



## Romantic Violence: Memoirs of an American Skinhead

Christian Picciolini

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At 14 years old, Christian Picciolini, a bright and well-loved child from a good family, had been targeted and trained to spread a violent racist agenda, quickly ascending to a highly visible leadership position in America's first neo-Nazi skinhead gang. Just how did this young boy from the suburbs of Chicago, who had so much going for him, become so lost in extremist ideologies that would horrify any decent person?

Romantic Violence: Memoirs of an American Skinhead' is a poignant and gripping cautionary tale that details Christian's indoctrination when he was barely a teen, a lonely outsider who, more than anything, just wanted to belong. A fateful meeting with a charismatic man who recognized and took advantage of Christian's deep need for connection sent the next decade of his life into a dangerous spiral. When his mentor went to prison for a vicious hate crime, Christian stepped forward, and at 18, he was overseeing the most brutal extremist skinhead cells across the country. From fierce street brawls to drunken white power rallies, recruitment by foreign terrorist dictators to riotous white power rock music, Picciolini immersed himself in racist skinhead culture, hateful propaganda, and violence.

Ultimately Christian began to see that his hate-filled life was built on lies. After years of battling the monster he created, he was able to reinvent himself. Picciolini went on to become an advocate for peace, inclusion, and racial diversity, co-founding the nonprofit Life After Hate, which helps people disengage from hate groups and to love themselves and accept others, regardless of skin color, religious belief, or sexual preference.



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