

United States District Court

People of the State of New York)	
Prosecution)	
)	
)	
)	
v.)	NO. HMC-10-06
)	
)	
)	
Gabe Mazur)	
Defendant)	

Summary of Facts Stipulated

Indictment

The Grand Jurors chosen, selected, and sworn, in and for the County of Wister, in the State of New York, IN THE NAME AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, upon their oaths present that on or about at and within Wister County, committed the offence of robbery, arson, murder, and kidnapping by directly managing and operating the enterprise VENERATIO in violation of UNITED STATES CODE: TITLE 18 § 1961(c) and AGAINST THE PEACE AND DIGNITY OF THE SAME PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

Relevant Legal Code

The RICO Act: RACKETEER INFLUENCED AND CORRUPT ORGANIZATIONS Act

18 U.S.C. § 1961.
Summary introduction: RICO is a law that increases the severity of penalties for crimes performed in conjunction with organized crime. The law states that any person or group who commits any two out of a list of 35 crimes (known as racketeering activity in the US Code) within a decade and can be determined to have committed them with similar results or similar intentions can be charged with racketeering. The penalty for racketeering as part of an "enterprise" (such as a gang) is higher than racketeering as an individual.

§ 1961. Prohibited activities
(a) It shall be unlawful for any person who has received any income derived, directly or indirectly, from a pattern of racketeering activity or through collection of an unlawful debt in which such person has participated as a

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principal...to use or invest, directly or indirectly, any part of such income, or the proceeds of such income, in acquisition of any interest in, or the establishment or operation of, any enterprise which is engaged in, or the activities of which affect, interstate or foreign commerce.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person, through a pattern of racketeering activity or through collection of an unlawful debt, to acquire or maintain, directly or indirectly, any interest in or control of any enterprise which is engaged in, or the activities of which affect, interstate or foreign commerce.

(c) It shall be unlawful for any person employed by or associated with any enterprise engaged in, or the activities of which affect, interstate or foreign commerce, to conduct or participate, directly or indirectly, in the conduct of such enterprise's affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity or collection of unlawful debt.

§ 1962. Definitions

"Racketeering activity" means (A) any act or threat involving murder, kidnapping, gambling, arson, robbery, bribery, extortion, dealing in obscene matter, or dealing in a controlled substance or listed chemical (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act), which is chargeable under State law and punishable by imprisonment for more than one year.

"State" means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any territory or possession of the United States, any political subdivision, or any department, agency, or instrumentality thereof;

"Person" includes any individual or entity capable of holding a legal or beneficial interest in property;

"Enterprise" includes any individual, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity, and any union or group of individuals associated in fact although not a legal entity;

"Pattern of racketeering activity" requires at least two acts of racketeering activity, one of which occurred after the effective date of this chapter and the last of which occurred within ten years (excluding any period of imprisonment) after the commission of a prior act of racketeering activity;

"Unlawful debt" means a debt (a) incurred or contracted in gambling activity which was in violation of the law of the United States, a State or political subdivision thereof, or which is unenforceable under State or Federal law in whole or in part as to principal or interest because of the laws relating to usury, and (b) which was incurred in connection with the business of gambling in violation of the law of the United States, a State or political subdivision thereof, or the business of lending money or a thing of value at a rate usurious under State or Federal law, where the usurious rate is at least twice the enforceable rate; and

"Documentary material" includes any book, paper, document, record, recording, or other material.

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Relevant Case Law

The State's Burden of Proof

United States v. Chillens, 1971

In order to be found guilty of violating the RICO statute, the government must prove beyond a reasonable doubt: (1) that an enterprise existed; (2) that the enterprise affected interstate commerce; (3) that the defendant was associated with or employed by the enterprise; (4) that the defendant engaged in a pattern of racketeering activity; and (5) that the defendant participated in the conduct of the enterprise through that pattern of racketeering activity through the commission of at least two acts of racketeering activity as set forth in the indictment.

Or, the prosecution can show that the defendant operated or managed an enterprise that engaged in patterns of racketeering activity.

"Enterprise" Requirement

Diamonds Plus, Inc. v. Kolber, 1992

An "enterprise" does not have to be a strictly a legal enterprise. An "association-in-fact," where the individuals are connected so some extent can be considered an enterprise. There are at least three characteristics to an enterprise: (1) some continuity of structure and personnel; (2) a common or shared purpose; and (3) an ascertainable structure distinct from that inherent in the pattern of racketeering.

Continuity of structure and personnel means that you cannot have a group whose membership is constantly in a state of flux. There must be something more than a fleeting consistency with regard to the number of group members and the identity of the group members.

Odom v. Microsoft Corp, 2007

If a RICO prosecution relies on an association-in-fact enterprise, it must plead and establish that there is an enterprise separate and distinct from the pattern of racketeering (the specific crimes that the defendant is being charged with).

Though it is not required, proof the enterprise conducts lawful activity unrelated to the pattern of racketeering activity will often serve to prove the enterprise is separate from the pattern of racketeering).

A distinct structure might be demonstrated by proof that the group engaged in a diverse pattern of crimes or that it has an organizational pattern or system of authority beyond what was necessary to perpetrate the predicate crimes. The command system of a Mafia family is an example of this type of structure as is the hierarchy, planning, and division of profits within a prostitution ring.

United States v. Johnson, 2005

The common purpose of making money can support the enterprise element of a RICO claim.

"The Defendant operated or managed the enterprise" Requirement

United States vs. Gianni, 1970

To be found guilty of the RICO statutes, the prosecution need not show that the defendant himself or herself engaged in the racketeering activity, although this can be the case, but that s/he operated or managed an enterprise that engaged in a pattern of racketeering.

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Reeves v. Ernst & Young, 1993

Section 1962(c) also requires that the defendant "conduct or participate, directly or indirectly, in the conduct of such enterprise's affairs." The Supreme Court has interpreted this language to mean that a defendant must "operate or manage" the enterprise.

An enterprise is "operated" not just by upper management but also by lower-rung participants in the enterprise who are under the direction of upper management. An enterprise also might be "operated" or "managed" by "others associated with" the enterprise who exert control over it as, for example, by bribery.

