



**START**

## **Community-Level Indicators of Radicalization: A Data and Methods Task Force**

*Report to Human Factors/Behavioral Sciences  
Division, Science and Technology Directorate,  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security*

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National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism  
A Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Center of Excellence  
Based at the University of Maryland

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## About This Report

This report is part of a series sponsored by the Human Factors/Behavioral Sciences Division in support of the Counter-IED Prevent/Deter program. The goal of this program is to sponsor research that will aid the intelligence and law enforcement communities in identifying potential terrorist threats and support policymakers in developing prevention efforts.

The author of this report is Shira Fishman, director of the project.

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## About START

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) is supported in part by the Science and Technology Directorate of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security through a Center of Excellence program based at the University of Maryland. START uses state-of-the-art theories, methods and data from the social and behavioral sciences to improve understanding of the origins, dynamics and social and psychological impacts of terrorism. For more information, contact START at [infostart@start.umd.edu](mailto:infostart@start.umd.edu) or visit [www.start.umd.edu](http://www.start.umd.edu).

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## Agenda

Thursday, October 15, 2009

9:00am Welcome and Introductions

9:45am Presentations by participants on thought pieces

1:00pm Lunch

2:00pm Breakout Session #1: Generating research questions, data and methods

4:15pm Plenary wrap-up

Friday, October 16, 2009

9:00am Overview of the day

9:15am Breakout Session #2: Creating a research agenda

12:15pm Plenary wrap up

12:30pm Close

## Executive Summary

Recently, a number of United States citizens have been charged with seeking overseas training for terrorist plots, sending money to fund terrorism or plotting to launch terrorist attacks within the United States. These actions underscore the need to prevent violent radicalization well before the immediate threat of an attack. This is an emerging research area, and far too little is known about what drives individuals to engage in violent radical behavior. In addition, the vast majority of past research has focused on case studies constructed after an attack or attempted attack, large-scale attitudinal surveys, or interviews with former terrorists. As with all research, these methods have limitations including lack of external validity (limiting ones' ability to generalize from one individual to other cases), the reliance on finding and convincing individuals to grant interviews, and the ability of large-scale attitudinal surveys to capture extremist beliefs. Thus, the current project was launched to explore alternative research approaches that could be used to improve understanding of the processes surrounding violent radicalization. In particular, we sought to examine whether empirical research, using archival or institutional data at the community level, could provide new insights into factors that might leave individuals vulnerable to radicalization.

Scholars from around the world with expertise in radicalization, communities in the United States and innovative methods from related fields, agreed to serve on a Task Force focused on these issues. The group was brought together for a day and a half to explore the potential relationship between community characteristics and susceptibility to radicalization.

The Task Force began with the theoretical premise that some communities might possess certain characteristics that make the likelihood and/or rates of radicalization higher in those communities. Marginalized communities (including Diaspora groups), those that experience relative deprivation (of resources, both financial and otherwise), and communities that have experienced significant social disruption emerged as priority areas for future research.

To conduct empirical research, three categories of dependent variables were identified by Task Force members as potential proxies for violent radicalization. The categories are:

- The amount of terrorism – this variable could include the number of incidents, the number of casualties or an estimate of the damage caused by an attack.
- The number of other severe (both violent and financial) ideologically motivated crimes – extremist crimes may well serve as a gateway to other ideologically motivated violence, thus, a community with other ideological crimes may well be a proxy for radicalization.
- The number of attempted terrorist attacks –there is a need to consider not just successful attacks but attempts as well. Using thwarted and successful attacks is most likely a better indicator, both theoretically and statistically, of concentrations of radicalization.

To test theories of radicalization, Task Force members suggested specific conditions under which radicalization may be more likely to emerge:

- Marginalized communities – measuring the extent to which a subgroup, including Diaspora communities, feels included in or excluded from a larger community.
  - Economic measures – to assess the extent of economic distress felt by a community, including variables such as unemployment rates, median household income, income inequality, and data on participation in government assistance programs.
  - Social capital – the extent to which members of a community feel connected or trusting of neighbors and government, with lower levels of social capital being indicative of marginalization. Variables included here are family structure (divorce rates, single parent families), the number (or density) of social service organizations, civic organizations or arts/sports organizations, and voter turnout rates.
  - Political inclusion/exclusion – the extent to which members of a community feel included in local politics and political institutions. These variables include participation rates in local elections, active involvement in campaigns and the extent to which a members of a subgroup are elected or appointed to local offices.
  - Social support – the greater the amount of services available, the less vulnerable a community may be to radicalization. Measures of support include Head Start programs, number of children enrolled in CHIP or Medicaid, and, for Diaspora communities, number of organizations or individuals receiving money from state Offices of Refugee Resettlement.
  - Demographics of Diaspora community – the social structure of an immigrant community is vital to a community’s success. Such factors that may impact the prevalence of radicalization include the age at which immigrants arrive in the United States, the number of foreign language speakers or students in ESL classes and the extent to which the community establishes its own institutions such as banks and local media.
- Ideology – the variables discussed previously were assumed to affect radicalization across ideologies. However, there should be some indicators that are ideology-specific . Extremist organizations are ideologically motivated and may serve as a gateway toward extremist violence. The link between such organizations and terrorism could be tested by tracking the organizations’ legal activities, the number of extremist organizations or the extent to which an organization attracts members of a community.

In all, participants of the Task Force concluded that pursuing research using community-level archival or institutional data to study radicalization was a challenging but necessary task. Issues such as the marginalization or deprivation of certain communities, especially Diaspora communities, are increasingly important to study. To date, violent radicalization is still a fairly rare problem within the United States, thus, it may be possible that the community level is too broad to adequately give guidance on when, where or how individuals radicalize. However, if such research does prove successful then it may have a major impact on the way in which law enforcement deals with terrorism.

## Introduction

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) convened a meeting of a Task Force on Indicators of Radicalization. The meeting was held October 15-16, 2009, at the ACE Conference Center in Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania. The primary goal of the Task Force was to offer collective judgment about the value and feasibility of using archival data, often available at the community level (county, city, town, precinct, or tract), to conduct research on radicalization in the United States. The Task Force considered possible community-level indicators of radicalization and explored existing data sources (excluding data from attitudinal surveys) to assess whether those data might be applicable and relevant to the study of radicalization and violent extremism. The Task Force discussed and examined the research investments that could be made (by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security or by other funders) to facilitate work in this area. The Task Force explored potential research projects involving both analysis of readily available data and longer-term initiatives involving new data collection efforts. This report provides an overview of the discussions at the meeting and the research agenda discussed as well as future recommendations.

## Project Background

On Tuesday, December 1, 2009, police arrested five men from Northern Virginia in Pakistan who travelled abroad, hoping to join a jihadist organization. Friends who attend the same mosque as the men displayed shock that these men could be involved with a violent extremist movement, as they were described as respectful and devout Muslims with no indication of radical beliefs (*The Washington Post*, 2009 December 11). One week before this arrest, David Headley, a businessman in Chicago, was charged with conspiring with members of an extremist Islamist group to perpetrate the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks (*The Washington Post*, 2009, Dec 11). In September, a man from North Carolina, already charged with planning to wage jihad overseas, was charged with planning an attack on the Marine Corps base at Quantico, Virginia (*The Washington Times*, 2009 September 25). Omar Hammami, Abu Mansoor Al-Amriki, “the American,” was born and raised in Alabama but has recently drawn attention for his quick ascent to a powerful position in Shabab, a radical Muslim organization fighting the Somali government (*The New York Times*, 2010, Jan27). In 2009 alone, the Department of Justice has noted a dozen cases of U.S. Muslims who have been accused of terrorism or who sought terrorist training outside the United States. According to a former terrorism prosecutor, such attacks “underscore the persistent and dynamic nature of the threat of domestic extremism” (*The Washington Post*, 2009 December 11). Given these and other recent events, researchers and policy makers are increasingly concerned about the radicalization of individuals and groups in the United States into violent extremism.

The threat and likelihood of radicalization appears to have increased in today’s global society. As expressed by Evan Kohlmann (2008), international terrorist organizations can now reach individuals in remote locations around the globe through online training manuals, audio and video recordings and chat forums. Individuals can follow the teachings of al Qaeda and other organizations without ever meeting a member of the organization or attending a terrorist training camp. For example, the five men from Northern Virginia first made contact with terrorist organizations through emails (*The Washington*



Post, 2009 December 11). Intelligence officials are increasingly finding evidence of these online networks in Europe and Northern America.

Disruption of plots is necessary and important for successful prevention of violent activity; however, effective programs can also take a longer-term vision of counterterrorism. As with crime in the United States, prevention programs target a larger audience of youth who are at-risk of engaging in criminal activity. With sufficient understanding of the conditions which foster radicalization, similar programs could be targeted at individuals vulnerable to violent extremism. As discussed in a recent editorial in the *Washington Post* (2009 December 16), to date there is far too little known about the process of radicalization, how individuals join terrorist organizations and why they are attracted to such organizations. The present Task Force engaged in a systematic effort to determine how some of these questions might best be addressed via research.

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) brought together this group of scholars to investigate the feasibility and value of employing archival or institutional data to study factors that might facilitate processes of radicalization towards violent extremism, with a focus on examining whether and how research in this area might improve understanding about the potential for radicalization in the United States.

### **Task Force Goals**

The primary goals of the workshop were to:

- Explore the potential use of archival or institutional data to study radicalization
- Brainstorm and examine potential community-level indicators of radicalization
- Develop a research agenda focused on testing potential indicators of radicalization

The secondary goals were to

- Develop ideas for research projects that could be undertaken to study radicalization processes
- Discuss data that could be collected to further research in this area

### **Task Force Process**

The project director and START leadership selected the participants to take part in the Task Force. Participants were selected because they (a) were experts on radicalization, (b) used innovative methodologies in their own research, and/or (c) worked with U.S. community-level data that might be relevant to radicalization. Participants were selected to include a wide array of social science disciplines including criminology, psychology/psychiatry, political science, and sociology. Field practitioners were also included. Participant biographies are shown in Appendix A.

Participants were provided background information on the goals of the Task Force and invited to attend a 1.5-day meeting of Task Force members. In advance of the meeting, participants were asked to write a

short thought piece in which they each responded to a unique question focusing on how their area of expertise might be applied to the use of community-level data to study radicalization (see Appendix B for specific questions presented to Task Force participants, as well as the responses submitted by participants). Each participant was asked to report on 3 to 4 key points from their thought piece at the outset of the Task Force meeting.

Deliberations during the meeting were structured to allow participants time to present their own expertise and to blend their own knowledge with that of their colleagues. The meeting agenda included small group brainstorming, group plenary sessions and individual interactions between participants. The meeting was not a venue to discuss the current state of radicalization research (discussed below) but, rather, an opportunity to discuss how to continue to move the state of the research forward.

## Background on Radicalization and Community-Level Research

### Defining Radicalization

As with many issues in terrorism research, definitions of radicalization abound, with no commonly accepted definition. McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) define radicalization as a change in belief, feeling, or behavior toward increased support for intergroup conflict, while the definition used by the Netherlands's intelligence service focuses on the pursuit and support of changes in society that harm the functioning of the democratic legal order (AIVD, Netherlands intelligence service, *From Dawa to Jihad*, 2004). Clearly the range in scope of different definitions is quite broad.

Given the goals of the Task Force, the way that radicalization is defined may have specific implications for the operationalization of key variables. For example, defining radicalization as being willing to commit a terrorist attack leads to a dependent variable involving an actual attack, whereas, defining radicalization as the tendency toward extremist beliefs would necessitate a very different dependent variable. Creating alternative ways of measuring radicalization is in itself a challenging task.

Another important point for radicalization research is the relationship between behaviors, attitudes and beliefs. The key question for radicalization researchers and security personnel is the extent to which an individual engages in violent behavior and what predicts that behavior. One question this raises is whether radicalization is about beliefs, subscribing to radical thoughts, or about actions, engaging in radical behavior. It seems obvious to say that individuals who engage in radical behavior hold radical beliefs, but, in fact, it is not entirely clear that one's attitudes or beliefs necessarily underlie their behavior. Thus, radical attitudes may not be a good indicator of radicalization. Further, subscribing to a radical belief does not necessitate engaging in radical actions, and civil liberties dictate that private beliefs should be free from public scrutiny. The tension here appears to be that radical beliefs might be a good way of identifying those who are at risk of engaging in radical actions, however, individuals should not be targeted as suspicious on the basis of their *beliefs* (and not actions). In addition, we know that there are many individuals who possess beliefs that would be considered to be radical but who never engage in illegal or violent behavior. Thus, the relationship between radical beliefs and radical actions

should be an empirical question, and some of the discussions at the Task Force meeting addressed this issue.

## Defining Terrorism

Defining terrorism proves difficult for many reasons, among them, changing meanings over time, the fact that terrorists often refer to themselves as anything but terrorists, and the fact that even U.S. government agencies cannot agree on a common definition. For example, the FBI defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives” (see <http://baltimore.fbi.gov/domter.htm>) while the Department of Homeland Security defines terrorism as “any activity that involves an act that: is dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources and... must also appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping” (see 6 USC 101 – US Code – Title 6:Domestic Security, January 2004 at <http://vlex.com/vid/sec-definitions-19267143>; see also Hoffman 2006, pp.31 for more information on different definitions). Recent changes made by the Patriot Act have further complicated the discussion. The most recent changes to the Patriot Act redefine “domestic terrorism” to include mass destruction, kidnapping and assassination as terrorist activities (see <http://epic.org/privacy/terrorism/hr3162.html>), a move that angered some groups, such as the American Civil Liberties Union. Thus, there is little agreement in either the policy or scholarly communities on how to define terrorism.

For the purposes of the Task Force, the definition of terrorism may have an important impact on, among other things, the type of data that one collects. There is no uniform definition amongst the databases that were discussed most heavily at the meeting. For example, the American Terrorism Study uses data on individuals arrested as part of the FBI’s counterterrorism program, thus, adopting the FBI’s definition of terrorism. The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) created their own definition of terrorism and allows researchers to limit their search according to specifics of the definition. To be coded in the GTD, the event must be (a) intentional, (b) entail some level of violence, and (c) the perpetrators of the action must be sub-national actors (see below for more details of the GTD definition of terrorism). Unlike either of the other two databases, the Extremist Crime Database is collecting new data on thwarted attacks, thus, creating a whole different set of definitions of terrorist activity. Any research program developed in this area will require clearly articulated definitions and will need to ensure that concepts and constructs developed are based on consistent and relevant definitions.

## Defining Community

The Task Force focused on community-level indicators of radicalization, but what was meant by community was not defined a priori. When thinking about community, the default appeared to be geographic area, and Task Force members agreed that, for a study of the United States, community should be thought of at the sub-state level; that is, counties, municipalities, towns, neighborhoods or census tracts. Members also agreed that looking at smaller-scale geographic units (tracts vs. counties)

might allow for more nuanced understanding of community dynamics. However, they also noted that some data will only be available at more aggregated levels of analysis, such as counties.

Within geographic communities there may be other factors to explore such as size of the community or within-community effects. There may exist some link between size and extremism; recent work from the Extremist Crime Database shows that states with the largest populations account for a large number (35%) of extremist-related homicides in the United States. However, this cannot be explained as a simple function of population, as New York State, with a large population, accounted for a relatively small number of homicides. Thus size may need to be considered when defining a community. Although differences between communities are often explored, differences within communities over time may also have an effect on radicalization. For example, based on some triggering factors, such as the influx of immigrants to a homogenous community or a sudden decline in the availability of jobs in an area, individuals within a community may be increasingly vulnerable to radicalization. Thus, between-community differences and within-community differences must be explored further.

Beyond geographic communities, virtual communities appear to play an increasingly important role in the world. Studying the ways in which individuals see themselves as a part of an internet community is an area which must be explored further. In addition, this may present a further research challenge as much of the community data are collected by geographic community, potentially missing important links between virtual communities.

Finally, identity communities may play an increasingly important role in studies of radicalization. Identity communities are those that are not necessarily connected geographically but are connected ideologically or ethnically. A *Diaspora community* refers to any community that has been displaced or relocated (by choice or otherwise). Thus, many Diaspora communities within the United States are ethnically, nationally or ideologically tied to another community in a different country. For example, recently the Somali Diaspora community in Minnesota has attracted attention for the seemingly large number of youths who have been pulled toward radicalization (Leipman, 2009).

While the Task Force members recognized the many nuances among different definitions and conceptions of *radicalization*, *terrorism*, and *community*, the group decided to move forward without consensus on any given definitions of these concepts. Rather, discussions included varied definitions of these key terms, allowing for a more broad discussion and greater levels of brainstorming about how and what scientific research might be valuable and feasible. All Task Force members agree, however, that any specific research projects undertaken in this area must be precise about the operational definitions being used in a given study and how such definitions shape the parameters of the findings of such studies.

## Related Research

How individuals become engaged in violent extremism is a key question facing the security and research communities. In order to prevent and deter terrorist attacks, security personnel must be able to identify individuals who are willing and ready to carry out such attacks. In the past, researchers attempted to

identify an “abnormality,” an individual-level variable likely to make one become a terrorist. The extremity of the act and the small number of individuals who engage in such violence can lead to the desire to find something unique and abnormal about these individuals. However, the vast majority of the research all pointed to the “normality” of individuals in terrorist organizations. Similarly, trying to identify a “root cause” or a single “trigger” of terrorism such as poverty, education or religious beliefs has failed to find any one cause that is both necessary and sufficient for engagement in terrorism. Not that these factors are necessarily unrelated to terrorism, but, alone, they cannot account for why some individuals choose to support and engage in violent extremism.

Recent work on radicalization has shifted the focus from the individual to focus on the situational and contextual factors that make an individual vulnerable to an extremist ideology. Rather than viewing radicalization research as a search for static factors, researchers are thinking about radicalization as a dynamic process that varies for each individual but shares some underlying commonalities that can be explored. For example, need for identity has been a theme that has resonated in much radicalization work; vulnerable individuals appear to be those who are struggling in some way to find an identity, to feel meaningful or significant, to merge the secular and religious, or to feel connected to others.

Some experimental work has shown the importance of discrimination and grievances to explain radicalization. These empirical studies measure the willingness to use violence among participants in the United States (Asal, Lemieux, & Wilkenfeld, 2008). In this research, participants are presented with fictional vignettes and asked to imagine themselves as residents of an ethnically divided society where they belong to the weaker and historically discriminated against ethnic group. Participants are given either a high grievance situation (your parents were killed by government “crackdown” and you experience ongoing severe discrimination) or low grievance situation (your parents were killed in car accident and you experience low level of discrimination). Participants are then asked about the likelihood of their engaging in a protest or a violent attack against the oppressing group. Results show that those who are given higher levels of grievance are more likely to use a terrorist tactic, are more likely to justify the use of terror by others and are more likely to justify protest activities.

Other research has focused on the issue of identity to predict support of violence. In an international study conducted by START, researchers found that in 12 Arab countries, those who primarily identify as a member of their religion were more likely to support attacks on the West as compared to those who identify as members of their nation or as individuals (Kruglanski, Fishman, Orehek, Chen, & Dechesne, 2006). Thus, issues of identity seem paramount to an understanding of radicalization.

In the policy world, issues of radicalization have centered on the threat from “homegrown terrorism,” terrorism perpetrated by individuals who were born or raised in the West. The train bombings in Madrid in March 2004 and the London subway bombings in July 2005 increased concerns about domestic extremist threats, leading to a vast array of reports, mostly case studies. Perhaps the most widely discussed report of this type is the New York Police Department’s 2007 report (Silber & Bhatt, 2007) on homegrown terrorism in the United States. The report argues that ideology is what drives individuals in the West to carry out “autonomous jihad” via terrorist attacks against their host country. Radicalization is a process whereby “unremarkable” individuals seek out an identity which they find in extremist Islam.

Although the conclusions of the report raise some important points, the report, like many others, has not been subject to rigorous empirical scrutiny leaving some major questions about radicalization unanswered: for instance, why do the vast majority of “unremarkable individuals,” with similar life experiences to those studied here, never engage in extremist violence? What specific factors differentiate those who choose to engage in terrorism from their peers?

The scientific study of radicalization raises a number of challenges. To date, most of the empirical work on radicalization has relied either on case studies, as with the NYPD radicalization report, or on data from attitudinal surveys, as with the international survey discussed above. While these methods are valuable for understanding the nature of radicalization, both have limitations. Case studies may provide important specifics about the conditions under which one individual or group engaged in violence to pursue a political or social goal, but these studies can have weak external validity, limiting the generalized knowledge that might be gained about radicalization processes from the study of one subject. Case studies often involve interviews with former or current extremists or terrorists, but this line of research relies on identifying such terrorists, convincing them to speak to researchers, and continually assessing the reliability of the claims of the interviewee. In addition, case studies and interviews rely on retrospective memories, which are notoriously flawed. The use of attitudinal surveys can be biased by a variety of artifacts including the framing of the questions, the reliance on retrospective answers and the fact that the question itself calls attention to the issues. In addition, attitudinal studies rely on the individuals to accurately assess their own attitudes, our capacity for which remains unclear (for example, there is much recent work in psychology on implicit attitudes, attitudes individuals are not aware of possessing, which can skew conclusions drawn from attitudinal surveys; see Devine, 1989, Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). In addition, attitudinal surveys of the general public or of a subset of the general public are expensive, meaning that there are few relevant series of attitudinal data to allow for the study of significant changes in beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors over time.

Attempts to use archival or official data to forecast or anticipate terrorist or radical activity has yet to be undertaken in the academic world. The current Task Force was charged with determining whether empirical research approaches might be relevant and useful to the study of terrorism, specifically work that would use archival or institutional data to measure constructs relevant to the process of radicalization towards violence.

## Key Topics for Consideration

Initial discussions among Task Force members focused on topics and themes related terrorism, radicalization, and the study of communities. These initial deliberations were structured according to the following themes: terrorism in the United States, understanding criminal activity in the United States through a community lens, marginalized and traumatized groups, radicalization and support for terrorism internationally, and methods of studying radicalization.

*Terrorism in the US* – The discussion among Task Force members began with an overview of terrorism in the United States, the types of terrorism committed, the groups perpetrating this terrorism and the planning activities leading up to an attack.

Gary LaFree provided an overview of terrorism in the United States. Using data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), LaFree analyzed 1,347 terrorist attacks in the United States from 1970-2007. U.S. data alone are rarely used for analysis, and LaFree argued that perhaps this is because the US represents a difficult case study: it has been attacked by a wide array of terrorist groups, and many attacks are hard to classify by type of attack (e.g., anti-abortion, eco-terrorism, hate crime). Some of the groups who have attacked within the United States include anti-abortion groups, the New World Liberation Front (NWLFF), the Death Angels, the Black Liberation Army, Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN), the Jewish Defense League (JDL), Omega – 7, Weather Underground, the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and Animal Liberation Front (AFL). The most active and deadly attack groups have changed drastically through the decades. The most frequent target of U.S. attacks are businesses, while the most common weapons used are bombs/explosives. Terrorism in the United States is primarily a big-city phenomenon, with New York City and Los Angeles accounting for 50% of the attacks. LaFree noted that the GTD does not collect data on thwarted attacks, which is becoming an increasingly important area to study.

An overview of the nature of terrorist planning in the United States was given by Kelly Damphousse. He conducted temporal and spatial analysis on a subset of data from the American Terrorism Study which contains information on all federal indictments resulting from FBI terrorism investigations from 1980-2005. Findings show that international groups that target the U.S. homeland have a long planning cycle, spending many months planning for an attack, whereas single-issue terrorists have a short planning cycle, assembling approximately 1-2 weeks prior to attack. In addition, international terrorists appear to either attack from far away (over 800 miles) or move to their attack location (within a 30 mile radius) shortly before an attack. In contrast, right-wing terrorists live farthest away from their attack sights, usually in rural areas, while perpetrating attacks on urban areas.

*Understanding criminal activity in the United States through a community lens* – As discussed, almost no research in terrorism has explored either archival data or community-level data related to radicalization. Given this omission in the field, it was necessary to bring together researchers who have studied community-level variables in other, related areas to glean from those fields the types of questions that are being asked, the data being collected and the analysis being done. Researchers in this area were

primarily sought for their work in other related disciplines and also their work using community-level variables in their own field. For example, those who studied criminology were valuable for considering the types of contextual factors that affect criminal behavior in general and might be applied to the study of radicalization. Researchers were selected from areas that might be relevant to the study of terrorism: situational crime, hate crimes, right-wing extremist crime, and gangs.

Graeme Newman expanded on the use of situational crime prevention to combat terrorism. The hallmark of situational crime prevention is breaking down different types of crime into very specific situations and problems (e.g., not just “car theft” but “theft of cars from residential streets and driveways”). Viewing terrorism from a situational crime perspective leads to the emphasis on opportunities (where is an opportunity to engage in terrorism?), rather than individual actors. Opportunities can be more easily identified than perpetrators can be. This focus echoes much of the current thinking on radicalization in attempts to understand the interaction between the individual and the situation rather than looking for some “abnormality” in the individual. The situational crime approach requires a rethinking of the role of local police and other local entities (local banks, local government, retail stores, etc.) in serving as data collectors in order to help answer questions such as the extent to which targets are easily accessible, weapons are available, tools are obtainable and the local conditions that may facilitate terrorist activity. This framework endorses a research approach that focuses on the use of local-level data to understand radicalization dynamics.

Andrew Papachristos brought to the Task Force an expertise and experience in the study of gangs to provide insights into potential parallels between individuals’ decisions to join a gang and an individual’s process of radicalization. Gangs are a local phenomenon in which individuals join primarily for protection. Social networking theory has recently been used to study the interrelationship of gang members and other connected individuals. This approach could be used to map and test interconnections among terrorists as research has shown the importance of networks and groups of friends for involvement in terrorism. Likewise, gangs rely on their broad membership rather than an individual leader and similar arguments have been made about terrorist organizations.

Like gangs, hate crimes are mostly a local phenomenon, although the data on this are very limited so conclusions are tentative, according to Ryan King. Just as the Task Force sought to explore conditions under which an individual might radicalize to ideologically motivated violence, hate-crime scholars seek to understand factors that may lead to an increased occurrence of hate-crime activity. Often majority-on-minority hate crimes in the United States are the result of an influx of immigrants into a predominantly white community. The major similarities between hate crimes and terrorism, identified by King, are venting a grievance, the use of symbolic targets, the response to an event and the use of the event to intimidate. However, there are some major differences as well. For example, terrorism has typically been used as a strategy of the weak, while hate crimes are often committed by members of a majority against a minority. In addition, hate crimes are often perpetrated by individuals (rather than groups) and hate crimes are often spontaneous events (rather than planned).

Joshua Freilich has been collecting data on extremist crimes in the United States. Freilich raised the key question of how to operationalize radicalization, typically measured using public opinion surveys



(measuring support for specific groups or ideologies) but potentially measured using behavioral measures of both legal activities (such as attendance at rallies) and illegal activities. Freilich noted that one strategy used for studying extremist behavior might be appropriate for studying radicalization--studying one community over time, tracking the rise and fall of radicalization according to certain political triggers. Finally, Freilich discussed the issue of data availability, including official data, data from extremist groups themselves, data from watch groups, media and other open sources, census data, and the American religious data archive.

*Marginalized and traumatized groups* – In the literature on radicalization, the presence of some grievance is an important concept and viewed by many as a pre-requisite. Feelings of humiliation, marginalization, or victimization can be necessary (although not sufficient) for radicalization. Researchers familiar with marginalized and traumatized groups in the United States were invited for their work with such communities.

Susan Clarke reviewed many issues of ethnic and racial minorities' inclusion at the local community level. Increased diversity may be associated with less trust in government and neighbors (lower social capital). This is certainly true on an individual level and may also be true at the community level. Individuals who immigrate may feel a part of both their U.S. community and also their home community (an issue that was echoed later in a discussion on the link between local and global terrorism). The extent to which individuals are participating in local governance appeared to be a central theme and will be repeated again as one of the variables that may measure group marginalization.

There is no simple relationship between trauma exposure and radicalization to violence. According to Stevan Weine, it is a mistake to over-prioritize exposure to a traumatic event as a singular cause of deviant behavior at the exclusion of other important factors. Some of the factors Weine suggests exploring include the gap between needs and resources (e.g., available benefits, economic opportunities), the age at which an individual immigrates (many problems among early adolescent immigrants), family characteristics (e.g., structure, stability, parental access to resources), and economic conditions. The difficulties lie in the lack of primary data from these communities and their unique nature, but there is hope that with good data, researchers can make generalizations from one community to another.

Bert Useem reported on prisons—home to a uniquely marginalized population—as an incubator of radicalization. There is reason to think that those in prison might radicalize: for one, they are a very violent group often from disadvantaged backgrounds, and they are accustomed to using violence to solve problems. In addition, in prisons there is a basis for collective grievance. However, Useem finds that U.S. correctional leadership and management have improved their ability to limit radicalization. In the near future, budgetary cutbacks may increase prisoner's ability to radicalize.

*Radicalization and Support for Violence Internationally* – Although the Task Force work was focused on communities in the United States, international work on political violence and radicalization can help guide research based on successes in Europe and elsewhere.

According to Victor Asal, the interplay between grievance, capability and political opportunity structure can be relevant to the probability of violence in a community. The conditions of economic and political institutions can be key drivers of grievance, however, the relationship is not always clear. For example, the link between poverty and general violence has been largely accepted in the literature, but the link between poverty and terrorism has been highly contested. Grievance caused by economic inequality should be explored further. The openness of a regime will have an impact on how people mobilize – a democracy is likely to lower the likelihood of radicalization because a democratic process should lower the motivation to radicalize, however, a democracy makes it easier for those already radicalized to act on their extremist ideology. The capability of an organization to mobilize resources is crucial to their ability to carry out an attack. These data are plentiful at the national level but, at the sub-national level, data are extremely limited.

Kris Robison noted variation among communities around the world that appear most receptive to violence. Islamic violence (as compared to leftist violence) seems to be concentrated in urban populations. More work is certainly necessary to explore whether there is something unique about the urban context that may inflame jihadist rhetoric and ideology. In his research, there also appears to be some link between the status of women and violent radicalization, with the inclusion of women appearing to increase radicalization. In contrast, mature economic development may inoculate a community against radicalization as it appears to ease some grievances. Many questions still remain to be explored across contexts, including the use of school to teach hatred, the effects of state responses, media staging effects that provide a platform to radicals and methods of studying and measuring secularism.

