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Criminological Explanations for Terrorism

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Introduction

Theoretically understanding the reasons behind the rise and persistence of terrorism and the ways that it can be stopped is one of the more salient political priorities in the early 21st century and has been a growing focus within the field of criminology since the late 20th century. Rigorous scholarship relies on theoretical explanations and their extensions as guides to scientifically assess terrorist behavior and to evaluate the many popularly held myths promoted by politicians and media. Such evaluations are now possible because systematically collected terrorism data and advanced analytic techniques are increasingly available to test these theories. Further, because criminologists and others have been studying law breaking and efforts to stop it for at least three centuries, the field offers a unique perspective that is often overlooked by other scientists who study terrorism. Criminologists are able to advance and refine their theories that are relevant to terrorist violence and to dispel others that fall short of being directly related. This article identifies scholarship that has applied existing criminological theories to terrorism. It begins by listing those studies that provide influential overviews of the different criminological explanations for terrorism, and then turns to the specific theories that have sought to explain the origins and motivations for terrorism. This article also presents the criminological works that have used theory to directly inform efforts to prevent or stop terrorism.

General Overviews

A growing body of literature bridges the gap between the many different criminological theories that explain why people commit crimes, and explanations for why the number of terrorist attacks vary across times and space. The scholarship presented in this section summarizes a collective body of contributions that demonstrate how the broader theoretical and empirical study of criminology can inform terrorism research. Lum, et al. 2006 is included in this section because after the authors conduct a systematic review of counterterrorism evaluations, they demonstrate a distinct need for evaluation research in this area. The authors also compare this body of research to evaluations of criminal justice programs, implying that much can be learned by applying a similar rigor to evaluating counterterrorism efforts. This lack of sound methodology is also expressed in Silke 2001, which persuasively delineates the methodological differences between terrorism research by criminologists and that conducted by scholars from other disciplines. It then reasserts essential research goals for terrorism study. Along these lines, Rosenfeld 2004 shows how criminological theory naturally fits into the study of terrorism, given the predatory nature of terrorism. To emphasize this even further, three other works, Gupta 2008, Noricks 2009, and Deflem 2004, provide general overviews of other criminological theories that have influenced the study of terrorism. Each also identifies opportunities and priorities for extending this research. LaFree and Dugan 2015 takes this a step further by presenting how criminology has, in the past decade, indeed responded to the need to apply its theoretical ideas and methodological advances to terrorism. And finally, Freilich, et al. 2015 examines a number of theoretical perspectives and hypotheses to examine the explanatory power of a number of central criminological theories.

Deflem, Mathieu. 2004. Introduction: Towards a criminological sociology of terrorism and counter-terrorism. In *Terrorism and counter-terrorism: Criminological perspectives*. Edited by Mathieu Deflem, 1–6. Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance 5. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Offers an overview of the edited volume that brings together the writings of criminological sociologists to address terrorism and counterterrorism from a variety of theoretical and substantive viewpoints. It calls on sociologists to build on their theoretical and methodological insights to contribute to the broader knowledge of terrorism and counterterrorism.

Deflem, Mathieu. 2004. Introduction: Towards a criminological sociology of terrorism and counter-terrorism. In *Terrorism and counter-terrorism: Criminological perspectives*. Edited by Mathieu Deflem, 1–6. Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance 5. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Freilich, Joshua D., Amy Adamczyk, Steven M. Chermak, Katharine A. Boyd, and William S. Parkin. 2015. Investigating the applicability of macro-level criminology theory to terrorism: A county-level analysis. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 31.3: 383–411.

Examines macrolevel hypotheses drawn from deprivation, backlash, and social-disorganization theories, using data from the Extremist Crime Database (ECDB) and the FBI's Supplemental Homicide Report (SHR) from between 1990 and 2012. Specifically, it examines whether county residence is associated with ideologically motivated homicides by right-wing extremists in the contiguous United States.

Freilich, Joshua D., Amy Adamczyk, Steven M. Chermak, Katharine A. Boyd, and William S. Parkin. 2015. Investigating the applicability of macro-level criminology theory to terrorism: A county-level analysis. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 31.3: 383–411.

Gupta, Dipak K. 2008. *Understanding terrorism and political violence: The life cycle of birth, growth, transformation, and demise*. Cass Series on Political Violence. New York: Routledge.

Presents different theoretical approaches to examining terrorism, drawing from theories commonly used in economics, psychology, biology, and criminology. It expands on traditional applications of rational choice to allow for altruism as a key motivator for terrorism, and explores how terrorist organizations adapt their strategies to take advantage of changing opportunities.

Gupta, Dipak K. 2008. *Understanding terrorism and political violence: The life cycle of birth, growth, transformation, and demise*. Cass Series on Political Violence. New York: Routledge.

LaFree, Gary, and Laura Dugan. 2015. How has criminology contributed to the study of terrorism since 9/11? In *Terrorism and counterterrorism today*. Edited by Mathieu Deflem, 1–23. Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance 20. Bingley, UK: Emerald.

Takes an inventory on the ways that the field of criminology has accepted scholarship on terrorism as part of the larger field. It also reviews how criminological theory and methodological advances by criminologists have been used to advance the study of terrorism. Available online through subscription or purchase.

LaFree, Gary, and Laura Dugan. 2015. How has criminology contributed to the study of terrorism since 9/11? In *Terrorism and counterterrorism today*. Edited by Mathieu Deflem, 1–23. Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance 20. Bingley, UK: Emerald.

Lum, Cynthia, Leslie W. Kennedy, and Alison Sherley. 2006. Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research. *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 2.4: 489–516.