The question of whether a particular defendant actually operates or manages an enterprise is generally considered by the lower courts to be a question of fact that is left to the jury.

United States v. Boyle, 1985

The government need not prove that the defendant agreed with every other conspirator, knew all of the other conspirators, or had full knowledge of all the details of the conspiracy. All that must be shown is: (1) that the defendant agreed to commit the substantive racketeering offense through agreeing to participate in two racketeering acts; (2) that he knew the general status of the conspiracy; and (3) that he knew the conspiracy extended beyond his individual role.

"Pattern of racketeering activity" Requirement

HJ Inc. v. Northwestern Bell, 1989

The Supreme Court determined that the factors of relatedness and continuity combine to produce a pattern of racketeering.

To be related, the criminal actions that form the pattern must "have the same or similar purposes, results, participants, victims, or methods of commission, or otherwise are interrelated by distinguishing characteristics."

In addition to relatedness, continuity must be shown. Continuity refers either to a closed period of repeated conduct, or to past conduct that by its nature projects into the future. A party alleging a RICO violation may demonstrate continuity over a closed period by proving a series of related predicates extending over a substantial period of time. Predicate acts extending over a few weeks or months and threatening no future criminal conduct do not satisfy this requirement as Congress was concerned with RICO in long-term criminal conduct.

United States v. Smith, 1982

As to the continuity requirement, the government may show that the racketeering acts found to have been committed pose a threat of continued racketeering activity by proving: (1) that the acts are part of a long-term association that exists for criminal purposes; or (2) that they are a regular way of conducting the defendant's ongoing legitimate business; or (3) that they are a regular way of conducting or participating in an ongoing and legitimate enterprise.

When a RICO action is brought before continuity can be established, liability depends on whether the threat of continuity is demonstrated. However, Judge Scalia wrote in his concurring opinion that it would be absurd to say that "at least a few months of racketeering activity. . . is generally for free, as far as RICO is concerned." Therefore, if the predicate acts involve a distinct threat of long-term racketeering activity, either implicit or explicit, a RICO pattern is established.

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"Interstate commerce" Requirement

United States v. Mazzio, 1980

In proving a nexus between the racketeering activity and interstate commerce, it is not necessary that the alleged acts directly involve interstate commerce. Thus, evidence that the supplies used in an illegal Maryland bookmaking operation originated outside the state was sufficient to show a nexus between the enterprise and interstate commerce, thus triggering RICO. Even minimal evidence is sufficient to demonstrate a nexus. Therefore, merely traveling between states in furtherance of an illegal gambling operation will establish a nexus to interstate commerce.

Instructions to the Jury

Find an enterprise where an association of individuals, without structural hierarchy, [had been formed] solely for the purpose of carrying out a pattern of racketeering acts;

[and that]

Common sense suggests that the existence of an association-in-fact is oftentimes more readily proven by what it does, rather than by abstract analysis of its structure.

Witness List

Prosecution:

Detective Victor/ia Marambio
Rose/Ross Padovano
Andrew/Andrea Polonyi

Defense:

Romulus/Romula Mazur
Robert/a Nye
Michael/a Jaksonian

Note on the Order of the Witnesses

The order of witnesses specified above is random and not binding. Teams should feel free to present witnesses in whatever order they deem most rewarding.

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Affidavit of Victor/ia Marambio

Witness for the Prosecution

My name is Victor/ia Marambio, and I am 35 years old. I have been a detective for the New York City gang unit for 7 years now. I got promoted to detective after busting a huge heist we had been looking into in 2002 in Chicago. I left for the NYC division in 2004.

I guess it's obvious that I've worked on some pretty prominent cases. Most recently, I worked on the team that brought in some of the Latin Kings. When I worked in Chicago, I cracked the Satan's Disciples case. I have never failed to take out at least part of a gang after I've started a case. My secret is that I just won't quit. I know I'm right, and I have unstoppable perseverance. But let me tell you, I have never seen or heard of the likes of Veneratio. I am lead detective for the team investigating Veneratio and know everything that's available on the organization.

We began investigating them in 2007. I had been advocating an investigation into this organization since 2006. It was on a hunch and my insistence that this was real that the chief eventually decided to give us the go-ahead. I noticed that, starting in 2004, we began to get a series of really random cases. It started out fairly harmless. In the November 2006 elections, the lead for a senate seat, Daniel Squidryn, had his website hacked. Instead of the page that was supposed to be there, the sentence "Pwned. Respeto." was displayed. Our experts couldn't trace it. I also understand that the senator brought in experts. He was freaking out because it was a week or so away from the actual day of elections, and he didn't want to seem disrespected. The very next day, before anything could be discovered, the site returned to normal. There was nothing we could do, and we had bigger cases coming in. Squidryn won anyway, so we just filed the case away.

Then, we had another series of random cases come in that I didn't connect until 2006. In January 2004, the entire city of NY suffered a 1 hour black out. The city temporarily descended into chaos. Before anything bad could happen, the power came back on. I happened to be sitting at home watching TV. When the lights went out, so did the TV. When the power came back, the TV came back on, but before it went back to a normal station, the word "Rispetto" flashed across the screen.

Next, we nabbed an Eastern European gang in Greenpoint - the Kielbasa Posse - late in 2004. One of the members had the word "szacunek" removed from his knuckles. I asked him where he got the tattoo and why he had it removed. He looked at me and shrugged; he told me it meant "respect" in Polish and that he had gotten it while still in the country, but removed it when he came to America.

After that, we had a mishap with the local Bronx newspaper. According to the printer, someone had hacked into their computer system and redesigned the second page of the paper last minute - it was blank with one word on it: "Respekt." By this point, I was getting suspicious.

In 2005, my daughter came home from her first year at Yale University. Although she didn't talk too much about her experience with me, she did mention that she wanted to join a club called "Veneratio." When I asked her what it meant, she rolled her eyes and said that it means respect in Latin, but that "obviously you're not smart enough to be in the club if you don't know that." There it was; the pieces were coming together.