Magnus Ranstorp identified a number of factors associated with Islamic radicalization that have emerged from studying communities in Europe, including the sense of living in a hostile society that views Islam, migrants and Muslims with suspicion, the feeling that Muslim concerns were not at the front of the political and social agenda, and feelings of discrimination (which appears to play less of a role for individuals radicalized in the United States except in the Black community). In looking at the United States, it appears that many U.S. extremists travel abroad (for language or combat training and to interact with other extremists), are inclined to plan attacks beyond the borders of the United States or to target U.S. military facilities in the United States (perhaps indicating fewer direct connections to al Qaeda), and are increasingly interested in Somalia and Yemen as target destinations. At the community level, Ranstorp discussed “gateway organizations” that socialize individuals into the extremist milieu. These organizations took the place of radical Imams and mosques and are increasingly operating “underground.” The internet may also serve as a vehicle for radicalization. War-torn areas are increasingly an area of concern for radicalization researchers, for example, the Somali community appears particularly vulnerable to radicalization. Community-level variables are lacking in both the United States and Europe, partly due to a lack of understanding about the dynamics between multiple communities in a large urban setting.

*Methodological Considerations* – Current methods for studying radicalization, using case studies and attitudinal survey data, have limitations. Understanding these limitations can help strengthen new

methods. In addition, understanding the difficulties inherent in translating measures to the community-level can help preempt some of the missteps.

Sophia Moskalenko and Clark McCauley reported on the traditional methods used for studying radicalization--attitudinal surveys and case studies. While case studies can be illustrative, they have a number of shortcomings, including the fact that researchers are limited to studying individuals who are willing to talk to them, and they rely on retrospective data which is often flawed and likely to be influenced by the ways in which individuals portray themselves (e.g., hero, fighter, etc.). Similarly, attitudinal surveys are limited by the types of individuals who respond and the types of questions that are asked. Further, it is unclear whether asking people outright about their attitudes is a helpful measure of what they believe and/or how they will act in the future.

Developing new strategies for studying radicalization that would rely upon existing archival and institutional-level data available over time at the community-level in the United States would address some of the limits of survey and case study research and could expand understanding of radicalization dynamics. As such, Fran Norris shared suggestions based on her own experiences of studying dynamics of U.S. communities using archival data. A clear conceptual framework is necessary before beginning; one must understand the community-level factors and their interrelations. What are the important constructs to study, and how can we measure them? This initial process is not easy or straightforward, for example, measures may be available for some communities but not others or there may not be a valid measure of a variable in the theoretical model. Norris cautioned that the development of an index must be validated empirically for internal consistency, stability and validity and encouraged researchers to ensure that new measures that they are utilizing actually measure the concept they purport to measure.

## A New Approach to Studying Radicalization: Observations at the Community Level

This Task Force began with the theoretical premise that some communities might possess certain characteristics that make the likelihood and/or rates of radicalization higher in those communities. As discussed previously, terrorists do not simply “arrive” as terrorists; there is a process by which an individual or group becomes radicalized. It is this process that we are attempting to study. We believe that there are certain factors, observable at the community level, which might indicate a higher likelihood of radicalization among individuals in a given community.

Marginalized communities repeatedly emerged in discussions as communities with high rates of radicalization. Individuals who feel socially excluded, especially those with no outlet for such feelings, are vulnerable to radicalization. Scholars have argued that such marginalization can account for increases in radicalization amongst individuals in Diaspora communities. For example, the NYPD report on radicalization (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p. 17) argues that within the Muslim Diaspora community, the Salafi interpretation of Islam is widespread and easily accessible to second and third generation immigrants eager to learn about their Muslim heritage. Similarly, in a report on homegrown terrorism in the United States and United Kingdom, Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman (2009, p.45) argue that

individuals may be primed for radical activity when they feel a schism between the West and Islam—a situation that is especially likely among Diaspora communities within the United States. In his presentation to the U.S. Senate Homeland Security Committee (2009 March 11), Andrew Leipman, Deputy Director of Intelligence, National Counterterrorism Center, discussed the growing appeal of radical Islam to youths in the Somali refugee community in the United States. He argued that youths within this Diaspora find themselves caught between the traditional, ethnic identities of their parents and the new culture and traditions here in America.

While there is anecdotal evidence of radicalization within Diasporas in the United States and in European countries, systematic analyses have not been undertaken to explore whether radicalization is more likely in geographic communities in which members of specific Diaspora communities are concentrated and, if so, under what conditions. Theories suggest that feelings of marginalization and lack of inclusion in the host community would contribute to a susceptibility to radicalization. The extent to which members of a Diaspora feel integrated into the larger host community may well be related to a vulnerability to radicalization. Within the literature, feelings of alienation in a Diaspora community are often discussed along with the idea of a perceived schism between the West and “traditional” or “ethnic” values (see for example, Thachuk, Bowman & Richardson, 2008). Feelings of alienation and marginalization may well be intertwined with the idea of the West versus traditional culture.

The link between Diaspora communities in the United States and their homeland communities around the world is also a source for research questions. How isolated are communities in the United States, and how connected are they? Events that occur on the foreign stage may have an impact on local communities, and the reaction to such events may be important to watch and record. For example, among the European intelligence community, there was significant interest in local reactions to the war in Gaza. Similarly, the crisis in Africa, including the invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia has been watched carefully by the Somali Diaspora community in the United States and increased nationalistic sentiments. Extremist recruiters have played on these nationalistic tendencies and a number of individuals from the Somali Diaspora community have returned to Somalia to train or perpetrate attacks (Leipman, 2009). Thus, attention to events on the foreign stage is crucial to U.S. homeland security, and the connection between the Diaspora and homeland communities must be explored further.

Another community characteristic relevant to likelihood of radicalization might be relative deprivation—either one community as compared to another or within a community. Deprivation may be felt in resources (i.e., money, water, insurance) or opportunities, such as those that might be available for growth and advancement. Relative deprivation may be intensified among members of a Diaspora community: Upon arrival in a foreign place, members of such a community may well be lacking in resources as compared to others around them. Similarly, some members within a Diaspora community, perhaps those who have arrived more recently, may have fewer resources as compared to others. Although it seems clear that economics alone cannot account for radicalization, it is possible that communities who are less financially viable, especially when compared to other communities, or that view themselves as having lower levels of opportunity, may be likely to see higher rates of radicalization. The relative deprivation of one community as compared to others may contribute to such things as frustration, humiliation and shame that may push individuals onto radical paths. A lack of opportunities

(especially as compared to the perceived opportunities of others) may foster an environment of helplessness and desperation.

Another potential factor fostering radicalization towards violence could be a real or perceived disruption in the social norms of a community. For example, a community that has lost political, economic or social power might support the rise of far-right social movements (McVeigh, 2009; see Freilich thought piece). Likewise, hate crimes are thought to occur most frequently in homogeneous communities that experience a sudden influx of minority immigrants (Green et al., 1998; see King thought piece). Thus, communities that appear stable may experience an event that disrupts the norms and creates an opportunity to allow radicalization to flourish.

### Dependent variable – trying to identify “communities with individuals vulnerable to radicalization”

Assuming that there are identifiable characteristics associated with communities where individuals are more likely to become radicalized, research should be able to test for occurrences of radicalization as a dependent variable at the community level. Often this dependent variable is measured by looking at survey data on support for extremist ideologies (i.e., the global jihad) and/or support for specific organizations or groups (i.e., al Qaeda). Given the Task Force’s goal of using non-attitudinal research, alternative variables needed to be considered as indicators of communities in which radicalization has occurred at high levels. Task Force members agreed that potential measures include:

- (a) the amount of terrorist activity experienced within a community,
- (b) the number of other ideologically motivated crimes (both violent & financial) in a community,
- (c) the number of attempted terrorist attacks (i.e., thwarted attacks) in a specific context,

Such behavioral measures have been and/or can be obtained through official sources, watchdog groups, extremist movements themselves, media reports and other open-source data. Each of these three measures is considered below, and the data sources/indicators used to study them is discussed. Although “community” was not defined outright, this section clearly references a local geographic community, such as county, city, or neighborhood.

Each of the dependent variables above could be looked at as either static, describing the community at any one given time, or dynamic, how a community might change over time. For example, a researcher could determine that community X was the most prone to radicalization because it has the most thwarted attacks compared to other communities in a given year. Alternatively, a researcher could explore the change nationwide in the number of thwarted attacks from year 1 to year 2 and determine that individuals in community Z are the most prone to radicalization, evidenced by the fact that this particular community experienced the greatest increase (or percentage increase) in thwarted attacks between these years. Both approaches may be necessary at first in order to assess the best method for capturing communities with individuals vulnerable to radicalization.

- a) **The amount of terrorist activity.** This dependent variable could be a tally of the number of incidents, number of fatal incidents, number of casualties (fatalities and/or injuries) or an estimate of the extent of damage caused by the attack (property/financial). As discussed above, there is still no agreed upon definition of terrorism, thus, each project would need to define a terrorist attack before collecting data.

*Data Availability.* The Global Terrorism Database (GTD) is an open-source database that includes information on over 80,000 terrorist incidents around the world from 1970-2007 (with annual updates planned). For an event to be coded in the GTD, the event must be (a) intentional, (b) entail some level of or threat of violence, and (c) the perpetrators of the action must be sub-national actors. In addition, for inclusion, the event must also meet *two* of the following three criteria, (a) the act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, social or religious goal, (b) there must be some evidence of an attempt to coerce, intimidate or convey a message to a larger audience, or (c) the action must be outside of the context of legitimate warfare activities. The GTD contains a record of each incident, including the number of casualties (fatalities and injuries) and an estimate of the property damage caused by the attack. The GTD currently records information at the city level. If the desired level of analysis for the United States is the county level, the GTD data could be converted.

- b) **The number of other ideologically motivated crimes (both violent & financial).** There are many extremist crimes committed in the United States that would not be categorized as terrorism; however, such crimes may be a useful dependent variable when assessing radicalization levels within a community. Extremist crimes may well be a gateway to ideologically motivated violence and terrorism. To assess such crimes within a given community, data on the location of various extremist crimes and the origin of the suspects could be used.

*Data Availability.* The Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) uses a broad range of official sources to document crimes committed by political extremist in the United States. Indicators from the ECDB may include the number of incidents or the intensity of incidents. Data on the location of the crimes and the origins of the suspects can be easily accessed from the ECDB. To date, ECDB includes data only on criminal activity by far-rightists in the United States, but efforts are underway to collect parallel data on other ideological extremists (including far-leftists, Jihadists, and single-issue extremists in the United States).

- c) **The number of attempted or thwarted terrorist attacks.** Better intelligence and surveillance has allowed officials to disrupt an increasing number of terrorist attacks. Between September 11, 2001, and September 11, 2009, at least 20 known Jihadist attacks have been stopped in the United States alone (*Christian Science Monitor*, 2009 September 26). In addition, there was broad agreement from the researchers at the Task Force meeting that using information on thwarted and successful attacks was a better measure than just successful attacks. If the goal is to understand radicalization, then there is little difference between a thwarted attack and a success, both indicate intended incidents of terror.

*Data Availability.* Neither the GTD nor the ECDB currently includes data on thwarted terrorist attacks, although the ECDB has begun to collect these data. The GTD does not contain data on attempted attacks. One database that might be used as an initial source is the American Terrorism Study (ATS) which contains data on individuals prosecuted in federal court as part of an official FBI terrorism investigation from 1980 to 2005. The data in the ATS includes both successful attacks and thwarted attacks in which a suspect was arrested on Federal terrorism charges. Although additional data must be collected, this may serve as one potential source for data on thwarted attacks.

## Possible Independent Variables

As discussed above, there is a need to identify the factors that may indicate an increased likelihood of radicalization in certain communities.

**Marginalized communities.** The extent to which communities feel integrated or included in the larger community was theorized to impact the extent of vulnerability to radicalization: Communities with higher levels of inclusion and integration might be less likely to give rise to radicalization. The need to maintain stable and positive interactions with others is seen by psychologists as one of the most fundamental of needs (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Threats to belonging lead to the desire for inclusion, thus, increasing the appeal of a small, tight-knit organization, like a terrorist group. In addition, marginalization is closely tied to the issue of relative deprivation. Indeed, it seems hard to imagine that a community that feels marginalized does not also feel deprived in some way. However, there is growing concern that Muslim Americans in the United States feel marginalized, despite there being no significant difference between the income level of Muslim Americans, in general, versus that of others in the country (Pew Report, 2007). The variables set forth in this section could measure either marginalization or relative deprivation.

Observers of radicalization dynamics in Europe have noted that some members of Diaspora communities within European countries are highly marginalized from the majority, host population and point to this dynamic as one that is fostering radicalization in some communities. According to psychological theories on the need to belong, individuals must perceive that their interpersonal relationships are stable (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). However, Diaspora communities may perceive instability in their status and may be increasingly at risk of marginalization. Some additional variables related specifically to Diaspora communities are also discussed below.

### *Economic Measures*

One way to evaluate marginalization is through the use of economic measures – to what extent is a community experiencing economic distress? What are the rates of unemployment? To what extent is their economic situation similar to the larger community or other sub-groups? Measures of poverty or economic disparity can be used, including Gini coefficients to measure income inequality or discrepancies between communities. Data on free/reduced-price school lunches could also be helpful as an indicator of poverty levels.

*Data Availability.* The Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://www.bls.gov/data/>) maintains monthly data on unemployment rates for states, cities, counties, cities and towns (with populations over 25,000). Country-wide labor force statistics are also available by gender, ethnicity, race, age, education, and marital status. Data on employment and wages are also available down to the county level. The Census Bureau ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)) maintains data at the county and city levels on economic indexes such as median household income, the number of people below the poverty level, per capita income, and median home values. Some general information from the census data such as income levels, poverty reports and employment can be searched by county (<http://censtats.census.gov/usa/usa.shtml>). The American Community Survey (part of the Census data) also includes data on the number of households receiving any of the following assistance: supplemental security income (SSI), cash public assistance income or food stamps in the past twelve months.

The Kids Count Data Center ([www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org)) presents Census data and reports on various indices relevant to children's well-being such as the number and age below the poverty level, income levels (by race and age), employment status of parents, school enrollment, and living arrangements (single family homes, number of people in a home). These data can be viewed by the county, city, metropolitan areas, or congressional or legislative districts.

The National Center for Education Statistics ([www.nces.ed.gov](http://www.nces.ed.gov)) also lists economic data such as poverty status, per capita income and home values for each school district (although not all school districts may be present). The center reports the number of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch for each public school in the country (<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/index.asp>).

The Gini-coefficient is a frequently used measure of income inequality. The census bureau reports Gini-coefficients by state (but not any level below), but a Gini-coefficient can be calculated at the county or district level using economic data at that level. Within the census, the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates Program (SAIPE) reports income and poverty statistics at the county and school district level ([www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/index.html](http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/index.html)).

### *Social Capital*

The extent to which a community is integrated may be measured by levels of social capital, the extent to which members of a community trust neighbors and government. Measures of social capital are frequently assessed at the individual level; however, there have been some recent efforts to translate these measures into community-level variables (see Sherrieb, Norris & Galea, 2009). Some indicators include the extent of volunteerism and association or club memberships. Higher levels of social capital, as measured by the presence of these indicators, would reflect a community with high levels of integration and, as such, lower susceptibility to radicalization.

*Data Availability.* Sherrieb, Norris & Galea (2009) conceptualize social capital as a function of *social support*, *social participation* and *community bonds*. Social support can be operationalized through variables relating to family structure, such as divorce rates, households with children, households with two parents versus one parent. These data are available at the county level through the Census Bureau.



Sherrieb et al. found that these measures were so highly correlated that it was possible to use the number of parents heading a household variable as a proxy for social support.

Others have used the General Social Survey ([www.norc.org/GSS+Website/](http://www.norc.org/GSS+Website/)) to access this type of data. The General Social Survey includes questions related to behaviors as well as attitudes. Similarly, Sherrieb and colleagues used the Social Capital Assessment Tool (SCAT) from the World Bank (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTTSOCIALCAPITAL/0,,contentMDK:20193049~menuPK:994384~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:401015,00.html>) which is a household survey dealing with conditions of one's community. The survey asks questions about the social supports available in the community as well as general characteristics of the community such as the economic conditions, availability of drinking water, electricity and sewage, and recreation opportunities. Interestingly enough, in the Sherrieb et al. study the number of social service organizations, based on data from the SCAT, was not correlated with other measures of social support in their study. Whether this finding would replicate or not remains to be seen, and the number of social service organizations may be a good proxy for social support in a community.

To this end, the National Center for Charitable Statistics (<http://nccs.urban.org/>) reports the number of registered non-profit organizations by U.S. county. These data can also be further specified according to predetermined categories such as health or religion. Social participation can be measured using variables such as number of (or density of) civil organizations and arts/sports organizations. Sherrieb et al. also found that percent of voters in the presidential election and number of religious adherents were good measures of social participation. All of these variables can all be assessed at the county level. Other variables that might be used to assess social participation include the number of blood drives and levels of PTA membership. Sherrieb et al. attempted to collect a measure of volunteerism but found that it could not be assessed at the county level. Thus, this measure may be difficult to obtain. The concept of community bonds was conceptualized by Sherrieb and colleagues by the net migration rate in a three year period and the inverse of the property crime rate. Sherrieb and colleagues also measured residential stability as defined as more than 5 years in the same household; however, this variable did not correlate to community bonds in their data. Trust in government might be another way to measure social capital. One way to assess trust in government is through voter turnout rates, especially in local elections during non-presidential election years. If individuals do not trust in government, they are likely to feel that voting is useless. Likewise, voting in local elections is a sign that one expects local governance to be receptive to their vote. Data on voter turnout in local elections could be collected from local media sources.

### *Political inclusion/exclusion*

Political inclusion/exclusion may be an indicator of larger community involvement. Some factors include the extent to which community members are involved in politics at the local level – do they run for or hold office? Do they vote in local elections (at a different rate compared to other sub-groups)? Are community members actively involved in campaigning, or have they joined, worked or held office in a partisan organization (i.e., moveon.org, Young Republicans)? Have they experienced a loss of political

power recently? Other community indicators include protest activity and history, letter writing/telephone/email campaigns, petition signing, and monetary donations.

*Data availability.* The American Citizen Participation Study (Verba, Lehman Scholzman, Brady, & Nei, 1990) was designed to assess political participation in the United States. The database includes information on voting status, involvement in community politics, contributions to political campaigns, and other campaign activities. Unfortunately, the study was only collected in 1990. The Pew Research Center ([www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org)) also collects yearly data which includes data on voting behavior. The Pew Internet and American Life Study ([www.pewinternet.org](http://www.pewinternet.org)) asked some specific questions relevant to political behavior (even at the community level); for example, one question asks respondents about whether they have ever attended a political meeting on local or town affairs. Other questions ask respondents about whether they have worked on a political campaign, volunteered for a party or made a political speech. As discussed with other data sources, the Pew data is collected by as a broad survey but it does focus on behaviors, not attitudes. It is unclear to what extent this data may be disaggregated such that answers may be viewed at the county level, rather than at the level of the nation as a whole. In addition, levels of inclusion could be measured as a function of the percentage of racial/ethnic minorities holding elected office in a given community, relative to the demographics of the population of that community. For instance, what percentage of elected officials is South Asian in a community in which 35% of the population is of South Asian descent? If the percentage of officials from a minority group is far below that group's presence in a community, this could be an indicator of political exclusion for a community. Election rates of ethnic and racial minorities are tracked by a range of special interest groups, such as National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, and data for research could be compiled from such sources.

### *Social Support*

The social support services being provided in a community may serve as a protective factor against radicalization. Previous work with refugee communities has shown that parental involvement, mentoring and organizational outreach have been the best protective factors for youth (Weine, thought piece). The number of federal assistance programs, such as Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program or Head Start, may be an indicator of the support being received. Similarly, the number of integrative institutions, those that assist immigrants with their integration, may be an important indicator specifically for Diaspora communities.

*Data Availability.* The numbers by county, city or district of children receiving various forms of federal aid such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), reduced/free lunches, school breakfasts, earned income tax credit, are available from Kids Count ([www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org)). The Kids Count Data Center also reports data by county and school district on the number and percent of students enrolled in Head Start, publically funded pre-K programs, and school district pre-K programs (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Default.aspx>). The center also reports various other vulnerability indicators such as low birth rate, teen births, infant mortality, child births, and high school dropouts. The National Center for Education Statistics also reports the number of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch for each public school in the country

(<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/index.asp>). Head Start programs can be searched for online (at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>). Entering a city and state yields the Head Start programs in that area. Census data reports on the number of uninsured children, and data at the state level are available for the number of children enrolled in CHIP or Medicaid (medical insurance for children in low-income families, see <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemapreport.jsp?rep=43&cat=17&sub=171&rgnt=5&sortc=1&=&a>). This information may not be available at the county level.

**Diaspora Communities.** Some additional variables relevant to Diaspora communities are discussed below.

### *Demographics*

For any project, it will be necessary to define Diaspora communities. The census has data at the county level on race, religion, nationality (whether foreign born) and language spoken at home. In addition, data are available on the number of individuals living in the same house at 5 years, which could represent an influx of immigrants to a community.

The demographic characteristics of a Diaspora community may represent potential indicators of vulnerability to radicalization. Some of these indicators include the age structure of the community, the age at which immigrants arrive in this county (with teenage arrivals seeming to be the most vulnerable to involvement in violence), the size of the community, and the spatial concentration of the community. Other indicators such as the language distribution or the number of students enrolled in ESL courses may also be important indicators of integration. If the older generation does not speak English, this may be an indicator of the extent to which the community has access to certain resources, for example, applying for financial assistance or food stamps. In addition, the number of anglicized or Americanized names may be a reflection of the social structure of the community or the extent to their integration. The number of babies registered or the number of name changes through Social Security can be researched. In addition, data on support services received by recent immigrants might provide relevant insights into the nature and demographics of particular communities.

*Data availability.* The Census Bureau includes data on the number of individuals born in the United States at the county level but does not include data on the age at which these individuals arrived here. This might be something that future research would want to collect as the age of arrival seems to represent a key vulnerability for immigrants. The age structure and the size of the community can be gleaned from Census data. In addition, the age of foreign speaking adults is also included in the census data (but may only be available as broad ranges, for example, data are listed as a percent of individuals who speak a foreign language who are age: 5-17, 18-64, or over 65). The special composition of the community may be gleaned by looking at school districts or census tracts and the number of foreign born in these areas. The census also reports on the number of foreign language speakers in a county or district (and which languages they are speaking). This can also be found on the Kids Count Data Center website ([www.kidscount.org](http://www.kidscount.org)). School districts must report the percentages of each sub-group (racial, ethnic, economic, special needs and ESL) on an annual basis. The Social Security Administration records

and publishes the names of all babies born in a given year. The popular names (top 100) are searchable by state, however, may not be available at the county or district level. In addition, the Social Security Administration keeps track of any name changes. The extent to which a Diaspora community is its own economic or social enclave may reveal the integration or marginalization of the community. One measure of this might be the extent to which they maintain their own institutions such as a banking system. A search of local newspapers or yellow pages could show, for example, banks that follow a Hawala system with origins in Islamic law, or financial institutions that offer “sharia compliant” advice. In addition, the presence of local media targeted at a foreign community may indicate the extent of inclusion or exclusion. The prominence and/or presence of foreign language media (television, newspapers, radio stations) could be researched and tracked at the community level. Whether such factors increase or decrease radicalization must be empirically tested. Communities with more of their own, segregated institutions may experience higher levels of marginalization from the broader community and thus may be more likely to be vulnerable to radicalization. On the other hand, these types of institutions may be seen as protective factors that make individuals feel welcome in the Diaspora, making the community less vulnerable to radicalization.

There are specific social support services available to some Diaspora communities. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) gives money to the states to help integrate new immigrants, involving services ranging from money for health care, English instruction, vocational training, and employment services. ORR may be able to provide information on how that money is spent, or state agencies could be contacted in regards to how this money is spent and which community it is serving. In addition, various local agencies, often non-profits, receive money directly from ORR. A list of some of these agencies and their location is available online (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/benefits/rss.htm>). State refugee offices can also be used for additional data, for example, New York has the Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance ([www.otda.state.ny.us/main/bria](http://www.otda.state.ny.us/main/bria)).

**Ideology.** There is no single ideology associated with extremist violence or terrorism. Across contexts, terrorists have sought to demonstrate their commitment to an array of belief systems—far-right ideologies, far-left, religious, nationalist, single-issue (such as eco-terrorists), and beyond. As such, it is important to consider that radicalization processes might be strongly influenced by the nature of the ideology at the core of the radicalization process, and research is needed to understand potential variation across “types” of radicalization. For example, do different ideologies/groups radicalize in different ways? Breaking down radicalization by ideological motivation may help to uncover specific indicators; however, this may also limit the ability to make generalizations about groups. The processes discussed until now have been assumed to apply to all ideologies, representing shared indicators across issues/type of group. However, there may be indicators that are specific to each ideology.

Some of the major violent extremist groups in the United States include eco-terrorists, White supremacists, anti-abortion groups, and jihadists. Each group is associated with different ideologies and different events may serve as triggers for different groups. Eco-terrorists groups such as the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and Animal Liberation Front (ALF) argue that they want to rid the world of any atrocities committed to animals and the earth and are clear in their intent to inflict economic damage to support those ends. Actions or policies that may trigger activities by eco-terrorists include new

construction that is not environmentally friendly, productions of SUV's, and policies that they believe to be harmful to animals. White supremacists believe in an inherent superiority of White people over all other races, often resulting in anti-Black or anti-Semitic violence. Events that might trigger activities by White supremacists include the migration of non-Whites to a traditionally White community and governmental policies that they believe favor non-Whites such as affirmative action or the election of a minority to a high governmental position. Anti-abortion extremists are those who are committed, at any cost, to stopping women from having abortions which they believe to be akin to murder. Triggering events for this community may include what they perceive as pro-abortion legislation, establishment of centers that may perform abortions or counsel women in their options for terminating pregnancies or a high profile abortion in a local community. Finally, jihadist groups are seeking to implement a pure Islamic state or Caliphate, including the implementation of Sharia law. The jihadists use religious means to justify their violence against civilians. The types of events which may inspire a jihadist attack include the perception of the West as against Islam, perceived worldwide violence against Muslims, or the implementation of policies seen to be anti-Muslim such as a ban on headdresses that cover the face.

*Data Availability.* One of the major difficulties with data availability is finding good proxies for measures of ideology. As discussed previously, ideology is primarily a set of beliefs, and, as such, finding behavioral measures as a proxy is difficult at best. Potential behavioral indicators that could be collected at the community level include numbers of subscriptions to various periodicals generated by an ideological movement or hits to various websites or chat rooms. In addition, as discussed below, participation with recognized extremist organizations and involvement in public ideologically motivated legal activities might provide insights into the nature of ideological sentiments within a community.

### *Extremist Organizations*

Extremist groups represent ideologically motivated organizations. One indicator of the extent to which extremist organizations are vibrant in a community is to simply count the number of extremist organizations. An increasing number of extremist organizations may indicate a greater vulnerability toward radicalization, an issue that could be tested empirically. As with different ideologies, extremist organizations are often narrowly focused on one issue, thus the presence of one type of extremist organization (e.g., far right extremism) may not indicate anything about a different type of organization (e.g., jihadist extremism).

*Data Availability.* A number of different organizations in the United States track activities of extremist groups. For example, the Southern Poverty Law Center tracks white supremacist and hate crimes, the Anti-Defamation League tracks anti-Semitic and other civil rights violations, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International conduct research on human rights throughout the world. Data from these organizations could be assembled to provide numbers of extremist organizations (as well as data on activities of these groups). One issue with data from watch-groups is that they focus primarily on specific types of groups (e.g., far-right extremists). In addition, the accuracy of such data is not known (see Freilich, Chermak & Simone, 2009), and biases can easily emerge from organizations with specific agendas, even with significant attempts at impartial data collection.

Another approach to collecting data on the number of extremist groups was undertaken in a recent study by Freilich and his colleagues (Freilich, Chermak & Simone, 2009) who asked state police agencies to estimate the number of extremist groups (and their supporters) in their jurisdiction. There is no government source or database that records this at the state level. A similar large-scale study could be undertaken to collect data on the existence of extremist organizations at the county level, as recognized by law enforcement.

#### *Non-criminal Extremist Activities*

Another way to measure the presence of an extremist ideology in a community is by studying the number of extremist ideologically motivated legal activities. Whether there is any relationship between extremist ideologically motivated legal activities and radicalization is an empirical question requiring further testing. One could imagine that if an organization is engaged in legal activities, the group may be less likely to engage in illegal violent behavior. However, one could also imagine such legal activities as a stepping stone toward engagement with more extreme behavior. If the legal route is not working, a more radical approach may appear necessary to the organization.

*Data Availability.* Some data on this issue have already been collected. For example, Freilich and colleagues collected estimates of these activities from state police agencies (Freilich, Chermak, & Simone, 2009). The number of permits granted for protests may be collected from municipal governments. Although these data do not appear to be readily available, police departments may be willing to work with researchers. The ECDB currently collects data on illegal activities but could be expanded to collect data on legal activities. Other data on activities may be gleaned from general surveys such as the American Citizen Participation Study (Brady, Verba & Schlozman, 1995), with data collected in a given year, or the American National Election Studies (ANES), collected every two years ([www.electionstudies.org](http://www.electionstudies.org)). The advantage of such studies is the large and random sample; the disadvantage is that questions are set by the organizations, thus, specific or tailored responses are not be possible. However, the ANES is now accepting online proposals for questions, thus, researchers may be increasingly able to influence the types of questions that are asked. In addition, the National Science Foundation has funded work by sociologist Jennifer Earl, for which Earl is collecting data on online protest-related activities (see National Science Foundation Award Abstract # 0547990, <http://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward.do?AwardNumber=0547990>). When made available, these data could be analyzed to help understand the use of specific tactics by organizations from different ideological perspectives and levels of participation in such activities.

#### *Organizational Membership*

Membership in an extremist organization itself may increase the vulnerability to radicalization overall. One organization may serve as a gateway group to another extremist organization. However, as discussed above, because such groups are very focused on a single issue, membership may not translate to other organizations.

*Data Availability.* While appearing to be an easy variable to measure, membership is often difficult to determine, as it is often kept secret. Using records of arrests for illegal activity is one way

that data has been collected in the past. For example, the ATS has records of FBI arrests from 1980 to 2005. The use of court records has a major limitation in that only individuals who have been caught doing something illegal are included in the data, rather than accurately reflecting the number of individuals in an organization. However, the number of individuals caught for illegal activity may have some relationship to the number of individuals involved in the organization (i.e., the more people in the organization, the more people who may be caught). A further complication is that membership in extremist organizations is an individual-level variable and the current project is focused on the community level. Thus, some aggregation of the data will be necessary in order to use this variable.

Specific researchers have also obtained lists of members for various organizations at various times. For example, Political Research Associates (PRA), a watch-group, retrieved the list of the 1987 members of the far-right John Birch Society from dumpsters when the society moved offices. Although this may represent the best way to obtain numbers of members, the opportunity for obtaining such lists makes it a less desirable method of data collection. In addition, the reliability of the data from these groups is not known and there may be biases in these data.