Provides an overview of the Campbell Collaboration systematic review, which evaluated whether existing counterterrorism strategies have been successful. Notes that there was an almost complete absence of evaluation research on counterterrorism interventions. Stresses the need for researchers, policymakers, and government officials to support evaluation on counterterrorism.

Lum, Cynthia, Leslie W. Kennedy, and Alison Sherley. 2006. Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research. *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 2.4: 489–516.

Noricks, Darcy M. E. 2009. The root causes of terrorism. In *Social science for counterterrorism: Putting the pieces together*. Edited by Paul K. Davis and Kim Cragin, 11–68. RAND Corporation Monograph MG-849-OSD. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Explores the factors that produce an environment where terrorism is more likely to occur. By focusing on macrolevel structural and cultural factors, this chapter compares these theoretical approaches, and delineates their implications for designing and implementing counterterrorism policies and future research.

Noricks, Darcy M. E. 2009. The root causes of terrorism. In *Social science for counterterrorism: Putting the pieces together*. Edited by Paul K. Davis and Kim Cragin, 11–68. RAND Corporation Monograph MG-849-OSD. Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Rosenfeld, Richard. 2004. Terrorism and criminology. In *Terrorism and counter-terrorism: Criminological perspectives*. Edited by Mathieu Deflem, 19–32. Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance 5. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Argues that Donald Black's characterization of terrorism ignores the criminological contribution to terrorism. The chapter shows that predatory violence is a means to the goal of moralistic violence and that motivations can be found in the institutional contexts of modernity: free markets, democracy, and religious tolerance.

Rosenfeld, Richard. 2004. Terrorism and criminology. In *Terrorism and counter-terrorism: Criminological perspectives*. Edited by Mathieu Deflem, 19–32. Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance 5. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Silke, Andrew. 2001. The devil you know: Continuing problems with research on terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13.4: 1–14.

Provides an overview on terrorism research between 1995 and 2000 and argues that most of it fell short of providing exploratory and predictive value. It suggests, however, that criminologists and sociologists offer a greater empirical commitment to testing and understanding terrorism, and it provides suggestions for improving future terrorism scholarship.

Silke, Andrew. 2001. The devil you know: Continuing problems with research on terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 13.4: 1–14.

Rational Choice

Rational choice theories assume that humans are self-interested beings with free will who seek to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. When applied to terrorism, this perspective draws on an extensive literature from criminology and other social sciences and has been used to examine a wide variety of central issues relating to terrorism. Some of the studies listed in this section draw on the principles of rational choice without necessarily explicitly discussing the theory. In fact, one of the most well-cited studies on terrorism, Pape 2003, provides evidence that suicide terrorists use a strategic logic, which is a necessary component of rational-choice theory; however, their logic counters commonly held assumptions about suicide terrorists. Perry and Hasisi 2015 also assesses the logic of suicide terrorists by questioning whether they are rational, and the authors consider the nature of their priorities and goals. The idea that terrorists might rely on strategic logic has also been questioned in McCartan, et al. 2008; Wilson, et al. 2010; and LaFree, et al. 2012, all of which find evidence that rebel groups operate strategically during ongoing conflicts. Other research directly relies on rational-choice theory to assess responses to interventions. Dugan, et al. 2005 does this by examining the impact of government counterterrorism actions that were implemented to change the rational calculus of potential hijackers. More recently, Dugan and Chenoweth 2012 uses rational choice to assess how a full range of government actions by the Israeli government affects Palestinian terrorist attacks during different tactical periods. Argomaniz and Vidal-Diez 2015 explores competing hypotheses that are aligned with rational-choice theory to examine the consequences of counterterrorism policies aimed at reducing the rational justification for terrorism by the Basque separatist group ETA (Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna). While rational choice is an especially appealing theory to inform potential interventions, Fussey 2011 critiques its application to terrorism and identifies a number of key theoretical issues that should be considered before moving forward in this area.

Argomaniz, Javier, and Alberto Vidal-Diez. 2015. Examining deterrence and backlash effects in counter-terrorism: The case of ETA. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 160–181.

Assesses whether six Spanish counterterrorism policies led to subsequent decreases in the risk of ETA terrorist attacks through deterrence, or increases in their risk through backlash, between 1977 and 2010. The authors' findings provide evidence that backlash motivated ETA attacks.

Argomaniz, Javier, and Alberto Vidal-Diez. 2015. Examining deterrence and backlash effects in counter-terrorism: The case of ETA. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 160–181.

Dugan, Laura, and Erica Chenoweth. 2012. Moving beyond deterrence: The effectiveness of raising the expected utility of abstaining from terrorism in Israel. *American Sociological Review* 77.4: 597–624.

Uses a rational-choice framework to broaden the strategies of counterterrorism beyond those of deterrence that punish terrorism to include government actions that reward abstention from terrorism. It tests this model by using data on government actions by Israel that are directed toward Palestinian civilians and terrorists.

Dugan, Laura, and Erica Chenoweth. 2012. Moving beyond deterrence: The effectiveness of raising the expected utility of abstaining from terrorism in Israel. *American Sociological Review* 77.4: 597–624.

Dugan, Laura, Gary LaFree, and Alex R. Piquero. 2005. Testing a rational choice model of airline hijackings. *Criminology* **43.4: 1031–1065.**

Uses rational-choice and deterrence theories as guides to test whether certainty-based interventions (target hardening) or cost-based interventions that increase the severity of punishment are related to a decreased risk of aerial hijacking. Analysis is conducted on subsets of hijacking events based on differing motives.