I did a little research on my own. It was fairly easy to find information about the Veneratio organization. They were an intellectual club founded simultaneously at the three big Ivies - Harvard, Princeton, and Yale - in 2000. They formed with the mission to initiate rebirth of the café "intellectual" activists that had been prominent in the early 20th century.

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Although they had no official political association, according to their website, they were inspired by the moral implications of creating art that drove the Eastern European intellectuals that supported a Worker's Revolution in the interwar period. Membership was exclusive and you could only join if you were invited. I began my investigation with the Yale chapter.

There I discovered that Romula/Romulus Mazur was the president. Mazur had attended Yale University and graduated in 2000. In 2006, s/he was working for the Lemur Brothers banking group as a senior analyst while heading Veneratio's Yale chapter. I looked at the membership list, which consisted of 20 people in 2006, and crosschecked them with the national criminal database. I hit gold on one member: Rose/Ross Padovano. S/he had been charged with computer trespass and computer conspiracy in 2004. S/he joined Veneratio in 2003. I had the link. I went up to my chief and presented my theory – that these string of crimes were connected and judging by how smart these kids were, this was probably only the surface that we could see. I pushed my case for a couple of months before my boss relented and gave me a small team. I figured I'd show him what I'd uncover. My gut is never wrong.

In January 2007, there was a string of robberies and arsons in the Northeast. The arsons were very particular. The first one happened in the wealthy Beacon Hill area of Boston. The criminals didn't take down the entire condo. They actually secured the area so the fire would not spread further into the surrounding homes. The furniture had been taken out of the home and stacked in the back courtyard. It was doused with a flame-resistant coating and then covered in gasoline. The gasoline was set on fire; the furniture was scorched but intact when the fire department and police arrived. There was no question that it was intentional arson.

About a week later, a similar incident occurred in Swampscott, a wealthy suburb outside of Boston. This time, however, the furniture was treated the same way *within* the house and the entire home burned down. After that, it was literally like wildfire. Arsons conducted in the same way spread up and down the East Coast. Besides the method of arson, there was one other thing linking these crimes together: the victims were all involved in politics. The current governor of Massachusetts had his house burnt down, as well as prominent senators and representatives. Now, it wasn't obvious at first that the Veneratio were connected to all of this, but it soon surfaced that every politician who had his house burned down was actually a member of Veneratio and had attended one of the three Ivy League schools.

The first wave of fires happened between January and March, about every two weeks. It shocked the country because there was little information on who the criminals were. It was not until March that we had discovered the Veneratio connection. I tracked down Mazur; that night he/she was having a reading in a small café in New York City. I went to check it out. The symbolism was just too much – he/she was reading excerpts from *Soñé que la nieve ardía* by Antonio Skármeta. Luckily, I know Spanish; the title translates to: "I Dreamed the Snow Was Burning." I soon found out that Mazur was traveling the East Coast promoting a photography exhibit he/she had put on display in a small art gallery in NYC. To promote it, he/she didn't show any of the photography, but read excerpts from poetry and literature by which he/she had been inspired. He/She told me that he/she thought his/her work would take the country by storm, and his/her vision would spread like wildfire. He/She probably had no idea that we were on to him/her.

Investigations involving complex and smart organizations are usually slow and sometimes seem like they'll never go anywhere. But I've never given up. The fires continued to occur throughout the country – they swept west, also taking place in Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles. My team realized that we weren't just dealing with a Northeast gang but one that could

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terrorize the entire nation. The fires were kept mostly on the mum. The politicians targeted didn't want to make a big deal out of it, although if you ask me it would have been smart to go to the media to try to get the word out. I could tell that their silence also meant that they probably sensed that something big was going on.

We had a breakthrough in the end of an arson-free May in 2007. Up until then, we had no real leads other than Mazur, but he/she checked out alright (I even saw Mazur's photo exhibit, which was actually pretty good). Rose/Ross Padovano came up to me at one of Mazur's readings in Boston. I was startled to see him/her come up to me because I was technically undercover, although Mazur knew that I was investigating the arsons. I didn't think that he/she would have told anyone. Padovano approached me and said that s/he noticed that I was also following Mazur's exhibit through the East. I nodded, and we chatted about his/her work for a little while. S/he made sure to point out how brilliant Mazur was and how s/he was going to change the moral chemistry of art for the next generation. It was always funny to hear Mazur's fans talk like that, most of them did, because s/he didn't sound as messianic as they made her/him out to be on stage. S/he just seemed like a really devoted artist. S/he asked me out to dinner after that. I'm not married anymore, so I figured why not, Padovano was cute. Apparently, Padovano wasn't interested. Over an Italian dinner in the North End, s/he confronted me about being a cop. I almost choked on my gnocchi!

After I admitted it, what came next was unexpected. Padovano said that s/he was part of Veneratio, but that it wasn't what I figured it was. S/he explained that it wasn't just an intellectual club. The intellectual aspect was simply a cover. The club was a way for its members to organize and communicate. I asked him/her what Veneratio actually did. S/he then launched into a very detailed story. It basically boiled down to this: Veneratio based its "mission" on the Platonic idea of a "philosopher-king" of sorts. Apparently, in *The Republic*, Plato described the best form of government as one ruled by a philosopher-king, who because of his ability to reason through logic, would be best suited for running the republic.

It sounded like Veneratio was a bunch of disgruntled smart guys (and girls, of course) who thought our country was going to the dogs. According to Padovano, they weren't necessarily a violent organization. Instead, they were smart "politicians" of sorts. Most became involved in college and had idealistic beliefs about their ability to make a difference in the world. They started to direct their lives towards changing the status quo. They maneuver their way, legally according to Padovano, into top businesses and government positions. They then, however, use whatever leverage they have to influence target politicians. The key lay in the fact that they did this collectively. Not even one member of Veneratio could falter. It sounded like blackmail to me.