## Conclusion

There was a unanimous feeling among the participants of the Task Force that the search for indicators of radicalization at the community level was a research area worth pursuing in more detail. On the whole, the theme of marginalization resonated throughout the discussion. There was a strong feeling among the participants that communities which experience exclusion, isolation or deprivation are especially vulnerable to radical messages. Communities where such experiences are most likely should be a priority for research on radicalization. From a research perspective, having a comparison group to identify factors that may allow radicalism to surface in one community but not another, would be ideal. As such, studies that consider a range of different and varied communities, with differing levels of radical activity (high v. low), should provide new and important insights into which community characteristics are relevant to the occurrence of radicalization. Analyses built around community-level data collected from around the country over time allow for such insights.

For a number of the independent and dependent variables presented, data already exist that can be used to test theoretical models. The dependent variables of the number of terrorist attacks (using the GTD), number of severe ideologically motivated crimes (using the ECDB), or the number of individuals arrested on terrorism charges (using the ATS database) are all readily available. Independent variables for which data are already available and could easily be correlated with such measures include (a) economic community data, such as average per capita income, average number of households below the poverty line or average number of households on food stamps, (b) engagement with local politics, assessed using percentages of voters who voted in the presidential election or the percentage of minorities elected to local offices, or (c) social services, such as the number of local agencies providing support, number of head start programs, or number of children enrolled in CHIP or Medicaid.

Although much of these data are already available, there are data that have not yet been systematically collected that could be valuable if this proves to be a promising line of research. For example, the

number of students eligible for a free or reduced price lunch is easily available on the web but is listed according to public school. Presumably, any data project would want to condense these numbers to capture a given community. On the other hand, a researcher interested in using the Pew Internet and American Life Study to look at community-level political behavior would need to disaggregate, if possible, nation-level data into community-level data. As for the dependent variables, systematic collection of data on thwarted attacks has yet to be undertaken. Presumably these data would be exceedingly important as intelligence officials become better at disrupting attacks. In addition, data on the legal activities of a community, number of individuals in an extremist organization and number of extremist organizations (as IVs or DVs) have not been systematically or uniformly collected.

Overall, a number of projects could be undertaken immediately and quickly, whereas other projects would require a longer time span to allow time for data collection and/or data recoding.

#### *Limitations and Future Directions*

One of the major complications for radicalization research has to do with the limited frequency of occurrence. Radicalization is such a rare phenomenon that the community lens might simply be too broad to adequately give guidance on when, how or why radicalization can happen.

A second major shortcoming is a problem of sensitivity of the dependent variable. The ultimate outcome of radicalization should be a terrorist attack, but the infrequency with which attacks occur and the myriad of variables that factor into an actual attack (e.g., abilities of the bomb maker, access to resources), may make this a poor way to measure radicalization. Thus, the variable that may be easiest to measure, may, in fact, be least likely to reveal subtle differences in levels of radicalization between communities. This underscores the need to collect data that can be used as additional dependent variables, such as number of extremist organizations.

Finally, the report thus far has focused on geographic communities. However, there is a growing need to study how virtual or internet communities may function in regard to radicalization. The variables presented may hint at some projects, further work needs to be undertaken to address issues of radicalization across virtual communities.

The reward for successful research related to radicalization seems an important step in understanding terrorism and terrorist behavior. If some of this research can identify communities of most concern, then law enforcement officers can prioritize their work on the ground, making them more efficient and effective at stopping terrorism. The radicalization of individuals into extremist groups is a phenomenon likely to increase in the coming years. More research is the first step to being able to understand and combat this type of violence.



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## Appendix A: Task Force Participant Biographies

**Victor Asal** is an assistant professor of Political Science at the University at Albany, SUNY. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Maryland in government and politics and also holds an M.A. from Hebrew University in international relations. Dr. Asal's research focuses on the interaction of international relations and domestic politics, notably how this interaction influences ethnic conflict and terrorism. Dr. Asal's dissertation, *The Political Inclusion of Minorities at Risk 1870-2000*, was a broad global comparative study of the political inclusion of minorities at risk involving three hundred groups over a hundred-year period. In this effort and in conjunction with the Minorities at Risk Project, Dr. Asal has overseen several ethnic conflict coding projects. Dr. Asal's current research expands on the work in his dissertation looking at the impact of political discrimination on political violence. He has also examined how a terrorist group's characteristics impact the group's behavior. In addition, Dr. Asal has done research on international crises and the impact of nuclear proliferation. Professor Asal has taught courses in Comparative Politics, International Relations, ethnic conflict, democratization, negotiation and crisis management. He has worked as a negotiation trainer in a variety of settings, most notably as a trainer for army officers, and civil servants running simulations on negotiation, democracy, and domestic regimes. Dr. Asal has also, in conjunction with the ICONS Project, created simulations on varied topics, including the India-Pakistan Kashmiri crisis, minority peoples in Indonesia, a U.S. Senate bill mark-up process, and war crime. Working with ICONS, Dr. Asal facilitates crisis leadership training seminars for the United States Office of Personnel Management.

**Susan E. Clarke** is a professor in the Political Science department at the University of Colorado at Boulder and the director of The Center to Advance Research and Teaching in the Social Sciences. She held previous positions at Northwestern University and served as a visiting scholar with the United States department of Housing and Urban Development. Clarke was recognized as a "mentor of distinction" by the American Political Science Association's Women's Caucus for her work with female graduate students. Clarke served as Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs (2002-2003) and Interim Associate Dean of the Graduate School (2001-2002) at Boulder. Professor Clarke's research and teaching interests center on public policy and urban politics and policy, particularly issues of globalization and local democracy. Her publications include *The Work of Cities* (with Gary Gaile: Minnesota, 1998) on local economic development strategies, a co-authored book on *Multicultural Moments: The Politics of Urban Education Reform* (Temple University Press, 2006) and numerous journal articles. Her research has been supported by the National Science Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, the Fulbright Foundation, the Canadian government, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the National League of Cities, and others. She is Editor (with Michael Pagano and Gary Gaile) of *Urban Affairs Review*, currently the top-ranked urban journal in Europe and the U.S.

**Kelly Dampousse** serves as Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences and is a Presidents Associates Presidential Professor of Sociology at the University of Oklahoma. He received his PhD in sociology from Texas A&M University. His teaching and research specialties include terrorism, drugs and crime, city level homicide studies, juvenile delinquency, statistics, and research methodology. He has

directed several research projects, including the Oklahoma Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring project from 1998-2004. In this project, his staff collected data at the Oklahoma City and Tulsa jails, interviewing recent arrestees on a quarterly basis. He also conducted the first field evaluation of voice stress analysis programs for the National Institute of Justice. Damphousse began studying terrorism in 1994 when he began to work with Dr. Brent Smith at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He later assisted Dr. Smith in the creation of the American Terrorism Study and he currently serves as the Associate Director of the project. The team of Dr. Smith and Dr. Damphousse has published several research articles and book chapters about American terrorism. A major goal of the project was to create (and now expand) a database (the ATS data) of individuals charged for acts of terrorism by the federal government. In cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the study collects data from court documents for each criminal case. The data represent cases from 1980 to 2004 and is designed to continue indefinitely. While the data are primarily intended for use by terrorism scholars and prosecutors, the richness of the data make it useful for a wide range of people interested in terrorism. The project has been funded in the past by the National Institute of Justice and by the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism.

**Joshua D. Freilich** is an associate professor in the Criminal Justice department at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. He received his Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from the University at Albany, SUNY and his J.D. from Brooklyn Law School. Dr. Freilich is a lead investigator for the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), a Center of Excellence of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). His research has been funded by DHS directly as well as through START. Dr. Freilich is the Principal Investigator (with Dr. Steven Chermak, Michigan State University) on the United States Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) study. The ECDB is a large-scale data collection effort that is building the first of its kind relational database of all crimes committed by far-right extremists in the United States from 1990 to the present reported in an open-source. The ECDB contains over 350 variables on the incidents, suspects, victims, groups and an assessment of the quality of the open source information used for each incident. Dr. Freilich's terrorism research has appeared, or will appear, in *Crime Prevention Studies; Criminology and Public Policy; Criminal Justice and Behavior; Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice; Journal of Criminal Justice; Justice Quarterly; Law and Human Behavior; and Terrorism and Political Violence.*

**Ryan King** is an assistant professor of law and criminology in the Sociology department at the University at Albany, SUNY. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. Dr. King has done extensive research on hate crimes in both the United States and Europe. Much of his work focuses on anti-Semitism before the Holocaust in Europe. His article on collective memory of hate in the United States and Germany (with Dr. Joachim Savelsberg) won the best article award from the Law and Society Association (2006) and the American Sociological Association Culture Section (2007). Dr. King's more recent article on intergroup conflict won the 2009 distinguished article award from Sociology of Law Section of the American Sociological Association. Dr. King's articles on hate crimes have appeared in numerous publications including *American Sociological Review, American Journal of Sociology, Annual Review of Law and Social Sciences, Criminology, Law and Society Review, Social Problems, Social Forces and International Political Science Review.* He is currently working on a book entitled, *Atrocities, Law*

*and Collective Memory* (with Joachim Savelsberg). His book (with Philip Smith and Timothy Smith), *Incivility: The Rude Stranger in Everyday Life*, is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.

**Gary LaFree** is Director of the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) at the University of Maryland, as well as professor in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Dr. LaFree served as President of the American Society of Criminology (ASC) in 2005-6006 and has also served as the President of the ASC's Division on International Criminology (1991-1993), the Chair of the American Sociological Association's Section on Crime, Law and Deviance (1991-1993) and a member of the Executive Committee of the Justice Research Statistics Association (2000-2001; 1993-1994). While at the University of Maryland, Dr. LaFree was a founding member of the Democracy Collaborative and an invited member of the National Consortium of Violence Research. Before joining the faculty at the University of Maryland, Dr. LaFree served as Chair of the Sociology and Criminology Department at the University of New Mexico for six years. He served as the Director of the New Mexico Criminal Justice Statistics Analysis Center for thirteen years. Dr. LaFree received the G. Paul Sylvestre Award for outstanding achievements in advancing criminal justice statistics in 1994, and the Phillip Hoke Award for excellence in applied research in 1994 and 1998, from the Justice Research Statistics Association. Dr. LaFree helped found and later served as Director of the Institute for Social Research at the University of New Mexico. Much of Dr. LaFree's current research is related to the development and analysis of the Global Terrorism Database, a major project being supported by START.

**Clark McCauley** is a professor of Psychology and co-director of the Solomon Asch Center for Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict at Bryn Mawr College and a lead investigator on a number of projects at the National Consortium for Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). He received his Ph.D. in social psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. His research interests include stereotypes and the psychology of group identification, group dynamics and intergroup conflict and in recent years he has focused on the psychological foundations of ethnic conflict, genocide, and terrorism. With colleagues he edited *The Psychology of Ethnic and Cultural Conflict* (2004), and with Dan Chirot he is author of *Why Not Kill Them All? The Logic and Prevention of Mass Political Murder* (Princeton University Press, 2006). He is a consultant and reviewer for the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation for research on dominance, aggression and violence, and founding editor of the new journal *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* published by Taylor and Francis.

**Sophia Moskalenko** is a research associate at the Solomon Asch Center for the Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict at Bryn Mawr College, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at START, and a consultant at the Oak Ridge National Lab (ORNL). Dr. Moskalenko received a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. Her research interests include psychology of group identification, radicalization and activism, and inter-group conflict. In collaboration with Dr. Clark McCauley she has authored several papers on political radicalization and terrorism.

**Graeme Newman** is a distinguished teaching Professor in the School of Criminal Justice at the University at Albany, SUNY, and the Associate Director of the Center for Problem Oriented Policing. Dr. Newman has consulted to the Criminal Justice and Crime Prevention Division of the United Nations and has published in the series of Problem Specific Guides for Police. Professor Newman has written widely in

criminal justice and other fields, and has written commercial software. Among the books he has written or edited are: *Super Highway Robbery* (Willan Press, 2003, with Ronald V. Clarke), *The Global Report on Crime and Justice* (United Nations/Oxford, 1998), *Rational Choice and Situational Crime Prevention* (Dartmouth, 1997, with Ronald V. Clarke and Shlomo Shoham), *Handbook of Criminal Justice Information Sources* (Oryx Press, 1997, with Dennis Benamati, Phyllis Schultze and Adam Bouloukos), *The Punishment Response, 2nd Edition* (Harrow and Heston, 1985), *Just and Painful: A Case for the Corporal Punishment of Criminals, 2nd Edition* (Harrow and Heston, 1995), and *Comparative Deviance: Law and Perception in Six Cultures* (Elsevier, 1976).

**Brian Nussbaum** is an assistant professor of Criminal Justice at Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts. He spent five years working at the New York State Office of Homeland Security, where he served as an Intelligence Analyst stationed at the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC). He holds a doctorate in Political Science from the Rockefeller School of Public Affairs at the State University of New York at Albany. His dissertation research, supported by the START Center, focused on urban counterterrorism issues in New York City and London. Dr. Nussbaum was twice awarded research fellowships from the DHS-funded START center. His research has appeared in academic journals like *Global Crime* and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, as well as numerous books.

**Fran Norris** is a Research Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Dartmouth Medical School, a Research Associate of the Executive Division of the Department of Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD, and a lead investigator at START. She has published over 120 articles and chapters and has been the recipient of a number of grants for research, research education, and professional development from the National Institute of Mental Health. Her interests include the epidemiology of posttraumatic stress, cross-cultural studies, the mobilization and deterioration of social support after disasters, and systems issues in providing disaster mental health services. She was the lead investigator on two case studies that examined lessons learned from mental health systems' responses to the Oklahoma City bombing and the World Trade Center Disaster, and has been serving as the National Cross-Site Evaluator for the FEMA-funded Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program since 2005. She is the Deputy/Statistical Editor of the *Journal of Traumatic Stress* and the Scientific Editor of the *PTSD Research Quarterly*. She received the 2005 Robert S. Laufer Award for Outstanding Scientific Achievement from the International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies.

**Andrew Papachristos** received his Ph.D. from the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago. He is currently Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Papachristos' research uses social network analysis to examine: (1) the social structures and group processes at the heart of interpersonal violence and delinquency; (2) issues of group dominance and reciprocity; and (3) the use of violence and honor as measures of social control. His current research combines ethnographic and quantitative techniques to explain the network dynamics responsible for the social contagion of gang murder in Chicago over nearly two decades. Dr. Papachristos is also currently involved in the evaluation of the Project Safe Neighborhoods program in Chicago and has just completed data collection on a four-neighborhood study of how illegal and pro-social networks of probationers and parolees influence offending patterns, interpersonal violence, gun markets, and

perceptions of neighborhood social order. His research has appeared in *Foreign Policy*, *Criminology and Public Policy*, the *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies*, and several edited books.

**Magnus Ranstorp** is Chief Scientist at the Centre for Asymmetric Threat Studies at the Swedish National Defence College and a Senior Honorary Research Associate and former Director of Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of St Andrews, Scotland. He is the author of *Hizballah in Lebanon* and other numerous articles and monographs on terrorism and counter-terrorism. He is on the International Editorial Advisory Board of the academic journal *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* and on the Editorial Board of *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*. He is currently completing another book on the Lebanese Hizballah as well as an edited book entitled *In the Service of Al-Qaeda*. He is internationally recognized as a leading expert on Hizballah, Hamas, al-Qaeda and other militant Islamic movements. He has conducted extensive field work around the world, interviewing hundreds of terrorists as well as members of militant Islamic movements. He has briefed senior government and security personnel around the world, including the 9/11 Commission. He is currently directing a large-scale project on radicalization and recruitment of salafist-jihadist terrorists across Europe.

**Kris Robison** is an assistant professor in the department of sociology at Northern Illinois University. He has done extensive work using different types of data and methods to study terrorism. He earned his PhD from Ohio State University where he conducted a cross-national analysis of terrorist violence. His numerous publications have appeared in journals such as *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *Social Forces* and *Sociological Inquiry*.

**Bert Useem** is Professor of Sociology at Purdue University. He has an interest in the conditions of stability in criminal justice institutions. Dr. Useem has published two books on prison disturbance and strategies for their resolution, and another book on the causes, course, and consequences of the prison buildup. He has published numerous articles on prisons as a form of crime control, the reform of the prison system and prison buildup. He recently completed a large-scale study of prison radicalization for START.

**Stevan Weine** is Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Illinois at Chicago where he is a clinician, researcher, writer and teacher. He is co-founder and co-director of the Project on Genocide, Psychiatry and Witnessing of the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Weine is also serves as a core faculty member at the International Center on Responses to Catastrophes. His scholarly work focuses on the personal, familial, social, cultural, and historical dimensions of trauma and migration. He was awarded a Career Scientist Award from the National Institute of Mental Health on "Services Based Research with Refugee Families" for which he conducted an ethnography of Bosnian adolescents and their families. He was principal investigator of a National Institute of Mental Health funded research study called "A Prevention and Access Intervention for Survivor Families" that is investigating the Coffee and Family Education and Support intervention with Bosnian and Kosovar families in Chicago. Dr. Weine is author of two books. *When History is a Nightmare: Lives and Memories of Ethnic Cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina* (Rutgers, 1999) is based upon survivor's oral histories. *Testimony and Catastrophe: Narrating the Traumas of Political Violence* (Northwestern, 2006) is a narrative inquiry of diverse

testimony readings from within four different 20<sup>th</sup> century socio-historical occurrences of political violence. Dr. Weine is currently Principal Investigator of two NIH funded studies: “An Ethnographic Study of Preventive Mental Health Services for Adolescent Refugees” and “Migrancy, Masculinity, and Preventing HIV in Tajik Male Migrant Workers.”



## Appendix B: Pre-Workshop Papers

List of questions for each Task Force participant and thought-piece responses.

### A. Terrorism in the United States

1. **Gary LaFree:** Provide an overview of what we know about the distribution and characteristics of terrorist attacks within the United States. What are the trends over time, major groups, hot spots, attack types, weapon types, fatalities, etc.?
2. **Kelly Damphousse:** What is known about the nature of terrorists' preparatory and planning activities in the build up to an attempted attack? What does this tell us about the people engaged in these activities and about the communities in which they live?

### B. Understanding Criminal Activity in the United States through a "Community" Lens

1. **Graeme Newman:** You have argued that it is more helpful to study situational aspects of crime rather than individual or personal aspects. Explain why this is true of terrorism. What are some potential situational aspects of terrorism and what types of data might be used to measure these aspects?
2. **Andrew Papachristos:** What do we know about the characteristics of communities that are most likely to experience a proliferation of gangs and gang activity? How can understanding factors that are associated with gang presence inform understanding of the conditions under which radicalization might occur?
3. **Ryan King:** What is known about the communities in which hate crimes occur in the United States? Do they share some common characteristics? Do perpetrators of these crimes usually commit the crime in their own community, or do they seek out targets outside of their immediate community?
4. **Joshua Freilich:** Given what is known about individuals and groups that engage in extremist crime in the United States, what are the characteristics of communities that are most likely to foster, condone, or give rise to such extremist ideologies? What are some of the variables at the community level that you think can be used to help study the rise of such ideologies?

### C. Marginalized and Traumatized Communities

1. **Susan Clarke:** What factors encourage positive relationships between different ethnic and racial communities in U.S. cities, and what factors are symptomatic of a sub-population being marginalized within an urban setting? What evidence is there that members of such a marginalized population are more likely to engage in illegal and violent activity directed at "outsiders"?
2. **Stevan Weine:** Given your experiences studying the behaviors of groups who have been exposed to large-scale violence and conflict in the past, what types of communities are most likely to facilitate the recovery of such individuals? Conversely, what might be some of the characteristics of communities in which such individuals might turn to violence and radicalism?

3. **Bert Useem:** What do we know about the extent to which radicalization in prison affects behavior after prison at the community level? What might be some of the community-level indicators of radicalization for individuals who have served time and are now in the general population?

#### **D. Radicalization and Support for Violence Internationally**

1. **Victor Asal:** In what ways, and under what conditions, do a society's political and economic institutions foster conditions that might lead to radicalization? What sub-national-level data might be most relevant to exploring radicalization?
2. **Magnus Ranstorp:** What parallels have been identified between radicalization in communities in Europe and the United States? What community-level variables are correlated with support for or engagement in terrorism?

*Provide an overview of what we know about the distribution and characteristics of terrorist attacks within the United States. What are the trends over time, major groups, hot spots, attack types, weapon types, fatalities, etc.?*

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES HOMELAND FROM  
1970 TO 2007  
Gary LaFree

Data for this review were drawn from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) compiled by LaFree and Dugan (2007, 2009).<sup>1</sup> I defined terrorism as “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence to attain a political, economic, religious or social goal through fear, coercion or intimidation.” Because the GTD are described in detail elsewhere (LaFree and Dugan 2007), I offer only a brief explanation here. The GTD data were collected by trained researchers who recorded terrorism incidents from wire services (including Reuters and the Foreign Broadcast Information Service), U.S. and foreign government reports, and U.S. and foreign newspapers foreign newspapers (including the New York Times, the British Financial Times, the Christian Science Monitor, the Washington Post, the Washington Times, and the Wall Street Journal), and more recently, the Internet. A similar basic coding scheme has been used during the entire data collection.<sup>2</sup> A major advantage of the GTD compared to other open source databases is that from its inception, it tracked domestic terrorist attacks of the kind being examined here.

The first two figures track total terrorist attacks that occurred in the U.S. homeland between 1970 and 2007. Figure 1 shows total attacks and Figure 2 shows total fatal attacks. The trajectories for both are sharply down over the nearly four decades included in the GTD. Total attacks peaked in the mid 1970s with about 120 attacks per year and the peak year for fatal attacks was 1972. According to the GTD, total terrorist attacks on the U.S. homeland were lower in 2007 than in any year since 1969. There

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<sup>1</sup> Data from 1993 were lost by PGIS in an office move and we have never been able to successfully restore them.

<sup>2</sup> The current analyses are based on GTD data downloaded on May 1, 2009.

were no fatal terrorist attacks within the U.S. homeland in 2007—which also happened in 2000 and for a few years in the mid-1980s.

Figure 3 shows that in about a quarter of US domestic terrorism cases, no group claims responsibility or can be attributed responsibility. Compared to the GTD as a whole, this is low proportion of unattributed cases. Unattributed cases for the data base as a whole is just 50% and for some specific countries and times—like Iraq after 2003—it can be as high as 90 percent.

Tables 1 and 2 show the groups claiming responsibility for attacks and fatal attacks on the U.S. homeland. One striking feature of these tables is the diversity of groups that are responsible for domestic attacks and fatal attacks against the United States. The largest single number of group attacks is attributed to the FALN—which accounts for just over 5 percent of the total attacks. Similarly, the Death Angels account for about 15% of all US fatal attacks. However, the “other” category—which includes groups that account for less than one percent of all attacks—makes up 32 percent of total and 50 percent of fatal attacks.

Tables 3-5 show weapons, attack types and targets for terrorist attacks against the U.S. homeland. Explosives and bombings are the most common type of US domestic attack and also the most common type of weapon used in domestic attacks, accounting for nearly 60% of the total in both categories. Businesses are the most common target, accounting for 26% of domestic US terrorist attacks. Figure 4 shows the total number of bombing attacks against the US homeland from 1970 to 2007. As with attacks in general, bombings have steadily declined over time.

I next borrowed a set of ideology codes based on the MIPT terrorist organization profiles data base and applied to the GTD by Victor Asal and his associates. Figure 5 shows a breakdown of US domestic terrorist groups by ideology for the entire data set. I should begin by first pointing out that ideology classifications were only available for 58 percent of the sample. Recall that for 27% of the sample of

attacks no group is attributed responsibility. For the remaining 15% of cases that are missing, no clear ideology could be recorded. Overall, the most important group ideologies for the US domestic cases are rightist groups (29%), ethnonationalist groups (26%) and leftist groups (26%). Rightist groups include both right wing conservative (militia type) and right-wing reactionary (formed against left-wing) groups. For ethnonationalist ideology, the uniting principle is a specific type of group identity, most likely an ethnic identity that leads to nationalistic or separatist goals. Leftist groups are dedicated to a communist/socialist ideology.

I next turn to the geographical dispersion of terrorist attacks on the US homeland. Table 6 shows the US domestic attacks by state and Table 7 shows attacks by city. More than three-quarters of all attacks on the US homeland happened in just ten states. Nearly half of all attacks happened in just two states: New York and California. At the city level, New York is by far the most common target, accounting for more than one-fifth of all attacks. The top five US cities in terms of targeting account for nearly 42% of all US domestic attacks. Figures 6-8 map the total attacks for the entire United States, the East Coast and the West Coast.

Table 8 provides a summary of the two most active and most deadly terrorist groups that have attacked the US homeland during each of the four decades spanned by the GTD.

Finally, it may be useful to briefly consider terrorist attacks aimed at US targets in other countries. Figures 9 and 10 show attacks and fatal attacks on US targets outside the US. In general, there are far more terrorist attacks on US targets outside the US than domestic US attacks—about seven times more. Terrorist attacks and fatal attacks on US targets outside the US do not show the same downward trajectory as we saw above with regard to total and fatal attacks on the US homeland. The high point for total attacks on US targets outside the US comes in the early 1990s, just after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The high point for total fatal attacks against the US comes in 2004 and 2005. These high

rates are due in no small part to attacks in Iraq and Afghanistan, which are notoriously difficult to classify as terrorism.

Table 9 summarizes the top twenty groups that have targeted the US outside the homeland over the four decades spanned by the data. Perhaps the most impressive feature of these results is the diversity of groups that have targeted the US in other countries. Thus, the top ten groups only account for about 14% of total non domestic attacks against the US.

## **Conclusions**

--The US presents data collection challenges in terms of counting terrorist attacks because it has been targeted by a large number of different groups and individuals that have struck infrequently and because a large proportion of attacks against the US homeland are by individuals without clear group connections. Thus, trying to determine whether attacks in the US are terrorism or better fit into some alternative category, like hate crime, anti-abortion activism, or environmental activism is challenging.

--The US is also characterized by a very large number of thwarted terrorism plots, especially since 9/11. These are not picked up by the GTD unless the assailants were interrupted in the process of carrying out an attack. An unsystematic review of open sources since 9/11 turned up 22 foiled domestic terrorist attacks against the US, mostly by groups or individuals making jihadi-style claims.

--The total number of attacks and fatal attacks against the US homeland has declined since 1970.

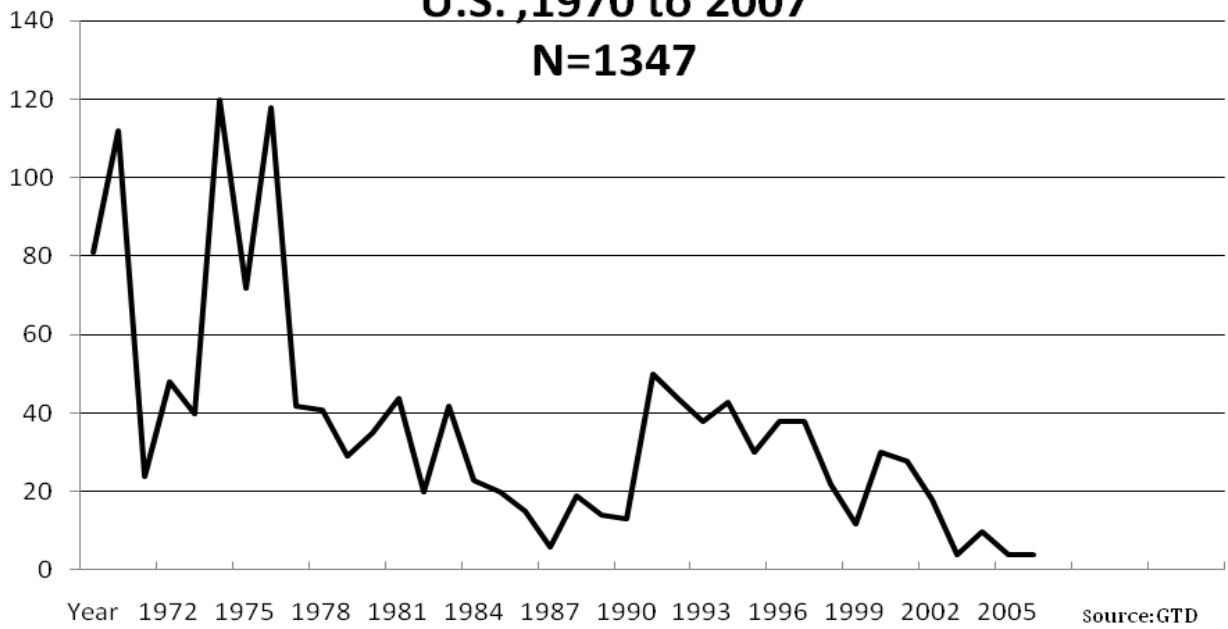
--The most common form of terrorist attack against the US homeland has been bombs and explosive devices. Incendiary attacks, especially in connection with arson, and firearms have also been common.

--An early classification of the ideology of groups attacking the US homeland over time shows great diversity, with the most important ideologies overall being rightist, leftist and ethnonationalist.

--Domestic attacks against the US are spatially concentrated with nearly 50% in the states of New York and California and over one-fifth in New York City.

--Attacks on US targets in other countries are far more common than attacks on the US homeland and have not declined as much as domestic attacks over time.

