of births, as reflected on the DetaxCanada homepage:

The 'registry' of a child places that child as a 'ward of the Crown (or State)'. That is how government gains control over our children, and forces parents to have their children educated in the government/Jesuit 'collectivist' brainwashing school curriculum. 'Registry' [offering up to the King (or State)] is the scheme. 'Recording' the live birth of a child with the local level of government is supposed to be merely a safeguard for the child and the parents, and that is what most people think they are doing when completing the birth 'Registry' (<http://detaxcanada.org>).

Some take their paranoia further, insisting that they are under constant surveillance. One interviewee, for example, suggested that some adherents “...perceive themselves as

surrounded by strong powerful malevolent actors, that their food is being poisoned, aircraft exhaust destroys their brain or reproduction, that their communications are being monitored" (Participant 15). One of the adherents interviewed for this study fits this characterization very well. They mistrust the government, saying that "...they control everything" (Participant 14) and that police, legal system, and government works on cronyism and corruption that makes it so the average person cannot properly protect themselves and their families. This adherent further claimed that "...if you own property, they'll [the government] steal it from you, even if you're right." Again, this is not necessarily a sign of delusional thoughts, but a reflection of their particular worldview.

7.3 – Escapists

According to several accounts offered by study participants, there is a contingent of anti-authority activists in Canada that can perhaps be best described as a living embodiment of Timothy Leary's 1960s mantra to "Turn on, tune in, drop out." For diverse reasons, escapists choose to withdraw from broader society, shunning both their rights and responsibilities in order to seek out and embrace alternate ways of living. Moreover, there seem to be two distinct types of anti-authority escapists in Canada: (1) drug users who want to be left to their own devices in terms of possessing, manufacturing, and consuming illicit substances, especially marijuana, and (2) geographical isolationists who believe that physical distance from broader society should afford them some form of autonomy. The former's anti-authority stance is grounded in state regulation of their drugs of choice. The latter – loners – are not necessarily hostile toward the state so much as they simply "opt out of" the social contract. Individually, sometimes in very small groups, they detach themselves from the social milieu to establish isolated enclaves far from "civilization." Indications seem to be that these are most evident in remote parts of Alberta, and to a lesser extent, British Columbia and Ontario, as in the case of those who occupied the trappers' cabins and traplines in Grand Prairie, Alberta (see section 8.3).

7.4 - Dabblers/Opportunists

Most of the participants we interviewed for this study were of the opinion that the vast majority of anti-authority adherents in Canada can be conceived of as short-term opportunists who engage with the community for a short period before moving on. These are individuals

who find themselves in sudden dire straits – immediate family, financial, civil or other difficulty – and turn to FOTL tactics to try to work their way out of a tight spot. The *Meads v. Meads* (2012) decision, for example, originated from a case wherein Meads sought to use pseudo-legal arguments to gain child custody. Often referred to by adherents interviewed for this study as “cherry-pickers,” dabblers subscribe to FOTL strategies, but not FOTL ideologies. These include individuals such as the interviewee who informed us that “...I’m not a Freeman. I don’t follow some of the ideas. I only look at it from a law and legal aspect” (Participant 13). These individuals stumble upon “free” legal advice on the Internet or from face-to-face interactions with anti-authority adherents, and through sheer desperation begin to inform themselves about pseudo-legal arguments. Another adherent in our study described his relative indifference to FOTL ideology over strategy:

I watched...you know...a couple videos. I guess it broke it down...you know...how would it work for me. I’d take my chances working with the legal system that I understand over trying to walk into court and argue a Freeman’s perspective of the law. (Participant 11)

Almost inevitably, dabblers fail in their legal challenges when employing pseudo-legal techniques and then move on, with little further consideration or adoption of anti-authority tenets. Netolitzky (2016b) estimates that upwards of 95% of OPCA litigants whose documents are rejected do not reappear on the docket.

In our conversations with more “committed” anti-authority adherents (see section 7.6), we discovered that there is a lack of consensus about the positive or negative nature of dabblers. The “entrepreneurs” described below in section 7.8 of this report are quite happy to welcome novices into the fold, since they provide a pool of income and potential committed followers to draw upon. Others are ambivalent about the contribution offered by dabblers. There is some recognition that core anti-authority ideas and methods can serve the immediate needs of dabblers. As one adherent suggested:

I don’t think people follow it for the Freeman. Some people think that they can get a free ride out of it. There’s some people that have that idea in mind, and I don’t see anything wrong with that. Power to them! (Participant 13)

But there are also a number of more committed members of the movement who are resistant to opportunistic exploitation, such as the following perspective:

No, if they get people like me who are actually reading and studying the law, it’s making people like us look like fools, right? Because everybody’s associating

people like us with these Freeman guys, right? And they...honestly, most of them don't have a clue and they're just...it's just a bunch of desperate people looking for a way out of their particular dilemma or whatever, right? I call it the 'truth' movement myself. (Participant 4)

7.5 - Sympathizers

In contrast to dabblers/opportunists, there are another subset of anti-authority activists who can best be understood as “sympathizers”: those who embrace and believe in anti-authority ideologies, but for one reason or another do not employ pseudo-legal tactics or fully embrace an anti-authoritarian lifestyle (e.g., destroying government identification, refusing to pay taxes, and so on). These are the individuals who hold some sort of animus against the government, but are not willing to engage in pseudo-legal or confrontational activities with the government and court system. Sympathizers tend to be active in online anti-government communities (e.g., World Freeman Society), and play an important role akin to Netolitzsky's (2016b) “cheerleader” type in bolstering the morale of committed adherents. These are the people on Facebook that might be understood as “free riders,” that is, who won't put anything at risk through concrete action, but want the benefits if the movement should prove successful.

7.6 - The Committed

These individuals are the “true-believers” who are fully invested in the ideology and practice of anti-authority activism. One of the adherents interviewed for this study falls squarely within this typology, as shown by their expressed devotion to the cause:

We are pushed into corners. People who have their children stolen, people who have their homes taken away, people who have...let's say a tax debt and then the government...they step on their neck. Give them nothing to live for. Nothing to... nothing to look forward to. And this is what you get: people who are fucking pissed off, and all they want to do is anything other than listen to what the government has to say. (Participant 1)

The examples of committed adherents that we identified during this study have almost universally had some form of direct and ongoing conflict with the government, the court system, or law enforcement. It is likely that their initial foray into exploring anti-authority worldviews is motivated by paranoia, or by the “dire straits” characteristic of the dabblers. However, several committed adherents that we interviewed during this study indicated some

form of watershed event (e.g., geopolitical events that caused them to re-evaluate their worldview, direct confrontation with the police and/or legal system, an intense personal crisis, etc.) that helped solidify their commitment to an anti-authoritarian lifestyle.¹⁶ For example, one of the adherents indicated that their initial interest in the movement stemmed from what they identified as “...getting slapped around [by the government] three or four times” during incidents with child services and negative incidents involving the local police (Participant 14). As a result of these incidents, the adherent decided to explore anti-authority ideology, and made the choice to not “...keep anything in [their] name”, out of fear of the government coming and taking it away from them. By their own account, they fully adopt and practice the core tenets of FOTL, although they personally do not identify as a Freeman.

7.7 - Violent Extremists

While admittedly rare, some of those who might otherwise be considered among “the committed” cross the line into violent extremism. These are adherents who are willing to take a stand to defend their position, their land, or their sovereignty. Looking ahead, it is possible that the emergence of something akin to a militia movement in Canada may provide the context for more anti-authority adherents to make this transition toward either defensive or offensive violence in support of their “cause.” However, recent incidents of violent extremist anti-authority adherents in Canada have been largely the efforts of isolated individuals, with two notable examples.

On June 4th, 2014, Justin Bourque murdered three RCMP officers and injured two others during a 28-hour rampage in Moncton, New Brunswick. Prior to the attack, Bourque was known for his anti-establishment Internet rants. His *Facebook* page, for example, portrayed him as a gun enthusiast and libertarian with an anti-authority mindset, and his account was awash with pro-gun, cop-hating, and liberal-bashing propaganda (CBC News, 2014; Friscolanti & Patriquin, 2014). His *Facebook* page also contained a reference to the widening gap between the rich and the poor, and an antisemitic cartoon depicting Jacob Rothschild with a hooked nose, huge teeth, and beady eyes (Terry, 2014). Most interestingly, a *Globe and Mail* report indicated that a large Confederate flag had been found in Bourque’s mobile home.

¹⁶ In order to avoid sharing information that might lead to the identification of study participants, we chose not to provide direct quotations or details about specific watershed moments described to us during interviews.

It is argued that Bourque was a self-motivated ideologue, a lone actor, and had no ties to any larger organization. Bourque used social media to educate himself on far-right libertarian preoccupations, such as the “militarization” of police, anti-authoritarianism, survivalism, “crownless kings,” confiscation of guns, and Canada’s readiness for a Russian invasion (Brean, 2014). Sophie Bourque, the sister of Bourque, claims that he battled with substance abuse issues (i.e., alcoholism and drug use), relationship troubles, and job insecurity, and in turn, was paranoid that someone would take away his guns (Carlson, 2014).

Norman Raddatz was the alleged shooter in the death of an Edmonton police officer on June 8, 2015. When members of the hate crime unit visited Raddatz’s home to serve him with an arrest warrant and court documents, the man refused to come outside. Officers left to get a warrant and returned with a battering ram, all in an effort to gain access to the West Edmonton residence. Upon entry, the suspect unloaded a high-powered rifle on officers, killing Constable Daniel Woodall, 35, on scene and injuring 38-year-old Sergeant Jason Harley. The house was later set ablaze, most likely by the suspect, and his body was located in the basement of his burned-out home (CBC News, 2015; Simons, 2015).