Who were the members, I asked Padovano. S/he responded that s/he didn't know. What? I couldn't believe it. How could I know that s/he was telling the truth if s/he couldn't even tell me who was a part of this organization? That's why they don't get caught, apparently. You know at most three other people in the organization. The most important thing is to know that you yourself are a Veneratio and to read the signs that come in order to know when to act. Through a complex web of interactions, the Veneratio communicate: they pass along poetry, books, and songs to get the message out. I got it; I could finally see: Mazur was passing along the message with her/his readings and photo exhibit. I asked Padovano whether Mazur was leading all of this. S/he looked at me real serious. "See, that's why Veneratio leadership is so brilliant. You don't actually meet them. If Mazur is involved, s/he's taking orders from someone else."

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I was happy to have gotten an informant, but I had to ask some tough questions, too. How did s/he know that they were behind the arsons and were trying to influence politicians? Padovano finally explained the criminal charge against him/her - s/he had committed computer crimes for Veneratio and taken the blame for it completely. I, of course, got a lot more information from Padovano. If it weren't for her/him and her/his tips, then we would have never been able to catch Mazur and have charges stick.

I have included with my affidavit the criminal records of three Veneratio members. They each committed arson, robbery, and computer hacking between January and April 2007. It took a while for us to track them down, but when you have such a huge number of these houses to burn down, you eventually leave some evidence behind. At the time, they were charged with and punished for these crimes, but not under the RICO act. Each member went through his own trial and was fairly charged. We also have evidence that Mazur's fingerprints were in some of the houses that were burnt down - the Boston and Swampscott ones. Obviously, s/he had his prints all over Polonyi's house. Because of the flame-retardant they used, we could gather some fingerprints and run a DNA analysis. It was standard police procedure.

Now, we believe that the three members committed the arsons as part of Veneratio and have Mazur, high up on the hierarchy, to answer for the organization. Padovano remained one of our informants and we struck a plea deal with her/him. S/he was personally involved in the Swampscott and Beacon Hill fires, and s/he did it on orders from higher ups in Veneratio. Here's the crazy thing that makes me think that perhaps Mazur is stupider than s/he appears: every item that was reported stolen from the burnt houses appeared in the photo exhibit. Obviously, they were photographed elsewhere, but I swear they were the same objects. We had an analyst take a look at it, and he could identify them as the same type of object, but not the object itself. We have yet to locate the stolen objects.

V. Marambio

V. Marambio

Subscribed and sworn to me on this, the 8th of May, 2009.

Brittany Novak, Notary Public

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Affidavit of Rose/Ross Padovano

Witness for the Prosecution

My name is Rose/Ross Padovano, and I'm 26 years old. I graduated from Princeton University in 2005. I sold my soul to investment banking right after college. I worked at Lemur Brothers, which is where I met Romula/Romulus Mazur. I had to pay my own way through college because my parents couldn't afford it. I graduated with huge amount of debt. Although I wanted to attend a writing program in Iowa, I couldn't afford it. People often tell you that you can do anything. Eventually, you realize that you can do anything as long as you can pay the bills.

I became part of Veneratio when I was a sophomore in college. I guess they believe that you have proven yourself by that point. Everyone knows who the Veneratio are because they hold the most prominent positions in each college and get most of the prestigious fellowships and highest paying jobs right out of college. They recruit you young to prepare you for what you have to do. Veneratio had only been in operation for a year when I joined. That is probably why I was privy to so much delicate information. I wasn't sure whether I would fit in - I was never one for social organizations, but Veneratio was different. All that mattered was how much you knew and whether you could apply it. When I joined Veneratio, I finally found a group of people who believed that what was considered by many as abstract and not applicable to reality could in fact be useful on a daily basis. I had become obsessed with German philosophers in high school, Kirkegaard, Kant, Nietzsche, and Blumenberg. I believed that intellect could rule!

Veneratio met officially every week when I joined. I knew that we had other branches at the major ivy leagues, but that for the most part, we were concentrated on ourselves. The branches got together to present original work twice a year. Yet even the official meetings were rather unofficial by most standards. It would not be exaggerated to say that this was simply our life - we reveled in being able to gather in cafes and discuss these ideas with people that understood them.

Eventually, it became apparent that Veneratio was most obsessed with the Ancient Greek philosophers. They had most concretely and practically combined intellect with political rule, which was the avenue down which Veneratio eventually went. And we quoted from Plato often. Although it wasn't obvious to me right away, Veneratio's political agenda began to stand out - we were all civil minded. We were in general disgusted with the normal path to politics. We didn't believe that majoring in "political science" or "government" qualified you to run the country. Instead, learning about life and people, training your brain by reading Tolstoy, Dickens, Schulz, Mayakovsky, and Aristotle would create significantly more capable leaders. Therefore, most of us majored in literature, history, and philosophy. Obviously, we were operating in an economic and political climate where such pursuits, the pursuits that historically qualified Leonardo Da Vinci as a Renaissance Man, were considered useless. So, logically, we helped each other out.

When I graduated, I used my Veneratio connections to land a job at Lemur Brothers. Mazur, I found out later, was the one who specifically arranged it. It wasn't until after graduation when everything that Veneratio did became revealed to me. We were the first generation to be in a position to enact change, and we were ready to do so. Veneratio did nothing new. Rich individuals everywhere are using their financial leverage to get politicians to behave the way that they want them to - look at how much it takes to finance campaigns. Politicians always need money.

There was also an understanding that Veneratios acted according to the

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code - to never speak about another Veneratio when not in his presence. We were not a secret society, but we never talked about the conversations we had or who was a member, with others. They simply wouldn't understand. I realized after graduating that our code of silence was useful in every practical way.

I soon realized that Veneratio, the organization, was only a front, or maybe more appropriately, a recruiting pool. It wasn't every member of Veneratio proper that eventually entered the elite rank after graduation. Many believed that it ended there. However, if the leadership believed you were useful, it was made known to you. Usually, you would manage to get your dream job and things would simply work out for you. Veneratios were everywhere, and they kept tabs on the promising ones that were graduating. I was lucky enough to be considered useful, I realized.