**Figure 1: Total Terrorist Attacks against the U.S., 1970 to 2007**



**Figure 2: Total Fatal Terrorist Attacks against the U.S., 1970 to 2007**

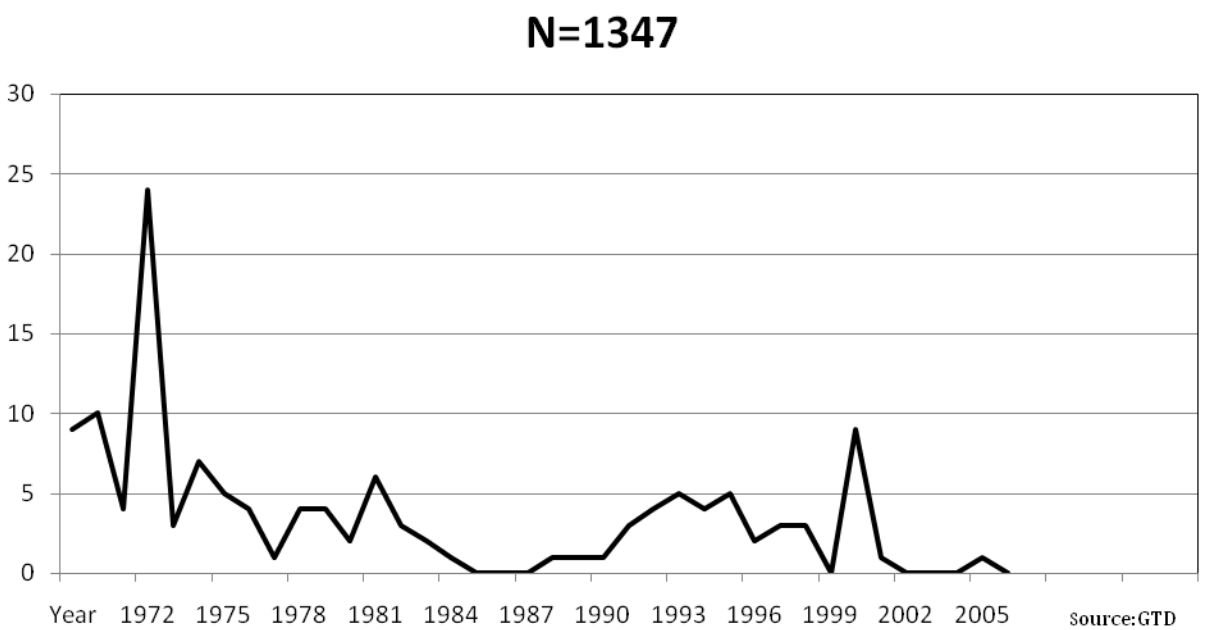
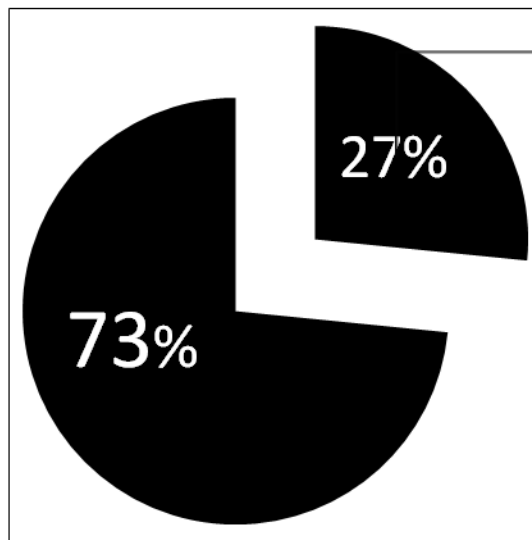


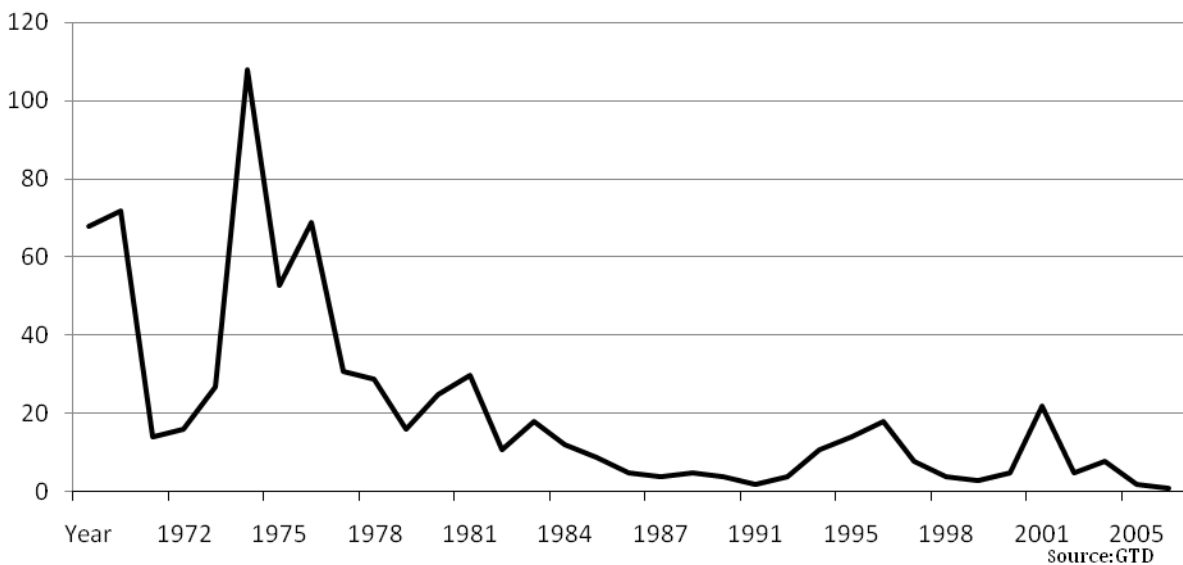


Figure 3: Proportion of U.S. Domestic Attacks  
Where Group is Unknown  
1970 to 2007



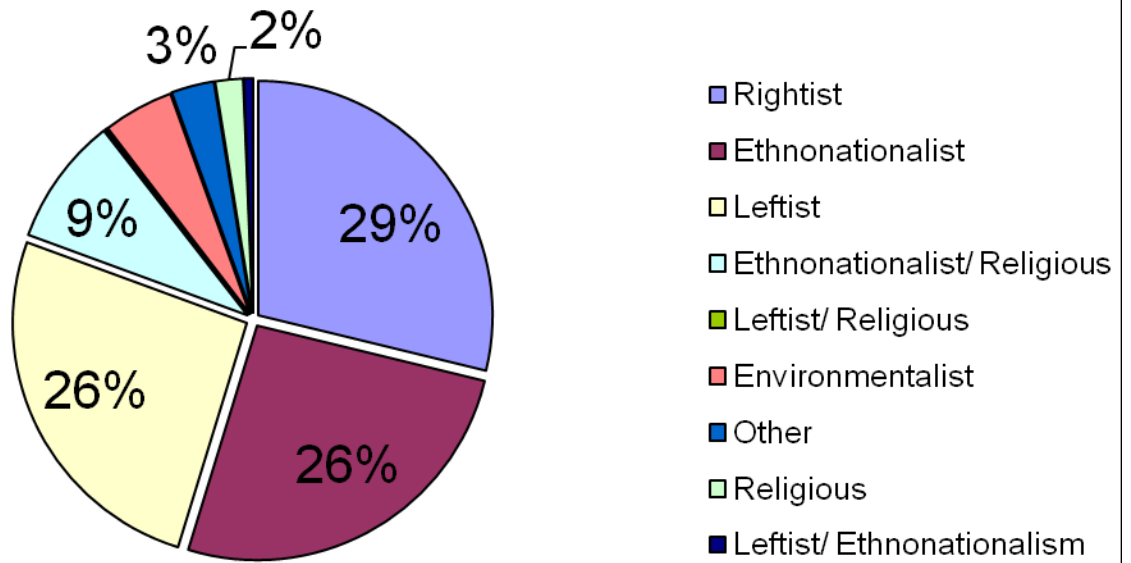
Source:GTD

Figure 4: Terrorist Bombings and Explosions  
against the U.S., 1970 to 2007  
N=1347



Source:GTD

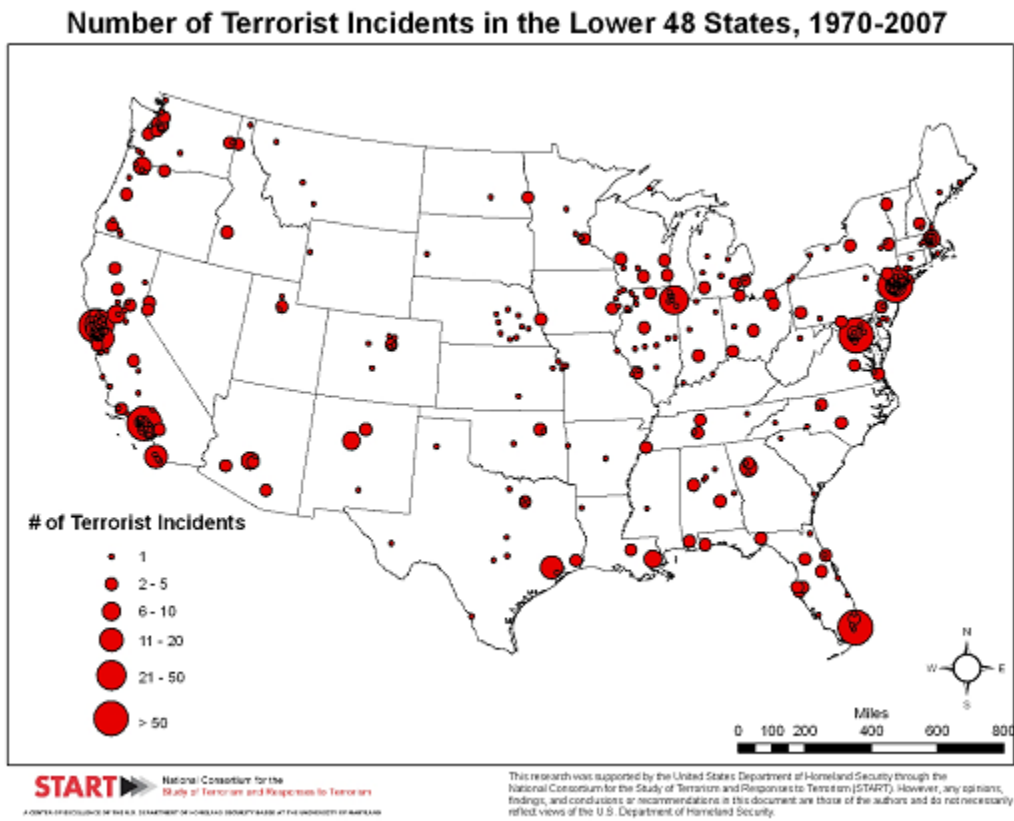
**Figure 5: Percentage of attacks in the US by ideology, 1970 - 2007**



\*n= 778

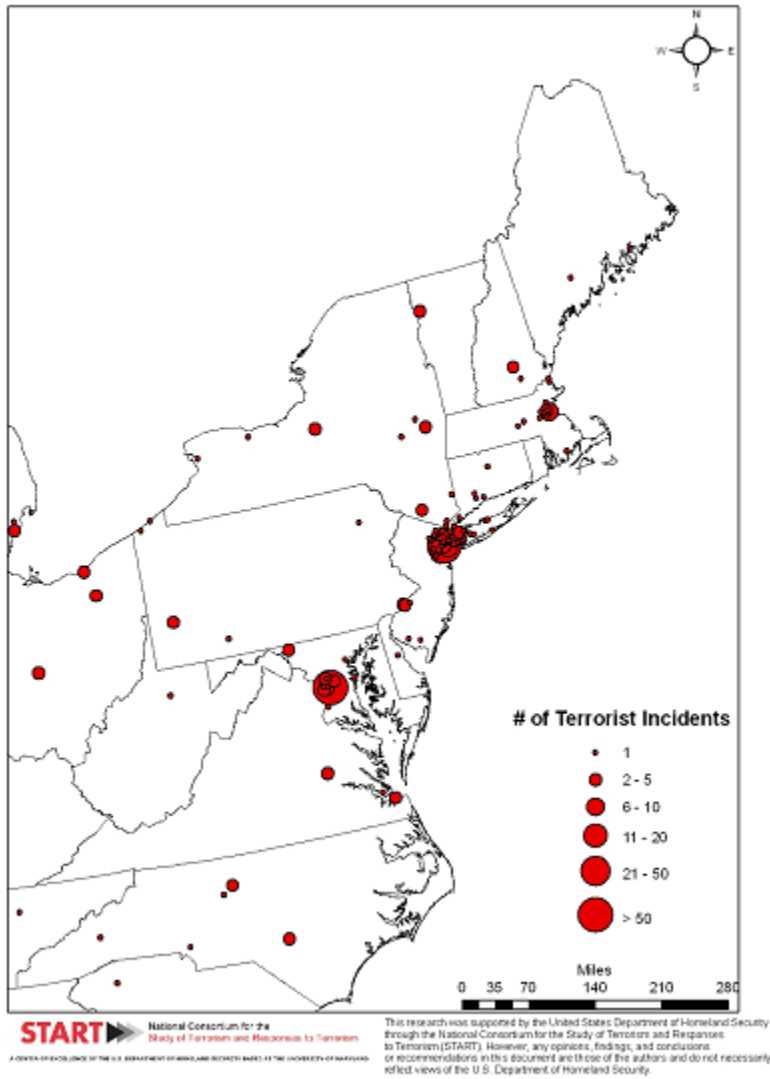
\*Missing= 569

**Figure 6: Total Domestic Terrorist Attacks, 1970-2007**



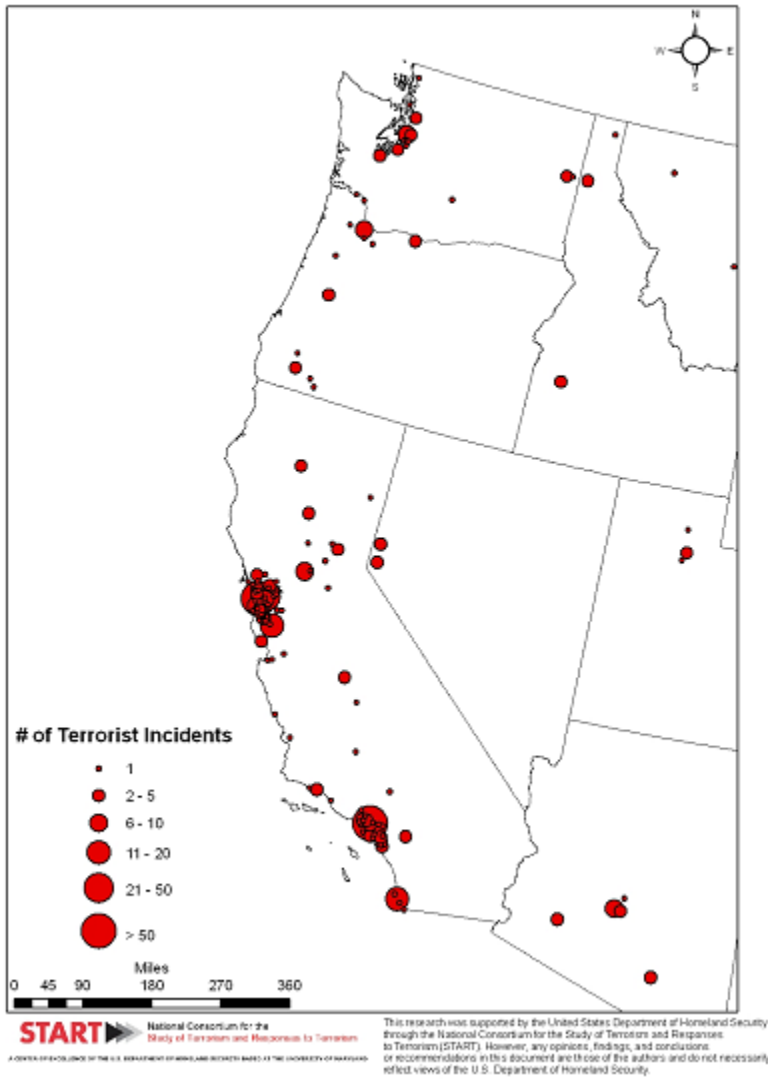
# Figure 7: Total Domestic Terrorist Attacks, East Coast, 1970-2007

## Number of Terrorist Incidents on the East Coast, 1970-2007

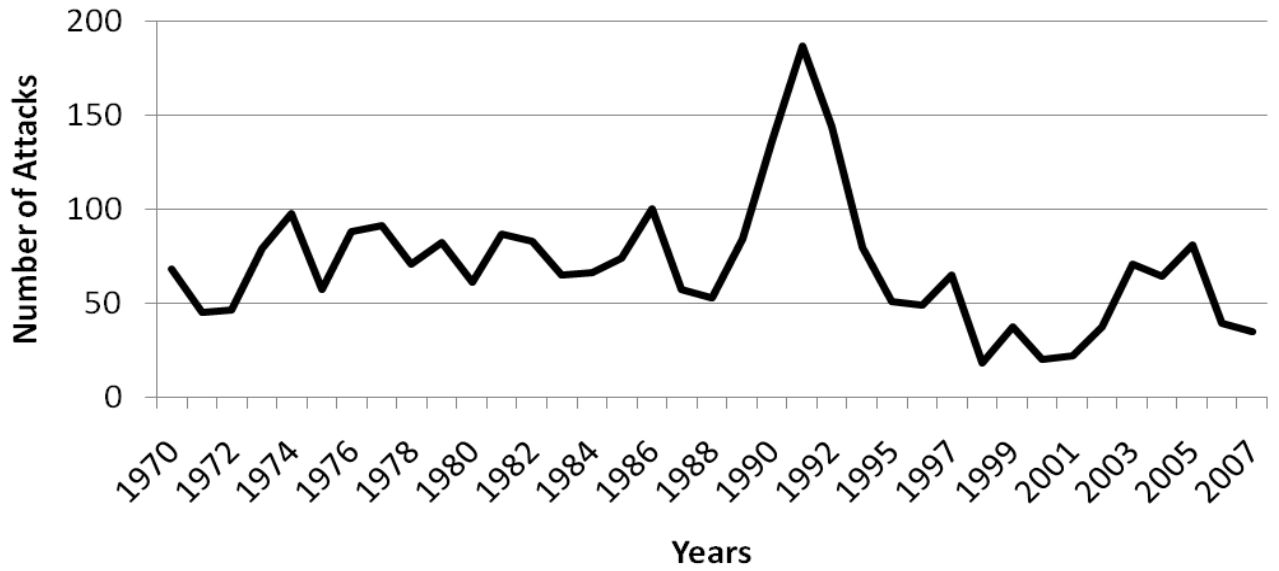


**Figure 8: Total Domestic Terrorist Attacks, West Coast, 1970-2007**

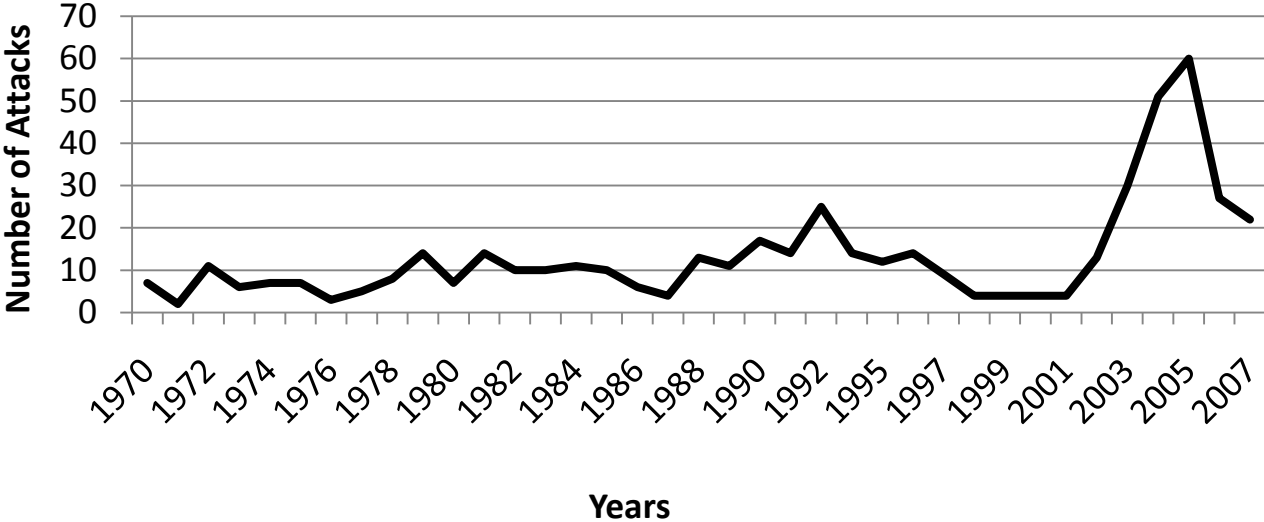
**Number of Terrorist Incidents on the West Coast, 1970-2007**



**Figure 10: Total Attacks Against US Targets outside US Homeland**



**Figure 10: Total Fatal Attacks against US Targets outside US Homeland**



**Table 1. Total Attacks against the U.S. Homeland by Group, 1970 to 2007**

<i>Group Name</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Anti-Abortion Group	177	13.14
New World Liberation Front (NWLF)	83	6.16
Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN)	71	5.27
Jewish Defense League (JDL)	55	4.08
Omega-7	42	3.12
Weather Underground, Weathermen	40	2.97
Earth Liberation Front (ELF)	37	2.75
Black Liberation Army	29	2.15
Animal Liberation Front (ALF)	23	1.71
Unknown	358	26.58
Other	432	32.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>1347</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Table 2. Total Fatal Attacks against the U.S. Homeland by Group, 1970 to 2007**

Group Name	Number of Incidents	Percent
Death Angels	14	14.89
Black Liberation Army	13	13.83
Individual	8	8.51
Black Panthers	4	4.26
Al-Qa`ida	4	4.26
Jewish Defense League (JDL)	4	4.26
Other	47	50.00
Total	94	100.00

**\*\*Note: 34 of the 128 fatal incidents had an unknown group.**



**Table 3. Weapons Used in Terrorist Attacks against U.S. Homeland, 1970 to 2007**

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Explosives/Bombs/Dynamite	745	57.44
Incendiary	325	25.06
Firearms	118	9.10
Chemical	64	4.93
Biological	19	1.46
Melee	17	1.31
Other	9	0.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>1297</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*\*NOTE: Of the 1347 incidents, 50 had a weapon that was unknown.

**Table 4. Types of Terrorist Attacks against U.S. Homeland, 1970 to 2007**

<i>Attack Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Bombing/Explosion	733	56.13
Facility/Infrastructure Attack	341	26.11
Assassination	98	7.50
Armed Assault	95	7.27
Other	39	2.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>1306</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*\*NOTE: Of the 1347 incidents, 41 had an unknown attack type.

**Table 5. Types of Targets against the U.S. Homeland, 1970 to 2007**

<i>Target Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Business	345	25.73
Abortion Related	254	18.94
Government (General)	137	10.22
Private Citizens & Property	121	9.02
Government (Diplomatic)	92	6.86
Police	53	3.95
Airports & Airlines	52	3.88
NGO	43	3.21
Utilities	39	2.91
Military	37	2.76
Educational Institution	37	2.76
Journalists & Media	30	2.24
Religious Figures/Institutions	25	1.86
Other	76	5.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>1341</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*\*NOTE: Of 1347 attacks, target unknown in six cases.

**Table 6. Total Attacks by State, 1970 to 2007**

<i>State</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
New York	345	25.73
California	319	23.79
Florida	105	7.83
District of Columbia	67	5.00
Illinois	59	4.40
Washington	32	2.39
Texas	31	2.31
New Jersey	28	2.09
Oregon	26	1.94
Massachusetts	26	1.94
Michigan	21	1.57
Ohio	20	1.49
Virginia	16	1.19
Georgia	14	1.04
Other	232	17.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>1341</b>	<b>100</b>

\*\*NOTE: Of the 1347 incidents, state unknown in 6 cases.

**Table 7. Total Attacks by City, 1970 to 2007**

<i>City</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
New York	242	21.38
Miami	70	6.18
San Francisco	66	5.83
Los Angeles	54	4.77
Washington	41	3.62
Chicago	37	3.27
New York City	30	2.65
Berkeley	19	1.68
Washington D.C.	12	1.06
Other	561	49.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>1132</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*\*NOTE: Of the 1347 incidents, city unknown in 215 cases.

**Table 8. Two Most Active and Most Deadly Terrorist Groups That Targeted the U.S. Homeland over the Past Four Decades**

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Most Active</i>	<i>Most Deadly</i>
1970s	New World Liberation Front (NWLFF)	Black Liberation Army
	Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN)	Death Angels
1980s	Anti-Abortion Group	Posse Comitatus
	Jewish Defense League (JDL)	Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide (tie)
		Jewish Defense League (JDL; tie)
1990s	Anti-abortion Group	Right-Wing Extremists
	World Church of the Creator	World Church of the Creator
2000	Earth Liberation Front (ELF)	Al-Qa`ida
	Animal Liberation Front (ALF)	

**Table 9. Top 20 Groups that Attack US Targets outside US Homeland**

<b>Terrorist Groups</b>	<b>Number of Attacks</b>	<b>Percent of Attacks</b>
Shining Path (SL)	53	2.05
National Liberation Army of Colombia (ELN)	39	1.51
Turkish People's Liberation Army	38	1.47
Montoneros (Argentina)	37	1.43
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)	36	1.39
Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA)	35	1.35
New People's Army (NPA)	34	1.31
Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR)	33	1.27
Taliban	30	1.16
United Popular Action Movement	29	1.12
Basque Fatherland and Freedom (ETA)	28	1.08
Ejercito Revolucionaria del Pueblo (ERP) (Argentina)	25	0.96
Baader-Meinhof Group	24	0.93
M-19 (Movement of April 19)	21	0.81
Dev Sol	20	0.77
Red Army Faction (RAF)	18	0.69
November 17 Revolutionary Organization (N17RO)	17	0.66
Revolutionary People's Struggle (ELA)	16	0.62
Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN)	15	0.58
Tupamaros (Uruguay)	14	0.54
Other Groups	778	30.51

*What is known about the nature of terrorists' preparatory and planning activities in the build up to an attempted attack? What does this tell us about the people engaged in these activities and about the communities in which they live?*

### **Indicators of Radicalization Thought Piece**

Kelly R. Damphousse

Much of what terrorists do when preparing and planning terrorist attacks remains unknown to terrorist scholars and counter-terrorists in spite of the dramatic increase in concern about, and research on, terrorism in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Most terrorism research focuses on individual motivations or counts of terrorism attacks over time. The rarity of terrorist attacks and the relatively recent advent of terrorism research has resulted in insufficient data to address the behavior of terrorists in the days and hours before a terrorist attack. This paper summarizes our attempts to address this vacuum in the past several years.<sup>3</sup>

The most well known acts of American terrorism (9/11 and the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center, the Oklahoma City bombing, and the Olympic bombings in Atlanta) involved offenders who engaged in long-term planning and preparation before travelling hundreds of miles to strike the target. If these patterns were typical of all terrorism incidents, then it would suggest that not much could be done locally by local law enforcement to counter-terrorism. Our research projects have focused on the extent to which these well-known attacks are typical and the extent to which such preparatory activity varies by terrorist type.

The data for the projects is based on the American Terrorism Study (ATS), composed of data collected from federal court cases that resulted from official FBI "terrorism" investigations from 1980 to 2005. Additional grants have allowed us to supplement the ATS database by including data that describe the temporal and spatial relationships among terrorists' preparatory conduct and a subsequent terrorist incident.

Terrorists engage in a variety of non-terrorist criminal conduct prior to the commission of any terrorist act. These non-terrorist acts include crimes related to the creation of false identities for group members, thefts to procure funding for the group, thefts of weapons or explosive materials and, frequently, crimes related to the maintenance of internal security (Hamm, 2007; Smith and Orvis, 1993; Smith, 1994; Smith, Damphousse, Jackson, and Sellers, 2002; Smith, Damphousse and Roberts, 2006). These behaviors may not themselves be acts of terrorism but they often facilitate the terrorist group's efforts to engage in a terrorism attack.

The types of preparatory activities may be moderated by the length of time that a terrorist group exists. Crenshaw (1988), for example, has suggested that terrorist groups are organizations that advocate political change and that the "fundamental purpose of any political organization is to maintain itself" (Crenshaw, 1988:19). The longer a terrorist group survives, the more likely its targets and its precursor activity will reflect a concern for maintaining the group and its organizational structure.

A dominant theme in terrorism literature is that the "regular" criminality of terrorists is more widespread and complex than previously discussed. Crenshaw (1988) acknowledged this with her expansion of terrorist targeting to include "organizational maintenance" crimes. Similarly, Hoffman

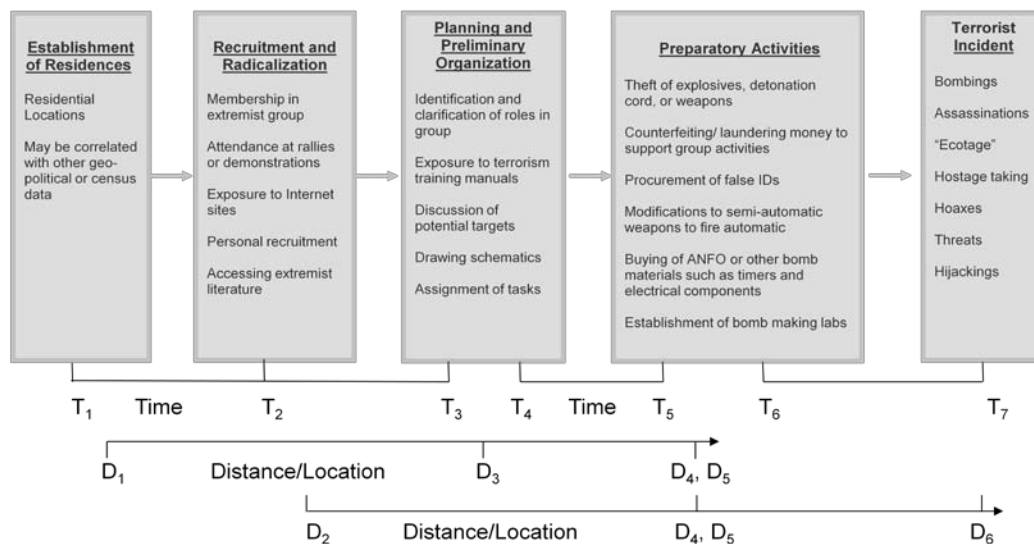
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<sup>3</sup> This paper is based largely on research conducted by the author and his colleague Brent L. Smith, Director of the Terrorism Research Center at the University of Arkansas. Portions of this research were funded by the National Institute of Justice (Grant Numbers: 1999-IJCX-0005, 2003-DT-CX-0003, 2005-IJ-CX-0200) and the Oklahoma City National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (Grant Number MIPT 106-113-2000-064) through the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security. The opinions presented here do not represent the official position of the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, the MIPT, or the NIJ.

(1998:158) suggested that the key motivation for many terrorist groups “has been the deliberate tailoring of their violent acts to appeal to their perceived constituencies.” Both ideas have important implications for radicalization.

Terrorist groups can be described as having a lifespan similar to any living organism. Their behaviors can be organized along a continuum that ranges from birth to death. “Birth” involves group formation, radicalization, and recruitment of members. “Death” involves the desistance of terrorist activities by the group (often as a result of criminal justice actions such as arrest of the group members). We have suggested that the “terrorist group lifespan” involves five major activities: (1) group formation and establishment of residence, (2) recruitment and radicalization; (3) planning and preliminary organization; (4) preparatory activities; and (5) terrorist acts. Terrorist activity ends when outside forces (either capitulation by the government or successful counter-terrorism actions) intervene somewhere along this continuum. These behaviors involve a *spatial* dimension (they are located in some geographical space) and a *temporal* dimension (they involve some element of timing). Both dimensions can be measures and, we hypothesized, vary by type of terrorism group. We sought to catalogue the spatial and temporal elements of all the precursor activities that we could find and discover the extent to which patterns could be established.