Police officers had no reason to foresee such an act of violence, as Raddatz was merely being served with court documents relating to criminal harassment charges and an arrest warrant for bylaw infractions (Kornik, 2015). The paranoid man was suspected of harassing a local Jewish man and his family for a year-and-a-half, intimidating them with increasingly hateful and violent messages (Simons, 2015). Raddatz was also known as “Dino Stomper” on Facebook, and he had a lengthy criminal record of hate-related offenses. However, he did not have a significant criminal record beyond the harassment charges, and it is unclear whether he was affiliated with a particular far-right group. Still, he was clearly antisemitic, anti-government, homophobic, and an online bully, posting hateful messages about “sodomites” and “f-bomb Jews,” and sharing crude jokes about the film “Brokeback Mountain.” Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney described the lone-offender as a member of the extreme right (Kornik, 2015), and an individual who was battling alcoholism and depression. Raddatz had recently become divorced, lost his business and motor home, and was in the process of losing his bungalow (CBC News, 2015; Simons, 2015).

7.8 - Entrepreneurs

As previously noted, the financial “payoff” associated with OPCA, FOTL or other related pseudo-legal strategies can serve as a motive for involvement in anti-authority movements. These individuals, who we have dubbed “entrepreneurs,” capitalize on the desperate nature of dabblers and more committed adherents seeking some form of alternative resolution to ongoing conflicts by offering them “for pay” easy-to-deploy pseudo-legal techniques that they guarantee to work. These can include: (1) “money for nothing” schemes (e.g., using hidden numbers contained in your birth certificate to access a secret bank account held in trust by the Bank of Canada) in order to cancel out debts; (2) paid services where an entrepreneur acts in the role of legal consultant or lawyer; and/or (3) access to pseudo-legal “fill-in-the-blank” documentation meant to circumvent or defeat legal or financial challenges, and many more. According to one police officer interviewed in our study, “...a large part [of anti-authority movements in Canada] are simply con men” who are selling bad legal advice for their own profit and empowerment (Participant 25). Entrepreneurs market themselves as holders of esoteric knowledge who are willing to share their strategies to naïve and often desperate “knowledge seekers” attempting to resolve legal, regulatory or financial dilemmas. In *Meads v. Meads* (2012), Rooke was explicit in his condemnation of this type of adherent, specifically, stating that “...the persons who advance these schemes, and particularly those who market and sell these concepts as commercial products, are parasites that must be stopped” (p. 16). Rooke also found that:

OPCA arguments are never sold to their customers as simple ideas, but instead are byzantine schemes which more closely resemble the plot of a dark fantasy novel than anything else. Latin maxims and powerful sounding language are often used. Documents are often ornamented with many strange markings and seals. Litigants engage in peculiar, ritual-like in court conduct. All these features appear necessary for gurus to market OPCA schemes to their often desperate, ill-informed, mentally disturbed, or legally abusive customers (p. 17).

It is important to note that some entrepreneurs may not necessarily be purely motivated by profit. Many are themselves fully committed to both the ideologies and the strategies associated with the movement. They may also support litigants beyond simply providing them with information and scripts. Rather, they are also likely to represent them in court – again for a fee (for example, see Images 3 and 4 in Appendix 4). They may create the relevant documents – for a fee. They may even lead “study groups” in which members read and discuss legal precedent and strategy.

7.9 - Emergent and Established Gurus

In simple terms, gurus are individuals who are actively engaged with a body of followers connected with anti-authority movements in order to offer their thoughts of the dismal state of the world/society, and then offer an array of solutions based upon their particular interpretation of Common Law. Their primary goal is to gain a measure of greater visibility and for their teachings to resonate with the sympathetic and supportive elements of the Canadian anti-authority community. Gurus often present themselves as some mixture of entrepreneur and committed adherent, and there are several examples of Canadian gurus who began their careers by freely offering their knowledge, and upon obtaining a measure of popularity moved to monetize their teachings through seminars and printed material (e.g., Robert Menard and Dean Clifford). Almost universally, gurus connect with established and potential followers by skilfully employing social media (mainly *Facebook* and *Twitter*) to promote their *YouTube* channel, written work, or upcoming seminars.

We distinguish between two different “types” of gurus within Canadian anti-authority movements. The first are *established gurus*, who have at some point managed to gain a measure of credibility among the larger anti-authority community in Canada. As a result, they wield a measure of authority, and their opinions are valued and consulted by dabblers, sympathizers, and the committed followers. The second type are *emergent gurus*, who are individuals actively engaged in the production and dissemination of a particular interpretation of Common Law or a “spin” on established FOTL or anti-authority ideology. These are anti-authority activists who are attempting to gain credibility and authority among the larger anti-authority community in Canada in order to attract a devoted following.

The most prominent examples of established gurus are Robert Menard and Dean Clifford, who are discussed in detail in sections 3.2, 3.3. and 3.4 of this report. However, another example of established guru that is worth mentioning is Edward (Jay Robin) Belanger. Belanger’s teachings come from a different perspective than other Canadian gurus – his anti-authority position is grounded in sacred rather than secular tenets. Belanger is the titular leader, or “Minister of Christ,” of an anti-authority group that predates the FOTL: the CERI (described above) (Quatloos!, 2013). This Christian group believes that King James's Bible is the legitimate source of law, not the Canadian government (Blais, 2012). Belanger hosts a site, titled “All

Creator's Gifts," where viewers can read his latest article and listen to radio interviews about the Church, as well as engage in forum and blog discussions with other adherents. Belanger also communicates with his followers via *YouTube*, where viewers can "learn" about government conspiracies, first hand from the "Minister" himself. According to his *Facebook* page, Belanger is currently residing in Edmonton, Alberta.

In the wake of a leadership vacuum caused by the repeated failures of Menard's pseudo-legal tactics and Clifford's arrest in 2013, a number of emergent gurus have sprung up on the Internet. A prominent example is John Spirit, an emerging guru of the Canadian FOTL movement, according to the few sources that have managed to attain some information on him (Quatloos!, 2016). Although Spirit has been in photos with Dean Clifford, very little is known about his identity, in comparison to the established FOTL gurus – his legal family name is not 'Spirit' and 'John' may not be his given name either, sources claim (Quatloos!, 2016). Perhaps this mystery is due, in part, to the fact that he – unlike Menard and Clifford – does not conduct his Freeman teachings in the real world. Rather, all of his known teachings can be found online, with his *YouTube* channel ('eternallyaware') being particularly active. His *Facebook* page features more than 70 "educational" videos on his thoughts about the legal system, natural law, and the Queen of Canada, for example.' Spirit also hosts his own website, which features, among other things, his radical thoughts and teaching on the history of Canada, human rights, and the structure of the economy. Spirit currently lives in a suburb of Montreal, Chateaugauay, Quebec, according to his *Facebook* page.

Another example of an emergent guru is Mika Rasila, an anti-authority contractor from Windsor, Ontario who became publicly known in 2010. On January 28, 2010, Rasila, gained some media attention when he was arrested in Saint Catharines, Ontario for driving without license plates – an incident that he video recorded with his hand-held electronic device (Walter, 2010). When asked for his driver's license, Rasila provided the officer a piece of paper titled 'Notice of Intent and Understanding' (LaFleche, 2010; *National Post*, 2010). Rasila proceeded with the claim that, because he had intentionally 'opted out' of Canada, the legal rules of the road no longer applied to him (LaFleche, 2010; *National Post*, 2010). Despite his claims, he was charged with six offences under the *Highway Traffic Act*, ranging from not having proper licence plates to driving with a suspended license (LaFleche, 2010; *National Post*, 2010). The video clip of the incident was later uploaded to *YouTube* (LaFleche, 2010). Faced with six charges, Rasila

appeared in court in March 2010 and was joined by a handful of his supporters (Walter, 2010). During the proceedings, he refused to be identified by his legal name. He also made it clear that he would not return to court for trial. In response, the court warned him that the case would proceed without him (LaFleche, 2010). Both parties kept their promise. In October, Rasila failed to appear in court for the trial and the presiding justice of the peace proceeded without him. Three charges were dropped and Rasila was convicted of the remaining three: driving with a suspended licence, not having proper licence plates on his vehicle, and using a hand-held camera while driving (LaFleche, 2010).

8.0 - The Potential for Crime and Violence by the Anti-Authority Community in Canada

In recent years, much has been made of the “threat” posed by FOTL and similar anti-authority movements in Canada. Media reports have drawn attention to legal conflicts involving adherents, particularly those that involved bizarre or odd behaviour (e.g., Graveland, 2013a; Graveland, 2013b). CSIS’s threat assessments have labeled anti-authority movements as security risks (see, Canadian Security and Intelligence Service, 2012). Even within law enforcement, some of the study participants noted that initial concerns about the movement arose out of media reports, and especially those coming from the US where there is a history of extreme – one might say, extremist – violence on the part of Sovereign Citizens (Loeser, 2014). In other words, it was not the direct experiences of Canadian law enforcement that drew attention to the potential threat, but their exposure to incidents and patterns emerging outside of Canada. One interviewed officer who, at one point in their career, managed the FOTL portfolio was very explicit about this, saying:

My understanding of what Freeman-on-the-Land was the kind of thing that I saw on TV when you saw what was happening down in the States with some of that...quasi-Freeman-on-the-Land, quasi-white supremacist violence, all that kind of stuff. And it seemed sinister to me in that respect, although it is a little bit different. (Participant 10)

Much like this study participant, few Canadian officers have had occasion to engage with anti-authority activists directly. Perhaps it is for this reason that there was general consensus – among both law enforcement and adherents in our study – that the anti-authority movement in Canada is not, by and large, a violent one. Frequent comparisons to the US context were drawn, whereby officers asserted that Canadian adherents were “not like Americans” in

this respect. They were seen as far less likely to resort to violence than their counterparts in the US, where they are in fact identified explicitly as a domestic security threat. One interviewed officer stated outright that the core ideologies are not themselves violent, but that violence is a potential, albeit rare, concern among adherents. Another officer claimed that "...the overwhelming majority of people that identify with Freeman ideology I would describe as non-violent and have no interest in engaging in any violence" (Participant 6). An interesting distinction was drawn, whereby Canadian actors were thought to be "...confrontational but not violent," or that they might "...rant and rave, but won't cross the line to physical violence," as one interviewee noted. Law enforcement generally attributed this to the historical absence of the sort of gun culture that tends to permeate the US.