Mazur and I became quick friends. Soon, it progressed to something much more. We began a relationship like none other I had ever had before. It was more mind-blowing than anything else. The wealth of information, the thoughts that Mazur had could shock a lifetime professor of literature. It's only in retrospect that I realize this, but s/he manipulated me in a way that I would never have detected if it wasn't for what later happened.

I had received a degree in computer science. When Mazur convinced me that the guy running for senator in 2006 deserved to be taught a lesson, I agreed with him. Then, we got to talking about past senate elections and he brought up the election of 2004. I was at Princeton at the time and remember being wowed by the hacker who managed to access Squidryn's website. It was more laughable than political. It just revealed how politicians were still vulnerable to intelligence. He ran around like a chicken who had lost his head for 24 hours! Even then, I secretly chuckled and applauded the hacker who had managed to disrupt this comfortable election. It seemed pretty harmless, and I reminded Mazur about it. He acted as if he didn't remember. I suggested that maybe something like this was worth doing again. I had won a series of hacker competitions back in college and knew that I could probably access the systems fairly easily. Mazur acted casually about it and just shrugged. But I wouldn't have done it if I couldn't detect a smile and the glint in his eye - that this was what he wanted me to do. Back then, I would have done anything to impress him.

That's how it started. I did that job. Pulled it off perfectly, of course. It only lasted 24 hours, but I'm sure the Veneratio got a kick out of it. In fact, it became a way for us to recognize each other. If you met someone that you thought may be Veneratio (because of the position they were in, the location, etc.), then you would bring up the hacking scheme. Depending on their response, you would know if they were Veneratio. The idea was apparently a hit. We waged a cyberwar on campaigns across the nation. Officials probably couldn't put it all together. Each attack lasted 24 hours and really wasn't a big deal in itself. It was more of the statement that we put out. My generation of Veneratio, the ones that we approved of, had all graduated in 2004 or 2005 with me and were gaining in prominence in their respective fields. After the hacking incident, I found myself in a position of leadership. It was unbelievable. I've heard about other gangs and their hierarchy, but it never occurred to me that we had one too. It was so much smarter than anyone else's; it was simply natural. I had earned my place at the top. Someone would have to take it from me. I traveled to the various universities for Veneratio events, the ones in which we read original work. It was usually at these meetings where the leadership had the opportunity to discuss who to endorse when they graduated. I hadn't noticed them when I was still in school, but we formed our own clique naturally. It was the strongest and most powerful Veneratio in my generation.

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Late in 2006, Mazur put up the photo exhibit. I was so proud of her/him; it was amazing. It was a clash of concepts that revealed the inner workings of a complex mind. The first time I saw it, I stood there frozen. I felt as if this was the first time that I could see the purpose of our work. Mazur then did a tour to promote the exhibit. Understandably, s/he went to all the café where Veneratio were known to frequent. It was those readings that inspired us and told us what to do. Our conversations were filled with our skepticism of the politicians, our disappointment at those who were former Veneratio, especially since we had endorsed their campaigns. There were some that were doing well, but others seemed to have forgotten where they had come from. The dissatisfaction was the theme. Under Mazur's guidance, I made the decision to show those politicians, now former-Veneratio, what we were thinking.

The scheme was genius, of course. To anyone else, it would seem like a few eccentric robbers. The fires started in January 2007. I had only to start them before the rest of the Veneratio took off. Anyone who had read and quoted Plato and knew his cave allegory (we all knew it by heart) extensively would understand the significance of a fire that wasn't really burning - we doused the furniture in a flame-retardant. America burned with our message for the next four months, and it put the lower Veneratio in their place. We soon began to see the political results - we had similar political agendas that we were pushing through that covered everything from foreign relations to educational reform.

Things began to degenerate after that. Three Veneratio were caught for the fires. It was a blow to our egos, to say the least. The crimes were nearly perfect. They were individualized and only true Veneratio, so we thought, would have the guts and brains to pull them off. We didn't have to worry about choosing people to do it - it was the benefit of creating an organization of highly goal-oriented, brilliant people. At one point someone implicated me. Mazur had broken up with me, and I had been demoted at Lemur Brothers. I knew the Veneratio were sending me a message; I had lost my position of authority, but I wasn't going down without a fight, so I decided to approach Detective Marambio with the information that I had. The downside of having an organization of brilliant people with initiative is that we're smart enough to take down the group.

Mazur was the brains of the East Coast Veneratio. Lording over the Yale chapter directly and with his connections at the Lemur Brothers and financial stamina, s/he had the ability to push and pull people exactly where s/he wanted them. However, Mazur was getting a little power hungry. At more than one point, s/he told me that s/he could probably run the entire country and make it better. Well, I'll admit s/he probably had a point, but even Plato would admit that a true, blossoming Republic couldn't completely in all its purity exist - Mazur never explained to me how it was that s/he could support Plato's vision. After all, Plato wanted all the poets to be thrown out and here he was, a poet.

R. Padovano

R. Padovano

Subscribed and sworn to me on this, the 8th of May, 2009.

Brittany Novak, Notary Public

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Affidavit of Andrew/Andrea Polonyi

Witness for the Prosecution

My name is Andrew/Andrea Polonyi, and I am 53 years old. I graduated from Harvard College and was the Governor of New Jersey from 2004 to 2008. Currently, I live in Hartford, Connecticut and teach Slavic Literature to undergraduates. I am, or should I say was, close friends with Romula/Romulus Mazur. In many ways, s/he destroyed my political career.

I don't think I was ever part of Veneratio. I graduated from Harvard College in 1962 and then went on to pursue an MBA at Harvard Business School. My understanding is that they recruit young and that you become initiated as an undergrad. Sadly, I was too old for that. But it was only time before a group like that was born. In my day, these societies were composed of either old money with major connections or violent gangsters that had a hard time getting by on pure hard work. I simply found myself falling in with some of the Veneratio. I worked at Lemur Brothers for a good part of my life after college. I didn't get there through any connections, just pure brains (and a good bit of luck). The economy was much more stable then, far less competitive than nowadays.