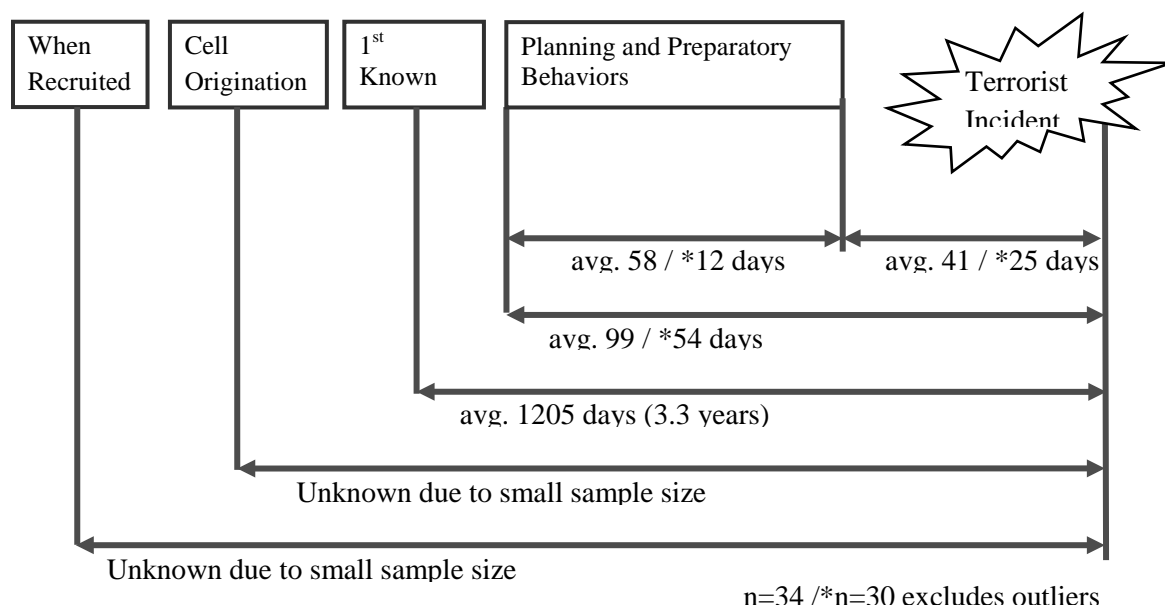
## Major Temporal and Spatial Dimensions of Terrorism



We examined a sample of cases from the American Terrorism Study (ATS) and other additional selected by a panel of subject matter experts. The ATS includes data on all federal indictments resulting from FBI terrorism investigations as defined by the AG Guidelines. The ATS currently includes approximately 80 variables and a wealth of qualitative court documents on approximately 650 “indictees” from 1980 – August 31, 2001. Additional cases were selected from the nearly 500 persons indicted from September 1, 2001 to August 31, 2004. Two additional projects (*Pre-Incident Indicators of Terrorist Activities* and *Geospatial Analysis of Terrorist Activities*) collected supplemental data from open sources that added to the ATS dataset. The additional data include the spatial and temporal information for group formation, radicalization and recruitment efforts, terrorist residences, group meetings and telephone calls, attack planning and terrorist attacks.

Subject matter experts identified a sample of 75 groups/cases for study in the original project. The sample included an approximately equal number of left-wing, right-wing, international, and single-issue terrorism cases. The resulting dataset includes information on over 400 variables involving about 60 case studies and 200 “incidents.” Information on an additional 40 cases involving international and environmental terrorists was later compiled. There is wide variability in our ability to collect complete data and we continue to add to the data as funding allows. We have successfully geocoded about 80% of the behavior in the groups in our database but had more limited success in measuring the time and date when behaviors occurred.

Temporal data relating to terrorist group planning and preparation was the most difficult type of data to obtain so our analyses are very preliminary. The analysis shown below only shows those measurements where complete information was available from “first known activity” to the “terrorist incident.” The number of outliers dramatically affects these statistics. Despite these shortcomings, these preliminary findings are enlightening.

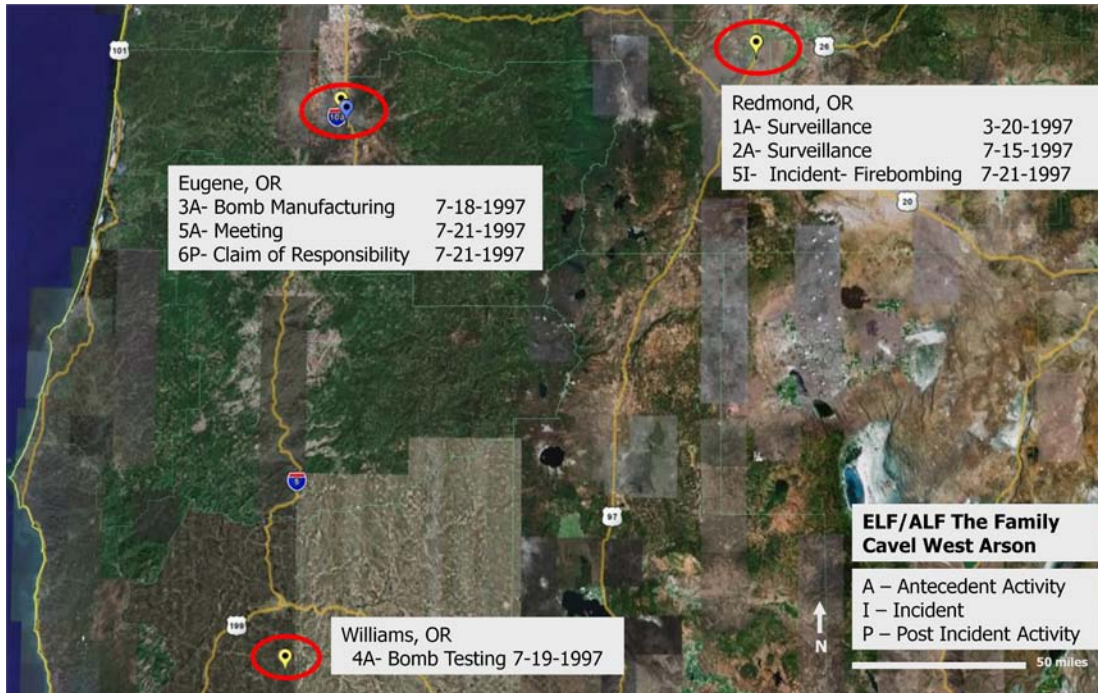


In general, the average length of planning for a given terrorist incident was approximately 2-4 months. Subsequent analyses have demonstrated that these averages vary depending upon type of terrorist group. International groups appear to have the longest planning and preparation period, while single-issue terrorists seem to engage in the least, or at least the shortest, preparation. For example, preliminary analyses of environmental cases suggest a relatively short planning cycle that involves reconnaissance of the target approximately 1-2 weeks prior to the planned incident. This was followed by the establishment of a “staging area” the day prior to, or the day of, the incident where the incendiary device was assembled. A return to the staging area immediately after the incident to destroy evidence used in the attack was typical of these groups.

The following case study from the Elf/Alf (the Family) Cavel West Arson attack provides some interesting insight that regularly played out among environmentalists. The target was identified in Redmond, Oregon in March 1997. Surveillance of the target was conducted on July 15, 1997. The bomb was built more than 100 miles away in Eugene on July 18 and tested about 400 miles away in Williams on July 19. The group met on July 21 in Eugene before travelling to Redmond to engage in the terrorist



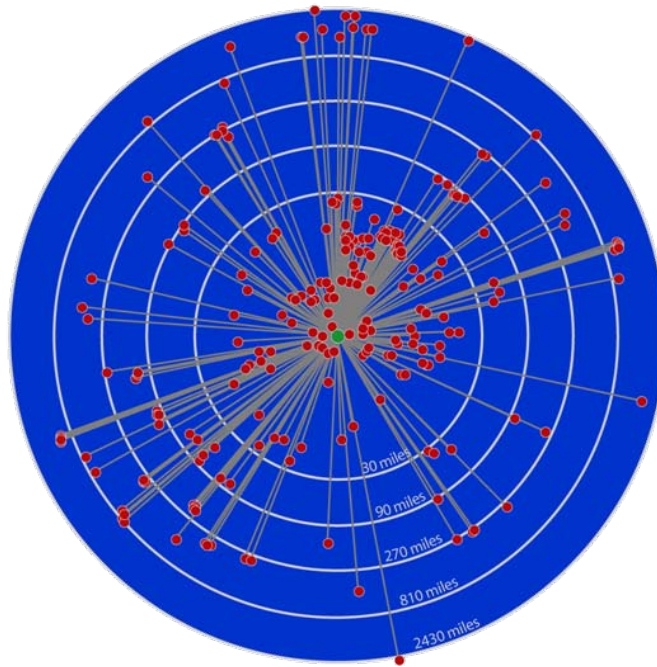
attack on that same day. They returned to Eugene before claiming responsibility for the attack before the end of the day.



The terrorist groups in this study engaged in an average of 2.3 known preparatory, planning, and ancillary behaviors per incident. About two-thirds of these activities, such as buying obtainable bomb making components or conducting surveillance on a target, were not, in themselves, illegal. Despite this, 145 planning and preparatory behaviors were recorded that reflected criminal conduct. The most common of these crimes was involving acquiring, manufacturing, or testing bombs (16.6%), robbery (14.4%), murder (6.1%) 15, and training (6.1%). The number of preparatory behaviors varied according to the type of terrorist group. The older, leftist groups studied, such as the United Freedom Front and the FALN, averaged the most preparatory behaviors per incident (7.00). The incidents studied involving international groups were also above the mean (4.18). In contrast, incidents involving right-wing groups and single-issue terrorists were below the mean (3.00 and 2.50 preparatory behaviors per incident, respectively). This finding is consistent with changes in terrorist group tactics in the 1990s. Both the extreme right and single-issue terrorists adopted “unorganized” or “uncoordinated” violence models in the early 1990s that emphasized less communication among subordinates and leaders.

The following figure shows the overall distribution of the terrorists’ residences and their target locations. Due to the large number of targets within 30 miles, coupled with targets in excess of 1,000 miles of their residences, the data are presented using a logarithmic scale. The overall resident-to-target pattern is bimodal. Terrorists either lived very close to the target or very far from it. Three-fourths of the terrorists either resided within thirty miles of the target or in excess of 800 miles. This pattern was apparent among all the group types except left-wing terrorists. It was most prominent among international terrorists, where nearly 90% of the residence-to-incident measurements were either within 30 miles or more than 924 miles. In contrast, right-wing terrorists tended to live farther from their targets. Most live in rural areas, while targeting the “pollutants of urban life” by bombing gay bars, porn shops, and abortion clinics in nearby cities.

### Linear Distance Analysis of Residences to Incidents



Statistics for residence-to-incident rose diagram using all terrorist incidents

<b>Statistics</b>	<b>Logarithmic Scale: Log10</b>	<b>Natural Breaks</b>
n = 426	46% are 0 - 30 miles	47% are 0 - 38 miles
Minimum: 0 miles	8% are 31- 90 miles	7% are 46 - 103 miles
Maximum: 2,570 miles	9% are 91 - 270 miles	13% are 114 - 410 miles
Mean: 394 miles	9% are 271 - 810 miles	6% are 440 - 985 miles
Std. dev: 514	28% are 811 - 2570 miles	27% are 1077 - 2570 miles

Statistics for residence-to-incident rose diagram by terrorist ideology

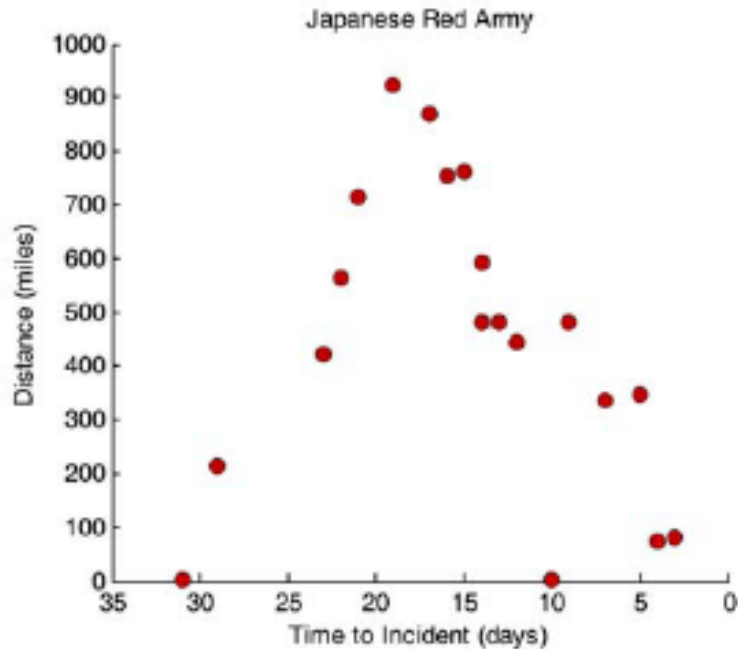
<b>International n = 262</b>	<b>Single Issue n = 68</b>
50% are 0-18 miles	43% are 1.26 – 28 miles
3% are 78-114 miles	15% are 46 - 82 miles
7% are 192-289 miles	16% are 144 - 447 miles
39% are 924-1098 miles	25% are 732 - 2570 miles
<b>Left Wing n = 33</b>	<b>Right Wing n = 71</b>
52% are 0-15 miles	32% are 0-38 miles
18% are 44-130 miles	20% are 51-103 miles
24% are 211-309 miles	17% are 233-394 miles
6% are 1656-2134 miles	10% are 457-481 miles
	21% are 712-877 miles

**Implications**

Our findings provide law enforcement officials, investigators, and prosecutors with reason to be optimistic about the possibilities for early intervention. We have learned that about one-half of terrorists both reside and prepare for their terrorist incidents within a thirty-mile radius of their residences. These patterns also varied by group type. International terrorists lived nearest the target, while right-wing terrorists who tended to live in rural areas while selecting urban targets, live the greatest distances from their incidents. In addition, among single-issue and international terrorists, a bimodal pattern emerges where the terrorists reside either very close to the target or very far from it. Unlike conventional criminals, the terrorists in our sample generally committed funding crimes (robberies, burglaries, and thefts) great distances from their residences and the selected targets, while committing specific planning and preparatory crimes in close proximity to the target.

Our temporal analyses of terrorist activity revealed that terrorist planning and preparation is more complex than originally anticipated. International groups tended to plan for attacks longer than either right-wing or single-issue domestic groups. Right-wing terrorists and single-issue terrorists, particularly environmental extremists, tended to commit fewer preparatory acts than international terrorists prior to the commission of a terrorist incident. These findings beg the question: Are these differences merely artifacts of the small sample size in the study or do they reflect variations in organizational structure or tactical methods, such as the use of “uncoordinated violence” as opposed to a more organized cellular approach?

Finally, the interaction between time and space has never been addressed. Initial impressions of our temporal and spatial data suggest a scenario much like a predator closing in on a prey—as the planned incident draws nearer temporally, the spatial events also draw nearer to the target location. Consider the case of the Japanese Red Army, where the preparatory activities (surveillance) started close to the target 30 days before the attack but moved further away for the next two weeks, only to move closer to the target as the day of the attack approached.



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*You have argued that it is more helpful to study situational aspects of crime rather than individual or personal aspects. Explain why this is true of terrorism. What are some potential situational aspects of terrorism and what types of data might be used to measure these aspects?*

Graeme R. Newman

### **Basic principles of Situational Crime Prevention.**

Situational Crime Prevention rests upon a solid body of environmental criminology theories – routine activity theory (Cohen and Felson, 1979), crime pattern theory (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1993) and the rational choice perspective (Cornish and Clarke, 1986). Unlike most other criminological theories that seek to explain the psychological, social and biological roots of criminality (a disposition), environmental criminology theories seek to explain the occurrence of crime (a behavior). A fundamental premise of environmental criminology is that crime is the product of the interaction between a criminal disposition and an opportunity for crime.

Situational prevention claims that reducing opportunities will reduce crime and, indeed, that more certain and swifter preventive gains are to be had by focusing on the reduction of opportunities than the reduction of dispositions. To ensure success, however, a situational prevention project must follow certain principles:

1. It must be focused on a highly specific form of crime
2. It should be based on a detailed understanding of *how* the crime is committed, not so much on *why* it is committed.
3. It should treat the offender as a rational decision maker, trying to achieve a particular benefit while at the same time minimizing risk and effort. An understanding of the offender's decisions can be achieved in two main ways: (1) through detailed analysis of data about recorded offenses and, (2) by interviewing offenders about their methods.
4. It should analyze all stages of a crime from preparation, through commission, escape and aftermath. Examining each stage in detail increases the yield of preventive options.
5. It should consider a wide range of different preventive options since success is more readily achieved by a package of opportunity-reducing initiatives than by a single measure. The latest classification of these measures (Cornish and Clarke, 2003) has 25 opportunity-reducing techniques grouped under five main headings: (1) increase the effort, (2) increase the risks, (3) reduce the rewards, (4) remove excuses and (5) reduce provocations.
6. It should evaluate the impact of the implemented measures paying particular attention to any possible displacement. In the most recent review (Guerette and Bowers 2010) of 102 studies which examined displacement, it was observed in 26 percent of cases. The opposite of displacement, diffusion of benefit, was observed in 27 percent of the cases.
7. It should also examine one other possible result of situational measures – offender adaptation. This refers to the long-term adjustment that takes place in the offender population to the introduction of preventive measures.

### **Crime as Terrorism**

Since terrorist attacks occur in environmental settings (as do all incidents including accidents), it is susceptible to the same situational approach as in crime. Situational Crime Prevention insists that the different types of crime are broken down into very specific problems or situations (e.g. not just ‘car theft’ but “theft of cars from residential streets and driveways”), the varieties of crime are considerable. The range of terrorist attacks not only includes many types of crimes such as counterfeiting of documents and currency, money laundering of drug money, but also suicide bombing, assassinations, roadside bombs, and arson, to name but a few. So from a behavioral point of view there is essentially no difference between crime and terrorism (Clarke and Newman 2006). Terrorism is simply crime with a political motive.

### **Terrorism as a “Rational Choice”**

Whatever the general motivation to carry out a criminal or terrorist act, the *immediate* motive is to complete the operation successfully. This clearly requires planning and the corresponding series of decisions that are needed to implement any plan. The overall motivation may be irrational, the perception of reality may be distorted, but choices must be made within the environment as seen by the terrorist. Successful planning and completion of a terrorist attack essentially depends on taking advantage of the opportunities available.

### **Terrorism as Opportunity**

Clarke and Newman (2006) have identified four “pillars” of terrorist opportunity.

1. *Targets*. Targets differ widely in their attractiveness: how easy they are to reach, how much impact their destruction will bring, whether they are occupied by many people; whether government or businesses; whether their destruction would be symbolic of victory. The “journey to crime” is of considerable importance.
2. *Weapons*. The range of weapons available and how appropriate they are for reaching the target. Suicide bombers are used, not because of a fanatical Islamic ideology, but because they offer clear advantages such as removing the necessity of planning an escape route or increasing the chances of reaching a substitute target if thwarted. Semtex explosive is used because it is easy to conceal under clothing. Terrorists prefer weapons they know.
3. *Tools available for conducting the mission*. These are tangible products that are used in the course of an attack. Among these important and essential (depending on the mission) products for conducting terrorism are: rented or stolen vehicles, cell phones, cash and credit cards, false documents such as passports, and information about targets such as maps, timetables and schedules.
4. *Facilitating conditions*. These are the social and physical arrangements of modern society that make specific acts of terrorism possible. Conditions that facilitate terrorist acts include:
  - a local community that is sympathetic to the terrorists, or that can be used as cover by foreign terrorists;
  - an accessible arms market;
  - banking and market conditions that permit money laundering for obtaining financial support for terrorist operations ,
  - lax or non-existent security procedures by government agencies or businesses

## **Terrorism as radicalization**

It is clear from the above that Situational Crime Prevention would view radicalization as a process, and would seek to identify the opportunity structure of radicalization – that is the environmental factors that facilitate it. Guided by the principle of specificity it would:

- Construct a step-by-step description of the process of radicalization;
- Ask whether different kinds of radicalization lead to different kinds of terrorism;
- Identify at what points in the process do the four pillars of opportunity: targets, weapons, tools, and facilitating conditions (which may include precipitating factors, group support etc.) come into play.
- Focus on collecting information at the local, community level where radicalization mostly occurs.
- Use community oriented policing as a means to collect information.

Local communities, which are often ethnic or immigrant communities, provide the “cover” of cultural and economic support for all members of the community, of which terrorists take advantage. However, the investigation and interrogation of members of these communities by police brings with it a number of problems (Newman and Clarke 2008):

- Language barriers prohibit effective communication and trust between immigrants and police;
- Immigrants may fear that contact with police will threaten their immigration status;
- The lack of voting rights among immigrant communities limits their relevance in determining the priorities of police and local governments.

Community policing (Bratton and Kelling 2008) can overcome these problems, but only if it adopts a crime prevention approach that views local ethnic communities as potential victims rather than as suspects (Briggs et al. 2006).

## **Terrorist opportunities and data collection**

The above outline covers an enormous range of possible situations, interventions and outcomes. It does not include, at least explicitly, tracking down and “taking out” the terrorists as a technique for preventing terrorist attacks. Yet this is by far the most widely accepted meaning of “prevention” – whether of crime or terrorism -- across all levels of law enforcement. It rests on the everyday practice of police who use arrest as the main solution to solving problems. By and large, the research shows that arrests do not solve crime and disorder problems (Scott 2005). Indeed, they often exacerbate them. This perspective on prevention requires, first of all finding someone to arrest for the crime, and second, especially as far as terrorism is concerned, finding someone to arrest who is planning to commit a terrorist act. The latter, of course, is typified by the popular FBI use of sting operations.

The Situational Crime Prevention approach leads to an entirely different orientation to data collection because:

- It focuses on opportunities, not individuals.
- Opportunities can be easily identified, perpetrators or potential perpetrators cannot.
- It focuses on how offenders carry out their tasks, not who.
- Interrogation of captured terrorists therefore avoids the inquisitorial obsession with building lists of terrorists or potential terrorists.
- It approaches those who provide information as allies, not potential suspects.

Some of the sources of data relevant to opportunities for terrorism are:

- Businesses or other entities that own or inhabit high risk targets,
- Businesses (banks, rental car agencies, hardware stores, cell phone retailers) among whose customers may be terrorists
- Government and other organizations that either issue or depend on document authentication, such as DMVs , city clerks, retail stores at point of sale, banks, etc.
- Ethnic communities that host new immigrants through charities, churches etc.
- Town planning, engineering and transportation departments and other entities charged with overseeing potential high risk targets such as energy, food and water distribution.
- Disaster management officials, other police departments, fire departments.

It is obvious from the above that data concerning opportunities for terrorism exist just about everywhere. This should be no surprise since Situational Crime Prevention has its roots in routine activity theory which focuses on the environment of everyday life that creates opportunities. The problem therefore becomes how to reassemble this information so that it can be accessed and analyzed according to need. This is an enormous task and carries with it many political, organizational and ethical difficulties. A bold first step would be to revamp local police as a data collection and analysis agency. This would have many benefits for the prevention of traditional crime as well as terrorism.

### **Local police as data collectors**

We have seen that information at the local level requires the assembly of a catalogue of terrorist opportunities that exist in local communities. That is, to what extent are targets easily accessible, weapons available, tools obtainable and what local conditions facilitate terrorist activity? Local police are in the best position to collect such information as part of their regular community policing role. Unfortunately, few police departments are trained in data collection as a part of community policing, especially problem oriented policing, the latter emphasizing much more a scientific approach to collecting data. Line officers are not trained to collect information on opportunities for crime, let alone terrorism. Most forms used by police for recording crime incidents are driven by the traditional broad categories of crimes (the UCR for example), and are name driven (i.e. designed to catch criminals and arrest them), not opportunity driven. The recent popularity of mapping has made small inroads into this mindset, but there is still a long way to go.

In sum, there is a pressing need for (1) the training of police management and crime analysts in data base development relevant to terrorist and criminal opportunity (2) training of line officers in collection of these data during their routine community policing activities and (3) perhaps the most important,



research to develop a framework for collection, classification and interlinking databases at the local level that are designed for both crime and terrorism prevention (Eck and Clarke 2010).

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*What do we know about the characteristics of communities that are most likely to experience a proliferation of gangs and gang activity? How can understanding factors that are associated with gang presence inform understanding of the conditions under which radicalization might occur?*

## Street Gangs and Radicalization

Andrew Papachristos

Street gangs are decidedly a local phenomena. Most gangs in the U.S.—and there are about 27,000 gangs identified by law enforcement—are intimately tied to very specific geographic neighborhoods, communities that are isolated from legitimate economic, political, and social opportunities. Moreover, the worldview of most gang members is extremely parochial, very often extending only a few city blocks. Although individual gang members may get involved in politics, religious organizations, or other types of social movements, gangs as social groups are less concerned with such matters. Most gangs are only loosely organized and their criminal activity is best characterized as what one criminologist calls “cafeteria style” offending—a little bit of larceny, a dollop of drug use, and a smidge of drug dealing served with a heavy helping of violence and conflict.

That said, there are a handful of examples—and, by handful, I mean three to five—in which gangs have become highly politicized, criminalized, and radicalized entities. These examples are illustrative of the ‘worst case scenario’ of what could happen to gangs under extreme conditions, and should be taken as a cautionary tale rather than the a rallying call for specific forms of gang suppression strategies. More directly related to the radicalization processes of interest to this group, however, are the complex and multi-faceted ways in which the gang and the community interact. In many neighborhoods, gangs are “institutionalized,” meaning they are deeply embedded into the lives of neighborhood residents and are as much a part of the social fabric as churches, boy scout troops, the Elks Club, and other community associations. At the same time, the violence, crime, and delinquency associated with gangs undermines a community’s capacity to regulate itself or pursue its goals. And, unlike most other radicalized groups, the targets of gang violence are most often members of the gang’s *own* community. Gangs rarely target “the system,” though, to be sure, they have strong feelings of injustice and inequality leveled against the criminal justice system and “The Man.” Such sentiments are virtually never translated into organized action against the government. Instead, the targets of gang mischief and mayhem are “people like them,” other young men living in the same neighborhoods.<sup>4</sup>

To better understand the ways that research on gangs can shed light on processes of radicalization, this research brief will discuss: (1) individual factors associated with gang membership; (2) community-level factors associated with the emergence and persistence of gangs; (3) the role of the prison-street nexus in fostering political or extremist identities among gang members; and (4) the potential utility of a social network approach to the study of gangs and radical groups.

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<sup>4</sup> Obvious exceptions are extremist hate organizations (e.g., Neo-Nazi’s, Skinheads, and the like). While such hate groups may sometimes try to recruit gang members, they tend to be distinguished from the more common examples of *street* gangs described here.

### **Individual-Level Factors of Gang Membership**

Research on gang membership has by and large taken a “risk factors” approach that seeks to uncover individual, familial, school, and community factors that increase an individual’s propensity of joining a gang. Such research produces a laundry list of risk factors that include: low self-esteem, anxiety, negative life events, living in extreme poverty, non-delinquent problem behaviors, lack of parental attachment/supervision, lack of attachment to schools, low academic achievement, and exposure to delinquent peers.

Unfortunately, meta-reviews of the research show that the importance of any single risk factor is highly variable across studies.<sup>5</sup> In other words, there is very little consistent research pertaining to the significance of any of these individual risk factors in actually predicting consistent differences between gang and non-gang members. Those risk factors with “more consistent” empirical support across studies include: negative life events, non-delinquents problem behaviors, and various characteristics of social networks.<sup>6</sup>

Such a risk factors approach faces two distinct problems. First, the vast majority of individuals with such risk factors never join a gang. Second, meta-analysis of the current research fails to find any clustering of risk factors that consistently predicts gang membership across locations, racial/ethnic groups, or studies. Even that research comparing gang vs. non-gang populations within same school, neighborhood, or ethnic/racial groups fails to produce consistent results as to the individual-level factors predicting gang membership.

### **Community-Level Factors of Gang Emergence and Persistence**

Unlike individual-level factors, the evidence pertaining to the community-level conditions associated with the emergence and persistence of gangs is rather clear: gangs are more likely to form and persist in communities associated with high levels of poverty, unstable residential populations, high levels of immigrant concentration, and diminished capacities of social control. Furthermore, communities with persistent gang problems tend to be isolated socially, politically, and economically from mainstream (read “middle-class”) opportunity structures. For instance, communities where gangs and gang violence are endemic also tend to lack grocery stores, jobs that pay livable wages, active ties to public servants, and the like.

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<sup>5</sup> A recent longitudinal study suggests that while a single risk factor alone are not able to predict gang membership, the accumulation of several risk factors does indeed increase the likelihood of joining a gang.

<sup>6</sup> This last risk factor—the influence of peer social networks—is part of the reason I conclude this brief with a discussion of social network analysis.

According to our earliest theories of gang formation, gangs emerge as a response to such social disadvantage and serve as an ersatz form of social organization that provide meaning and structure to the lives of young men. Adolescents are expected to “age out” of the gang as they get married, join the military, secure decent employment, or otherwise “grow up.” While this pattern of ‘aging-out’ of gang involvement accurately describes the experiences of white-ethnic immigrants circa World War II, this view of gangs appears to less applicable to contemporary disadvantaged minority communities, both in the U.S. or abroad. Gangs today are most often found in the slums and ghettos across the world, whether they be housing projects in Chicago, Shantytowns in South Africa, or favelas in Rio. Most of the members of these groups tend to be members from racial, ethnic, or religious minority groups who occupy a marginalized space in the social ecology of cities. And, rather than being a fleeting experience of adolescence or neighborhood transition, gangs in many modern-day disadvantaged neighborhoods have become a neighborhood fixture.

Ethnographic research on gangs in the Post-Industrial Era highlights the extent to which gangs have become embedded into the social fabric of disadvantaged neighborhoods. Gangs are an integral part of the social organization of neighborhoods *and*, at the same time, are also partially responsible for significant social problems. This gang-community relationship is indeed complex. Gangs are tolerated (and in some cases supported) for several reasons. First, gang membership is not a zero-sum category. Community residents don’t see gang members as psychopathic murderers, but as brothers, fathers, sisters, neighbors, co-workers, church goers, and so on. Put another way, the social category of “gang member” is just one aspect of any individual’s identity. What is more, gang membership is often a fluid category with some individuals claiming association only rarely, while others view it as more central to their identity. In short, gang members *are* part of the community—they might be occasional troublemakers, but they live, eat, work, and go to school in the same neighborhood as non-gang members. Community members frequently struggle with the desire to be rid of particular gang behaviors without necessarily being rid of gang members per se.