The widely shared sentiment among adherents is that Canada tends to be devoid of the sort of aggressive, somewhat revolutionary stance taken by many sovereign citizens or militias currently active in the US. For example, one interviewed adherent vehemently argued that:

No, no, no you just fly under the radar. We're peaceful. We don't go out antagonizing anybody. We don't go out starting riots. We don't go out lighting houses on fire. We don't go out calling people bad names. We're just like you. We live our life, right? (Participant 2)

Other adherents interviewed for this study suggested that advocating for violent action actively damaged the credibility of the movement. One interviewee went so far to admonish the more actively militant members of the Canadian anti-authority community, saying: "You don't go out with a gun, or burn down a government building, or throw a Molotov-cocktails. You go to court and you challenge" (Participant 5).

When study participants were asked if anti-authority adherents represented either a public safety or national security threat in Canada, there was broad consensus amongst participants that neither was the case. However, some interviewees acknowledged that, under the right conditions, violent outcomes were possible. In his assessment of the security threat posed by Canadian FOTL, Hofmann (forthcoming) noted two conditions that may precipitate some form of violence: (1) a credible charismatic leader, and (2) a precipitating event that galvanizes and invigorates some form of organized action. One officer interviewed for this study reinforced Hofmann's assessment, stating that:

I think there is a huge potential for physical threat when it reaches that level. And the for lack of better words [when you] have a charismatic leader that could make

them become a more coherent group, then yes, definitely there is some potential for that. It hasn't reach that yet, so yeah. (Participant 7)

Despite the fears expressed by law enforcement and Canadian security agencies, officers interviewed for this study generally agreed that there are very few incidents where members of the public-at-large were affected by anti-authority activities (some exceptions noted below). Rather, they claimed that agents of the state (i.e., police officers, court personnel, notaries, and judges) are the most likely targets of anti-authority violence in Canada. However, there is an acknowledgement that even that threat is minimal. For example, one officer declared that "...probably a small percentage would only be considered an officer safety threat, and the remainder would be more in the regulatory round or just an officer annoyance or nuisance" (Participant 8). In short, participants indicated the public risk associated with anti-authority groups is rare in Canada, and when they do occur, are typically targeted toward those whom adherents see as connected with "illegitimate" authority.

Nonetheless, as Table 1 indicates, anti-authority violence is not unheard of in Canada. In our survey of anti-authority violence in Canada, we were able to identify three classes of crime and violence: (1) offensive violence; (2) defensive violence; and (3) harassment and intimidation. We also highlight two areas of concern that may signal the growing potential for violence in the future: (4) gun ownership and defensive narratives; and (5) militia movements. We discuss each in the sections below.

8.1 - Offensive/Extremist Violence

Offensive violence (i.e., a planned attack with no precedence of provocation) is the least common action associated with the anti-authority movement in Canada. When asked, none of the study participants were able to recall any incidents of anti-authority offensive violence, aside from Bourque's attack on RCMP officers in 2014. The only other incident of anti-authority offensive violence that we were able to identify was John Carlos Quadros's violent attacks in St. Paul, Alberta in May of 2014. After fatally shooting a local priest, Quadros proceeded to a local RCMP detachment where he opened fire on the building. He was immediately pursued in his pick-up truck which he then used to purposefully ram a police vehicle at high speed, trapping an officer inside. His next move would prove fatal, as he opened fire on several officers. He was shot and killed in that exchange. In the end, he had wounded three RCMP officers (Ramsay,

2014). When officers were able to access the truck, they found several weapons, including a high-powered rifle, two shotguns, a pistol, and several rounds of ammunition for each (Weber, 2014). It is apparent from his actions and from this arsenal that he was ready for a sustained assault on law enforcement. Police at the time said that it was not “a random occurrence” (Ramsay, 2014). The website associated with his health food store provides additional insight into his motives. The mission statement for the business states that:

At Health Mart 2000 we believe that the road to optimal health may be achieved thru a natural approach, using Herbs and Natural products given to us by GOD, as our inherent right as his adopted children; and a continued daily effort to know our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ, the way to Salvation and ever Lasting Life” (The Canadian Press, 2014, p. 2).

Elsewhere on the site, Quadros complains about government regulation of natural health products, arguing that in doing so they are “...protecting the various agendas of the Big Billion dollar Corporations even if it means the suffering and death of countless numbers. May GOD protect you and the TRUTH set You FREE” (Robb, 2014, p. 1). This is reminiscent of some of the theologically informed variants of the movement, as noted in a previous section. Targeting law enforcement is also an indicator. However, aside from the obvious role of police as agents of the state, it is not clear why he focused his animosity toward them.

Table 1. Anti-authority Violence in Canada (2005-2016)

Actor(s)	Date	Location	Incident
James Roszko	March 2005	Mayerthorpe, AB	Roszko shot and killed four RCMP officers who were executing a property seizure on the farm, where Roszko operated a marijuana grow-op.
Rodney Wayne King	June 2006	Jasper, ON	When an attempt was made to serve King with an eviction order, he fired on his landlord and an Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officer, permanently injuring the latter.
Mario Antonacci/ Andreas Pirelli	September 2007	Montreal, QC	An elderly landlady was pushed down a set of stairs by Antonacci, who was “squatting” at her property. The fall resulted in broken bones.
Ian E. Bush	June 2007	Ottawa, ON	Three murder victims were tied up, beaten, and suffocated by putting

			bags over their heads. One of the victims was a Chief Court of Canada Tax judge who had previously held against Bush.
Daren McCormick	March 2011	Amherst, NS	Convicted of uttering threats to kill police officers, McCormick told an officer that he could outdraw police and that if a police cruiser ever pulled up in his yard, he would kill the officers. When police moved to arrest him the following day, they found him with a loaded .44-calibre revolver in a holster strapped to his hip.
Brad Clarke and Sawyer Robison	February 2012	Killam, AB	Two RCMP officers were shot and injured in Robison's house, where a cache of guns and ammunition was discovered. Robison's uncle Brad Clarke was also killed. Robison was later cleared of attempted murder charges.
Steven Finney	October 2013	Kitchener, ON	After refusing to cooperate with police during a traffic stop – on the basis that they had no jurisdiction over him – Finney accelerated in his vehicle toward an officer who had been called for backup.
Glenn Fearn	October 2013	Coutts, AB	Fearn, a Sovereign Citizen adherent from Arizona, was arrested while attempting to cross the border into Canada while in the possession of restricted firearms.
John Carlos Quadros	May 2014	St. Paul, AB	Quadros shot a Catholic priest at the local cathedral, then travelled to the local RCMP detachment and fired shots at the building. He rammed a police vehicle with his own vehicle and engaged in a shootout with officers (Pruden, 2014). Quadros fatally shot himself.
Justin Bourque	June 2014	Moncton, NB	Justin Bourque led law enforcement on a frightening chase after targeting and shooting RCMP officers in Moncton, NB killing three and injuring two others.
Norman Walter Raddatz	June 2015	Edmonton, AB	As he was serving Raddatz with legal papers and a warrant, Constable Daniel Woodall of Edmonton Police

			Service was shot and killed. Another police constable was injured. Raddatz had a history of anti-Semitic harassment, and racist, homophobic and anti-authority online posts.
Samuel Maloney	December 2016	London, ON	During a confrontation with police trying to arrest him at his home, Maloney shot and injured one of the officers with a crossbow. During the ensuing confrontation, Maloney was shot and killed by police officers.

8.2 - Defensive/Reactionary Violence

In contrast to the rarity of offensive anti-authority violence, defensive or reactionary anti-authority violence directed toward law enforcement and other agents of the state are much more common. Police officers' reflections on adherents – in this study – suggest three key interrelated reasons for their concerns about the threat posed by adherents. First is their obvious lack of respect, indeed, dismissal of authority. Second is their unpredictability. Each case is different; each individual interprets the “script” slightly differently so it is very difficult to generalize about how they might react or how an officer should approach them, making them difficult to manage. Third and finally, there is a perception, whether accurate or not, that anti-authority adherents are likely to be armed and also ready to use force and/or weapons. One officer who was interviewed for this study shared a pertinent illustrative example of this fear among law enforcement professionals: during a routine traffic stop on Highway 407 in Ontario an FOTL adherent refused to exit his vehicle, so the highway was shut down in order to obtain tactical support because the arresting officers feared that “...he might have been armed” (Participant 27). As another officer in our study noted, “...we are always conditioned to think of the worst-case scenario” (Participant 8). In the case of anti-authoritarians, that worst case is armed and aggressive adherents.