Dugan, Laura, Gary LaFree, and Alex R. Piquero. 2005. Testing a rational choice model of airline hijackings. *Criminology* 43.4: 1031–1065.

Fussey, Pete. 2011. An economy of choice? Terrorist decision-making and criminological rational choice theories reconsidered. *Security Journal* **24.1: 85–99.**

Discusses the increasing attention given to crime prevention approaches aimed at reducing terrorism. Argues that rational choice erroneously assumes that terrorist organizations engage in value-free strategic and operational decision making. Offers further critiques of crime prevention approaches, concluding that they are limited in their ability to explain terrorism.

Fussey, Pete. 2011. An economy of choice? Terrorist decision-making and criminological rational choice theories reconsidered. *Security Journal* 24.1: 85–99.

LaFree, Gary, Laura Dugan, Min Xie, and Piyusha Singh. 2012. Spatial and temporal patterns of terrorist attacks by ETA 1970 to 2007. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* **28.1: 7–29.**

Examines whether the spatial and temporal patterns of terrorist attacks by ETA between 1970 and 2007 reflected rational strategic planning. Tests whether the diffusion patterns of attacks after ETA declared a prolonged war of attrition with Spain shifted from contagion diffusion to hierarchical diffusion extending beyond the Basque region.

LaFree, Gary, Laura Dugan, Min Xie, and Piyusha Singh. 2012. Spatial and temporal patterns of terrorist attacks by ETA 1970 to 2007. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 28.1: 7–29.

McCartan, Lisa M., Andrea Masselli, Michael Rey, and Danielle Rusnak. 2008. The logic of terrorist target choice: An examination of Chechen rebel bombings from 1997–2003. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* **31.1: 60–79.**

Assesses the strategic choices of Chechen rebels during the Chechen-Russian conflict between 1997 and 2003. It tests whether civilian targets are more likely in Russia than in Chechnya, whether weather influences their attack frequency, and whether the Chechens are likely to increase the costs to Russians with time.

McCartan, Lisa M., Andrea Masselli, Michael Rey, and Danielle Rusnak. 2008. The logic of terrorist target choice: An examination of Chechen rebel bombings from 1997–2003. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31.1: 60–79.

Pape, Robert A. 2003. The strategic logic of suicide terrorism. *American Political Science Review* **97.3: 343–361.**

Analyzes all suicide terrorist attacks from 1980 to 2001 to uncover a pattern of strategic logic for the attacks. The author presents evidence that terrorists use the tactic to pressure democratic occupiers to withdraw from territory.

Pape, Robert A. 2003. The strategic logic of suicide terrorism. *American Political Science Review* 97.3: 343–361.

Perry, Simon, and Badi Hasisi. 2015. Rational choice rewards and the jihadist suicide bomber. *Terrorism and Political Violence* **27.1: 53–80.**

Applies rational-choice theory to explore motivations of jihadist suicide terrorists. After reviewing the personal, social, and religious incentives, this study suggests that suicide terrorists display a commitment toward maximizing self-gratifying behavior rather than altruism.

Perry, Simon, and Badi Hasisi. 2015. Rational choice rewards and the jihadist suicide bomber. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 53–80.

Wilson, Margaret A., Angela Scholes, and Elizabeth Brocklehurst. 2010. A behavioural analysis of terrorist action: The assassination and bombing campaigns of ETA between 1980 and 2007. In *Special issue: Terrorism: Criminological perspectives***.** *British Journal of Criminology* **50.4: 690–707.**

Examines whether strategic and tactical patterns can be found in assassinations and bombing attacks perpetrated by ETA between 1980 and 2007. Analyzes descriptive accounts for similarities and differences and whether one type of violence could substitute for another.

Wilson, Margaret A., Angela Scholes, and Elizabeth Brocklehurst. 2010. A behavioural analysis of terrorist action: The assassination and bombing campaigns of ETA between 1980 and 2007. In *Special issue: Terrorism: Criminological perspectives*. *British Journal of Criminology* 50.4: 690–707.

Deterrence

Deterrence has been one of the most dominant perspectives within the literature on terrorism, given that most governments rely heavily on the threat of punishment to end terrorist violence. Most of the research in this section uses deterrence theory to test whether interventions that threaten to punish are effective in reducing terrorist risk. An early study of this sort, Le Vine and Salert 1996, examines how terrorist groups respond to government strategies aimed at deterring their attacks, and it discusses other rational goals that governments may achieve through these strategies. LaFree, et al. 2009 similarly uses deterrence theory to evaluate the impact of a range of different counterterrorist strategies used by the British government in Northern Ireland to see how they affect the risk of terrorist violence. In later research, Carson 2014 uses deterrence theory to assess whether US legislation that increases the punishment for acts of ecoterrorism is effective. Other research in this section draws on other theoretical perspectives to better understand how deterrence efforts might actually play out when directed toward reducing terrorism. Along these lines, Tyler, et al. 2010 uses ideas of legitimacy to explore what governments can do to increase the effectiveness of counterterrorism policing and other policies aimed at deterring terrorism. Frey and Luechinger 2003, alternatively, questions the perceived effectiveness of deterrence strategies by theoretically examining the likely consequences of deterrence-based interventions and suggesting alternative strategies that could also reduce terrorism. Hua and Bapna 2012 also dismisses the value of deterrence theory, by pointing out structural difficulties when applying and measuring deterrence strategies for cyberterrorism. Trivizas and Smith 1997 applies deterrence theory differently by making terrorism the independent variable and asking whether terrorism can be a deterrent for other forms of crime.

