



Op-ed Takes SPLC to Task for its Role in 2012 Attempted Mass Shooting

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), the oddly named and [scandal-ridden](#) left-wing smear group, is defending itself against the accusation that it is tangentially responsible for the 2012 attempted mass shooting at the offices of the Family Research Council (FRC), an organization that defends Christianity and traditional values.



A [USA Today op-ed](#) penned by Jessica Prol Smith, a former writer and editor for the FRC who is now a senior news writer and editor for the Alliance Defending Freedom, describes her memory of the attempted mass-murder.

Smith wrote, “I’ll never forget the moment I learned we were on lockdown. It was Aug. 15, 2012. My frustration mingled with fear. Trapped on the sixth floor, we knew someone had been shot. We knew we couldn’t leave yet. We knew little else.”

The gunman, Floyd Lee Corkins II, entered the offices of the FRC with a backpack loaded with ammunition and 15 Chick-fil-A sandwiches, which he intended to smear on the faces of his victims as a political statement. Like the FRC, Chick-fil-A was opposed to gay marriage.

Although a co-worker was wounded in the arm, FRC staffers were able to disarm and restrain the unhinged Corkins. In 2013, Corkins was sentenced to 25 years in prison. It was the first conviction under Washington, D.C.’s 2002 Anti-Terrorism Act.

During FBI testimony, Corkins confirmed that he selected the FRC specifically because the SPLC had labeled them a “hate group.”

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Smith wrote: “It has always been easier to smear people rather than wrestle with their ideas. It’s a bully who calls names and spreads lies rather than thoroughly reading a brief’s legal arguments or challenging the rationale underlying a policy principle. The SPLC has taken the easy path — to intimidate and mislead for raw political power and financial benefit.”

The SPLC fired back with an op-ed of its own in which the writer defended the organization’s slanderous “hate list,” saying that they do not seek “raw political power.” Rather, the SPLC’s focus is to “educate the public about the harmful pseudoscience that these groups [those listed on its “Hate List”] push and the real-life consequences.”

The SPLC’s op-ed was penned by Heidi Beirich, the director of the SPLC’s ironically named Intelligence Project, which produces the quarterly *Intelligence Report*. Beirich is among those [specifically named in a lawsuit](#) accusing the SPLC of fraud, racketeering, and abetting theft.



Written by [James Murphy](#) on August 22, 2019

Beirich continued: “Our work, especially our commitment to communities we serve, has never been deterred, and it will keep driving us as we continue to look forward to truly modelling the change we want to see in the world.”

Knowing the SPLC, Beirich’s statement about “truly modelling the change we want to see in the world” sounds more like a threat than a defense of their actions, especially when you consider some of the SPLC’s recent scandals.

In March, the organization [fired co-founder Morris Dees](#) over allegations of unspecified misconduct. But reports have surfaced that the misconduct may have included inappropriate sexual conduct in the workplace and charges that Dees was a racist.

Then, later in March, SPLC President Richard Cohen and key staffer Rhonda Brownstein [abruptly resigned](#) as an audit of the organization was about to begin. In a zany coincidence, Michelle Obama acolyte and Chicago-based attorney Tina Tchen was brought in to head the audit. Tchen is the same attorney who helped arrange the extremely light sentence for Jussie Smollett, the actor who engineered a fake hate crime in Chicago in January of this year.

To make things even worse for the SPLC, [a piece](#) written by former staffer Bob Moser appeared in the *New Yorker* on March 21, in which Moser referred to the organization as a “highly profitable scam.”

Moser’s article portrayed a “social justice” organization, in which profit mattered far more than the social justice they pretended to champion. While pretending to stand up for minorities and marginalized communities, the SPLC’s professional staff was nearly all white.

Moser wrote, “But nothing was more uncomfortable than the racial dynamic that quickly became apparent: a fair number of what was then about a hundred employees were African-American, but almost all of them were administrative and support staff — “the help,” as one of my black colleagues said pointedly.”

So, at the very least, the SPLC is a hypocritical organization. At worst, they are downright racist in their hiring practices and their culture. Perhaps Jussie Smollett-hoax enabler-Tchen’s audit will steer the SPLC back in the right direction. But probably not.

In 2012, a gunman, directly inspired by the SPLC, attacked one of the organizations smeared by it. Firm evidence in the form of FBI testimony in court backs this assertion. The SPLC doesn’t hesitate to link other groups with mass shootings with far less evidence than Jessica Prol Smith has linking them to the 2012 incident at the FRC. And, frankly, if the SPLC doesn’t like being linked to that incident, then too bad for them, because they are inextricably linked.

Photo of police and FBI outside Family Research Council after 2012 shooting: AP Images

James Murphy is a freelance journalist who writes on a variety of subjects with a primary focus on the ongoing anthropogenic climate-change hoax and cultural issues. He can be reached at jcmurphyABR@mail.com.



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