Police traffic stops were highlighted by many law enforcement officers as a primary context fraught with tension and risk. As one officer put it:

...the things that you're gonna [sic] find is that some of the acting out on the part of FOTL has been in the interactions with the police. They find that the police are kind of like agents of the government, and they don't recognize the government.

Therefore, they don't recognize the police, and it created some pretty tense situations. (Participant 10)

There are countless videos available online, posted by adherents, that indicate the nature and depth of the antagonism that arises when anti-authority adherents are confronted by police.¹⁷ Yet the vast majority of these incidents do not escalate beyond minimal physical violence. Law enforcement officers in our study most often described incidents of pushing or shoving, largely as means of resisting arrest. One officer did, however, mention a case in which a suspect attempted to grab an officer's gun. Had they been successful, the consequences could have been dire.

Aside from traffic stops, officers indicated to us that they feared the potential for anti-authority violence during disturbance calls to homes, or when serving official papers (e.g., evictions and notices). One officer recalled an incident in Cornwall, Ontario, where a colleague was shot in the arm by an adherent during an attempt to remove him from his former home. The bank had foreclosed on the property and in fact sold it. However, when the new owner arrived at what was now her home, the FOTL adherent was still occupying it. It was when the officer was called in to evict him that he was shot. This example is eerily reminiscent of the most widely known case of anti-authority defensive violence. In 2015, Norman Raddatz shot and killed Edmonton police officer Daniel Woodall. Raddatz's social media accounts provided clear indications of his affiliation with FOTL ideologies. He often complained about how he had been consistently "harassed" by bylaw tickets, which he characterized as an "extortion racket." He posted a photo of one such ticket on his *Facebook* page, with the notations "No Consent" and "No Contract" written on it. He also insisted that police engaged in such tactics as threats, intimidation, and illegal behaviour (Kornik, 2015). His contempt for authority – and especially law enforcement – came to a tragic head when he opened fire on two Edmonton police officers who attended at his home to serve warrants, one of which was related to ongoing antisemitic harassment. Before taking his own life, Raddatz fired more than fifty shots, killing Constable Daniel Woodall, and seriously injuring Sergeant Jason Harley.

Similarly, it is possible that a violent incident involving James Roszko might have been influenced by anti-authority ideologies. Roszko ambushed officers who came to his farm

¹⁷ For examples, see the following *YouTube* videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IPct574o4w>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ee5TD84HRDc>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2QcE2J1RxQ>

outside of Mayerthorpe, Alberta with warrants to search for further evidence of drug production after they first noted signs of a marijuana grow-op. Killed in the ambush were Constables Anthony Gordon, Leo Johnston, Brock Myrol, and Peter Schiemann. In addition to later finding a large crop of marijuana plants and growing equipment on the property, police also found a list of the names and call numbers of RCMP officers from the local detachment. Like many anti-authoritarians in Canada, Roszko was reclusive and distrustful. Yet unlike most adherents, he had a history of crime and violence. To defend his property – and his privacy – he resorted to booby traps, and it was thought by many that he would gladly shoot anyone he did not want on his property (Edmonton Journal, 2005). A 2000 psychiatric assessment concluded that he denied responsibility for his criminal behaviour, but was hostile toward the government and police, for whom he blamed his legal troubles (CBC News, 2005). In addition, a local bailiff told the media that Roszko “blamed all of his problems on the RCMP” (Edmonton Journal, 2005). Even his father admitted that Roszko seemed to be fated to come to a violent confrontation with police, saying that he thought “he had a terrible hate against the police” (CBC News, 2005, p. 2). There seems little doubt, then, that Roszko’s calculated assault on the officers was shaped by extremist views on the legitimacy of the law and its enforcement officers.

8.3 - Harassment and Intimidation

The original title for this project referred to FOTL as “paper terrorists,” referencing the common pseudo-legal techniques employed by FOTL and OPCA movements to harass and intimidate their detractors or opponents. One interviewee characterized this “threat” as “...the disruption of government functionality that causes a lessening of services available for others [...] because they are spending so much time on being with them” (Participant 7). From this perspective, the risk posed to officials by anti-authority movements that employ “paper terrorism” revolves more around misuse of time and resources rather than any physical harm. However, several of law enforcement participants in this study took issue with this characterization, arguing that it trivialized the activities of anti-authority adherents in Canada. For them, even the bureaucratic approach to challenge the law and the state constitutes out and out intimidation. This was a sentiment shared by notaries, law enforcement, lawyers and judges, as one officer expressed:

Those sorts of processes to try to intimidate is a very, very different tactic than you see anywhere else. It makes them quite different from any other sort of grouping you might see on the extreme right or left, or anywhere else. (Participant 9)

As noted in section 5.3 of this report, a common strategy used by anti-authority adherents in Canada involve extra-legal filing of an array of claims against individuals, police officers, even the Prime Minister of Canada and the Queen. Typically, these are the sorts of “vexatious claims” identified in *Meads v. Meads* (2012). Interestingly, several study participants suggested that it is harder to use pseudo-legal techniques in Canada when compared to the US, noting that there are “fewer loopholes” and “more restrictive civil remedies” in this country. The aftermath of the *Meads* decision seems to have restricted this avenue even more dramatically. Nonetheless, the filing of these claims is also often associated with language and behaviour that constitute harassment, intimidation, and persecution. Lawyers and notaries, for example, often bear the brunt of this pressure. In a very early assessment of the risk associated with FOTL, Bilinsky (2012) published an article in the Law Society of British Columbia *Benchers’ Bulletin* issuing a warning about the growth and activism of the movement. He cautioned that thwarted attempts to have their frivolous documents notarized had the potential to escalate into anger and violence, including verbal tirades and threats in person and by letter and email. Ron Usher, of the British Columbia Society of Notaries, also remarked that “They’re [FOTL] very confrontational. We’ve had a number of instances now where they’ve needed to call police or security” (Moore, 2013, p. 1).

Perhaps unsurprising, law enforcement also bear a significant brunt of harassment and intimidation efforts by anti-authority activists in Canada. Officers are often “served notice” with bills for “services rendered,” fines for their “illegal” attempts to detain them, and even have fictitious liens placed upon their property. Following a traffic stop in which the officers allegedly behaved “unprofessionally,” Robert Menard wrote in a lengthy letter excoriating the officers, warning that: “You will be getting a bill. If you do not pay it I will take lawful measures to collect” (Menard, n.d.a, p. 55). The fee: \$2,000 per hour for the time spent interacting with law enforcement. Such actions are consistent with the logic that police have no formal jurisdiction over “people” and thus any attempt to engage with them, or to demand identification, licenses, etc., constitutes anything ranging from fraud to illegal detention.

Other “agents of the state” and perceived authority figures have also been targeted by Canadian anti-authority adherents. In light of the frequency with which adherents come to the

movement in the context of child custody disputes, it is not surprising that child welfare workers are often threatened and harassed, both bureaucratically and physically (Netolitsky, 2016b). In rural areas, Fish and Game or Conservation officers face risks when confronting those who are choosing to live off the land, often poaching and fishing illegally or, as in a case described below, when attempting to evict squatters from properties they have illegally occupied. Judges, like law enforcement, come under particular fire. As an example, at the close of the trial that would see him sentenced to three years in custody, Dean Clifford “fined” the presiding judge \$50,000 for the time he had spent in court (Nickel, 2015). Clifford would also eventually submit a “True Bill” for over \$500 million for his incarceration. Another albeit extreme case involved the murder of a Chief Court of Canada Tax judge, whom Ian Bush held responsible for a failed tax fraud appeal from 2001. Later that same year, Bush sent a “summons” to Chief Judge Garon, demanding that he attend at an appeal of the case – at Bush’s home. Tragically, six years later, Garon, his wife and neighbor were killed, allegedly by Bush (Yogaretnam & McGregor, 2015).

The illegal occupation of homes and property is perhaps one of the few contexts where members of the general public may be at risk of harassment or intimidation by anti-authority adherents. A highly publicized case in Alberta in 2013 was that of Andreas Pirelli, who rented a property from Rebekah Caverhill, then proceeded to gut and “redecorate” the house. When Caverhill came to check on the house, she found that Pirelli had also changed the locks and would not let her enter. He claimed the rental home as ‘an embassy house’ to which Caverhill had no rights (Graveland, 2013a). Pirelli was a self-proclaimed FOTL, and “Senior Chief Justice” of the TSILC (described above). It was later learned that he had previously occupied a rental home in Quebec, where he had been known as Mario Antonacci. He was accused in that province of pushing his landlady down a flight of stairs, resulting in a broken pelvis, arm, wrist, and ankle (Graveland, 2013b). Around the same time as Pirelli was occupying Caverhill’s house, trappers near Grande Prairie, Alberta also faced FOTL “squatters” in their hunting cabins, and on their trap lines. The squatters threatened the owners with raised guns, and also made it clear to Forestry personnel that they would defend “their” cabins “with all necessary force” (Lazzarino, 2013). One of the men removed from the cabins was found in possession of two firearms and ammunition. Ultimately, he was charged with uttering threats, using a

firearm in the commission of an offence and possession of a firearm while prohibited (CBC News, 2013).