Carson, Jennifer Varriale. 2014. Counterterrorism and radical eco-groups: A context for exploring the series hazard model. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* **30.3: 485–504.**

Examines whether four federal-sentencing acts were able to deter radical ecoterrorism in the United States. It specifically examines the impact of each change in legal sanctions on the additional incidents, serious incidents, and ideologically specific incidents. Finds some evidence for legislation and outcome specific deterrence.

Carson, Jennifer Varriale. 2014. Counterterrorism and radical eco-groups: A context for exploring the series hazard model. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 30.3: 485–504.

Frey, Bruno S., and Simon Luechinger. 2003. How to fight terrorism: Alternatives to deterrence. *Defence and Peace Economics* **14.4: 237–249.**

Explores alternative strategies to deterrence and suggests that raising the opportunity cost of terrorism and making terrorist attacks less attractive may be superior strategies for reducing terrorism.

Frey, Bruno S., and Simon Luechinger. 2003. How to fight terrorism: Alternatives to deterrence. *Defence and Peace Economics* 14.4: 237–249.

Hua, Jian, and Sanjay Bapna. 2012. How can we deter cyber terrorism? *Information Security Journal: A Global Perspective* **21.2: 102–114.**

Highlights the legal and technical challenges to tracking terrorists and provides a series of suggestions to address these practical constraints. Presents some key structural considerations that are needed to improve the deterrent capacity of existing methods on cybersecurity.

Hua, Jian, and Sanjay Bapna. 2012. How can we deter cyber terrorism? *Information Security Journal: A Global Perspective* 21.2: 102–114.

LaFree, Gary, Laura Dugan, and Raven Korte. 2009. The impact of British counterterrorist strategies on political violence in Northern Ireland: Comparing deterrence and backlash models. *Criminology* **47.1: 17–45.**

Estimates the effects of six interventions by the British government on the risk of terrorist attacks by Northern Ireland republicans to assess whether they are consistent with the predictions of deterrence or backlash.

LaFree, Gary, Laura Dugan, and Raven Korte. 2009. The impact of British counterterrorist strategies on political violence in Northern Ireland: Comparing deterrence and backlash models. *Criminology* 47.1: 17–45.

Le Vine, Victor T., and Barbara A. Salert. 1996. Does a coercive official response deter terrorism? The case of the PLO. *Terrorism and Political Violence* **8.1: 22–49.**

Analyzes the impact of official responses to terrorism that was sponsored or directed by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) between 1968 and 1986. Observes that some deterrent impacts were short lived, and suggests that coercive responses to terrorism by government were more valuable for providing political defenses than for deterring terrorism.

Le Vine, Victor T., and Barbara A. Salert. 1996. Does a coercive official response deter terrorism? The case of the PLO. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 8.1: 22–49.

Trivizas, Eugene, and Philip T. Smith. 1997. The deterrent effect of terrorist incidents on the rates of luggage theft in railway and underground stations. *British Journal of Criminology* **37.1: 63–74.**

Examines whether salient terrorist attacks affect rates of luggage theft in railway and underground stations, finding a sharp and brief decline in thefts after a major terrorist incident, and discusses whether this was due to increased police vigilance (deterrence) or concern that the luggage might contain explosives.

Trivizas, Eugene, and Philip T. Smith. 1997. The deterrent effect of terrorist incidents on the rates of luggage theft in railway and underground stations. *British Journal of Criminology* 37.1: 63–74.

Tyler, Tom R., Stephen Schulhofer, and Aziz Z. Huq. 2010. Legitimacy and deterrence effects in counterterrorism policing: A study of Muslim Americans. *Law & Society Review* **44.2: 365–402.**

Explores conditions that foster voluntary cooperation by members of the Muslim American community with police efforts to combat terrorism. The authors' analysis of data covering the period between March and June 2009 suggests that focusing on procedural justice in designing counterterrorism policing strategies may help nurture community cooperation.

Tyler, Tom R., Stephen Schulhofer, and Aziz Z. Huq. 2010. Legitimacy and deterrence effects in counterterrorism policing: A study of Muslim Americans. *Law & Society Review* 44.2: 365–402.

Strain

Strain theories within criminology have had a large impact on the study of crime and have developed to encompass a number of theoretical predictions within the criminological literature. Since 1992, scholars have directed general strain theory (GST) toward terrorism in an effort to better predict its patterns. This effort has been led by Agnew 2010, which provides an overview of how GST can be applied to terrorism, and outlines a number of analytic considerations for this effort. More recently, Rice and Agnew 2013 offers an updated framework of GST that expands on the role of emotions and negative affect in terrorism. Applications of GST on terrorist outcomes are found in Fodeman 2015, which empirically assesses the impact of strain in the United States on anti-abortion terrorism, and in González, et al. 2014, which uses GST to explore terrorism committed by women in the United States. Rice 2009 is included in this section because it discusses GST and other criminological theories and provides a research agenda for examining the role that emotions may play in terrorism. Other works have applied the concept of strain without explicitly conjuring GST. For example, Cottee 2011 discusses how terrorism groups may operate according to the collective response to strains experienced by their members. Further, Dugan and Young 2010 offers a provocative policy proposal based on the premise that strains derived from the policy in the United States may provide the impetus for terrorism. Piazza 2012 examines the role that discrimination against minorities, an obvious strain, might have on terrorist attacks across 166 nations between 1991 and 2006.

Agnew, Robert. 2010. A general strain theory of terrorism. *Theoretical Criminology* 14.2: 131–153.

Argues that acts of terrorism are most likely to occur when people experience "collective strains" that substantially affect civilians, are unjust, and are inflicted by substantially more-powerful others.