Furthermore, many gangs (about 30 percent, according to law enforcement estimates) are involved in organized drug dealing which frequently has economic spillover into the non-gang population of the community. Qualitative research suggests that non-gang members are often employed by drug dealing gangs to store weapons, package drugs, and work as lookouts or in other positions in a drug operation. Several documented cases detail how gang largess has been used to host community block parties, sponsor sporting events, and coordinate other such community activities. In addition, in many communities, gangs can also serve as a de facto source of social control. Frustrations with local law enforcement—“the police don’t come when we call”—leads some residents to rely on gang leaders to solve problems, such as dealing with noisy youth (often gang members), protecting neighborhood residents against other types of crime (e.g., rapists or robberies), and even as a way to regulate other underground economic activities (e.g., prostitution). Such reliance on gangs only serves to increase their importance in a community.

In my own experience—as well as in some ethnographic accounts—the gang-community tension arises precisely as the community residents try to rectify its tolerance for some gang behaviors (such as drug dealing) and reliance on the gang for certain social functions versus its dismay over other types of less-

desirable gang behavior, especially violence. To be sure, *no one*—not even residents of the most disadvantaged areas—believe that violence is morally or legally “okay.” In fact, a recent study suggests that African American residents in high poverty neighborhoods are actually *less* tolerant of violence than middle-class whites. Yet, without economic and social opportunity structures, residents of such neighborhoods must often navigate such competing cultural systems.<sup>7</sup> For some residents, violence is just another option for settling disputes and dealing with problems as they navigate their daily lives.

### **Prison Setting – An Unexplored “Community” Context**

As mentioned above, a handful of gangs have engaged in coordinated acts against the government or have established connections with other radicalized groups. In the late-1980s, Chicago’s El Rukns (a.k.a., The Black P. Stones) attempted to buy small arms and a rocket launcher from a group of Libyan government officials; according to authorities, three members of the El Rukns flew to Panama and discussed the commission of “terrorist acts on U.S. soil” with Libyan agents. Another Chicago Gang, the Latin Kings, reportedly established financial and personal ties with the paramilitary group, F.A.L.N.; while such links have been claimed in several cases, I could not determine the exact nature of this relationship. Lastly, there have been several recent inquiries into the extent to which the gang MS-13 has international connections that it exploits for various crimes, including: human trafficking, arms dealing, and narcotics trafficking.<sup>8</sup>

All of these examples share one thing in common—most of these links to radical organizations were cultivated in prison. The El Rukns, for instance, were supposedly contacted through connections developed by the gang’s founder while serving time in federal prison. Similarly, the Latin Kings – FALN connection was also cultivated in Illinois prison as well as through familial connections to Puerto Rico. As I describe elsewhere, much of the movement of members of MS-13 comes from the migration—sometimes the force migration in the form of deportation—from the US back to the country of origins.<sup>9</sup>

What is it about the prison context that politicizes gang members? While very little empirical research exists on this subject, the Chicago example is again illustrative. During the 1960s gangs were by all accounts extremely active in legitimate community and civil rights organizing. While some gangs during the 1960s become involved in the Black Power movement, gangs in Chicago made serious efforts to distance themselves from more militant political groups such as the Black Panther Party. As state, local, and federal law enforcement began to target gang members (especially gang leaders) in response to growing civil unrest and escalating levels of violence, young men involved in political organizing went to

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<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, a review of cultural explanations of gang behaviors is beyond the scope of this paper, but offers another extremely promising area of inquiry.

<sup>8</sup> Although not discussed here, motorcycle gangs and traditional organized crime (i.e., the Mafia) have also been linked to interstate and international crimes such as arms, narcotics, and human trafficking.

<sup>9</sup> See, Papachristos (2005) “Gang World,” *Foreign Policy*.

jail in large numbers. At roughly the same time, considerable human rights organizing *inside* prison were being decided through important court cases; several decisive victories for prisoner rights occurred during this period.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the birth of many of the country's more organized gangs occurred at roughly the same time as highly politically-minded gang leaders entered a prison system that was amidst serious legal and human rights changes. Prison gangs in Chicago, Los Angeles, and elsewhere began to adopt the language of politics. Gang leaders referred to themselves as "ghetto prisoners" or "political prisoners," making claims (sometimes legal claims) that their cases were similar to that of Malcolm X. Other groups explicitly referred to themselves as "Brothers of the Struggle," invoking images of the gang vs. society. Interestingly, such language is often not a part of gang culture outside of prison walls.

Perhaps the most recent and widely publicized example of how prisons might serve as a breeding ground for radicalized gang behavior comes is the case of Jose Padilla. Padilla was arrested at Chicago's O'Hare airport in June 2002 reportedly en route to detonate a "dirty bomb" in a U.S. city. Once a member of a gang called the Maniac Latin Disciples, Padilla converted to Islam while incarcerated on an assault charge. It was during his incarceration that Padilla is suspected to have cultivated links to Al-Qaeda.

Padilla's story, however, is less about the radicalization of a street gang, as it is about the radicalization of a specific street gang *member*. In other words, this is more a story of life course criminology than organizational evolution. Padilla's former gang has no history of political activity and, at the time of his involvement in terrorist activities, Padilla had long since "grown out" of his gang behavior. But, Padilla's gang membership may have been just one of many turning points in his criminal career—it was not the end, but perhaps an important turning point on the path his criminal behavior took over the course of his life. Regardless, it is clear that his status as "gang member" was not instrumental in his later acts against the state as an "enemy combatant." Still, the story illustrates the appeal gangs can have for particular types of individuals, especially in prison settings where political rhetoric is more overt among gangs.

### **A Closing Note – The Potential of Social Network Analysis**

Part of the failure of an individual risk-factors approach is that it only briefly examines the influence of social networks on individual and group behaviors. In this way, the study of network effects on criminal behavior fails for many of the very same reasons that early explanations of the spread of HIV failed: it ignores the important "connected" nature of crime. In other words, individual-based approaches forget that many of criminal activities rely implicitly or explicitly on the social networks created by individual behavior and social relationships. In concluding this paper, I want to draw attention to a new and

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<sup>10</sup> It was also during this time that a rash of prison riots occurred throughout the U.S. that were used as leverage for increasing attention towards prisoner rights. Gangs were active in many of these riots.

developing line of research that may be applicable in understanding street gangs *and* the process of radicalization.<sup>11</sup>

The field of social network analysis focuses on the “connections” between actors and how regularities in such connections influences social and individual behavior. In other areas of research, network analysis has been used to analyze political influence, the diffusion of technology and information job seeking behavior, entrepreneurial activities, and even the success or failure of political revolutions. Gangs, if anything, are social networks of individuals engaging in specific types of behavior: hanging out on street corners, dealing drugs, getting in fights, and so on. Gang membership itself is often determined by the strength of individual friendships, personal influence, and patterns of loyalties. Recently, a small number of scholars have begun applying developments in social network analysis to the study of street gangs. In the gang context, network analysis has been used to understand: (1) the organizational structure of specific gangs, (2) how the location of individual members in said structures influences victimization and offending; (4) patterns of inter-group conflict and violence, and (5) the differences in influence and power among gang members. Additional types of questions that network analysis can help answer include: do friendship networks or subgroups within a larger gang determine intergroup conflict? How does leadership and participation relate to behavioral patterns? Which types of social ties predict social status, power, or influence within a group? In short, network analysis provides a new and promising area of inquiry that can potentially unpack the black-box of group processes and structures that are the foundation of gang identity and behavior.

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<sup>11</sup> This is area I will most likely spend time on during our meetings. For that reason, I will keep its description here rather brief.

*What is known about the communities in which hate crimes occur in the United States? Do they share some common characteristics? Do perpetrators of these crimes usually commit the crime in their own community, or do they seek out targets outside of their immediate community?*

## Communities and Hate Crimes

Ryan King

### I. Introduction

This paper discusses the community-level determinants of hate crime offending and highlights some aspects of hate crimes research that might inform the study of radicalization and terrorism. Hate crime, like terrorism, might be defined a number of different ways, and in this paper I generally refer to illegal acts involving intentional selection of a victim based on a perpetrator's bias or prejudice against the actual or perceived status of the victim (Craig, 2002, p. 86). This description closely resembles the federal government's definition employed for data collection purposes and is similar to definitions found in numerous penal codes across the United States.

The bulk of this paper summarizes extant empirical research as it relates to two questions. First, what is known about the communities in which hate crimes occur in the United States, and do 'high hate crime' communities share some commonalities? Second, do perpetrators typically commit hate crimes in their own community, or are their targets more often located outside of their immediate residential areas? I draw on prior research and available descriptive information on hate crimes to answer these questions. I then close with a cautionary note about the reliability of hate crime data.

### II. 'High Hate Crime Communities'

***Summary statement:* Hate crimes are often about defending turf. More often than not they are a defensive reaction by majority group members in response to encroachment from minority groups. They frequently occur in tightly knit and predominately white communities that recently experienced an influx of racial minorities.**

A growing body of research has investigated the neighborhood, city, and state-level determinants of hate crime offending. This body of work gives particular attention to three factors – demographics, the distribution of political power, and economic conditions – each of which is discussed below. First, however, two issues relevant to this discussion warrant brief attention at the outset. For one, the lion's



share of empirical research on communities and hate crime focuses on two categories of offending – those motivated by racial prejudice and, to a lesser extent, crimes motivated by bias against a victim’s religion. Far less work at the community-level exists for crimes motivated by bias against one’s sexual orientation, immigrant status, political views, or sex, presumably because of data limitations. I thus confine my review to prior work on racially and religiously motivated offenses. Second, the determinants of hate crimes perpetrated by majority group members against minorities (e.g., white-on-black hate crime) categorically differ from the predictors of crimes perpetrated by minorities against majority group members (e.g., black-on-white hate crimes). This difference may be consequential when attempting to draw parallels between hate crimes and terrorism because the former are disproportionately ‘downward crimes’ (powerful against the marginalized) while the latter are often ‘upward’ (marginalized attacking the powerful).

#### *A. Demographics*

Research on the ecological correlates of hate crime offending at the neighborhood level of analysis increasingly supports a “defended neighborhoods” explanation. This theory posits that historically white neighborhoods seek to maintain their racial composition and will rely on discrimination, harassment, and presumably racially motivated crime to threaten, exclude, or eject minority group members. Accordingly, hate crimes are thought to occur most frequently in homogeneous white neighborhoods that experienced a recent influx of minority group members. The in-migration of minorities effectively serves as a trigger, while the homogeneity of the community minimizes condemnation and fear of reprisal for the offense.

Arguably the two most authoritative statements on hate crime offending lend strong support for this argument. Green et al. (1998) examined racially motivated hate crimes in New York City using hate crime reports from the NYPD’s Bias Crime Unit between 1987 and 1995. They found that hate crimes perpetrated by whites against three minority groups – blacks, Latinos, and Asians – occurred most frequently in predominately white neighborhoods that experienced an influx of minorities. More recently, Lyons (2007) analyzed hate crimes reported to the Chicago police to assess neighborhood variation in levels of anti-white and anti-black hate crime. A significant novelty of Lyons’s work is that he also incorporates data on community social cohesion and informal social control from the Community Survey of the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods, which allows for a more complete test of the defended neighborhoods thesis. Consistent with the work of Green et al., Lyons concludes that anti-black hate crimes are more prevalent in mostly white neighborhoods with high

levels of informal social control that experienced an influx of blacks in recent years. The findings are notable, and in some ways counterintuitive, because general (non-hate motivated) violent crime rates tend to be lowest in areas characterized by substantial informal social control, suggesting that the antecedents of anti-black hate crime are not only unique, but completely the opposite of the correlates of non-bias crime. Stated differently, crime is associated with social disorganization, but hate crimes against minorities are associated with social organization.

Importantly, an entirely different pattern emerges for anti-white hate crimes. The latter are more prevalent in “relatively unstable communities with frequent population turnover” (Lyons 2007, p.844), thereby resembling communities where general crime rates are typically high. Although it remains unclear why the antecedents of anti-black hate crimes differ from the predictors of anti-white hate crime, Lyons posits that anti-black crimes are principally about territorial control whereas anti-white crime may often be retaliatory – i.e., a response to an anti-black offense in an adjacent neighborhood.

#### *B. Political power*

Extant work on violence and discrimination suggests hate crimes may, in part, constitute a reaction to either a perceived loss of political clout by majority groups or a form of grievance expressed by minority groups to vent feelings of alienation and political powerlessness. Hence, a working hypothesis in the literature is that political gains by a given group incite resentment among competing groups, which in turn results in elevated rates of hate crime (e.g., Levin & McDevitt, 1993, Ch. 4).

The above hypothesis has not been directly tested for the case of hate crime specifically, although work on analogous behaviors such as lynching and right-wing violence is consistent with this political model. For example, lynchings of blacks in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were more frequent in counties where the Populist political movement challenged the established white supremacy in the South (Olzak, 1990), and King and Brustein (2006) show that major violent episodes against Jews in pre-WWII Germany increased with political support for leftist political parties, which had disproportionate Jewish representation. City-level analyses similarly find that white killings of blacks are higher in cities with black mayors (Jacobs & Wood, 1999). On that note, Pinderhughes (1993) finds that the election of NYC mayor David Dinkins, an African American, ignited prejudice and may have incited racially motivated violence among white Brooklyn youths. As one interviewee in his ethnographic research lamented, “My father told me that [as a result of the new black mayor] they are going to fire all the white construction workers in the city and hire all black guys” (p. 484).

### *C. Economic conditions*

It is also instructive to touch on community characteristics that do *not* correlate with hate crime offending, such as economic conditions. Green et al. (1998), for instance, find no evidence that hate crimes are more prevalent in economically depressed areas of New York City. Lyons (2007), in some models, even finds that anti-black incidents are more common in economically affluent communities. In line with these assessments from U.S. settings, related empirical work in Germany finds no robust association between economic conditions and right-wing violence net of other control variables (e.g., number of foreigners; see Krueger and Pischke, 1997; McLaren, 1999). Still, it may be premature to completely discount the impact of economic conditions on hate crime offending and radicalization more generally. Research focusing on the economy should further consider differences between coordinated and uncoordinated forms of racially motivated attacks. For instance, Olzak (1989) suggests that business failure rates positively correlated with collective violence against blacks in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, McVeigh's account of the rise of the Ku Klux Klan implicates shifts in economic organization (e.g., moving manufacturing to cities) and increases in (often immigrant) unskilled labor as impacting the growth of the Klan in its formative years. It thus remains a tenable proposition, and one based on a quantum of evidence, that economic conditions may indeed contribute to the radicalization of *organized groups*.

### **III. Residency of hate crime offenders**

***Summary statement:* There is some evidence that hate crimes are largely a local affair with perpetrators and victims residing in the same community where the incident occurs. However, empirical work in this vein is limited and any conclusions should be considered tentative.**

Few empirical studies have examined whether hate crime offenders tend to commit crimes in their own communities or whether they pursue targets outside of their residential area. However, a cursory look at available hate crime data offers some provisional answers. The only data source with information on hate crimes and residency of offenders is the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). When restricting the data to cases in which the residency status of arrestees was known to police, a descriptive analysis of cases from the 1995-2000 NIBRS files indicates that 68% of arrestees committed hate crimes in their own town, city, or community (author's analysis). This percentage closely mirrors the 'residency rate' for other (non-hate) types of crimes. Likewise, 75% of hate crime victims were victimized in their

community, city or town of residence. The comparison figure for victims of non-hate crimes is slightly higher (85% based on 2005 NIBRS data).

In short, available evidence reveals a tendency for offenders to perpetrate hate crimes in their own neighborhoods against victims who also reside in the area. This claim aligns with Strom's (2001) finding that 38% of hate crime victims identified their assailants as acquaintances while only 26% identified their attackers as strangers. In this sense hate crimes are hardly distinct from non-hate crimes. Still, we might tentatively conclude that hate crime offenses are slightly more likely than non-hate crimes to involve strangers and take place outside of offenders' communities, and in some extremely violent cases the attackers clearly ventured outside of their immediate surroundings to find targets. For instance, white supremacist Benjamin Smith crossed county and even state lines in his July 1999 shooting spree in Illinois and Indiana that targeted Jews and racial minorities. Still, at present we know little about the characteristics of offenders that perpetrate hate crimes outside of their communities and how they might differ from 'local offenders.'

#### **IV. Hate crime data - a cautionary note**

**Summary statement: Hate crime data are notoriously unreliable. Government data must be used cautiously and steps should be taken to control for differences in police or victim reporting practices.**

The study of hate crime has been plagued by a dearth of reliable data. The largest repository of hate crime information is the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports, which maintains records of hate crimes recorded by police. However, participation in this program has been highly variable (King 2007) and reported incidents may partly reflect different incentives for police to investigate and report such offenses (McVeigh et al. 2003). Victimization surveys, often commissioned by advocacy organizations (e.g., the ADL on anti-Semitic incidents), are also highly subjective and probably less reliable than government data.

Two strategies appear promising for minimizing reporting biases in community-level research. First, researchers should privilege *intra*-city research designs (e.g., comparing neighborhoods) over *inter*-city comparisons. To this end, research on offending might also try to assess (1) change over time within cities where (2) police have had a consistent policy for recording hate crimes that (3) includes follow-up investigation to evaluate the veracity of the original report and, if possible, (4) utilize data from policing

agencies that initiated data collection efforts independently of federal government mandates. Second, research might profitably utilize data on analogous behaviors that in contemporary American society would constitute hate crimes. For instance, historical data on lynching and violence perpetrated by labor unions could be informative. Other possibilities include archival and newspaper sources to assess right-wing violence (see Koopmans & Olzak, 2004) and historical violence against religious minorities in Europe (see King & Brustein, 2006). These types of behavior are consistent with current conceptualizations of hate crime and allow researchers to incorporate alternative types of data and methodologies.

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Given what is known about individuals and groups that engage in extremist crime in the United States, what are the characteristics of communities that are most likely to foster, condone, or give rise to such extremist ideologies? What are some of the variables at the community level that you think can be used to help study the rise of such ideologies?

### Community-Level Indicators of Radicalization Thought Piece

Joshua D. Freilich and Steven M. Chermak

This piece focuses on community-level indicators of radicalization and addresses the questions listed above. We first discuss the different *dependent variables* that community-level and other macro-level variables could shed light on. Second, we discuss the precise unit of analysis that “community-level” refers to. Third, we review conceptual frameworks and empirical findings to develop a listing of community-level *independent variables* to explain variation in the level of support for extremist ideologies, and the amount of legal activities and crimes committed by extremists. Fourth, we discuss data sources that could be used to examine these dependent and independent variables.

#### *1. Community-level dependent variables: Ideological strength, legal activities and crime*

The question’s reference to both *crime* and *ideology* implicates a recurring issue in the study of radicalization: Attitudes versus behavior. Thus, the first issue that must be clarified is what our dependent variable is. The conference invitation noted that “to date, most of the empirical work on radicalization has relied either on case studies or on data from attitudinal surveys.” This approach focuses attention on two attitudinal outcomes, community-level variation in (i) support for extremist ideologies (e.g., the global jihad), and (ii) support for specific extremist organizations or groups (e.g., Al Qaeda).

A review of the literature, however, documented at least four additional behavioral outcomes that researchers have examined across communities. We list these outcomes (but note that additional ones exist): (i) membership in an extremist organization, (ii) the number of extremist organizations, (iii) the number of extremist ideologically motivated legal activities such as rallies, and, of course (iv) the number of terrorist attacks or other severe (both violent & financial) ideologically motivated crimes. These four additional outcomes should not be ignored because they may also inform our ability to distinguish between more and less radicalized communities.

The dependent variable of interest must be specified because scholars have applied different causal frameworks to explain each of the six outcomes (we discuss this further below). It is also important to investigate the relationship- if any- between and among these six variables. For example, are there higher levels of extremist legal activity, extremist criminal activity, and terrorist activity in communities that demonstrate greater levels of support for extremist ideologies or supporters of specific groups? Do communities that have higher levels of extremist legal activities, also have higher levels of ideologically motivated extremist crimes?

#### *2. What is a “community”?*

Before a listing of community-level variables can be crafted it is necessary to operationalize what the term “community” refers to. This is not an easy task, however. Similar to the terrorism literature,

scholars studying communities in criminology and related disciplines have defined this concept in various ways. Many descriptions of “community” point to macro-level geographic units, but there are multiple ways to operationalize this term.

There is great value, for example, in studying cross-country estimates of radicalization and investigating whether they covary with various outcomes, such as terrorist attacks. There may also be variation, however, in support for extremist attitudes within a country. Certain communities within a country might score high or low on various indicators of extremism. Importantly, even within “more extreme” communities, there could be variation in levels of support for such attitudes. Alternative ways of investigating variations in radicalization include examining a single “community” over time and documenting its trajectories related to extremism. It is likely that extremist attitudes vary temporally and the peaks and valleys could be explained by contextual factors, triggering events, key actors, and organizations, etc. Finally, within a community there is also likely variation regarding their support of pursuing specific extreme actions. For example, although there are many white supremacist organizations in the United States, only a few are linked to violent crimes, many ideological racists condemn the use of violence, and the groups vary in their levels of ideological commitment.

There is also disagreement about how large or small the geographic “community” unit must be. A number of studies have investigated variation in the number of terrorist incidents and the strength of extremist ideologies cross-nationally. Our recent survey of the 50 American state police agencies (Chermak, Freilich, and Simone, 2009; Freilich, Chermak and Simone, 2009) documented their estimates of the number of (i) specified extremist groups, (ii) their supporters, (iii) legal activities and (iv) crimes and found variation across the 50 states.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, our ongoing Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) study (Freilich and Chermak, 2009) has documented over 290 homicide incidents committed by far-rightists in the United States between 1990 and the present. Interestingly, there was variation in the homicides across the 50 states. States with large populations like Texas, California and Florida accounted for over 35% of the homicide events. But it was not completely a function of population as New York State accounted for a small number of the homicides, even though it possesses a relatively large population. Importantly, in 12 states *no homicides* occurred during this 20 year period.<sup>13</sup> Uncovering the state-level characteristics that account for this variation across the 50 states is important and would prove useful to policy-makers. We are currently working with fellow START member Jeffrey Gruenewald on a number of papers that investigate the spatial distribution of these homicide incidents. Similarly, we are presently working with fellow START member William Parkin to examine state-level factors that account for differences in state police agencies estimates of the number of specified extremist supporters, and the levels of their legal activities in their jurisdictions (we discuss theoretical orientations we will test below).

Other scholars have examined variation in extremist activities across smaller geographic units of analysis. For example, Van Dyke and Soule (2002), in addition to studying variation in the number of extremist groups across the 50 states, examined variation across counties in California, Georgia and Michigan. They argued that greater numbers of groups was a proxy for greater numbers of group members and/or activities. However, subsequent scholarship has undermined this claim and shown that

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<sup>12</sup> State police agencies completed the survey on the condition that the researchers would not reveal data from specific states. As such, no state names are identified in these findings.

<sup>13</sup> The 12 states are Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Kentucky, West Virginia, Delaware, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont and Maine.



greater numbers of groups do not always covary with membership or activities (Chermak 2002; Freilich and Pridemore 2006). Green and Rich (1998) investigated the association between white supremacist rallies and demonstrations (i.e., legal activities), and cross-burnings on the county-level in North Carolina. They found that in counties where white supremacist rallies occurred, the likelihood of a cross burning increased. The authors conclude that since most the suspected cross-burners had no apparent ties to white supremacist groups, it could be that white supremacist rallies encouraged fellow travelers- by drawing attention to racial grievances- to engage in this form of racial intimidation. Alternatively, the link between rallies and increased cross-burnings may be that counties where these rallies occur also have greater numbers of racist sympathizers.

Meanwhile, Green, Strolovich, and Wong (1998) examined the relationship between demographic change and anti-minority hate crimes across even smaller units of analysis in New York City. They found that hate crime was more likely to occur in community districts that had experienced higher levels of non-white migration. Finally, we recognize that in addition to geographical units other descriptions of the term community, such as communal level identification, exist.

### *3. Community-level independent variables*

The selection of independent variables should be generated by theory and availability. We discuss specific conceptual frameworks in this section, and in the next section we discuss data sources. Terrorism research is interdisciplinary and there are theories from criminology (e.g., learning, strain, and control frameworks, and situational crime prevention opportunity perspectives), economics (e.g., rational choice models), political science (e.g., theories of political violence), and sociology (e.g., social movement models) that have been used to explain some or all of the six outcome variables listed above on the macro-level. Again, these outcomes range from extremist beliefs, to legal activity to political violence and it is therefore important to be clear about what our dependent variable is.

Many conceptual frameworks (e.g., anomie theories; Marxist perspectives) argue that economic dislocation and/or social disorganization (e.g., Disorganization models) account for extremist belief systems, extremist legal activities, and/or ideologically motivated crimes. Variables that are commonly used to represent these concepts include: poverty rate, welfare payment rates; unemployment rate, income inequality (e.g., Gini coefficients), divorce rate, rates of children born out of wedlock; and rates of individuals that changed dwellings/houses in the immediate past. Other models- similar to claims made by Green in his hate crime research (see above)- argue that extremist beliefs, and actions occur because of the perceived rise of rival groups (i.e., backlash effects). In the United States scholars have examined whether minority and female empowerment account for some of the six outcomes (listed previously) among whites. Often these concepts are operationalized in economic terms (such as the ratio of female median income to male median income and the ratio of black per capita income to white per capita income) since this feature is often a marker for gains in other spheres as well. Relatedly, political scientist Ehud Sprinzak (1993) set forth a theory to explain the emergence of right-wing political violence. Sprinzak argues right-wing radicals usually reach terrorism through a trajectory of split delegitimization, which implies a primary conflict with an 'inferior' community and a secondary conflict with the government.

Recently, Rory McVeigh (2009) set forth a general theory of right-wing social movement mobilization that is designed to explain the rise of all far-right social movements. McVeigh's asserts that macro-level changes facilitate the growth of far-right groups in some areas but not in others. Far-right groups emerge in response to the devaluation of their constituents' economic, political, and status based

purchasing power. McVeigh tested his theory on variation in the KKK's activities across the United States in the 1920s. Variables examined by McVeigh included percent of minority religions (Jewish and Catholic), percent foreign born, percent non-white, percent increases- in the immediate past- of foreign born and nonwhite, percent increase in the number of votes cast in past elections, percent voting for far-left parties, percent increase of workers per establishment in the immediate past, percent employed in agricultural occupations, percent decrease in farm commodity prices, percent acres devoted to cotton and corn, percent students in public schools, percent increase in the total population, and the percent of delegates supporting prohibition at the 1924 Party conventions.

Other frameworks contend that variation in the strength of particular cultures across communities explains some or all of our outcomes of interest. In the United States, researchers have pointed to paramilitary culture and conservative religious culture, for example, as predictors of far-right extremist legal and criminal activity. These concepts have been operationalized through magazine subscription rates (for e.g., to the NRA's official magazine to represent paramilitary culture) and the number of specific churches and adherents to them (for e.g., Christian Fundamentalists to represent conservative religious culture). Relatedly, resource mobilization and political opportunity scholars from the social movements discipline claim that pre-existing mobilization and hospitable political climates explain why some communities have higher rates of our six outcomes. These concepts have commonly been measured as the percent of particular parties in legislative bodies and membership numbers for similar prior extremist groups/movements.

#### *4. Data sources for community-level dependent & independent variables*

Again, besides the need to be clear about the precise outcome variable of interest, researchers must also be clear about their unit of analysis. We next outline sources that could possibly provide community-level dependent and independent variables, but it is important to keep in mind that some variables may only be available on certain levels of analysis.

Attitudinal surveys have usually been used to measure community-level support for both extremist ideologies, and specific extremist groups. Others have turned to official sources, watch-groups, extremist movements themselves, and media reports and other open sources to measure behavioral outcomes. Our recent survey of state law-enforcement enforcement agencies measured variation across of their estimates of specific movements' in terms of the numbers of their members, legal, and criminal activities. Similarly, Green and colleagues obtained hate crime data from the New York City Police Department's Bias Unit, and the ECDB uses a number of official sources to document crimes committed by political extremists. Watch-groups, such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), have been used to provide numbers of specific movements groups, activities and crimes across both counties and states. For instance, Green's study on cross-burnings in North Carolina used data from the SPLC's Klanwatch and North Carolinians Against Racial and Religious Violence (NCARRV). McVeigh's state-level study of KKK activity across the US in the 1920s examined KKK literature to create a listing of the KKK's actions. Finally, many studies of political crime and terrorist databases create listings of these crimes from systematic reviews of media accounts and other open sources. For example, Chermak, Freilich, Wikenfeld, Pate and Asal are examining organizational differences between violent and nonviolent groups. A variety of characteristics are collected about each organization, including variables related to the ideological orientations of the group.

In terms of independent variables, the Census Bureau provides variables for various units of analysis such as, state, county, and census tract level for many of the economic and social disorganization variables listed above. The Census Bureau also used to provide data on religious affiliation but it stopped doing so a number of years ago. However, the American Religion Data Archive has data on the number of religious institutions and members of these institutions for particular sects on the state-level and in some cases lower-levels of analysis. The Audit Bureau of Circulation is able to provide subscription numbers for specific magazines (that could be used to represent particular cultural values) on the state-level in the United States.

Many scholars have attempted to measure whether the strength of previous extremist movements is related to our six outcome measures. Scholars studying this issue on far-right extremism have uncovered a number of useful variables. For example, the watch-group Political Research Associates obtained the 1987 membership roll for the far-right John Birch Society (Kraft 1992). When the John Birch Society changed offices they left behind a bunch of materials. One board member informed Chip Berlet from PRA- and he retrieved cartons of information from the dumpster, including the names and addresses of the 1987 JBS membership. Assuming that the addresses are still available, these data could be disaggregated into both state and county-level data. Others have obtained the number of KKK Klaverns (i.e., groups) per county in Pennsylvania in the 1920s (see for e.g., Flint 2001). Similarly, a New York Times reporter obtained documents prepared by the Klan leadership in 1925 that included KKK membership for males aged 21 and above for 89 of Indiana's 92 counties in the 1920s (McVeigh, 1999). Finally, the House on Un-American Activities Report provides the number of Klansmen in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Tennessee, Florida, North Carolina, Texas, South Carolina, Arkansas, and Virginia in 1967 (Hewitt 2000: 331; 2003).

## Conclusion

This paper examined community level indicators of radicalization. In particular, it focused on some of the definitional issues related to defining communities, conceptual frameworks, key variables, and potential data available for studying radicalization. Future research is needed on several different areas, such as better isolating the measurement of radicalization, and importantly linking such measurements to key dependent variables.

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*What factors encourage positive relationships between different ethnic and racial communities in U.S. cities, and what factors are symptomatic of a sub-population being marginalized within an urban setting? What evidence is there that members of such a marginalized population are more likely to engage in illegal and violent activity directed at “outsiders”?*

## Community Context of Radicalization Background Paper

Susan Clarke

As I understand it, one goal for the October meeting is to recognize that “understanding the community aspect is the central question in exploring indicators of radicalization at the community level.” In addition we need to determine “how archival, community-level data can be used to study and understand radicalization.” I’ve organized this paper to address the three questions posed to me, referencing the debates in the scholarly literature. It is selective, not comprehensive, but highlights some issues we might discuss together.