8.4 - Gun Ownership and Defensive Narratives

Cases where anti-authority individuals are armed and ready to use force, like the case involving FOTL squatters in Grande Prairie, are of particular concern to Canadian police and security agencies. While the anti-authority adherents almost universally eschewed violence or violent tactics, there is nonetheless an element within the Canadian anti-authority community that embraces the idea, inspired by a conservative interpretation of the American second-amendment, of the “right” to bear arms and to use force when threatened (see, Bell, 2010). This confrontational worldview, which combines gun ownership woven into a defensive narrative of standing one’s ground in the face of hostile external forces, demands attention and care from police, security agencies, and the Canadian government. While perhaps not as overt as in US anti-authority movements, rhetoric involving the justification of violence to defend sovereignty and individual rights is present in Menard’s foundational writings. In an early “book” that was a reaction to his experience with child welfare services, he explicitly stated that:

You have the right to use potentially lethal force against anyone who attempts to abduct your offspring, even if they are government agents and operating under the color of Law (Menard, n.d.b, p. 13).

Menard elaborated on this later in *With Lawful Excuse*, a graphic novel that laid out a number of key tenets of his understanding of FOTL philosophy. Included there are warnings directed at law enforcement specifically:

And pay VERY close attention to this part: WE OUT NUMBER YOU VERY BADLY. And as peaceful and well mannered as we can be, wake our ire and you will pay very dearly. We are not sheep; we are peaceful, patient and perhaps slumbering guards dogs, and it will be your greatest woe if we wake to you shearing our freedoms and rights, stealing our wealth or harming our families and country. You will be made to pay. When I say you will pay, I do mean very dearly indeed (Menard, n.d.a, p. 49).

If you cross that line inadvertently with shiny boots and accept correction nothing harmful happens. Cross that line with muddy boots however and you are a threat and have breached our trust. Attack us and you will see the truth. We out number you rather completely, and we all have boots too (Menard, n.d.a, p. 157).

It perhaps comes as little surprise, then, that Menard and others like him have made efforts to establish para-legal police forces or what they refer to as “Peace Officers.” In *With Lawful Excuse*, Menard (n.d.a) maintains that:

If you think your job is tough now, wait until there are a million Freemen who know the Law, have created and convened new Lawful courts, and have charged NEW Peace Officers empowered to arrest existing ones who attempt to impose statutory obligations on said Freemen (p. 156).

If existing officers refuse to accept the findings of lawful courts, they will have to face our lawfully empowered peace officers (p. 165).

Indeed, this is a threat that law enforcement and intelligence personnel noted during several interviews. They were aware and very concerned that certain anti-authority movements have made attempts to create alternative police forces. In the case of the FOTL, Menard founded an organization that he dubbed the “Canadian Common Corps of Peace Officers” (or “C3PO,” a tongue-in-cheek reference to the Star Wars character), described as “an association created for the lawful purpose of preserving and maintaining the public peace.”¹⁸ As a result of activities surrounding C3PO, Menard was charged with several counts of impersonating a police officer. During one interview, an officer recounted an incident with another adherent with similar ideas in northern British Columbia: “He told people he could be a police officer. You can basically self-declare the police officer and at one time he had an idea to organize like a Freeman police force” (Participant 6). Additionally, the TSLIC group in Alberta (described above) intended to create their own community – a “mini-state.” According to one study participant, members of the TSLIC went as far as buying and surveying a tract of land, with the intention of creating an independent community with its own police force, consisting of:

...what they called territorial marshals, and these guys were uniformed with their own realistic looking badges. The uniforms were good enough that at the Alberta legislature they walked in through security and weren’t stopped. (Participant 15)

8.5 - Militia Movements

Another area of concern surrounding the potential for anti-authority violence involves the nascent militia movements within Canada, who hold similar far-right worldviews akin to militia movements currently operational in the US. Comparative assessments of the far-right

¹⁸ The *YouTube* video can be found by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkrifHQYzm8>

movements in Canada and the US generally suggest that the relative “peacefulness” of Canadian extremists has to do with the lack of a parallel and/or connected militia movement here (Parent & Ellis, 2016). The militia and related patriot movements in the US have a long and violent history (see, Levitas, 2002). In contrast, there has generally been little indication of any similar organizing in Canada. Perhaps this has to do with the absence of a vocal and powerful gun rights lobby, and the trend toward less gun violence across Canada. Several officers interviewed for this study also pointed to the lack of a militia and/or gun rights movement in accounting for the muted nature of the Canadian anti-authority movement. One officer, for instance, claimed that “...it’s so different from the US where you have that cross over with fixations with second amendment type of stuff.” He further noted that:

But in the States, you might see sort of...more kind of bent towards right-wing ideology...I mean in the sense that historically there has been a connection between hate groups. And then of course the whole sort of survivalist kind of like bunkering down at a ranch...you don’t see that here. Culturally it’s so different... (Participant 6).

Despite their rarity, there are several known far-right militias operational in Canada. One salient example was brought to our attention by a Vice journalist seeking commentary on the activities of the “III%ers” in Canada, a far-right “prepper” militia movement who are actively arming and engaging in paramilitary training in Alberta (email correspondence, January 2017). In June, 2017 Vice published a disturbing article on the ideologies, aims and activities of this explicitly paramilitary group (Lamoreux, 2017). Informed by rabid Islamophobia, the Alberta group – numbering in the area of 150-200 - is actively training to defend Canada from what they see as the inevitable invasion by Muslims. Lamoreux quotes the leader’s Facebook post, in which he claimed that “We are at war folks, we have been at war, and we are in the middle of the fight of our lives . . . It’s on mother fuckers. It’s time to do patriot shit. You wanna fuck around, you’ve seen nothing yet. We will win this war.”

Subsequent searches revealed the presence of other similar groups, such as the Milice Patriotique Quebecois, and the Permanent Active Militia. Despite the recent emergence of small militia movements across Canada, they were not raised in many of the interviews with law enforcement and intelligence officers. However, Quebec seemed to be one province where the militia movement was visible, with up to 200 adherents, according to one law enforcement officer interviewed for this study. There, as with Alberta’s III%ers, members are known to train

in weaponry, paramilitary tactics and survivalist strategies. The Milice Patriotique Quebecois, for example, sees itself as the army of “New Quebec,” willing to intervene in a civil war intended to reclaim the province for white Francophones. While not technically Sovereign Citizens or FOTL, militia groups share their anti-authority positions. Moreover, the US experience suggests a cautionary tale. In that country, it appears as if the line between the two movements is growing ever narrower.

9.0 – Recommendations

9.1 – Role of Law Enforcement

Throughout the interview process, law enforcement and other legal experts were explicitly asked their thoughts on how we should respond to anti-authority movements in Canada. Somewhat surprisingly, they did not provide much guidance in this respect. In fact, among law enforcement, there was a tendency to deny that they had any role to play aside from responding to criminal incidents, as stated explicitly by two officers:

It really only factors into how to respond to the ideology...I don't really think you can respond to the ideology. The police can only respond to criminal activity or evidence of criminal offense. (Participant 6)

I don't think there is any specific response the police can give, again because it is not a movement. You can only respond to the individuals to the extent that the police have interactions with people who identified with the ideology. I don't think there is really any way to respond to the ideology as the police have to do and the courts as well. (Participant 6)

Well, from a law enforcement perspective, what we do is we enforce the law, right? Prevent crime, detect crime, apprehend criminals. So, if they cross the line then we have a responsibility. If they aren't crossing the line, then they have their rights and protections. (Participant 9)

Granted, the role of law enforcement is just that – to enforce the law. However, as we argued in our earlier assessment of RWE in Canada (see, Perry & Scrivens, 2015), police also have a role to play, with community partners, in countering emerging threats. We have highlighted the value of multi-sectoral responses to extremism (see, Scrivens & Perry, 2017). Approaches that combine the resources and capacities of several agencies stand the greatest likelihood of success (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2016). Countering anti-authority movements can be, in part but not only, a law enforcement responsibility.

Rather, it also requires the engagement of educators, social service providers, even the media. Collaborative action is key to building resilient communities. Local police services can work with local notaries to identify risks; they can work with local academics or open source analysts to counter the narratives that might be emerging. And they can certainly work with local court officials to challenge the legitimacy of pseudo-legal arguments.

9.2 – Education, Awareness, and Violence Reduction

What this amounts to, in short, is enhancing understanding and awareness of anti-authority movements in Canada. We hope that this report goes some way in supporting this approach. We have provided insights into the history and ideologies of the Canadian movements. We have also provided typologies that will help to understand the often subtle elements that differentiate the multiple parts of the broader anti-authority movement found in Canada. This was accompanied by a careful consideration of the different kinds of adherents, according to their motivation, level of commitment, and activism. Bringing these threads together will certainly deepen our general understanding of the contours of the movement.

Some officers in our study also suggested that they would like to see indicators that suggest the risk associated with anti-authority adherents, as did the following:

...when you do your report, certainly any clarity you can bring to...sort of...intensions around criminal activity, around capabilities, around changes in the movement if there are warning signs; changes to increasing militants lead[ing] to increasing threat of violence. That would always be valuable. (Participant 9)

...sometimes my concern, in an overall safety concern, is that we tend to react a lot after the fact so....and sometimes necessary [is that] the most effective controls require for us to anticipate and be able to try and predict a little bit sooner and provide this information to certain individuals. I'm not sure we are at that stage yet. (Participant 7)

Like the last officer stated, we are not certain “we are at that stage,” or whether we can even get there. As our discussion of related violence suggested above, there are considerable challenges with predicting the violent potential associated with adherents. Most significant is the fact that, contrary to media reports, at least in the Canadian context, the movement tends not to engage in a high level of violence. The fact that there are so few Canadian cases makes it exceedingly difficult – perhaps even irresponsible – to attempt to identify indicators of the

escalation to violence. Unfortunately, there is not much advice to offer in this context. It is not even the case that those who most persistently challenge the courts – and lose – are most likely to escalate to violence. Rather, violence is often an unpredictable outcome of a single interaction. One point worth raising in this respect is the relationship between anti-authority sentiment and gun rights activism, and/or support for militia. We saw how these factors intersected to bring Justin Bourque to the point of extremist violence in Moncton, New Brunswick. We noted, too, how armed, rural squatters may also escalate to armed threats, such as Rodney King in Jasper, Ontario. Indeed, this suggests that there is still a threat posed by loners or fringe members of anti-authority movements who, completely under the radar, embrace or interpret teachings in a violent, radical manner.

