

Talty, S. (1996, February 25). [The Method of a Neo-Nazi Mogul](#). *The New York Times Magazine*, pp. 40-43.

OVERVIEW

[George Burdi](#) (also known as George Eric Hawthorne) is not a nostalgic fascist dreaming of past Aryan supremacy; his vision is of a fascist future. At age 25, he owns his own record label, [Resistance Records Inc.](#), and a magazine. He also distributes a weekly electronic newsletter through his Internet home page. His views are straightforward racism with no appreciation for the complexities of culture:

As I have said time and time again, the progeny of slaves cannot live in harmony with the progeny of slavemasters....To put black men and women in American society which is traditionally and essentially established on European traditions, and to say, 'Here you go, you're an equal, now compete,' is just as ridiculous as assuming that you could move white people to the Congo and have them effectively compete.

Six-foot, 200-pound Burdi boasts a tattoo on his right bicep that reads, " 'To thine own self be true.' " According to the article, "Wearing work boots, jeans and a leather jacket, he projects a Brandoesque arrogance. Instead of Brando's vulnerability, though, Burdi displays the tetchy manner of an academic and what he calls an inner rage, which animates him to 'do his best work.' "

George Burdi is lead singer in his own rock-and-roll band called [Rahowa](#), which is short for Racial Holy War. With partner, Mark Wilson, Burdi's Resistance Records has twelve bands and sold 50,000 CDs in eighteen months. The article continues:

The reason that the so-called movement has been struggling over the years is because it has operated on the rational—not the emotional—level...This is a seminal change in how to present racist ideology in a way that will reach middle America. The idea of utilizing music is of special new concern to us because we can take a half-step back and think of all the wonderful things that have been achieved socially in terms of people in the music field. Music touches the soul, it leaps past the reason.

The following sample of Burdi's lyrics is provocative: "As I march into battle, my comrades I hail/Tonight the white race prevails/Death by our swords to the vile, alien hordes/Their every resistance shall fail."

The author also notes that "Burdi is especially bullish on the future of electronic racism": " 'We have big plans for the Internet. It's uncontrollable. It's beautiful, uncensored.' " One 16-year-old who has accessed the home page from California calls himself Remie666. He describes himself as "AY" or Aryan Youth. He uses the Internet to read Burdi, listen to music samples, order CDs, discover white-power novels, and to correspond with other white-power skinheads. Remie666 notes that, "The Internet has quadrupled the number of white-power skins I'm in touch with....Burdi has a lot of power in his voice when he speaks. I think he's a very good influence. I see people listening to him more than anyone else."

"Bootboy," a 27-year-old from Dallas says, "I have operated a PO box and voice mail for four years now. And I have received more contacts, good ones, over the Internet in four months than I have in all four years. I get E-mail from other white-power skins from Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, Holland, Luxembourg."

The neo-Nazi skinhead movement is not a benign blemish in our society:

Already, Resistance Records has figured in two of the most notorious recent hate crimes in this country. The Pennsylvania skinhead brothers who killed their parents in February 1995 fled to the home of a Michigan friend they had met at a concert that Resistance promoted. And one of the soldiers at Fort Bragg in North Carolina who were arrested for murdering a black couple in December had a copy of Resistance magazine in his rented room.

The quarterly magazine that Burdi edits provides news of the racist movements and is a manual for a supremacist life style. It includes KKK ads and movie reviews with statements like one describing "Pulp Fiction" as "better than a cold beer on a hot Auschwitz afternoon."

George Burdi grew up in a Toronto suburb. His family was upper-middle-class. Neither his father, an insurance broker, nor his mother, a homemaker, was racist. George was very bright and over-achieving. He

attended a private Catholic high school and continued at the [University of Guelph](#). A paper for his high school history class denied the reality of the Holocaust. His heroes are Caesar Augustus, Napoleon, and Alexander the Great—"anyone with a strong will to assert themselves and expand the territory of their people." It was Nietzsche's idea of the Superman which began his journey to white supremacy. More of his life can be found in Warren Kinsella's book, [Web of Hate: Inside Canada's Far Right Network](#).

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

- What most impresses or depresses you most in this article? Is the article fair in dealing with this subject? What questions does it raise for you? What do you most want to see discussed?
- How do you explain the rise of the extreme right and white-supremacist racism in Europe and North America in the late 1980s and 1990s?
- What young people do you know who are susceptible to this type of ideology and lifestyle? How would they most likely become involved, and what might that involvement lead to?
- How would you engage George Burdi in a class discussion or youth group meeting? How would you refute his arguments, and what would be your main points?

IMPLICATIONS

- As friends who are survivors tell us, we must never forget the Holocaust nor think it could never happen again. Similarly, we must deal with the fact that a lynching mentality still exists.
- Along with ethnic strife, racism continues to be a critical problem for the 21st century.
- We need new and creative ways to instruct a rising generation of world leaders and participants. And there must be ways to counteract insidious, negative license in the electronic media.
- It is never wise to attack teenage problems negatively. Young people slip into destructive lifestyles because something significant is missing. A positive message of hope, purpose, truth, and love must be offered them by those who care. Loners are most often attracted to extremism and companionship in negative lifestyles.
- The world's major religions teach love as an antidote to racism. The

Bible has much to say about racism, from the marriage of Moses to an African woman to bringing Jews and Samaritans together.

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