### **Three Questions:**

1. What factors encourage positive relationships between different ethnic and racial communities in U.S. cities?
2. What factors are symptomatic of a sub-population being marginalized within an urban setting?
3. What evidence is there that members of such a marginalized population are more likely to engage in illegal and violent activity directed at “outsiders”?

### **OVERALL**

Four issues stand out:

#### **Getting the question right**

There are substantial literatures on ethnic and racial cooperation and conflict, collective action, contentious politics, and political violence that are relevant to the study of the community context of radicalization. But are we conflating concepts and processes that need to be more carefully specified?

#### **Avoiding the dangers of extrapolation**

McClain et al (2009) warn that concepts of group membership, group identity and group consciousness have been developed in the context of African-American politics but are uncritically transferred to analysis of non-black groups. While this viewpoint can be challenged, the dangers of extrapolating from racial and ethnic politics literatures, in particular, to the study of radicalization merit attention. Ryan King voices a similar concern in his presentation.

#### **Community or proximity?**

Although the Task Force's challenge is to understand the community context in which individuals become involved in radical activities, does this presuppose a territorially bounded community that can be measured and assessed through existing community-level data? This assumption potentially is undermined by social media that allows proximity independent of community. Networks encouraging radicalization are not necessarily territorially bounded. Kelly Damphousse's work exemplifies this challenge.

### **Integrating structuralist, rationalist and culturalist studies of contentious politics/resistance**

Lichbach (1998) urges moving beyond a singular emphasis on structures/resource mobilization, culture/relative deprivation, or rationalist/collective action to seek more integrative combinations. The dominant social science approach remains oriented to political opportunity structures (POS) and political processes to bridge these approaches. The POS argues that social movements/contention are triggered by political opportunities that create incentives for action. Can we systematically identify these types of political opportunities?

#### **I. What factors encourage positive relationships between different ethnic and racial communities in U.S. cities?**

##### **A. Prospects for cross-group cooperation/conflict**

In reviewing decades of research on inter-group processes, Segura and Rodrigues (2006) conclude that "neither competition nor cooperation is inevitable; rather, the emergence of either will be contingent on the specific historical and demographic circumstances of the community and the choices and attitudes of both political elites and mass publics." With recent immigration trends, much of the debate centers on whether the political and cultural dimensions of African American, Asian and Latino identities preclude common, converging patterns of cooperation (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 2002). Cooperation is especially strained at the local level in policy arenas where competition for access to resources and power is strong and increasing. Immigration has brought recent Latino and Asian immigrants into poorer neighborhoods, often pushing resident Latinos and Asians into historically black neighborhoods. These frictions sparked riots in Los Angeles, Miami, Washington DC, and New York in the 1980s and early 1990s characterized by inter-ethnic conflict rather than the stark racial violence of the 1960s. So there is substantial community variation in the factors contributing to conflict/cooperation across groups.

##### **B. More diversity=less trust?**

Some analyses find that this greater diversity is associated with less trust in government and in neighbors. Robert Putnam (2007) finds that more culturally diverse neighborhoods appear to have lower social capital. The more heterogeneous the setting, the less trust reported in Putnam's research. This suggests that more diverse local settings can dampen trust and stymie political mobilization as groups compete for scarce resources and are wary of cooperation despite the potential for mutual gain.

If we look at individuals (rather than structural networks), there is considerable evidence that trust indeed is weak in diverse communities. This may reflect the uncertainties in “reading” or understanding different cultural cues, fear of discrimination from those outside one’s familiar setting, or preferences for dealing with those with similar backgrounds and social status. Greater diversity can confuse the cues for all residents in multicultural communities, foreign born as well as native citizens. Are there ways we can measure community diversity and social capital or trust?

### **C. Political structures mediate the effects of diversity**

But it is not clear that heterogeneity itself is to blame: there is some evidence that the size of the locality and the stability of the local population influence both the structural and the individual dimensions of social capital. Furthermore, Skocpol (2008: 118) argues that social capital is not a function merely of particular socio-cultural features but also shaped by groups’ political histories and prior practices. So understanding the political experiences that shape political ties is necessary to assessing the consequences of diversity for social trust and political action. State political structures make a difference: Ireland’s (2004) comparison of local European integration strategies emphasizes that institutions and policies have power to shape ethnic relations: local structural integration policies appear to reduce ethnic conflicts while efforts at political integration encourage ethnic mobilization. The sequence of these policy efforts is critical. This underscores the need to understand variations in local incorporation or integration strategies and their consequences.

### **D. Identity-to-politics link is problematic**

Many analyses of contentious politics center on whether the disadvantaged/marginalized are represented in the system. Lee (2008) argues that the assumption that members of the same group share political goals and interests—that their identity is the basis for political action—varies across ethnic and racial groups. While a sense of “shared fate” is often true for African-Americans and apparently for Muslim-Americans as well (Barreto and Bozonelos, 2009), identity is less of a political factor for Latinos and Asians. That is, using identity as the basis for political mobilization and potentially contentious actions is insufficient for many groups. Masuoka (2006) finds panethnic mobilization for different immigrant groups, although driven by different factors. She concludes that social contextual features such as racial discrimination play significant roles in mobilization. African-Americans are the largest share (30-40%) of Muslim-Americans but until the 2004 election differed sharply from Middle Eastern and South Asian Muslim-Americans in the U.S. But since 9/11, differences in partisan alignment and voting patterns among U.S. Muslim-Americans are not significant; all report a growing interest in politics and increasing rates of political participation if not partisan affiliation (Jalalzai, 2009; Barreto and Bozonelos, 2009; see also Pew 2007).

In testing whether ethnicity can be the grounds for mobilization among diverse Latino groups, Barreto (2007) observes that the presence of a co-ethnic, i.e. Latino candidate causes Latinos’ voter turnout to increase along with their support of the ethnic candidate. Thus the availability of a co-ethnic candidate mobilizes and empowers a Latino population that previously was characterized by low voter

turnout and participation. We can't assume that identity will be the basis for mobilization; we can roughly measure discrimination, hate crimes and other community level features.

### **E. Place matters**

Place matters as a contextual influence on the relationships between identity and politics. Place exerts an influence on the strength and direction of relationships between social identity--particularly race and religion-- and political outcomes in U.S. cities. DeLeon and Naff (2004) analysis of identity politics in a multilevel comparative study in the United States and 30 urban communities finds that variations in local political culture help to explain why the same identity variables (especially race and religion) have different and even contradictory effects on political ideology and political behavior from community to community. Therefore, the importance of race and cultural factors such as religion as mobilizing forces are not predictive and will vary by community.

### **F. Neighborhoods matter even more**

As Turner and Rawlings (2009) demonstrate, a growing share of U.S. neighborhoods are racially and ethnically diverse, both because recent immigration has made the population much more diverse and because fewer neighborhoods than in the past exclude minorities entirely. But overall levels of segregation are declining only slowly, and low-income African Americans in particular remain highly concentrated in predominantly minority neighborhoods.

This uneven spatial diversity affects political participation. Stoll and Wong (2007: 191) argue that the multiethnic settings in which groups reside exert important effects on their level of political participation: non-whites living in majority-white neighborhoods participate at lower rates than those living in non-white neighborhoods. These differences might be attributable to isolation from the organizations that offer access to minority voice, such as ethnic-based churches or the preferences of those choosing to live in more integrated settings. Any community-level analysis, therefore, needs to measure the broader spatial context in which observations are made.

### **G. Not just inclusion but incorporation**

Contested political identities, complicated by class, cultural, and generational splits, make political mobilization and incorporation a complex matter. The process of bringing marginalized groups into local political processes is portrayed as political incorporation: It looks beyond participation rates to assess whether racial and ethnic groups gain representation within the key governing institutions in government. Groups achieve political incorporation when their members become integrated into the governing coalition of a political jurisdiction. Representation is thus seen as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for substantive influence.

Whereas immigrants and racial minorities historically used their ethnic identities and citizenship status to mobilize for local political incorporation in electoral politics, the contemporary arenas are more ambiguous. In addition to transnational orientations, the salience of electoral institutions for mediating the needs of underrepresented groups is diminished by the emergence of governance



arrangements with multiple actors, agendas, and decision rules. Local government is only one of many players in local governance. New types of participatory democratic practice, for example, are available to articulate new demands; for many groups, particular issues rather than group-specific interests drive their participation and these issues are not necessarily managed through state institutions.

But it is not clear that existing concepts—such as political incorporation—are adequate for examining situations where religion, language, and other 'non-racial' markers of difference may be more significant drivers of exclusion (ESRC, 2004). Although race, ethnicity, and religion increasingly structure local political activities in a globalizing era, our theoretical frameworks for understanding these processes seem inadequate. Analyzing how groups construct their own identities and understanding how elites and institutional incentives frame and shape these identities are compelling questions.

## **II. What factors are symptomatic of a sub-population being marginalized within an urban setting?**

### **A. Bonding but not bridging social capital**

The social capital concept can be seen as a structural or attitudinal construct. If the structural focus is on networks, we often find strong linkages within ethnic communities but often weak ties to other communities—what Putnam calls “bonding” but not “bridging social capital”. High levels of bonding social capital within groups in more segregated settings could bring isolation and political disaffection or could become the grounds for common identity and political mobilization. Further discussion of the prospects for measuring bonding/bridging social capital is important, particularly in terms of network analyses suggest by Papachristos.

### **B. Absence of mediating institutions**

According to Hero, “[The] weaknesses of contemporary mediating institutions and the absent consideration of reforms in existing governmental institutions imply that the future of cities as crossroads of equality is likely to be up for grabs..” (703). To support this he notes the decline of political parties as agents of minority mobilization, as well as the decline of Unionism and parochial schools. These urban mediating institutions helped to force change and accommodation of earlier immigrant groups. Also, the relatively diminished capacity of political parties to embrace immigrant communities except in “competitive” situations limits political voice. Since these are likely to vary socially and spatially across communities, we need to consider the prospects for measuring the presence of mediating institutions.

## **III. What evidence is there that members of such a marginalized population are more likely to engage in illegal and violent activity directed at “outsiders”?**

### **A. Not ethnic diversity but relative ethnic exclusion**

Min et al challenge the argument that ethnic conflicts are the result of ethnic diversity or the grievances of ethnic minorities. Their historical analyses demonstrate that ethnic political exclusion is associated with greater ethnic conflict. Moreover, low economic development rates are not a function of ethnic diversity as often assumed; patronage-oriented economic policies contribute to these low rates: more

inclusive policies are associated with higher economic development rates. So ethnic political exclusion is associated with greater ethnic conflict and apparently leads to low economic development and the attendant conditions of marginalization. This reinforces the argument to develop community level measure of political incorporation and integration.

### **B. The greater and more persistent the perceived relative deprivation gap within the community, the more likely the turn to violence**

According to relative deprivation approaches, the conditions supporting violence and terror lie in disparity relationships--the gap between the current situation and the idealized state of being. As the discrepancy between the expectations and the practical abilities of a group intensifies, the protracted sense of injustice increases, triggering a "frustration-aggression response" and enhancing a group's predisposition towards violence. According to Pedahzur (2005) the longer the deprivation persists, the weaker the belief that things will change and the greater the potential for violence. Putting a spatial lens on this view, Peterson and Krivo (2009) contend that differences in violence across communities of varying race-ethnic compositions are rooted in highly differentiated social and economic circumstances of the segregated neighborhoods inhabited by different groups. In particular, inequality in the character of internal and nearby neighborhood conditions leads to patterned racial and ethnic differences in violence across areas. This suggests the need to develop spatial measures of relative deprivation rather than rely on "flat" measures within communities.

### **C. The greater the relative political standing, the less likely political violence**

In contrast to this emphasis on relative material deprivation, an inverse relation is likely between relative political standing and political violence. Martha Crenshaw holds that minority groups embrace political violence in order to "gain or regain something that they consider rightfully theirs such as land or political rights" (1981: 381). From this perspective, individuals from marginalized groups resort to violence to gain back political voice, preserve national identity and express cultural differences. But those seeking to improve their political standing are less likely to do so (Davtian, 2006). Can we develop measures of the loss of political voice through, e.g. local ordinances constraining expression, etc.

### **D. Agenda competition**

Erica Chenoweth (2006) argues that terrorist groups are more likely to emerge in democracies because of the opportunity structures available to them but also because of inter-group competition for limited agenda space. This crowding phenomenon may encourage groups to adopt escalating terrorist strategies to attract and maintain public attention to their demands. In our discussions, we noted the examples of ELF and PETA as appearing to fit this model. In democratic societies, terrorist groups not only "compete" with each other but can track the effects of their actions through media attention. The contagion effects noted by other scholars are contingent on the availability of such intermediaries; up to this point, however, scholars have tended to slight the extent to which these channels and actions constitute a discursive platform for terrorist groups to signal each other as they compete for attention.

### **E. Transformation of urban violence**

It is over 30 years since the last wave of significant riots in American cities although individual cities continue to experience unrest. Although many of the conditions triggering these earlier disturbances persist, civic violence is less frequent. Katz (2007) notes this puzzle and argues that urban violence has been transformed by more stable spatial boundaries (the *ecology of power*), the *management of marginalization* (through selective incorporation; ostensible reforms; indirect rule as authority migrate beyond formal government; an emphasis on consumption; and repression and surveillance) and the *incorporation and control of immigrants*. Independent of agreement on these factors, the prospect of the transformation of urban violence is provocative.

#### **IV. Research Issues**

In addition to these substantive issues, a number of methodological issues suggest caution in developing community level analyses.

##### **A. Scarcity of community level data**

There is the need, of course, to avoid data-driven research agendas but it is also important to recognize the scarcity of data that can be disaggregated to the MSA level. This is particularly critical for attitudinal data. To develop appropriate attitudinal data requires oversampling in select communities.

##### **B. Challenge to pyramid argument of community context**

The literature noted above challenges a “pyramid” argument in which community context necessarily influences individual behavior. The link of community and group/individual behavior is an empirical question and likely to be a matter of interactive effects.

##### **C. Avoid ecological fallacies and exception fallacies**

It is critically important to avoid ecological fallacies in which assumptions or inferences about individual behavior are drawn from more aggregate data on groups or communities. Similarly, it is important to avoid exception fallacies--making generalizations about groups or communities based on information about individuals as exceptional cases.

##### **D. Consider alternative methods of analysis**

Given these concerns, it is useful to consider alternative methods of analysis. These include network analysis, as in Papachristos’ presentation, weighted spatial regressions to encompass the spatial variations anticipated, and cluster analysis in which the case is the unit of analysis rather than discrete variables. Each of these provides more contextualized information than standard regression approaches, in a format accessible and useful to policymakers. They are also more likely to provide information about situations and settings, with the implications of prevention, than about attitudes and motivations which have less relevant implications.

##### **E. Plan both multi-method and multi-level analysis**

No one methodological strategy will be sufficient to determine both the pattern of community level variations and the processes contributing to conflict/cooperation. Nor will it be sufficient to focus only on the community: a multi-level analysis is needed in which behaviors are viewed as nested in a community context and in which communities are analyzed as embedded in multiple levels of social and political forces.

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**Community Datasets: Selected data sets with community samples/disaggregated to MSA level**

**2000 US Census data**

**American Community Survey:** states, counties and places of 65,000 population or more, and for towns/townships of the same size in selected states; also includes other geographic areas, such as congressional districts and school districts

**ESRI Demographic Data:** GIS coded at block level

**National Center for Charitable Statistics**

**National Neighborhood Crime Study**

**National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership:** Urban Institute data for 32 cities

**Neighborhood Change Data Base/UI:** the only data base that contains nationwide census data at the tract level with tract boundaries and variables that are consistently defined across the four U.S. Censuses from 1970 through 2000.

**Olzak Dataset:** information about all ethnic collective protests and conflicts among all groups that occurred within 318 Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) between 1954 and 1992. Coded from daily reports of the *New York Times*.

**Social Capital Benchmark Survey**—a unique dataset that contains both national and community-level samples

*Given your experiences studying the behaviors of groups who have been exposed to large-scale violence and conflict in the past, what types of communities are most likely to facilitate the recovery of such individuals? Conversely, what might be some of the characteristics of communities in which such individuals might turn to violence and radicalism?*

Using a Psychosocial Approach to Developing Preventive Interventions to Combat Radicalization  
amongst Refugee and Immigrant Youth

Stevan Weine

Psychosocial approaches are used in a broad range of humanitarian, public health, and mental health services, including recovery from trauma, and the prevention of HIV infection and violence (Bhana et al, 2004; Group for Advancement of Psychiatry, 2009; Weine, 2006). What these approaches have in common is what may be called the 'psychosocial perspective', which like public health, prioritizes community and family both as levels of analysis and intervention. The psychosocial perspective places considerable focus on community and family strengths and resources and offers a platform to build upon them. This approach is in contrast to those that focus primarily on deficits, as is often characteristic of more clinical psychiatric approaches that center on the assessment and treatment of conditions such as posttraumatic stress disorder.

Why is a psychosocial approach so unique in the context of efforts aimed at preventing radicalization? Where counterterrorism researchers have often focused on understanding why some people become or stop being terrorists, and identifying the risks factors, a psychosocial approach to prevention would focus on systematically influencing family and community protective resources in real world community settings so as to enhance resistance to recruitment and radicalization in the first instance. Several points illustrate how this work could be approached with U.S. refugee and immigrant groups, based upon evidence from effective prevention interventions in public health that have diminished risk behaviors through changing community and family processes.

*1. Identify Community and Family Protective Resources*

Because refugee and migrant youth come from families who moved to the U.S. in search of a better life, it should be possible to work with the hopes and dreams that they carry with them. Though many live in difficult circumstances, most have reported satisfaction with their lives in the U.S. (Halcon et al, 2004; Robertson et al, 2004). A psychosocial approach is based on the assumption that susceptibility should be modifiable by strengthening the family and community protective processes that are widely found. This basic assumption has been validated in a range of public health interventions concerning violence, drug use, and HIV amongst highly adverse conditions (Ashery et al, 1998; Group for Advancement of Psychiatry, 1999; O'Connell et al, 2009; Trickett, 2005). Thus one key research question from a psychosocial perspective is: *What are the potentially modifiable family and community protective factors that impact recruitment and radicalization?* Mixed ethnographic and survey methods such as are being implemented in other studies of refugee adolescents offers means to accurately answer this question (Weine, 2006). Findings from multiple Diaspora communities point to the roles of parenting, parental involvement in education, organizational outreach to families, and mentoring (Weine, 2008).

*2. Build Family Interventions*

It should be possible to design family interventions for refugee and migrant families based upon contextual knowledge of the complex social circumstances of refugee and immigrant youth. These interventions would be designed to target those at the highest risk (e.g. males, ages 12-25, with single



mothers). For example, there is a profound worry among many refugees and migrants that parents cannot control the behaviors of teens and young men. However, what is learned from those who are not radicalized may help in understanding what can be provided for those at risk of radicalization. Some parents and community leaders do actively talk with youth about radicalization and recruitment. Through intensive interviews and observations of parents and community leaders and the utilization of qualitative research methods of data analysis it should be possible to learn: *what exactly do the parents say and why, how is it received by youth, and do these messages impact the youths' behaviors?*

These insights could help to craft parenting education and support interventions (e.g. teaching families to talk about recruitment, helping parents to take practical steps such as hiding passports and monitoring internet and email use) that aim to reduce susceptibility to recruitment through changing family support in a way that the community recognizes as helpful. National Institute of Health (NIH)-funded research program to support refugee families has been shown to be feasible, acceptable, and effective (Weine, 2006). Multi-family groups such as the CAFES (Coffee and Family Education and Support) program have been shown to be effective in changing individual behavior by improving family communication (Weine et al, 2005; Weine et al, 2006, Weine et al, 2008). Similarly, a Somali Mothers Health Realization intervention has enabled mothers to distance themselves from negative intrusive thoughts so as to promote proactive common-sense parenting strategies (Robertson, 2004). These successful approaches could be extended to countering radicalization and recruitment with refugee and migrant families from different ethnic minority groups, and naturally would require rigorous ongoing assessment to determine their effectiveness in that process.

### *3. Build Multilevel Community Interventions*

It is necessary to think beyond family interventions and design interventions that would work with refugees and migrants at multiple community levels. For example, it is expected that youth with local role models who have either integrated or speak positively about integration are less interested in or supportive of radicalization. Through examining these community influences upon youth, drawing upon successful intervention models, and carefully adapting them to the targeted refugee communities, pilot projects could be developed.

Community projects could aim to: 1) provide male mentors for refugee youth who encourage their development, careers, and education; 2) form a network of local and state leadership groups to provide leadership development and encourage refugee youth to participate in civic engagement and public service; 3) provide training and tools to Imams and community leaders on how to identify and prevent recruiters from gaining access to youth in the mosques, in order to protect both the youths and their communities from harm in the short- and long-term; 4) counter web postings that coax youth into terrorism and media stories that alienate youth, with credible alternative viewpoints to militant extremism targeted at youth through a public information campaign.

Because no one intervention is going to reach all in a community, deploying multiple interventions in different community sectors would be warranted. Pilot projects would necessarily have to be rigorously assessed for feasibility, acceptability, effectiveness with measurable outcomes, and processes of change.

### *4. Form Community Collaborative Partnerships*

Successful psychosocial projects with U.S. refugees and migrants must involve communities as active collaborators in developing, refining, and testing interventions through partnerships with local associations, schools, mosques, and clinics. The establishment and maintenance of these partnerships is a considerable challenge. However, successful partnerships have been achieved by community-services research collaborations working in many difficult settings while addressing public health problems that are no less vexing than terrorism (Stevenson, 1994). Counterterrorism efforts could learn from what

prior programs have found regarding impediments to collaboration as well as helpful facilitators, such as incorporating community values, being responsive to local needs, providing incentives, and sharing information (McKay, 2007).

### *5. Form Multidisciplinary Collaborations*

This psychosocial approach to counterterrorism does not currently represent a focus of law enforcement, education, social and mental health services, or academic scholarship. To be effective, however, the psychosocial approach to counterterrorism will require input from these varied domains.

The recent episode with U.S. Somalis in Minnesota (Eliot, 2009) has revealed knowledge and practice gaps that call for the development of a new type of program that would enhance law enforcement', psychosocial workers', and community agencies' abilities to prevent, predict, and investigate terrorism in the highly complex and fluid community contexts where they work – in this case, U.S. Diaspora communities linked in some way with failed states and extremist militant movements. This could be accomplished by bringing together counterterrorism law enforcement, psychosocial experts and workers through consultation, research, and training to provide constructive interventions for preventing the involvement of children and young adults in terrorism amongst U.S. Diaspora communities. Similar multi-disciplinary program models, such as the Yale Child Development-Community Policing Partnership, have proven highly effective in programs concerning child victims of violence (Marans & Berkman, 1997).

The specific aims of such a collaborative initiative could include: 1) Enabling psychosocial expertise to directly support the decision making and activities of counterterrorism law enforcement; 2) Conducting analysis and research on emergent counterterrorism/psychosocial issues that will help to develop and enhance counterterrorism (as described above in the ethnographic study); 3) Designing and implementing collaborative programs for terrorism prevention (as described above in the intervention pilot study); 4) Providing education, training, technical assistance, fellowships both to counterterrorism law enforcement on psychosocial issues and to psychosocial workers on counterterrorism.

### Conclusions

Community-based interventions to combat radicalization amongst refugee youth in the U.S. must be targeted, effective, and adaptive enough to overcome the risks, processes and adversities that contribute to radicalization and thus work against positive behavior change. Psychosocial perspectives that have achieved social and behavioral changes in other areas (e.g. most notably public health) can help to elucidate multilevel prevention strategies that, if properly informed, may lead to effective and sustainable interventions to combat radicalization. Further investigation is needed to develop and operationalize these concepts and then to demonstrate their potential effectiveness. Unless we believe that the recent radicalization of Minnesota Somalis is a one-time occurrence, then the seriousness and complexity of events when U.S. refugee and migrant youth radicalize, clearly warrants strong consideration of this kind of investment.

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*What do we know about the extent to which radicalization in prison affects behavior after prison at the community level? What might be some of the community-level indicators of radicalization for individuals who have served time and are now in the general population?*

## Radicalization and Prisons

Bert Useem

The core premise of a constitutional order is that parties pursue power and other ends in a responsible manner, by limiting the ends they seek and the means that they use to achieve those ends.<sup>14</sup> The distinctive feature of the prison population is that, by having committed one or more felonies, they have shown a disregard for those constraints with regard to personal ends. Prisoner radicalization, however, must defy a second component of constitutional restraint, the one related to the pursuit of power. Prison inmates may not be distinctively alienated from the political community. (Here we exclude inmates imprisoned for terrorism, estimated to be about 355 of the 1.6 million offenders behind bars.<sup>15</sup>) If so, radicalizing prisoners must swim against the main currents of their immediate environment. When is such “swimming” likely to occur? To help answer this question, we turn to an earlier generation of work coming out of the effort to understand totalitarian social movements.

Writing when the threat of totalitarian social movements loomed large on the world scene, Egon Bittner (1963, 929) argued that the defining feature of radicalism is the rejection of an every-day, common sense world-view, and its replacement by one that differs not just in degrees but is its polar opposite. He highlights the point by defining radicalism as

a distinct philosophy and program of social change looking toward systematic destruction of what is hated, and its replacement by an art, a faith, a science or a society logically demonstrated as true and good and beautiful and just (Kallan, quoted in Bittner)

Bittner goes on to argue that this polarity puts radicalism at a rhetorical disadvantage compared to the outlook of normal, ordinary common sense. The former seeks to reconstruct the entire social order; the latter assumes a go-along-get-along attitude. The former requires self-sacrifice, even the “ultimate” sacrifice; the latter can appeal to the pursuit of self interest or at least no more than modest sacrifice. The former requires an imagined future, such as an Islamic Caliphate; the latter uses experience as test for validity – no Caliphate in recent history.

The outlook of common sense, Bittner (1963, 928) argues, “jeopardizes the integrity and continuity of radical movements.” This is because they are logically at odds with each other. To thwart the pernicious impact of common sense on radicalism is the principle task of a radical movement. Two mechanisms stand out. One is shoring off radical thought from everyday common sense. To survive, radicals must create a community on to their own. Second, “charisma must attach to the movement

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<sup>14</sup> By “constitutional order,” we are following the usage of Selznick (1952, 4). “A ‘constitution . . . is not necessarily formalized. It includes all the traditional rules and expectations that define and control legitimate controversy.”

<sup>15</sup> According to a U.S. Department of Justice spokesman, there are 216 international terrorists and 129 domestic terrorists in federal prison. (*New York Times*, May 23, 2009).

and its creed” (Bittner 1963, 936). This charisma is often provided by a strong, if not overpowering, personality.

When and where is a break with common sense likely to occur? To help answer this question in the *present* context, a research team working out of the New York City Police Department modeled the process of radicalization, based on an analysis of 11 terrorist attacks and thwarted plots, including the London, July 2005 attack, the Madrid March 2004 attack, and a reanalysis of the September 11, 2001 plot.<sup>16</sup> For five of the most notable case studies, NYPD dispatched detectives and analysts to the sites to collect information. Their model – derived inductively from the empirical cases – postulates that radicalization passes through four phases.

The NYPD’s four-phase model squares well with the processes that Bittner identifies as required for radicalization to take hold, as we shall see below. If both analyses were to hold up against empirical challenge (a condition clearly not yet met), this would suggest that radicalization has properties onto itself, independent of historic context. A robust theory of radicalization may be possible: the concept of “radicalization” has legs, and not merely a label applied to a cluster of violence tactics we have observed in recent years.

#### *NYPD’s Radicalization Model*

The NYPD model identifies four stages that individuals pass through if they are to be actuated in jihad-based terrorism. The stages are a narrowing process: not all individuals in each stage will move on to the next one. Each of the four phases has “signatures” associated with it – observable markers that, from the point of view of law enforcement, allow an observer to identify movement in the process.

Stage 1, Pre-radicalization: This phase lays the ground work for becoming radicalized, although the key finding is that not much allows one to identify the sorts of people who are suitable to hold radical beliefs and eventually engage in terrorist action. The analysts found that the radicalized participants had been generally well integrated into their social structure. There were few signs of being uprooted, displaced, or a failure: “The majority of individuals involved in these plots began as ‘unremarkable’ – they had ‘ordinary’ jobs, they had lived ‘ordinary’ lives and had little, if any criminal activity” (NYPD 2007, 6).

Participants in the five key plots tended to have these characteristics: male Muslims under 35 years of age; second or third generation citizens of Western liberal democracies; well educated (at least high school graduate, often some university); little criminal history. The Portland 7 case, for example, entailed an effort to join al-Qaeda immediately after 9/11. The group was diverse, but included a 38 year old middle-class father and husband. He was considered a superstar performer in his work at Intel (NYPD 2007, 57, 59).

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<sup>16</sup> In privileging this report, we only mean to imply that it serves a reasonable touch-stone for our purposes. It is empirically based, and the analysis appears faithful to the data it has assembled. These redeeming features does not necessarily make it correct.

Stage 2, Self-identification: The second phase has two components. One is to lose one's certitude about the common sense understanding about the world, and begin to explore radical ideas, such as Salafi Islam. A second component is to identify with others going through, or having gone through, the same exploration. The critical point: the seeking of new meaning for radicalism is triggered by crisis that shakes an individual's certitude. The individual's common sense is challenged, allowing for a cognitive opening. Triggers include losing a job, encountering blocked mobility, death of a close one in the family, or an international conflict perceived to be anti-Muslim.

Stages 3 and 4, Indoctrination and Jihadization: The third and fourth phases deepen the process that begins with self-identification. Indoctrination is the immersion of the individual into the radical ideology, and its acceptance hook, line, and sinker. This is often facilitated by a "spiritual advisor," who can guide acceptance. Jihadization entails mobilizing now-radicals into a plan of action. It entails planning (what is to be done) and preparation (readiness to act). After Jihadization, execution is likely to follow.

Let us consider an application of this model to a particular situation. Like many other analyses, the NYPD group (2007, 39) predicts that prisons will serve as a "radicalizing cauldron." That is,

prisons can play a critical role in both triggering and reinforcing the radicalization process. The prison's isolated environment, ability to create a "captive audience" atmosphere, its absence of day-to-day distractions, and its large population of disaffected men, makes it an excellent breeding ground for radicalization.

The US prison buildup over the last quarter century gives this prediction a test, limited, of course, by the fact the events of tomorrow may differ from those of yesterday. There are 1.6 million prison inmates in state and federal prisons. One in 30 men between the ages of 20 and 34 is in prison; one in nine black males in that age group are in prison (Pew Center on the States, 2009). Each year, prisons release 370,000 inmates to their communities. If prisons are an "excellent breeding ground" then we should expect prisons to generate considerable – or at least a few – radicalized efforts. To date, however, there has been only one such confirmed incident, which we discuss below. Either the theory is wrong or its application to prisons is wrong. We argue the latter.