The long history of right-wing violence in the United States suggests that a major determinant in the genesis of anti-authoritarian violence is correlated with how law enforcement officials respond to crises and standoffs with adherents (see, Wright 2007). Although far-right and anti-authoritarian movements have not been as violent in Canada when compared to the US, our findings suggest that front-line officers who mishandle a situation, such as when pulling over an adherent driving with fake licence plates, may not only lead to a standoff, but may precipitate a bloody conflict at the time of the event, or at some point in the future. Canadian law enforcement should pay attention to the hard lessons learned by their US counterparts during the aftermath of the 1992 standoff at Ruby Ridge and the 1993 siege at Waco, Texas (see, Levitas 2002; Wright 2007). Both of these violent encounters with American far-right activists were fuelled, in part, by the aggressive tactics embraced by law enforcement that played into the conspiratorial threat narrative embraced by the far-right. Anti-authoritarian culture is steeped in the perceived “threat” by the government and its agents. Hostile, angry, or aggressive encounters between adherents and law enforcement serve as fodder for this narrative, and can harden or confirm personal anti-authoritarian beliefs. In short, law enforcement cannot give besieged anti-authority groups or individuals a reason to engage in violence, or a reason to confirm their worldview that the government is “out to get them”. Scholars who have examined the tragedies at Waco and Ruby Ridge have suggested that academics can play a crucial advisory and bridging role in the event of a stand-off between anti-authority groups and law enforcement (Rosenfeld 1997, Wessinger 1999). It is crucial that law enforcement, legal, and government officials who are likely to come in contact with such

individuals be aware of the origins, beliefs, and methods of the different types of anti-authority groups active in Canada. To this end, there should be a collaborative effort between government, law enforcement, and scholars to create provincial and/or national training material for front-line and response officers who may come into contact with Freeman, Sovereign Citizens, or other anti-authority groups. As a first step towards greater awareness of anti-authority movements, we have included a brief list of indicators in appendix 7 to help law enforcement and legal officials identify anti-authority adherents. This list needs to be explored, expanded, and operationalized in a more systematic and empirical manner in future research. However, we hope that it will provide the groundwork for a more social-scientific understanding of “who” and “what” anti-authority adherents are and aren’t, rather than relying upon the exaggerated portrayals often shared in the media.

9.3 – Acknowledgement of the Violent Potential of Canadian Anti-authority Movements

We observed during the interview process that there was a hesitancy among law enforcement officers to acknowledge the more extreme forms of violence committed by anti-authority adherents as concrete acts of terrorism. Interestingly, only one of the officers interviewed during this study identified that violent incidents such as Bourque and Quadros’s should be considered as acts of terrorism:

I would say that Freeman-on-the-Land came under my purview when it came to police response because by its nature it is motivated by an ideology. In the Criminal Code, Section 83 of the Criminal Code, it says that anything that our society finds rises to the point of a criminal offence, if it's motivated by political, religious, or ideology, will fall under the new Terrorism Act. (Participant 10)

However, there were no other references among study participants that connected Canadian anti-authority violence with terrorism. This ambivalence puzzled us, given the obvious congruity between the motivations, tactics, and targets of violent anti-authority actors and other more “clear cut” Canadian terrorists such as the Toronto 18, Momin Khawaja, and so on.

Consider the case of Justin Bourque, who murdered three Moncton RCMP officers in 2014. Ironically, Bourque is a good fit for the sorts of “terrorist” profiles of which both scholars and government officials are so enamoured (e.g., Pliner, 2013; Pressman, 2009; UK Home Office, 2010). According to standard sketches, some of the potential indicators that may reveal vulnerability to violent extremism include: (1) military or paramilitary training; (2) an

ideological attachment to and glorification of violence; (3) possession of extremist and/or militaristic literature, and; (4) “us versus them” societal views, generally expressed through feelings of disconnection, and expressions of anger towards the government (Pliner, 2013; Pressman, 2009; UK Home Office, 2010). Indeed, Bourque fits this particular profile just as well, if not better, than his “contemporaries,” Couture-Rouleau or Zehaf-Bibeau (Perry & Scrivens, forthcoming), as the above discussion suggests. The characteristics noted there are clear indicators that Justin Bourque, an obvious anti-authoritarian, did in fact fit the common terrorist profile.

We suspect that the myopic focus of current terrorism scholarship and Canadian security policy upon radical Islamist terrorism has created a blind spot against the threat posed by far-right and anti-authority violence. While Canada has not yet suffered from a large-scale violent incident akin to Waco, Ruby Ridge, or the Oklahoma City Bombing, a real and present threat exists from a certain minority of Canadian anti-authority groups and a small number of radical-fringe individuals that needs to be taken seriously. It is important that Canadian law enforcement and security agencies take a proactive, rather than reactive, stance against the threat posed by these types of actors. If we are to avoid future violent incidents involving the Canadian anti-authority community, law enforcement and legal practitioners need to recognize and acknowledge the potential for violence, and dedicate similar attention and resources to combating it as we currently do for radical Islamist terrorism.

9.4 - *Further Research*

The report offered here is, in the Canadian context, ground-breaking. It is the first systematic social-scientific analysis of the anti-authority movement in this country. However, it is but a first step. There are an array of other potential avenues of exploration. For instance, while we made good use of social media to unpack ideologies and networks, and to connect with adherents, we have not offered a detailed assessment of the ways in which adherents use these platforms to self-radicalize or to attempt to radicalize others. It is evident from the visibility of “gurus” and others on *Facebook*, *Twitter*, even *YouTube* that they recognize the utility of social media. Much more detailed assessment of how social media facilitate ideological uptake or practical strategies is warranted. Related to this, a more systematic examination of the established and emerging leaders – what many call gurus – is also needed. What particular

events or series of events drew them into the movement? What strategies and narratives seem to be most effective in drawing others to them? Hofmann's (2014; 2015; 2016) work on charismatic figures can certainly be extended and deepened. Qualitative case studies featuring leaders and "rank and file" can provide much more nuanced insights into the life histories that leave individuals vulnerable to recruitment into anti-authority movements. A collection of such life-histories will also allow much more confident generalization and theory-building.

We have drawn or implied comparisons between the Canadian and American movements several times in this report. A more nuanced and precise comparison would be useful. There is much to be learned from the US history of anti-authority movements: their growth trajectory; their intersection with militia or white power groups; their capacity for violence, as examples. Careful and detailed review of the similarities and dissimilarities may well help us in better assessing the future risk associated with Canadian anti-authority elements.

Finally, collaborative work between and among police, security agencies and scholars is also warranted. As noted above, strategies intended to respond to FOTL and similar activists are most effective where they are grounded in multi-sectoral action. Similarly, our understanding of the groups can also be enhanced by joint analysis of group ideologies, activities, and personalities. Each sector has unique strengths and competencies that, cumulatively, expand the body of knowledge as well as the analytical capacity for understanding anti-authority movements. For too long there has been a disconnect between scholars and practitioners. Writing of the related field of hate crime Neil Chakraborti (2016, p. 578) reminds us that "good practice needs to be informed by good policy, which in turn needs to be informed by academic knowledge." However, he argues that the relationship between the sectors has historically been hostile at worst, distrustful at best. If we are to move forward in knowledge and capacity, we need to forge stronger links between us.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Interview Guide for Law Enforcement Officials

Formal Questions:

- (1) What have been your experiences with, or what have you heard about the Freeman-on-the-Land (FOTL) movement in Canada?
- (2) What are your thoughts on the FOTL?
 - i. Who are they?
 - ii. What are their ideologies?
 - iii. What motivates them to become involved in the movement?
 - iv. What motivates them to remain involved in the movement?
 - v. Where are these individuals and/or groups situated in Canada?
- (3) What have officers in your division said about the FOTL?
- (4) What have officers in other divisions said about the FOTL?
- (5) Have you had experiences or interactions with the FOTL? If so, please describe them.
- (6) Have any of your colleagues had experiences or interactions with the FOTL? If so, please describe them.
- (7) Do you think that the FOTL are a threat in Canada? Please explain.
- (8) Do officers think that the FOTL are a threat in Canada? Please explain.
- (9) Do you think that the FOTL are a violent movement? Please explain.
- (10) How can we effectively respond to the FOTL movement from a law enforcement perspective?

Demographic Questions:

- (1) What is your official title?
- (2) How long have you been in law enforcement?
- (3) What division are you currently working at?
- (4) Have you worked in other divisions? If so, please list and describe them.
- (5) How many years have you been in your current position?
- (6) Briefly describe your work history as a law enforcement official.

Appendix 2 - Example of Introduction Message Sent to Potential Participants on Facebook

Hi [name of prospective participant]. A group of us are going a study on the sovereignty movement in Canada, and we're wondering if we could get your perspective on it, as well as your experiences with it. If you're interested, I can send you some more details.