Mazur's application landed on my desk. S/He had incredible credentials. Even more than that, s/he passed the interview tests like no other candidate I had previously met. I used to joke with her/him whether s/he may have gotten the questions beforehand from our HR team; now, I'm not so sure s/he didn't. S/He applied to Lemur Brothers in 2003, fresh out of college. I hired her/him personally and s/he worked brilliantly for me. At the time, I was preparing a campaign for governor of NJ and therefore couldn't be putting in as much time in the firm, and Mazur came right in to back me up.

We spent a lot of time together outside of the office, chatting about our Ivy League days and books. What impressed me most about this young adult was her/his very practical idealism. Most of the young people we meet these days, the big boys (the ones that have lived a few years through economic booms and busts) simply call them "dreamy do-gooders." I wouldn't say that it's a derogatory term so much as a way of seeing that they'll soon grow out of it. Most of the kids that find themselves out of college and in the financial business eventually do find their way out of it. I could sense, however, that Mazur was different. S/He may have had idealistic views, but s/he knew very well how to achieve them and what sort of climate s/he was working in. The smart thing that s/he did was a little like philanthropy: s/he was fine with not doing good herself/himself as long as s/he could enable others to do good. Unlike the rich guys that give to charities, s/he was picking the people to donate to himself. It was a very hands-on approach.

After a few months, Mazur volunteered to work on my campaign. I told her/him I would love her/his brains, but I didn't think that s/he could manage both working on my campaign and working at Lemur Brothers. But, of course, I knew that I should never doubt her/him. I don't know if the kid slept, but s/he managed to do both, and do them incredibly well. S/He worked on convincing the young people in New Jersey - s/he apparently had connections through Veneratio in Princeton.

It was after my campaign when I began to hear more and more about Veneratio. Mazur kept bringing in these kids s/he called "brilliant" - I gave them recommendations for Lemur Brothers, other financial institutions I had connections with, and even gave them positions in my own office. I never had reason to doubt when Mazur brought me one of these kids because they were worth every penny. They worked incredibly efficiently and produced quality work.

At the end of 2006, however, Mazur and I began to have disagreements,

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but s/he still agreed to help begin me run my next campaign. We disagreed with how the government should handle the education system. It also seemed like her/his views were growing increasingly fanatical. S/He was giving me more and more names of kids s/he wanted to get recommendations for, too. I couldn't place all of them without seeming like I was flooding the market with my own personal supporters. Apparently, s/he had also acquired enough lift at Lemur to give recommendations of her/his own. Then the threats starting coming in November. At first, I wasn't sure that it was Mazur. S/He didn't even cross my mind. They were telephone calls and post-it note messages. But one gave it away. About a year ago, we had a conversation where we disagreed over Platonov's work *The Foundation Pit*. I hated it. I thought it was well written in Russian, but it wasn't a novel, it was an idea and would be better served as a piece of art, rather than a written work. Mazur blew up in my face. I received a phone call with a male voice whispering: "The pit will need to be built." Someone who had read Platonov would certainly understand the reference, and I got it. Loud and clear.

I won't go into the metaphysics behind the 140 page novel. Needless to say, it meant that I was messing up in office, and Mazur apparently wasn't happy with it. At the end of January, my house burned down. I knew it was part of the string of Veneratio arsons that had swept through the East. I wasn't sure it was Mazur, but I didn't feel comfortable with her/him helping on my new campaign and so I asked her/him to step away, very politely, in April 2007. S/He still tried to help out, but I politely sent her/him away every time.

That month, all the Veneratio staff I had quit. They composed half of my staff by then! With half my staff leaving, the rest of my staff couldn't pick up the slack, and everything went downhill from there. I finished up my term, but I couldn't run for re-election, even though I was a shoe-in. The staff "liquidation" as the newspapers called it made everyone suspicious, although obviously there was nothing to be suspicious of. I couldn't go back to Lemur with Mazur there. I'm not even sure they would have offered me my job back. Luckily, I had studied History and Literature at Harvard. I decided to teach part-time and try to get my master's on the side. It's working out well now. But it was a hellish few months, figuring out what to do with my life, realizing that all the doors that used to be open were now closed.

I now know that it was Mazur behind all of this. One day, in January, s/he visited me in my new home. It was the strangest interaction. S/He simply came up, knocked on my doorstep, and asked if I had a cigarette. I gave her/him one, and s/he lit it. S/He looked straight into my eyes and dropped the match on my doormat. Luckily, it was too cold and snowy for the horse-hair mat to catch fire. I yelled when I saw it, but s/he just turned and walked away.

A. Polonyi

A. Polonyi

Subscribed and sworn to me on this, the 8th of May, 2009.

Brittany Novak, Notary Public

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Affidavit for Romula/Romulus Mazur

Witness for the Defense

My name is Romula/Romulus Mazur, and I'm 29 years old. Currently, I'm living in Greenpoint, New York and working at Lemur Brothers. I'm a financial analyst as a way to get by, but I live for my art. I'm head of the Veneratio chapter at Yale and have been since I graduated. I didn't really inherit the position from anyone, they just needed someone to step in and organize, so I did.

I think the accusations that are being brought against me are ridiculous, and it feels just like the ancient days or most dictatorships where intellectuals who voice their discontent are persecuted. I guess we just do it "democratically." How about what happened to the intellectuals in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary in the 1950s? Is this the beginning of a great purge? First, Veneratio is no mafia-like enterprise that is trying to take over the country. Nor did Veneratio orchestrate the robberies and arsons that took place in 2007. The ex-Veneratio, and I stress ex, members who committed those arsons and those who were charged with computer crimes are individuals. They did not do it for the organization, nor did I in anyway instruct them to do it. That's absolutely absurd. If you want to read my quotes as a signal for Veneratio members to burn down houses, well I'm sorry to disappoint you. I think Marambio is just afraid of being wrong.