*Self interest.* For radicalization to take place, according to the Bittner/NYPD model, an individual must be willing to sacrifice his/her self interest to a broader cause. Consider the following report by a chaplain in a state prison attempting to assist an inmate with a call to his mother.

He says to me, "Chaplain, can I call my mom? She's dying." So I'm sitting there on speaker phone and the first thing out of his mouth is "Where's my f—ing money? Where's my quarterly package, you bitch?" And it's like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, you said she's dying." And she is, you can hear the woman on the respirator. So I end that conversation. I said, "What are you doing?" and he says, "Well, before she dies, I want my money." (Hicks 2008, 215)

NYPD's Stage 3 requires "the radical's goals are non-personal and focused on achieving 'the greater good'" (NYPD 2007, 36). As a working hypothesis, backed by extensive interviews of inmates, the inmate quoted above is closer to the modal inmate than one envisaged as being willing to sacrifice to a cause (Useem and Clayton, 2009).

*Pre-Radicalization.* As noted above, a key finding of the NYPD report is that the participants in the plots and attacks generally came from the ranks of those integrated into society's institutions, typically having "ordinary" lives with little criminal backgrounds. U.S. prison inmates, in contrast, tend to come from the lowest ranks of society, are disproportionately unemployed prior to incarceration, and have criminal histories in addition to the incident crime that led to their current imprisonment.

*Social and Personal Crisis.* Both Bittner and the NYPD report emphasize the role of "crises" that renders an individual vulnerable to radicalized messages. Imprisonment or extreme marginalization may be one of those crises, even though those so radicalized are likely to come from elite backgrounds. Bittner (1963, 937) states: "Leaders of proletarian movements are often aristocrats or intellectuals; on the other hand, radical leaders often discover or formulate their doctrines in prisons, in exiles, or in fringe circumstances as in bohemia." And as noted above, NYPD found that Western Jihadist often, in Stage 2, experience a personal crisis, which allows them to drift away from their old identify and opens them up to a new identify.

For many inmates, prisons are a personal crisis. They are ripped away from their community and loved ones (no one chooses prisons), and made to endure a life absent of many of the simple pleasures to which they are accustomed. The quality of life is low, at least when compared to life on the "outside." Nearly everything that would make an inmate's life a little more pleasant – a radio, a snack, a pair of shoes, a breath of fresh air – is not his or hers for the taking or purchase, but must be requested from a correctional employee. Inmates have only what they are given. Sexual relations are prohibited (though not always effectively). Visits with loved ones are limited in duration and awkward in setting. Food typically lacks variety and flavor. These considerations would in turn suggest that prisons *would* be a cauldron of radicalization.

*Competing pulls.* Bittner (1963, 937) states, that for radicalization to take place, "No part of a member's life can be defined as outside the scope of the doctrine of the movement. . . Members are obliged to carry the burden of their convictions into every nook and cranny of their personal lives, to eliminate as far as possible any source of distraction." Similarly, NYPD reports that radicalized individuals in Stages 3 and 4, withdraw from participation in a social life that does not support the goal of Jihad. They may pull back from participation in the Mosque, as their radicalism goes beyond what their Mosque supports (NYPD, 36). For example, Mohammad Atta, the leader of the 9/11 attack, was isolated from the local culture in Hamburg, German, and "began praying five times a day, strictly observing a halal diet, and avoiding normal student events like clubs and sporting events" (NYPD 2007, 77). Moreover, in 1988, "as the Hamburg cell became further radicalized, the group moved their meetings from the mosque into both a bookstore near the mosque and Atta's residence" (NYPD 2007, 78).

This point seems critical for the future of radicalization of prison inmates. If US corrections allows inmates to “rot,” abandoning them as “others” with little concern for their future, then we should anticipate prison-generated radicalization. There will be an absence of day-to-day distractions that would otherwise pull inmates toward more practical issues away from the glory of terrorism. More importantly, the sentiment of inmates will turn against prison authorities and the established order. Two examples illustrate possible alternative trajectories for the future.

If inmates exist in overcrowded, and underserved prisons, where day-to-day services are at a low level and programs are rare, then radicalization becomes far more likely. This is the condition that Petersilia (2008) describes California in. There has been one terrorist plot come out of the US prisons, suggestively from a California prison. In 1997, Kevin James, then an inmate in the California State Prison at Sacramento for a gang-related armed robbery, formed Jam’iyyat Ul-Ilsam Is-Saheeh (“JIS,” the Authentic Assembly of God). The immediate purpose of this “movement” was to “offer a complete understanding of the Islamic culture, Fiqh, Hadith, politics, and spirituality without any interference” (James, 1997). The movement’s long-term goal was to help “reestablish the Islamic Khalifate . . . throughout the Muslim world” (U.S. v. James, 2007). Some years later, the plot was hatched on the streets, though thwarted by law enforcement. James brought charisma to his “movement.” A close observer of this situation, Mark Hamm (2009, 675), notes:

JIS was distinguished by the piousness of its leader—a 26-year-old black Muslim from South Central Los Angeles, named Kevin James—who claimed special expertise as a representative and legitimate voice for Islam. Kevin James’s piousness was central to his charismatic appeal. . . James claimed to have spent time with Islamic extremists in Sudan—an apocryphal story that became a crucial part of his mythmaking.

This sort of charisma is likely to be rarer in the prison context. Nevertheless, relying on its absence is hazardous, if the other conditions for radicalization are present.

As a second example, the New York State Department of Correctional Services intensively involves inmates in programs and constructive activities (Useem, forthcoming). Speaking generally, the rates of prison violence at a particular is the byproduct of many factors, including those related to both “who” is in prison and prison policies. In New York, the rates of violence within prison have been linear downward. In 1983, there were 26 assaults against staff, per 1,000 inmates; by 2007, the rate had declined to 9. Moreover, this observed downward-trend in the *rate* of inmate violence understates the progress made in reducing violence. In terms of criminal backgrounds, in 1999, 53% of inmates were in prison for a violent offense; by 2008, 59% of inmates were in prison for a violent offense. New York has not had a major incident of collective violence in over a decade. Despite the agency’s responsibility for the territory where 9/11 struck most visibly, no radicalized inmate has emerged from the prisons to carry out a terrorist plot. This *could* be pure luck. Additional data would helpful to settle the issue.

### *Summary*

Our core argument is that radicalization appears to have properties that are independent of immediate historical context. The features of totalitarian radicalization appear structurally identical to the features



of Jihad radicalization. This isomorphism, in turn, suggests the location of the deep levers of radicalization, and where intervention may be most effective, at least in the prison context.

Prisons are worrisome as a “radicalization incubator.” The worry is fueled by the fact that inmates have not accepted the constitutional restraints in the pursuit of personal ends. Moderating this concern is the fact there is no strong evidence that inmates have, at least in masse, rejected the broader political restraints of the political order. They are not itching to blow up the social order and replace it with a new one. Yet there may be pocket of such sentiments in the making. Vigilance is needed, and so too is good correctional practices. The economic recession has led to very tight budgetary conditions at the state and local levels which in turn has caused most states to consider cutbacks in services provided to inmates, such as treatment programs. The incubator may be growing warmer.

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*In what ways, and under what conditions, do a society's political and economic institutions foster conditions that might lead to radicalization? What sub-national-level data might be most relevant to exploring radicalization?* **Politics, Economics and Radicalization: Theories and Data**

Victor Asal

When you treat people badly they are likely to think badly of you. If you single them out for bad treatment differentially than others they are likely to think worse of you. If they do not have a way of rationalizing the treatment – and if it goes on long enough they are likely to try to pursue:

...and/or support to far-reaching changes in society which may constitute a danger to (the continued existence of) the ... legal order (aim), which may involve the use of ... methods (means) that may harm the functioning of the ... legal order (effect). (AIVD, Netherlands intelligence service, From Dawa to Jihad).<sup>17</sup>

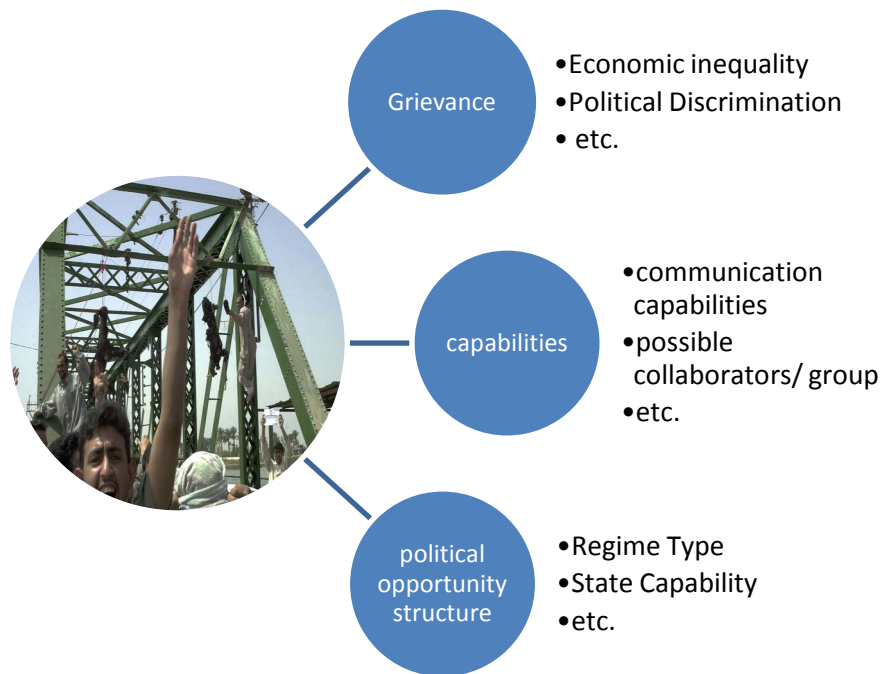
In other words I believe that the relative deprivation theory (Gurr 1970) (and better yet the more updated grievance form of the theory (Gurr and Moore 1997; Gurr 2000; Gurr 2005)) is a strong argument about what governmental and economic factors are likely to lead to radicalization. When it comes to political mobilization I believe that grievance provides a key motivating factor. This motivation does not lead directly to active radicalization for it has to be caveated by context (the political opportunity structure perspective is useful here as a conceptual framework (McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1989; Banaszak 1996; Giugni 1998)) as well as by the capabilities that are available to the individual and/or the organization (resource mobilization also provides a useful conceptual framework for capabilities and potential capabilities (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Klandermans 1984; Banaszak 1996; Lichbach 1998; Boyns and Ballard 2004)).

My perspective is driven by a contentious politics approach that sees the interaction between grievance, political opportunity structure and group capabilities as key factors in determining whether a group will support and then pursue change in society that may be violent or/and extreme. In other words when people feel treated unfairly and they have the tools to do something about it they are likely to mobilize – and that mobilization is likely to be radical depending on ideological and cultural factors as well as the openness and capability of the regime. I lay this out visually in figure 1. I focus most strongly on the issue of grievance because it spans the spectrum of radicalization from wanting to change the existing order, to supporting others using violence to actually using violence oneself. I then focus briefly on opportunity structure which can have an impact on those grievances. I focus less on opportunity structure and capabilities though because the former to some extent and the latter almost entirely have more to do with the constraints limiting what radicals wants to do to and the actual violent pursuit of extremist ends that they are able to achieve. In the sections below I lay out in more detail how political and economic institutions can lead to radicalization and identify some data that may be useful in this respect as well as identify some important limitations in the current state of our ability to analyze the process of radicalization quantitatively.

### **Figure 1**

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<sup>17</sup> I think this in some ways is the most useful of the definitions for it does not call for a further definition of what radicalization or extremism might or might not mean. In addition I have left out the component relating to democracy. Neither the target nor the perpetrator necessarily has to have any particular relation to democracy. Democratic extremism can be dangerous as well.



## Grievance

In *Mandela's Sermon*, Keorapetse Kgotsitsile (Kgotsitsile 1999) spells out the power of grievance as a motivator for radicalization when he says:

Blessed are the dehumanized  
for they have nothing to lose  
but their patience

False gods killed the poet in me.  
Now  
I dig graves  
with artistic precision

Economic and political institutions can be key drivers of grievance. Differential negative treatment has been strongly tied to political violence. Poverty for example has been tied to violence fairly persuasively and is accepted in the literature (Muller and Weede 1990; Sambanis 2002; Feldmann and Perala 2004). The implication here is that economic institutions that either discriminate or are ineffective are going to drive people to be radicalized. Despite the claim that the link between poverty and political violence "are generally accepted (Sambanis 2002)" the finding is still contested with Piazza, examining over 90 countries, finding for example that "poverty, malnutrition, inequality, unemployment, inflation, and poor economic growth" are not linked to terrorism (Piazza 2006). On the other hand Collier and Hoeffler (Collier and Hoeffler 2001) and Fearon and Laitin (Fearon and Laitin 2003) find that GDP per capita is related to the outbreak of political violence. I should note that the preceding argument focuses on data that for the most part looks at national level data. Data that looks not only at poverty but at inequality as a cause of grievance have provided evidence that grievance caused by economic inequality leads to civil war (Muller 1985; Seligson and Muller 1987; Muller and Seligson 1989).

Much more contentious than the issue of the economic nature of the state is the impact of political discrimination on the use of violence. Gurr (Gurr 1970) (Gurr and Moore 1997; Gurr 2000; Gurr 2005)) argues that people are motivated by grievance and that, given the right conditions and sufficient provocation, people will rebel. Others have also argued that exclusionary or repressive regimes are more prone to revolution (Hibbs 1973) (Goodwin 2001; Reynal-Querol 2002). The argument that discrimination is a cause of radicalization though is equally contested. Collier and Hoeffler (Collier and Hoeffler 2001) as well as Fearon and Laitin (Fearon and Laitin 2003) argue that when tested, discrimination is not found to be significant. The problem is that Collier and Hoeffler (Collier and Hoeffler 2001) measure ethnic hatred by looking at ethnic fractionalization – a much too broad proxy measure and Fearon and Laitin (Fearon and Laitin 2003) measure it in a similar way. Both also use democracy as a measure of discrimination. Neither of these measures though actually measure differential treatment and discrimination. Democracy should be taken into account when it comes to the nature of the opportunity structure but it is not synonymous with discrimination. Indeed when a variable is used that actually captures practices of discrimination it can come up statistically significant and predictive of violence (Regan and Norton 2005; Wimmer and Min 2006).

If indeed inequality is related to the use of violence this implies that the practices and the institutions of the state are crucial in determining if groups will mobilize. States that have economic and political institutions arranged to discriminate against certain sectors of the population are likely to be generating radicalization amongst their citizens. Indeed in recent experimental work Asal and Lemieux (2009) used a 2 (high grievance, low grievance) by 2 (high risk, low risk) experimental design to test if grievance actually led to a higher propensity to support or actually engage in political violence – key indicators of radicalization. The experiment used a simulation survey given to a nationally representative sample of 2932 U.S. adult participants. They found that participants who were in the high grievance condition were more likely to favor taking action, and felt that both forms of action were more justified than did participants in the low grievance condition.

### **Opportunity Structure**

The Political Opportunity Structure approach argues that the openness of a regime has an important impact on if and how people will mobilize. The fact that there is growing evidence that democracy may alleviate human rights abuses (Davenport 1999; Davenport and Armstrong 2004; Davenport 2007) provides support for the argument that democracy should alleviate radicalization because it reduces the motivation to radicalize. Repression creates the incentive structure to want to change the political structure. On the other hand if one does have a grievance it is easier to do something about it if one lives in a democracy. Perversely then democracy is likely to lower the likelihood of radicalization while making it easier for those who are radicalized to act out on their extremist ideology. This helps explain why researchers have found an “inverted U” relationship between regime type and the use of political violence by non-state actors (Hegre, Ellingsen et al. 2001). Looking specifically at terrorism, Blomberg, Hess and Weerapana, examine how the economic conditions of a state impact the level of international terrorism in a country. They find that countries with poor economic performance but strong democratic institutions are more likely to suffer from terrorism (Blomberg, Hess et al. 2004)

In addition to regime type, another important factor is state capability. States that have trouble getting the job of a state done in or controlling sections of their territory are more likely to suffer from terrorism

(Crenshaw 1981) (Rotberg 2002, 128). LaFree, Dugan, and Fahey have identified a strong relationship, between weak and failed states and the number of terrorist incidents in a country. In addition to material capacity we should also note that state's also have normative capabilities. Specifically we can conceive of the legitimacy that a state enjoys amongst its residents as an important normative resource. LaFree and Ackerman argue that:

Perceived legitimacy should be especially important in predicting terrorism, because compared to most ordinary crime terrorism is an especially public type of deviance. Terrorists, unlike common criminals, actively seek public recognition. ... In fact, terrorist and counter terrorist strategies can be conceptualized as a battle over legitimacy (LaFree and Ackerman 2009).

States that can control their territory and command the loyalty of their subjects are less likely to allow the conditions that foster radicalization.

### **Capabilities**

McCarthy and others argue that the ability of the organization to mobilize resources is a key component in how organizations chose to behave. (McCarthy and Zald 1977; McCammon, Granberg et al. 2001; Alimi 2003, 117). Organizations may have all sorts of goals. The ability to try and achieve these goals are dependent on having the capabilities to do so or the ability to create such capabilities. We should note though that capabilities do not make organizations radical – they allow radicals to act on their beliefs. That being said, organizations with different capabilities are likely to express their radical views in very different ways. If we take a closer look at the literature of terrorism we see that outside support (Byman 2005) and internal levels of support (Bloom 2005, 1) impact how and where organizations are likely to use violence. This same kind of logic should apply to active radicalization.

### **The Data Challenge**

A society's political and economic institutions should be important in the conditions that might lead to radicalization or limit the amount of radicalization. From the research cited above it should be clear that there is a large amount of data that allows for study of one of the key outcomes of radicalization – violence - at the national level. Unfortunately at the substate level there is much less data available in order to test those factors that are likely to lead to radicalization. To START's credit the vast majority of the data that DOES exist has been created by START researchers. For example the MAROB data set can be used to test what political and economic institutions are related to more or less radicalized Minorities at Risk Organizations (Asal, Johnson et al. 2007). The same can be said of the data being collected by MAR (Gurr 2000). At the individual level of analysis from the experimental (Kruglanski and Fishman 2006) to polling data (Weber 2006) there is the start of the ability to analyze what factors move individuals in the direction of being radicalized.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately the data that has been generated so far is only a good first step.

If we think about the kinds of substate data that is not readily available yet that would be very useful for understanding changes in radicalization we need data on individuals, organizations and communities. I should note that much of this data is very similar to data that would be useful for understanding what factors make communities resilient<sup>19</sup>. At the individual level data, current research suggests that psychological, ideological and socio-economic and cultural data on individuals would be

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<sup>18</sup> If this thought piece were to move in the direction of publication I could add a GREAT deal more to his point about START data and findings but for the purposes of the conference I thought this was sufficient.

<sup>19</sup> I could go on in much more detail about this but that would be a different white paper.

useful in identifying factors that make people more likely to radicalize. One of the key elements missing from the current data is the temporal dimension. Data collected from the same individuals over time would be extremely useful not only in being able to isolate external factors but also because we could observe changes in propensities for radicalization and how they correlate to other changes in the same individual.

At the community level it would be wonderful to have the same kind of demographic and institutional data that we currently have at the country level for substate units of analysis. This is equally true for markers of radicalization like violence and protest. Unfortunately much of this data is only available for a set of rich countries – and even in these countries it is costly and time consuming to collect.

At the organizational level I believe that the MAROB project is a good start but there is still a long way to go. First and foremost MAROB variables like ideology, government behavior and organizational structure would get more traction in the area of radicalization at the level below violence if they could be disaggregated to measures that give us more traction on the spurs of extremism. For example MAROB now currently codes groups as religious or nonreligious – but it does not code if they are Islamic or some other religion. Of equal importance the current variables do not capture particular characteristics or organizations that may be good identifiers of radicalization or factors that may be contributing to changes in organizational thinking. For example MAROB does not currently identify if an organization will see other Muslims as Takfiri.<sup>20</sup>

In essence I would argue that to better understand the process of radicalization we need more data – but not just more data. We need data that allows us to capture at the substate level features of grievance, political opportunity structure and group capabilities where we are not selecting on the dependent variable.

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<sup>20</sup> I would like to thank Frank Hairgrove for bringing the whole issue of Takfiri to my attention.

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*radicalization in communities in Europe and the United States? What community-level variables are correlated with support for or engagement in terrorism?*

Magnus Ranstorp

Any parallels drawn between radicalization processes between the European and U.S. context must be prefaced by necessary contextualization as these vary widely in terms of general threat picture; where and which sectors (prisons; underground mosques, etc) are prevalent radicalization milieus; ethno-demographic profiles specifically vulnerable; community dynamics; connectivity to AQ chain-of-command or regional conflicts; foreign policy agendas; counter-radicalization and other C-T policies, etc). Cumulatively these strands provide a complex context in which to make meaningful comparisons. Similarly the radicalization processes in the United States is very difficult to profile, given the relatively fragmented nature of Muslim communities.

From recent EU-commissioned studies on radicalization it was concluded that the sense of living in a hostile society that views Islam, migrants and Muslims with suspicion fuelled the phenomenon. Many feel under pressure to assess, as Muslims, their relationship to violent radical narratives and the politics of the Muslim world without knowing them or their interrelationship. Similarly a recent Dutch study (Buijs, et al. 2009) found that the critical climate towards Islam in the Netherlands has significantly contributed to radicalization among Dutch Muslim youth. Many of these second generation youths from Moroccan origin felt misunderstood by their parents and at the same time rejected by Dutch society.

Another theme was disenfranchisement and heightened political consciousness as Muslim concerns were not represented in issues surrounding civil liberties, foreign policy and social justice concerns. Giles de Kerchove, EU's counterterrorism coordinator, often underscores the crucial nature of *discrimination* as playing a prominent role in radicalization processes across Europe. While this dimension of discrimination is seemingly a driver in Europe it is much less visible as a factor in cases in the United States with the exception of radicalization cases within the African-American community.

- As such, the processes of radicalization in Europe is the combined product of identity politics and grievance politics whereas this combination is mostly visible in African-American converts in the United States playing empirically significant role in the most well-developed plots and attacks.
- Many US extremists express at some point within the radicalization process a desire to travel abroad, whether for training in the Arabic language, interaction with other militants, or combat training.
- It is also fair to say that most US extremists are more inclined to combat non-Muslim forces abroad in 'fault-line' conflicts than plot within the US. Multiple ideological and structural factors play into this decision-making process.
- Most violent US extremists target US military facilities when plotting attacks within the US; soft targets do not factor as prominently. This indicates, as a general rule, fewer direct connections to centralized AQ networks. The reverse is true in Europe as many of the plots have been inspired and directed from AQ-sources in Afghanistan/Pakistan.
- With the strong exception of the 2005 JIS case, prison radicalization emerges only as a tangential factor in most plots.
- Somalia and Yemen appear to be emerging foreign destinations for US extremists; many are also captivated by the conflict in Afghanistan/Pakistan.

Identifying common socio-demographic factors is difficult as the entire spectrum is represented. Based on evidence-based data involving hundreds of cases, the behavioural science unit within the British Security Service found that there were potential vulnerability indicators in British suspects such as:

- male (though women were playing increasing role);
- majority of suspects being aged in mid-20's;
- majority have steady relationships;
- more likely to be more well-educated than the population from which they are drawn (though this can be misleading);
- employed in low grade employment;
- majority have no previous criminal background;
- large number of those involved in terrorism do not practice faith regularly or have deep and wide knowledge of Islam;
- often they are religious novices;
- a disproportionate number of converts are involved;
- no personality disorders; and
- travelling overseas for significant periods (longer than six months) in at least half the number of cases examined.

The same British MI5 study found that there were no single pathway as there were different starting and end points and different journeys in between. Nevertheless the processes of radicalization in Europe display similarities across ethnicities such as micro-isolation of communities due to the loss or lack of cultural and political references and for “young people distorted perceptions of the armed conflicts in the Muslim world.” (Change Institute, August 2008). It is a master narrative/frame woven together with symbols and images enabled by global media which evokes mobilization (Olesen, 2009) based on a mixture of ideological conviction and emotional appeal.

This master narrative has been best captured by Roger Hardy who argues that: “the force of the narrative revolves around three distinctive but mutually reinforcing elements, explaining its widespread appeal.

- Firstly, it is a narrative of humiliation and one that is painted *in primary colours*. The core of this is that the West is at war with Islam: daily evidence is barraging us of the West's aggressive design from conflict zones: Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Kashmir...and Somalia, Darfur...Reinforcing these are the metaphorical wars – disputes over headscarf; Mohammed cartoon and countless other controversies. All these conflicts and controversies, big and small, act like streams feeding a single river.”
- The second theme is redemptive violence offering to transform humiliation into inevitable victory; suffering into self-sacrifice; shame into honour.”
- The third theme is the projection of emotionally powerful imagery...which provides compelling moral shock to take direct action.” (Hardy, 2006)

This master narrative is reworked into multiple narratives in regional and local contexts but they all follow this pattern whether in a European or American context. Obviously the collage of emotive issues is selectively blended to appeal to local constituencies and mobilization efforts as there are multiple strands of the narrative according to context and struggle.

A kaleidoscope of factors, much like vectors, pushes individuals towards radicalization and enables their recruitment. Dutch research has shown that three aspects play an important role in radicalization processes: the individual process, the interpersonal dynamic and the effect of circumstance. (RecoRa Project). Research into radicalization processes in Europe have underscored the multidimensional interplay between 1) individual psychological disposition; 2) social factors; 3) political factors; 4) ideological and religious dimensions; 5) cultural identity; 6) traumatic experience and other triggering factors; ultimately 7) group dynamics (being the radicalization 'engine')(Ranstorp, 2009).

- individual psychological disposition involves: exclusion; anger/frustration; disappointment; a polarized Manichean mindset; tendency to misinterpret situations; victim mentality, etc.
- social factors involving: social rupture (imposed isolation); limited education; reduced social mobility; reduced prospects for the future; petty criminality, etc.
- political factors involving: Western foreign policy/wars; the perceived injustice suffered by Muslims across several key regional conflicts (such as Chechnya, Iraq, Somalia, Kashmir and the Palestinian territories, etc) that exposes Western double-standards and leads to passive and active contributions to these struggles by Muslim communities within Europe; military interventions by Western states; local harassment.
- Ideological/religious dimensions involving: select historical retrieval, takfiri-interpretation of Islam; jihadi mission; Feeling of Islam under attack and defensive posture to protect fellow Muslims under siege.
- Cultural identity involving: standing in between cultures as well as the politics of Muslim identity.
- Traumatic experience and other triggering factors involving: experience of moral shock and search for meaning.
- Group dynamics involving: leadership; isolation from old social networks; polarisation; groupthink and cohesion, etc.

EU studies on radicalization also indicate that recruitment efforts have driven underground with little or no involvement of mosques and that more focus should be placed on "so-called 'gateway organisations' which prepare individuals ideologically and socialise them into the extremist milieu." (King's, 2009). In the absence of radical Imams, attracting and channelling potential recruits, it is not known the extent to which these gateway organisations serve as initial socialising scene for likeminded individuals who may later break away into network of sub-cultures – some which may pursue pathway into violence. Similarly the Internet plays increasingly a more prominent role as a vehicle for radicalization and, in some cases, even recruitment (Neumann, 2009).

As indicated by the conclusion of the recent report by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman, radicalization processes emphasize the growing importance of converts in terror networks and the role of overseas training and/or fighting in a regional conflict. While there is limited evidence that there is AQ-coordination in the U.S.-based networks unraveled so far, there is growing concern and evidence that the Somali community is particularly vulnerable and an active front for radicalization and recruitment. As pointed out by Abid Raja of New Scotland Yard's Muslim Contact Unit, individuals from war-torn parts of the world like Somalia have seen violence before and have a lower threshold for their own involvement if they have experienced fighting (Raja, 2008). The Somali diaspora communities in both Europe (primarily in Sweden and the United Kingdom) and in the United States are particularly vulnerable for radicalization and recruitment efforts. A Swedish study of 5,000 Somalis in Gothenburg revealed a bleak picture of a disadvantaged community: broken families with half of all Somali women not living with the father of their children; only three out of ten Somali youths have completed their

basic secondary education; every fifth Somali man suspected of criminal behaviour; and 50% of all Somalis had zero income (Lovkvist, 2007). Similarly to the Somali case in Minnesota, the Swedish security service estimate that there are 20-30 recruits in Sweden deployed into Somalia to fight for al-Shaabab.

There are few community-level variables that indicate support for or engagement with terrorism across communities as there is few dependable surveys that can separate sympathy for the wider cause or AQ-inspired narrative and actual engagement and real sympathy for terrorism. This is partly due to the fact that we do not adequately understand or gauge multiple communities within large cities. City managers are uniquely situated to provide a granulated picture of dynamic within communities within districts and neighbourhoods. Similarly there is a need to provide community impact assessments of the C-T measures and how they are perceived and internalized within the respective communities.

One way to receive an indication of propensity towards radicalization is to gauge degrees of segregation and forms of enclaves within cities where there is targeted recruitment within schools and the existence of so-called garage mosques. In particular, the degree of presence of so-called cultural/religious enforcers that focus on behaviour conformity is a useful indicator that there is a subculture that may seek separation and that harbour extremist views that seek to police behaviour of the communities. Newly arrived immigrants were particularly prone to pressure from cultural/religious enforcers that sought to establish for them the right way to behave or 'the law of the land' (Ranstorp/Dos Santos, 2009). Early warning signals as to the scope of so-called cultural/religious enforcers indicate the control of behaviour within districts of cities and may serve as one useful indicator of a subculture of intolerance and exclusion that may indicate separation or societal rupture that may accelerate radicalization and involvement into terrorism. However, the fact is that we require more concerted data and research into these community dynamics, especially within the major cities of Europe.

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[http://www.fhs.se/upload/Forskning/centrumbildningar/cats/Rosengårdsrapport%20\(eng\).pdf](http://www.fhs.se/upload/Forskning/centrumbildningar/cats/Rosengårdsrapport%20(eng).pdf)

**Four EU-commissioned studies on radicalization:**

*Les facteurs de création ou de modification des processus de radicalisation violente, chez les jeunes en particulier* by Compagnie Européenne d'Intelligence Stratégique (CEIS), Paris.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/fsj/terrorism/prevention/docs/ec\\_radicalisation\\_study\\_on\\_trigger\\_factors\\_fr.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/terrorism/prevention/docs/ec_radicalisation_study_on_trigger_factors_fr.pdf)

*Beliefs, ideologies and narratives* by The Change Institute, London.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/justice\\_home/fsj/terrorism/prevention/docs/ec\\_radicalisation\\_study\\_on\\_ideology\\_and\\_narrative\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/terrorism/prevention/docs/ec_radicalisation_study_on_ideology_and_narrative_en.pdf)

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