Appendix 3 - Interview Guide for Adherents

Formal Questions:

- (1) What is the Freeman-on-the-Land movement (FOTL) in Canada?
 - i. History
 - ii. Ideologies
 - iii. People who are involved
 - iv. Purpose
- (2) When did you first hear about the FOTL?
- (3) How did you first hear about the FOTL?
- (4) How did you become involved in the FOTL movement?
- (5) Why do people get involved in the FOTL movement?
 - i. What motivates them to become involved in the movement?
 - ii. What motivates them to remain involved in the movement?
- (6) How do you stay in touch with other FOTL members?
- (7) How do FOTL stay in touch with other FOTL?

Informal Questions:¹⁹

- (1) When did you figure out that something was fundamentally wrong with the system (e.g., legal and economic)?
- (2) When did you figure out that the government was taking advantage of us?
- (3) When did you figure out that we have been deprived of our status?
 - a. When did you find out about these beliefs?
 - b. How did you find out about these beliefs?
- (4) When did people buy into the system?
- (5) Are more people seeing “the lie”?
- (6) Language and terminology are important in the movement. Can you speak about this?
- (7) Have you renounced your citizenship?

¹⁹ These informal questions generated the richest responses from the adherents.

- (8) Some say that the sovereignty movement in Canada is right-leaning while others say it is more left-leaning. What are your thoughts on this?
- (9) Lots of people do online research and connect with others on the Web. Do you do the same? Do others in the movement do this as well?

Demographic Questions:

- (1) How old are you?
- (2) Where were you born?
- (3) Where did you grow up?
- (4) Do you have a family? If so, please describe.
- (5) What “race” or “ethnic background” do you identify yourself with? What is your “ethnic heritage” (i.e., where your parents, your grandparents, etc. were born)
- (6) How long have you been involved in the FOTL movement?
- (7) Did any of your friends or family members join the movement? Please explain.
- (8) What is your employment history?


*Appendix 4 - Images of Robert Menard's Online Presence*²⁰

Images 1 and 2 - Example of Internet memes promoting Menard and the Freeman Worldview



²⁰ Source: Robert Menard's *Facebook* page. Images were posted in 2014.

Image 3 - Facebook post by Menard advertising his “for pay” teaching and legal services as a Freeman Guru Worldview



Robert-Arthur: Menard
July 18, 2016 · 🌐

Freeman Course
By Professor Robert Arthur Menard
Freeman 'Guru' Extraordinaire

Have you ever wanted to be a Freeman, instead of a ward of the state, or child of the province? Are you tired of funding the fancy lifestyles and perks of those who claim to 'represent' you? Do you want to plant the seeds of a direct democracy?

Robert Arthur Menard, Canada's preeminent Freeman on the Land, is offering a 6 week intensive online instruction course consisting of weekly webinars and individual instructions.

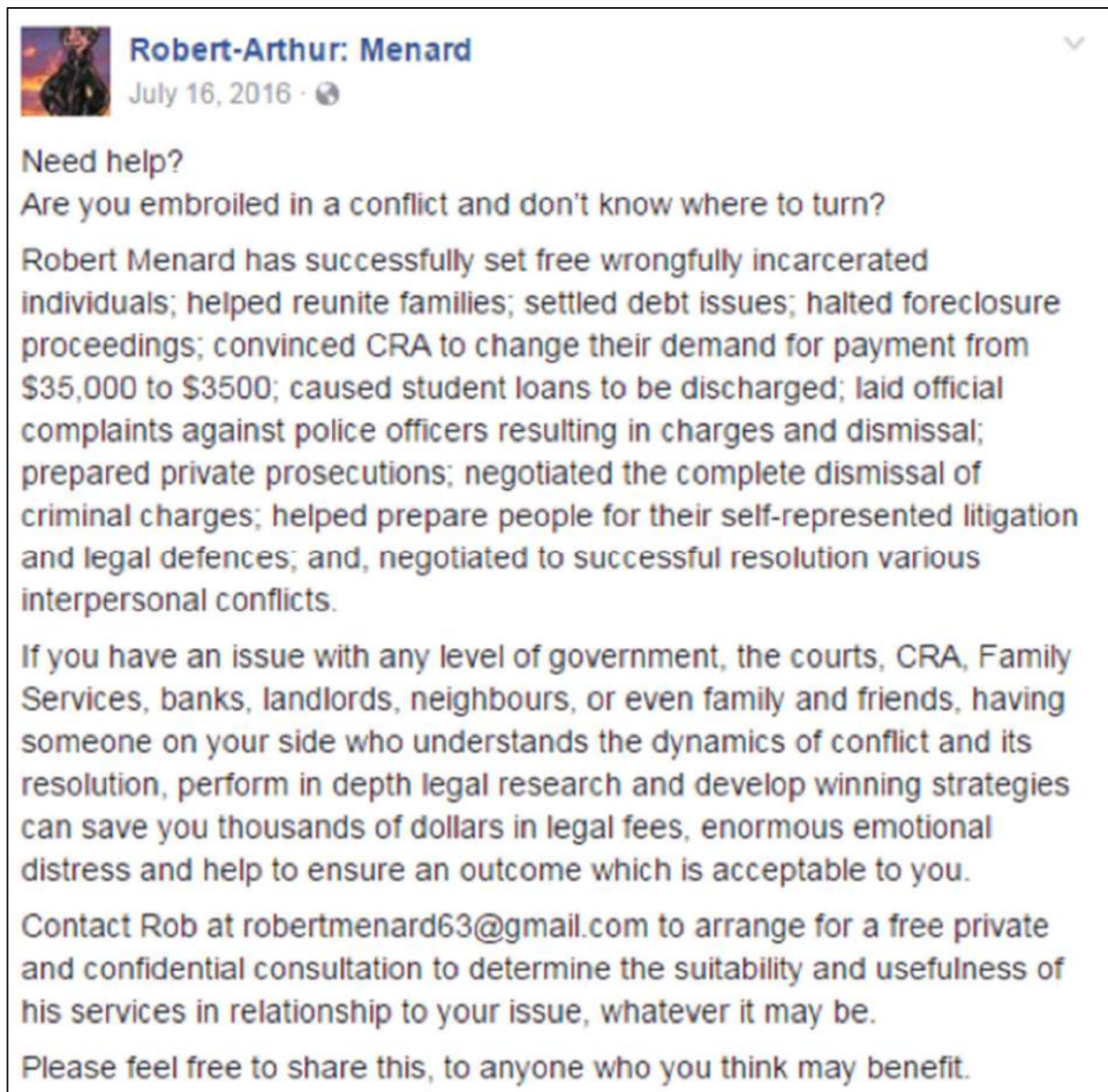
Designed to help you understand the system we live under, and how using trust law your will has been subverted, you will be guided in the process of developing and serving your own Notices and Claims, and trained to stand your ground with honour when challenged.

Tuition is very reasonable, classes are small, and individual support is provided. Family discounts are available for couples.

Contact Rob at robertmenard63@gmail.com to enrol now. Spaces are limited, and going fast, so act quickly.

[Please feel free to share this with people whom you feel may benefit from this course.]

Image 4 - Facebook post by Menard advertising his “for pay” teaching and legal services as a Freeman Guru



Appendix 5 - Example of Pseudo-legal Document Employed by the Tacit Supreme in Law Court Anti-Authority Movement

Private - Confidential - Proprietary Information - Do Not Copy
Confidentiality, Non-Circumvention, Non-Disclosure Agreement between _____ and Andreas
Pirelli
This document is issued by and the possession of The Tacit Supreme In Law Court for The First Nations Sovran Embassy and all Sovran Satellite Embassy of Earth.

confidences, documentation, contracts, and trade secrets of the Facilitator which permit access to very private and lucrative business opportunities which form the business relationship of the Undersigned.

- b. "Consideration" means that in a contract each side must give some consideration to the other. Often referred to as the quid pro quo.
- c. "Intellectual Property" of a individual shall mean, without limiting the generality of the definition of "General Intangibles" set forth herein, all know-how, processes, designs, techniques, plans, artwork, packaging, documentation, drafts (agreements/contracts), advertising material, specifications, models, data, inventions and similar types of property related to, or used by such individual in connection with its business and all underlying and derivative works of any of the foregoing whenever created, and all rights of such individual therein and thereto of every kind and nature, including, but not limited to, any and all copyrights, copyright applications, rights in copyright, interests in copyrights and renewals and extensions of copyrights, domestic and foreign, heretofore or hereafter obtained thereupon, and all trademarks, trade names, service marks and logos, and variants thereof and rights therein, and all registrations thereof and applications to register any of the foregoing, trade secret rights, patents, patent applications, industrial property and other rights, provided, however, that, notwithstanding the foregoing or anything in this Agreement to the contrary.
- d. "Ownership" shall mean all confidential information, in whatever form, including without limitation, shall be and remain the property of the "Disclosing Party". All such information shall be returned to "Disclosing Party" promptly upon request and shall not be retained in any form by the "Receiving Party".
- e. "Terms Generally" The words "hereby", "herein", "hereof", "hereunder" and words of similar import refer to this Agreement as a whole and not merely to the specific section, paragraph or clause in which such word appears. All references herein to Sections, Schedules and Exhibits shall be deemed references to Sections, Schedules and Exhibits of this Agreement unless the context shall otherwise require. The words "include", "includes" and "including" shall be deemed to be followed by the phrase "without limitation." The definitions given elsewhere in this Agreement shall apply equally to both the singular and plural forms of the terms defined. Except as otherwise expressly provided herein, all references to "dollars" or "\$" shall be deemed references to the lawful, functional currency of Canadian Dollar.
- f. "Trade Secrets" shall mean any/all portions of Confidential Information which constitutes trade secrets, as defined by applicable law and including, without limitations, computer programs, software, designs, processes, techniques, procedures, equipment, data, reports, product specifications, formulas, improvements, or any pertinent, applicable information and knowledge of the existence of any existing or proposed contracts with third parties, whether copyrightable or not.