The entire Lemur financial staff can attest to the fact that I was in the building during each arson crime, except one. I was away on business when Polonyi's house was burned down. I was a good friend of her/his for a long time, and I helped her/him out immensely. We had a few disagreements, but I thought we were still friendly, so I went to see her/him. When I knocked on his door, expecting to enter, I could see in her/his eyes that s/he wasn't going to even invite me in. I was offended. I may have disagreed with her/his politics, but I believed that s/he could change. Maybe I was a little disrespectful when I threw the match on her/his doormat, but you have to understand what it's like to have a friend pretend like they don't know you after all that you've done for them.

I was good friends, very good friends, with Padovano. I can't believe that s/he would betray me like this and spread all these lies. S/he's clearly just saying these things to get out of the arson charges. I should have turned her/him in when I had the chance. I knew that s/he had committed the computer hacking crime and that s/he was somehow involved in the Boston fires. I couldn't say for sure, but I had a pretty good hunch. The two politicians whose houses s/he targeted had actually just rejected him/her. It was a blow, coming out of Princeton with a brilliant brain, but not-so-great grades. He/She's lucky he/she had me as a reference to Lemur Brothers. I saw his/her potential although his/her obsession with the humanities meant that he/she focused more on learning than getting good marks, which is detrimental to one's resume in this present day.

I did help out many Veneratio members get jobs with people that I knew. That's how this stuff works. You need to get your foot in the door somehow. I happened to know the right people, and I happened to know brilliant kids that could help them out. I worked on a few political campaigns here and there, but mostly I was focused on my artwork. Of course, they would find my fingerprints in these homes. I knew most of these guys pretty well. I visited their homes, I had dinner with them. What do you expect? It doesn't mean I set the houses on fire. I couldn't! I was at Lemur Brothers every time, except the one time that I explained.

Not too long ago, I put up an exhibit. It was the work of years. I had traveled across America photographing typical American images. I pro-

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moted it so that my old friends would travel to see it. I also wanted a larger audience to be aware of the work that I was doing. It displayed objects you would find in a typical household, but in a place you wouldn't expect them. For example, I had one photo where a football trophy was balancing on top of a hydrant. I won't necessarily explain it since no one reading this will have to opportunity to see the exhibit in all its glory. It was taken down, unfortunately, but it diagnosed the modern age's dilemma - what our country has been suffering from in the last two decades. As for Marambio's claim that I stole the items from the homes that were burned down simply because they are in my photos is absurd. I photograph *common* objects, common American objects, and those would obviously be in many households. Maybe someone should look at the bizarre robber stealing football trophies instead of flat screens before looking at my photos.

There's really nothing more I can say because these accusations are absurd. The idea of having a Veneratio run the country is a brilliant idea. I almost wish I would've thought of it, rather than being accused of it. Then, again, I'm a law-abiding citizen, no matter how much I think the enforcers of the law are wrong. I wouldn't commit an illegal act.

R. Mazur

R. Mazur

Subscribed and sworn to me on this, the 8th of May, 2009.

Brittany Novak, Notary Public

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Affidavit of Robert/a Nye

Witness for the Defense

My name is Robert/a Nye, and I am 76 years old. Right now, I'm living in Brooklyn, NY. Before that, I lived in Linden, NJ. I have been working at Lemur Brothers for the last 30 years as their head security officer. Anyone or anything that walks through those doors, I'll know what they're up to. Lemur Brothers is no small-time business. There are a lot of people that wouldn't mind getting their hands on some information or worse, messing with the staff.

I remember Romula/Romulus Mazur very well. S/he strode in the first day like s/he owned the place. I was impressed. When they first start most of these kids are cowering with those coffee cups that seem super-glued to their hands. Mazur seemed to know what s/he was about. Of course, when Lemur gets a new employee, we register them in the database and run a background check. Everything on Mazur came up clean - a spotless record. I probably shouldn't say this, but you'd be surprised how many of our employees have at least misdemeanors. Not Mazur. Not even a speeding ticket! Mazur also impressed me by coming up and introducing herself/himself to me. Everyone eventually gets to know the Nye guy! After all, I see them every morning and evening.

Mazur and I got to become fast pals. We were both Red Sox fans in a Yankee snake pit. S/He even gave me tickets to a game in Yankee stadium. S/He said that s/he normally goes to the games, but that Polonyi was working her/him to the bone. Apparently, Mazur was both working the campaign and putting in sixty hours a week at Lemur. I asked her/him how he could have let Polonyi talk her/him into that. S/He just looked at me, and I knew that Polonyi had said some harsh things. I didn't want to pry, but I knew that Polonyi had made more than one kid run out of this building with his tail between his legs.

I should say that I do know something about all the fires that happened in Boston. My son lives in the area, and I visit him and his wife as often as I can. I was walking through their Beacon Hill neighborhood when I saw a girl dressed in all black hightailing it past the State House. I nearly holstered to ask if she was alright, and then I looked ahead to see a pillar of smoke! I called 911 right away and stuck around to see what I could do.

Here's the crazy thing. I have a buddy, Ed, up north who works for a major security company that takes care of the top houses in Maine. We went to baseball games in the city whenever we managed to get tickets. More than a couple times, we ended up snagging them last minute from Mazur. Ed got used to me calling him up the night before a game during the season and telling him to hitch a ride down. He used to praise Mazur like a god. Anyway, Ed called me up a week or so after the Boston fires to report how Maine had its own string of fires. You can expect crazy things in our day and age - if you haven't notice, we've turned an eccentric corner after 9/11. Here's the thing, Ed called to tell me that he saw the most uncanny likenesses in a series of these videos - he had this crazy notion that he saw Mazur. I was blown away. Of course, instantly, I begin to investigate. There was *nothing* definitive about the tapes and images.

I'm glad Ed brought this to my attention because I was going to investigate it. Apparently, the police couldn't put any names to this fuzzy apparition, and Ed and I weren't going to suspect a friend if there wasn't any way to prove it. Lucky for us, the security office keeps detailed records for when people walk in and out of the building because they have to check in with us every time. For the month of February 2007 when the Maine fires were taking place, Mazur was in the office working long hours. S/He even came in

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on most weekends. In fact, we have her/him *in* the office at the hour of the fires and the hours leading up to them. I included those records with my affidavit as well.