Agnew, Robert. 2010. A general strain theory of terrorism. *Theoretical Criminology* 14.2: 131–153.

Cottee, Simon. 2011. Jihadism as a subcultural response to social strain: Extending Marc Sageman's "Bunch of Guys" thesis. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23.5: 730–751.

Suggests that the formation of terrorist organization can be understood as a collective response to the strains encountered by the members of these groups. Cottee also contends that these strains are imposed by the circumstances that individuals experience.

Cottee, Simon. 2011. Jihadism as a subcultural response to social strain: Extending Marc Sageman's "Bunch of Guys" thesis. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 23.5: 730–751.

Dugan, Laura, and Joseph Young. 2010. Allow extremist participation in the policy-making process. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Society of Criminology held 4–7 November 2009 in Philadelphia. In *Contemporary issues in criminal justice policy: Policy proposals from the American Society of Criminology conference*. Edited by Natasha A. Frost, Joshua D. Freilich, and Todd R. Clear, 159–168. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Considers the role that strains in the policy process may have on subsequent terrorism in the United States. Argues that increasing political participation by extremists and giving them a voice in the policymaking process may reduce subsequent terrorist violence.

Dugan, Laura, and Joseph Young. 2010. Allow extremist participation in the policy-making process. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Society of Criminology held 4–7 November 2009 in Philadelphia. In *Contemporary issues in criminal justice policy: Policy proposals from the American Society of Criminology conference*. Edited by Natasha A. Frost, Joshua D. Freilich, and Todd R. Clear, 159–168. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Fodeman, Ari David. 2015. Safety and danger valves: Functional displacement in American anti-abortion terrorism. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 7.3: 169–183.

Discusses the relationship between general strains and other theories on anti-abortion terrorism and other forms of protest in the United States. Suggests that anti-abortion responses varied in accordance with political frustrations.

Fodeman, Ari David. 2015. Safety and danger valves: Functional displacement in American anti-abortion terrorism. *Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression* 7.3: 169–183.

González, Alessandra L., Joshua D. Freilich, and Steven M. Chermak. 2014. How women engage homegrown terrorism. *Feminist Criminology* **9.4: 344–366.**

Explores the engagement of women in terrorism and extremist violence in the United States, by using the US Extremist Crime Database (ECDB). Provides a framework for studying terrorism that uses GST and other theories. Tests a number of hypotheses regarding the involvement of women in US terrorism.

González, Alessandra L., Joshua D. Freilich, and Steven M. Chermak. 2014. How women engage homegrown terrorism. *Feminist Criminology* 9.4: 344–366.

Piazza, James A. 2012. Types of minority discrimination and terrorism. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* **29.5: 521–546.**

Explores whether discrimination against minority groups may lead to increases in terrorism. Using cross-national data from 166 countries between 1991 and 2006 concerning language rights, relative economic status, and political participation and representation, the findings suggest that only socioeconomic discrimination against minorities consistently predicted terrorism.

Piazza, James A. 2012. Types of minority discrimination and terrorism. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 29.5: 521–546.

Rice, Stephen K. 2009. Emotions and terrorism research: A case for a social-psychological agenda. *Journal of Criminal Justice* **37.3: 248–255.**

Discusses and outlines a research agenda for examining the role that the emotions of terrorists and their constituencies play in terrorism. Argues that numerous criminological theories, including GST, can be used to better understand terrorism.

Rice, Stephen K. 2009. Emotions and terrorism research: A case for a social-psychological agenda. *Journal of Criminal Justice* 37.3: 248–255.

Rice, Stephen K., and Robert Agnew. 2013. Emotional correlates of radicalization and terrorism. In *Criminal psychology*. **Vol. 2,** *Typologies, mental disorders, and profiles*. **Edited by Jacqueline B. Helfgott, 215–226. Westport, CT: Praeger.**

Argues that negative affect and emotions more generally hold theoretical value for examining radicalization and terrorism. Provides a detailed framework for understanding how emotions, affect, and GST may contribute to the understanding of terrorism, and suggests ways to pursue this research agenda.

Rice, Stephen K., and Robert Agnew. 2013. Emotional correlates of radicalization and terrorism. In *Criminal psychology*. Vol. 2, *Typologies, mental disorders, and profiles*. Edited by Jacqueline B. Helfgott, 215–226. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Social Disorganization

Social-disorganization theories have been influential within criminology for more than a century; however, their application to the study of terrorism has been only within the past decade. As with general strain theory, some studies explicitly apply social disorganization to terrorism while others use its components without mentioning the theory. Freilich and Pridemore 2007 provides one of the earliest empirical examinations that explicitly links social disorganization to terrorism, by using cross-sectional data of US states. LaFree and Bersani 2014 also applies social disorganization to terrorism by examining whether county-level geographic patterns of terrorism in the United States are consistent with its predictions. Fahey and LaFree 2015 examines this link further by testing a number of hypotheses related to social disorganization through using the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) across nations. Other studies have empirically examined the components of social disorganization. Akyuz and Armstrong 2011 investigates the links among ethnic heterogeneity, residential mobility, poverty, and terrorism in Turkey between 2005 and 2007. The model used in Mullins and Young 2012 (legitimation-habituation) offers predictions that are similar to social disorganization, in that they both test their hypotheses across nations. At the individual level, Hamm 2004 and Pisoiu 2015 explore the social histories of neo-Nazis to investigate the impact that subcultures (i.e., a component of some social-

disorganization theories) may have on terrorism. Wormeli 2014 turns a critical eye toward the challenges of applying social disorganization to terrorism, providing a number of valuable policy suggestions based on these observations.