1.03 The headings of the Sections and Articles of this Agreement are inserted for convenience of reference only and will not in any manner affect the construction or meaning of anything herein contained or govern the rights or liabilities of the Undersigned hereto.

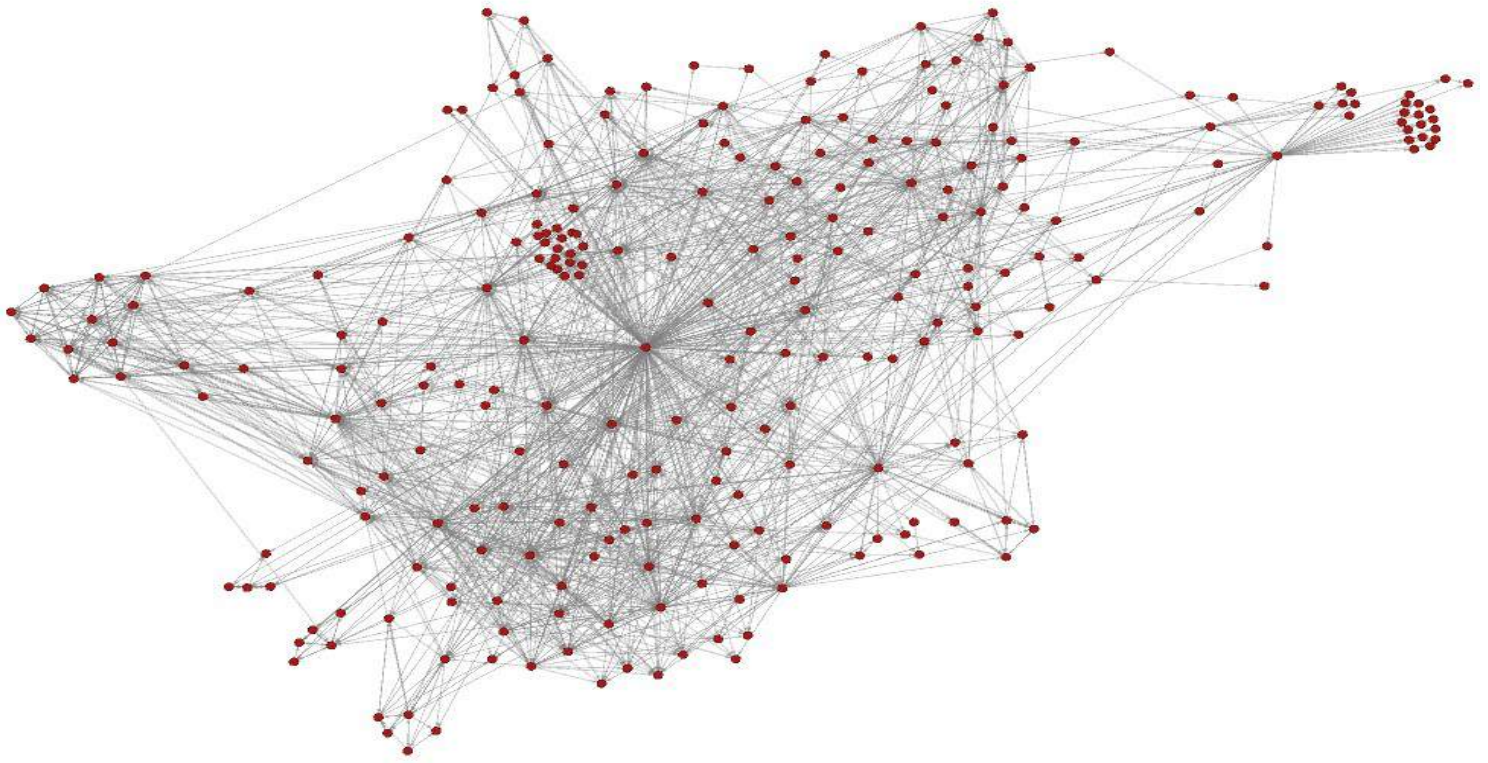
1.04 Words importing singular number will include the plural and vice versa and words importing the masculine gender will include the feminine and neuter gender.

1.05 The signatures of the Undersigned to this agreement and any associates they represent hereby confirm that any corporation, organization, firm, company or individual of which the signatory is associated

Non Disclosure Page 2 of 7 This document is issued by and the possession of The Tacit Supreme In Law Court.

Pirelli's Initials: _____'s Initials: _____

**Appendix 6 - Ego-centric Network Sociogram of Connections (Likes, Comments, Shares)
between Robert Menard's Facebook Page and his Followers Between 2014-2016**



Appendix 7 - Recognizing Anti-Authority Adherents²¹

License plates with oddball names like the "Kingdom of Heaven" and the "Little Shell Pembina Band," which is a fake Indian tribe that runs a redemption scam. The FBI has a brochure available for all law enforcement agencies that includes pictures of a variety of sovereign plates.

Antigovernment bumper stickers.

An arrogant or belligerent attitude. Sovereigns believe that they have secret knowledge about a complex government conspiracy that most Canadians, including law enforcement officials, are too stupid to comprehend.

Unsolicited anti-Semitic comments, either outright or veiled.

Odd punctuation of names, typically involving colons and hyphens, or capitalized. JOHN ROBERT DOE, for instance, signifies the corporate shell of a person, as opposed to the flesh-and-blood person.

Anti-government or anti-banking comments, even though all you are discussing is a driver's license, registration tags or traffic infractions. Anger towards other government agencies such as FEMA, the EPA, the U.S. Post Office and the Census Bureau is common.

Treasury Direct Account

When a baby is born, sovereigns believe that the government funds a secret account in that baby's corporate shell name, based on that person's future earnings. This account can be accessed by writing special checks to pay taxes, mortgage balances and other debts. Sovereigns variously believe the account's value is between \$600,000 and \$20 million.

Odd Postal Practices

- The absence of a postal code in adherents' addresses (sometimes, the zip code is present, but placed in brackets).
- International postage rates is applied even for domestic mailings.
- All paperwork will be mailed using registered mail.
- Stamps will be affixed near the signature line or at the bottom corner of the page.

Unusual Documents or Components of Documents

- Include an "Apostille Number"
- Contain the phrase "Accepted for Value"
- Are notarized, even if not required
- Include presence of thumbprints, typically in red or blue ink, on or near a signature or seal
- "SLS" may follow signature; stands for "Sovereign Living Soul" Birth Certificate

This form establishes each person's corporate shell, a kind of evil doppelgänger that is attached to every flesh-and-blood baby. The shell is then supposedly sold by the government as

²¹ The indicators here are drawn from FBI (2010), and UNC School of Government (2012).

a security to foreign investors to enrich bankers. The proof that the certificate has secret meaning is found in the use of all capital letters, bond paper and a seal and/or watermark.

Affidavit of Fiduciary

A sovereign citizen will file an Affidavit of Fiduciary when a financial institution files legal documents against him/her. This Affidavit claims the financial institution's lawyer, will be representing the sovereign citizen. The lawyer cannot ethically represent both parties due to a conflict of interest-creating a procedural problem for the filing agency.

Affidavit of Truth

This document declares the filer as a "sovereign" or "Freeborn sovereign" consistent with the tradition of natural Common Law. Although the individual may have accepted or used instruments of federal, state, and local governments, this does not indicate the acceptance of these items. Therefore, any implied "contracts" with federal, state, and local government are null and void.

Truth Language

A complex and bizarre set of language rules designed to mimic the secret language of the law. All sentences must start with the preposition "for," have a minimum of 13 words, and use more nouns than verbs. Punctuation rules are just as complex.

Unusual use of Outdated Language, or Formal/Legal Language

A simple question like, "Where are you headed?" may get you a response along the lines of, "I am a free man, traveling upon the land."

Strawman

The label assigned to the corporate shell in the redemption process. This corporate shell is attached to a baby at birth when a birth certificate is typed out using all capital letters and a Social Insurance number is applied for.

Sui Juris

Many sovereigns add this Latin phrase, meaning "of one's own right," to their flesh-and-blood names on legal documents to signify that they are reserving all the rights to which a free man is entitled.

Accepted for Value (A4V)

An "Acceptance" is an offer from a sovereign citizen, which forms a "binding contract" with the receiving party. The value of the contract is considered the "property" of the sovereign citizen. If a sovereign citizen writes "Accepted for Value" on a document, they are acknowledging the terms of the contract, recognizing the contract limits their rights, and waive their right to any legal remedies. By acknowledging the terms and limitations, the sovereign citizen is not indicating a willingness to adhere to them. Instead, this person is indicating a willingness to negotiate the terms of the contract.

Example: A sovereign citizen receives a credit card bill which states the amount owed on the account, an interest rate for the card, and a payment plan. By writing "Accepted for Value" on the bill, the sovereign citizen acknowledges the contract was received. The amount owed,

interest terms, and payment schedule are all considered to be negotiable items, which once "accepted for value" could be negotiated with the billing company.

Redemption

The phony legal process sovereigns use to separate a person's flesh-and-blood body from their mythical corporate shell. Since only the corporate shell is subject to taxes, traffic laws and license requirements, the ability to separate the two is the key to liberating people from such requirements. An added bonus is that the newly freed sovereign can then write checks, or "bills of exchange," on the account the government has set up to monetize the person's life and earnings.