Mazur was a good, smart kid. It'd be ridiculous for her/him to be twisted up in some crazy Veneratio stuff. That's just not her/him.

R. Nye

R. Nye

Subscribed and sworn to me on this, the 8th of May, 2009.

Brittany Novak, Notary Public

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Affidavit of Michael/a Jaksonian

Witness for the Defense

My name is Michael/a Jaksonian, and I am 24 years old. I recently graduated from Yale University in 2007 and was part of the Veneratio chapter there for three years (since sophomore year). Currently, I work as an art curator at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, MA. I knew Romula/Romulus Mazur throughout my three years at Yale, and s/he even recommended me to the MFA when I graduated; s/he has a lot of art contacts.

Mazur was a new-old breed, if you draw out the true nuances and implications of that idea. In many ways, although we're not living in an age conducive to it, s/he was a "revolutionary" of sorts. You could actually picture her/him in the ABC café at the turn of the 20th century. Too bad s/he wasn't born then, when s/he could have really started a movement. The Veneratio was an attempt to draw out the same force of thought in a college environment that had become increasingly individualistic and based on self-survival. It's quite obvious when you go to a majority of colleges today, students don't "socialize" by exchanging ideas and becoming invested in projects together - or only the rare few do.

There is certainly nothing enterprise-like about Veneratio in the sense that everyone has been asking me about. Sure, we sell our artwork where and when we can. We need money as much as the next person, and we've always been taught to value our art - sell it, don't give it away. And, yes, we paid dues every once in a while, but it was never a set thing. We paid how much we had to pay based on what Mazur told us. I was the person in charge of keeping the records for our sales together. It's not like I was officially "treasurer;" we didn't believe in stuff like that. But I suppose I fulfilled the same role as other treasurers in more standard organizations.

The money mostly went into the biannual Veneratio conferences we had. The Veneratio conferences are an interesting blend of what you would find at a "political" conference and an "artistic" one. We shared our work, and we had a series of panelists that spoke about the motivations and visions behind their work. The schemes were always grand. The most prevalent belief behind the words of the Veneratio elite was that they were somehow altering the mental canvas of our present world. It was a belief that I never could buy into simply because I just wasn't as talented as the rest of them were.

Although we never had any designations, it was obvious to everyone who was at the top and who called the shots - who decided which artist was the best and what books we should be reading. Mazur was consistently one of them. His/her brilliance was only reiterated with time. No one doubted Mazur.

I remember the 2006 conferences very well. There was an echo of the revolution in the air. The political empire in America was clearly crumbling, and we were sick of it. But, we weren't the ones to devote ourselves solely to campaigns. That's not where the change took place, instead we wanted to remold the very fabric of people's brains - the way they saw and understood the world. Mazur gave the opening remarks at both conferences, but didn't take part in any panels, which I found surprising. After the conference, I knew what I wanted to do after I graduated - I wanted to go work for a leading art museum. It was something that became apparent to me after hearing everyone talk about their work and their experiences. I was, like all Veneratio, going to put myself in a position to effect change.

And that's exactly what I did. I have enough power at the MFA to be able to voice my concerns on exhibits and even veto some. I'm certainly a heavy-weight visionary in terms of what the museum puts on.

That's really all Veneratio is - it's a bunch of really smart kids with

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a heavy, artistic vision mixed in with a tad bit of idealism. We share our work, we talk, and we inspire each other. Mazur helped us put all of this together. In my three years with Veneratio, I never heard word of us planning some sort of political coup or planning to sabotage a campaign or send "messages." Sure, we all had our political views, and most of them coincided. I also knew of Veneratio that went and did stuff like that on their own, but that's just our personalities, naturally, not the organization itself.

M. Jaksonian

M. Jaksonian

Subscribed and sworn to me on this, the 8th of May, 2009.

Brittany Novak, Notary Public

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Exhibit D

From the personal notes of Detective Marambio
NYC Police Department
Gang Unit

Dates and Locations of East Coast Fires

Month	Day	Location	Suspect caught?
January	1	Boston, MA (Beacon Hill)	
January	6	Swampscott, MA	
January	18	Providence, RI	
February	1	Bucksport, ME	Yes
February	6	Stratton, ME	Yes
February	18	Topsfield, ME	Yes
March	1	NYC, NY	
March	6	Trenton, NJ	
March	18	Cherry Hill, PI	
April	1	Baltimore, MD	
April	6	Annapolis, MD	
April	18	Dover, DE	

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Exhibit F

Logs from Security Office at Lemur Brothers
Compiled by Robert/a Nye
January 1st, 2007 - April 18th, 2007

Note: Although we have detailed reference logs, Mazur's pattern is very typical and I condensed it to be more readable. We also use our own coding and short-hand that would be difficult to decipher even with a legend

January 1st - January 18th, 2007

Mazur checked in at my desk between 8:30 am and 9:00 am.
Mazur checked out between 11 pm and 11:30 pm.

January 19th - January 31st, 2007

Mazur never checked in. When I asked Mazur later about it, Mazur said s/he was working Polonyi's campaign and keeping up with company work on her/his own time at home.

February 1st - February 18th, 2007

Mazur checked in at my desk between 8:30 am and 9:00 am.
Mazur checked out between 11 pm and 11:30 pm.

February 19th - February 28th, 2007

Mazur never checked in. When I asked her/him later about it, Mazur said s/he was working Polonyi's campaign and keeping up with company work on his own time at home.

March 1st - March 18th 2007

Mazur checked in at my desk between 8:30 am and 9:00 am.
Mazur checked out between 11 pm and 11:30 pm.

March 19th - March 31st, 2007

Mazur never checked in. When I asked her/him later about it, Mazur said s/he was working Polonyi's campaign and keeping up with company work on his own time at home.

April 1st - April 18th, 2007

Mazur checked in at my desk between 8:30 am and 9:00 am.
Mazur checked out between 11 pm and 11:30 pm.

April 19th - November 16th, 2007

Mazur took an extended leave to work on the campaign and her/his new art exhibit (he was featured in The New Yorker as an up and coming artist).