Akyuz, Kadir, and Todd Armstrong. 2011. Understanding the sociostructural correlates of terrorism in Turkey. *International Criminal Justice Review* **21.2: 134–155.**

Uses yearly province-level data from Turkey between 2005 and 2007 to examine the association of residential mobility, poverty, and ethnic heterogeneity on terrorism. The authors' findings suggest that all three factors may be related to subsequent terrorism in Turkey.

Akyuz, Kadir, and Todd Armstrong. 2011. Understanding the sociostructural correlates of terrorism in Turkey. *International Criminal Justice Review* 21.2: 134–155.

Fahey, Susan, and Gary LaFree. 2015. Does country-level social disorganization increase terrorist attacks? *Terrorism and Political Violence* **27.1: 81–111.**

Examines the impact of country-level social disorganization on terrorist attacks and resulting fatalities in 101 countries between 1981 and 2010. Operationalizes social disorganization as the presence of revolutionary and ethnically motivated wars, government regime changes, and the presence of genocides.

Fahey, Susan, and Gary LaFree. 2015. Does country-level social disorganization increase terrorist attacks? *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 81–111.

Freilich, Joshua D., and William Alex Pridemore. 2007. Politics, culture, and political crime: Covariates of abortion clinic attacks in the United States. *Journal of Criminal Justice* **35.3: 323–336.**

Employs social disorganization and other criminological theories to examine violence committed against abortion clinics in the United States. Uses cross-sectional analysis of state-level structural and cultural characteristics to evaluate these associations.

Freilich, Joshua D., and William Alex Pridemore. 2007. Politics, culture, and political crime: Covariates of abortion clinic attacks in the United States. *Journal of Criminal Justice* 35.3: 323–336.

Hamm, Mark S. 2004. Apocalyptic violence: The seduction of terrorist subcultures. *Theoretical Criminology* **8.3: 323–339.**

Examines the social histories of forty neo-Nazi males and presents two case studies in order to better understand the knowledge networks that provide meaning to terrorist subcultures. Suggests that diversity in the human condition adapts people to subcultures conducive to terrorism.

Hamm, Mark S. 2004. Apocalyptic violence: The seduction of terrorist subcultures. *Theoretical Criminology* 8.3: 323–339.

LaFree, Gary, and Bianca E. Bersani. 2014. County-level correlates of terrorist attacks in the United States. *Criminology & Public Policy* **13.3: 455–481.**

Uses data on counties in the United States between 1990 and 2011 and finds that terrorism has an identifiable geographic pattern that is consistent with some of the predictions of social-disorganization theory.

LaFree, Gary, and Bianca E. Bersani. 2014. County-level correlates of terrorist attacks in the United States. *Criminology & Public Policy* 13.3: 455–481.

Mullins, Christopher W., and Joseph K. Young. 2012. Cultures of violence and acts of terror: Applying a legitimation–habituation model to terrorism. *Crime & Delinquency* **58.1: 28–56.**

Explores how the overall volume of violence within societies influences the likelihood of political dissidents engaging in terrorism. Using data from the GTD between 1970 and 1997, the authors find evidence to suggest that the volume of legitimate and illegitimate violence within a

society holds predictive value for terrorism.

Mullins, Christopher W., and Joseph K. Young. 2012. Cultures of violence and acts of terror: Applying a legitimation–habituation model to terrorism. *Crime & Delinquency* 58.1: 28–56.

Pisoiu, Daniela. 2015. Subcultural theory applied to jihadi and right-wing radicalization in Germany. *Terrorism and Political Violence* **27.1: 9–28.**

Uses a range of qualitative sources concerning three right-wing and four jihadi extremists to demonstrate that radicalization processes are embedded within social and cultural environments. Arguing that mesolevel approaches are important for understanding radicalization, this study makes recommendations for future research employing a subcultural lens to study radicalization.

Pisoiu, Daniela. 2015. Subcultural theory applied to jihadi and right-wing radicalization in Germany. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 9–28.

Wormeli, Paul. 2014. Developing policies for countering terrorism. *Criminology & Public Policy* **13.3: 493–497.**

Emphasizes the importance of examining the origin of previous terrorist attacks at the neighborhood level so that an effort can be made to prevent terrorism during the planning stages instead of responding to it only afterwards. Argues that information sharing among government agencies is necessary to prevent terrorism.

Wormeli, Paul. 2014. Developing policies for countering terrorism. *Criminology & Public Policy* 13.3: 493–497.

Situational

Criminologists have used situational theories of crime to explain the geographical and strategic distribution of crime and terrorism in order to reduce its occurrence. Clarke and Newman 2006, a seminal book, suggests a framework for understanding and analyzing opportunities that terrorists may seek to exploit. The authors also highlight a number of important considerations for policy, including the expectation of adaptation by terrorists and the need for public partnerships. More recently, Gruenewald, et al. 2015 draws on the framework suggested in Clarke and Newman 2006 by examining the choice of whom and what ecoterrorists target in the United States. Others situational theories have been used to better explain the behavior of terrorists. Parkin and Freilich 2015 assesses whether differences between ideological and nonideological homicides can be explained by predictors of routine activities and lifestyle theories. Hsu and Apel 2015 explores important hypotheses regarding displacement and diffusion of benefits stemming from the implementation of airport metal detectors in the 1970s, while Perry, et al. 2016 examines many different aspects of situational theory by assessing how the "West Bank Barrier" in Israel influenced suicide attacks and other forms of terrorism. Smith and Damphousse 1998 looks at the situational context of federal court processing and assesses whether terrorist defendants are processed in a more consistent manner than other defendants for the same crime, by using structural-contextual theory and the liberation hypothesis. Applying situational theory to terrorism can be challenging, and Lynch 2011 and Morris 2015 identify difficulties associated with empirically testing this perspective and provide important overviews of the existing literature on situational responses to terrorism.

Clarke, Ronald V., and Graeme R. Newman. 2006. *Outsmarting the terrorists.* **Global Crime and Justice. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International.**

Presents a framework for minimizing opportunities to commit terrorist acts, in order to reduce their occurrence. Argues that regardless of the reasons underlying the decisions to attack a government, opportunities that allow for terrorism should be identified and removed.

Clarke, Ronald V., and Graeme R. Newman. 2006. *Outsmarting the terrorists.* Global Crime and Justice. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International.

Gruenewald, Jeff, Kayla Allison-Gruenewald, and Brent R. Klein. 2015. Assessing the attractiveness and vulnerability of eco-terrorism targets: A situational crime prevention approach. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* **38.6: 433–455.**

Evaluates the vulnerability and attractiveness of ecoterrorism targets in the United States on the basis of the framework provided in Clarke and Newman 2006. Findings indicate general support for the claim that the vulnerability and attractiveness of targets inform targeting decisions by ecoterrorists.

Gruenewald, Jeff, Kayla Allison-Gruenewald, and Brent R. Klein. 2015. Assessing the attractiveness and vulnerability of eco-terrorism targets: A situational crime prevention approach. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 38.6: 433–455.

Hsu, Henda Y., and Robert Apel. 2015. A situational model of displacement and diffusion following the introduction of airport metal detectors. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 29–52.

Examines different forms of displacement and diffusion of benefits in response to airport metal detectors on acts of terrorism occurring between 1970 and 1977. Suggests that the response of terrorist organizations to the implementation of situational counterterrorism strategies is more complex than is often assumed.

Hsu, Henda Y., and Robert Apel. 2015. A situational model of displacement and diffusion following the introduction of airport metal detectors. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 29–52.

Lynch, James P. 2011. Implications of opportunity theory for combating terrorism. In *Criminologists on terrorism and homeland security*. Edited by Brian Forst, Jack R. Greene, and James P. Lynch, 151–182. Cambridge Studies in Criminology. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Highlights a number of statistical and theoretical difficulties in producing conclusions from the literature on evaluating the success of terrorism prevention measures. Argues that the absence of terrorism does not necessarily suggest that counterterrorism efforts are successful, since terrorism is a rare event.

Lynch, James P. 2011. Implications of opportunity theory for combating terrorism. In *Criminologists on terrorism and homeland security*. Edited by Brian Forst, Jack R. Greene, and James P. Lynch, 151–182. Cambridge Studies in Criminology. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Morris, Nancy A. 2015. Target suitability and terrorism events at places. *Criminology & Public Policy* 14.2: 417–426.

Discusses the environmental elements of terrorism and summarizes the previous literature on target selection by terrorists. Concludes that the implementation of situational crime prevention may yield counterterrorism benefits, particularly for specific vulnerable places.

Morris, Nancy A. 2015. Target suitability and terrorism events at places. *Criminology & Public Policy* 14.2: 417–426.

Parkin, William S., and Joshua D. Freilich. 2015. Routine activities and right-wing extremists: An empirical comparison of the victims of ideologically- and non-ideologically-motivated homicides committed by American far-rightists. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 182–203.

Examines whether routine-activities theory and lifestyle theory can explain in part the attributes of victims of fatal, ideologically motivated attacks in the United States. Finds empirical support that both routine-activities theory and lifestyle theory differentiate ideological and nonideological homicides.

Parkin, William S., and Joshua D. Freilich. 2015. Routine activities and right-wing extremists: An empirical comparison of the victims of ideologically- and non-ideologically-motivated homicides committed by American far-rightists. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27.1: 182–203.

Perry, Simon, Robert Apel, Graeme R. Newman, and Ronald V. Clarke. 2016. The situational prevention of terrorism: An evaluation of the Israeli West Bank Barrier. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 32 (20 June): 1–25.

Evaluates the effectiveness of the "West Bank Barrier," constructed by the Israeli government, on suicide bombings and other terrorist attacks. Findings suggest a reduction in suicide terrorist attacks and a movement toward more opportunistic attacks.

Perry, Simon, Robert Apel, Graeme R. Newman, and Ronald V. Clarke. 2016. The situational prevention of terrorism: An evaluation of the Israeli West Bank Barrier. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 32 (20 June): 1–25.

Smith, Brent L., and Kelly R. Damphousse. 1998. Terrorism, politics, and punishment: A test of structural-contextual theory and the "liberation hypothesis." *Criminology* 36.1: 67–92.

Examines whether the situational context (i.e., terrorist versus nonterrorist defendants) of federal cases affects how consistently these cases are processed. Tests structural-contextual theory and the liberation hypothesis by using analyses of sentencing decisions made against terrorist defendants compared to nonterrorists.

Smith, Brent L., and Kelly R. Damphousse. 1998. Terrorism, politics, and punishment: A test of structural-contextual theory and the "liberation hypothesis." *Criminology* 36.1: 67–92.

Developing Areas

Many scholars have leveled the criticism that the terrorism literature has overlooked criminological theory, and that a number of perspectives remain underexplored. This section presents research efforts from a number of different perspectives that have received less attention than those presented in the other sections of this article or that have investigated concepts that are relevant to a broader range of theories. As such, the only commonality in the research presented here is that each pushes the boundaries of existing theoretical frameworks to include terrorism. For instance, criminologists have extensively studied why people desist from crime. LaFree and Miller 2008 argues that desistance research can be applied to terrorism, and the authors present a research agenda for this domain. Rice 2009 draws on the intersection of psychology and criminology to suggest that research should incorporate the emotional processes of terrorists and their communities to improve the explanatory power of terrorism research, while Akers and Silverman 2004 outlines the potential value of applying differential association and social-learning theories to terrorism. Oliverio and Lauderdale 2005 explores the roles that different forms of social control may play in terrorism, Freilich, et al. 2009 applies developmental theories to four white-supremacist groups to examine the factors that could influence their growth and longevity, and Appleby 2010 uses labeling theory to examine whether government-created labels related to Islam make counterterrorism efforts better or worse. Hayward 2011 discusses the intersection of cultural criminology and critical terrorism studies and highlights topics for future research, and Gaskew 2009 presents an overview of peacemaking criminology, from this perspective detailing the experiences of Muslim Americans following the introduction of the US Patriot Act.

Akers, Ronald L., and Adam L. Silverman. 2004. Toward a social learning model of violence and terrorism. In *Violence: From theory to research*. Edited by Margaret A. Zahn, Henry H. Brownstein, and Shelly L. Jackson, 19–30. Newark, NJ: LexisNexis Anderson.

Outlines social-learning theory, which can be applied to the study of terrorism. Argues that terrorists adopt an ideology and identity that includes values, beliefs, and attitudes that justify terrorism specifically, and killing more generally. Suggests that this perspective may work alongside other perspectives to better understand terrorism.

Akers, Ronald L., and Adam L. Silverman. 2004. Toward a social learning model of violence and terrorism. In *Violence: From theory to research*. Edited by Margaret A. Zahn, Henry H. Brownstein, and Shelly L. Jackson, 19–30. Newark, NJ: LexisNexis Anderson.

Appleby, Nicholas. 2010. Labelling the innocent: How government counter-terrorism advice creates labels that contribute to the problem. *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 3.3: 421–436.

Applies labeling theory to explore the impact of government-created labels that have sought to distance terrorism from Islam. Argues that this government rhetoric fails to allow for multiple identities and homogenizes individual identity, resulting in outcomes that are detrimental to counterterrorism goals.

Appleby, Nicholas. 2010. Labelling the innocent: How government counter-terrorism advice creates labels that contribute to the problem. *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 3.3: 421–436.

Freilich, Joshua D., Steven M. Chermak, and David Caspi. 2009. Critical events in the life trajectories of domestic extremist white supremacist groups. *Criminology & Public Policy* **8.3: 497–530.**

Observes changes over time in four white-supremacist groups involved in extremist violence, by using open-source data. Suggests that the capability of leadership to advance ideological messages and goals and to take advantage of political opportunities is connected with the growth and longevity of these groups.

Freilich, Joshua D., Steven M. Chermak, and David Caspi. 2009. Critical events in the life trajectories of domestic extremist white supremacist groups. *Criminology & Public Policy* 8.3: 497–530.

Gaskew, Tony. 2009. Peacemaking criminology and counterterrorism: Muslim Americans and the War on Terror. *Contemporary Justice Review* **12.3: 345–366.**

Examines the fundamental concepts of peacemaking criminology through sixteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in a Muslim American community in Florida after the passage of the US Patriot Act. The study describes in detail their difficulties and recommends ways to improve relations between law enforcement and Muslim American communities.

Gaskew, Tony. 2009. Peacemaking criminology and counterterrorism: Muslim Americans and the War on Terror. *Contemporary Justice Review* 12.3: 345–366.

Hayward, Keith. 2011. The critical terrorism studies–cultural criminology nexus: Some thoughts on how to "toughen up" the critical studies approach. *Critical Studies on Terrorism* **4.1: 57–73.**

Explores the similarities and differences between early-21st-century research in critical terrorism studies and cultural criminology. Makes a number of suggestions for future research and highlights the importance of having focused goals for communicating between disciplines.

Hayward, Keith. 2011. The critical terrorism studies–cultural criminology nexus: Some thoughts on how to "toughen up" the critical studies approach. *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 4.1: 57–73.

LaFree, Gary, and Erin Miller. 2008. Desistance from terrorism: What can we learn from criminology? *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* **1.3: 203–230.**

Introduces desistance from terrorism as an important research domain. Discusses the implications of this approach from the existing criminological literature and identifies a number of objectives for future research on this topic.

LaFree, Gary, and Erin Miller. 2008. Desistance from terrorism: What can we learn from criminology? *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 1.3: 203–230.

Oliverio, Annamarie, and Pat Lauderdale. 2005. Terrorism as deviance or social control: Suggestions for future research. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* **46.1–2: 153–169.**

Argues that families and other social groups can emulate social-control mechanisms established by a government to control terrorism and other violence. Also suggests that particular forms of societal-control structures could be used to justify terrorism.

Oliverio, Annamarie, and Pat Lauderdale. 2005. Terrorism as deviance or social control: Suggestions for future research. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 46.1–2: 153–169.

Rice, Stephen K. 2009. Emotions and terrorism research: A case for a social-psychological agenda. *Journal of Criminal Justice* **37.3: 248–255.**

Points out that much of the previous research on terrorism has ignored the interpersonal emotional processes of terrorists and their communities. Suggests that by accounting for these processes, the predictive and explanatory value of terrorism research will increase.

Rice, Stephen K. 2009. Emotions and terrorism research: A case for a social-psychological agenda. *Journal of Criminal Justice* 37.3: 248–255.

back to top