Turning A New Leaf:
Developments in Research and Policy on Terrorism & Counter-Terrorism

Thursday, May 2 and Friday, May 3, 2013
Minto Suite Hotel, Ottawa

AGENDA

May 3 / Day 2   **May 3 / Day 2**

9:00 am   **Notes from Day 1 and Presenting Day 2**
- Martin Bouchard (Simon Fraser University, TSAS Associate Director, Research)

9:15-10:45 am   **Panel 1: Innovations in Methods to Analyze Terrorism and its Response (Part 1 of 2)**
Moderator: Brett Kubicek
- Leslie W. Kennedy (Rutgers University)
  Global Threats to Security: Risk Terrain Modeling and Risk Balance Strategies

- Herbert H. Tsang (Trinity Western University)
  A Systematic Approach to Develop a Computational Framework for Counter-terrorism and Public Safety

10:45 am   *Break*

11:00-12:15 am   **Panel 2: Terrorism and The Internet**
Moderator: James Taylor
- Laura Huey (University of Western Ontario)
  The Gray Cygnet Problem in Terrorism Research

- Benjamin Ducol (Université Laval)
  A Radical Sociability: In Defense of an Online/Offline Multidimensional Approach to Violent Radicalisation

12:15-1:15 pm   *Lunch*

1:15-2:45 pm   **Panel 3: Innovations in Methods to Analyze Terrorism and its Response (Part 2of 2)**
Moderator: Sean Norton
- Thomas Holt (Michigan State University)
  Exploring the Phenomena of Civilian Cyber-warriors

- Sue-Ming Yang (National Chung Cheng University)
  What Produces Change in Terrorist Activities? Introducing two Innovative Methods to Systematically Examine Terrorism over Time

2:45-3:00 pm   *Break*

3:00-4:00 pm   **Lessons Learned**
What have you learned that will impact your work in this area?

- Siobhan O'Neil (UCLA)
- Adam Molnar (University of Victoria)
- Karine Côté-Boucher, (York University)
- Benjamin Ducol (Université Laval)
- Brett Kubicek (Public Safety Canada)

4:00 pm   **Concluding Remarks** *- Martin Bouchard*

Day 2 Workshop Abstracts

Day 2, Panel 1

Leslie W. Kennedy

Global Threats to Security: Risk Terrain Modeling and Risk Balance Strategies

In responding to global threats, such as, terrorism or armed conflict, researchers and policy makers have increasingly turned to risk assessment tools to improve the ways in which they prepare for and respond to the consequences of these events. This talk will address ways in which new data, analytical and visualization techniques, and response strategies have been deployed in these endeavours.

Herbert H. Tsang

A Systematic Approach to Develop a Computational Framework for Counter- terrorism and Public Safety

Public safety has been a great concern in recent years as terrorist activities occurs in many parts of the world. It is important to keep the public safe and at the same time, to have a specific plan to control and rescue the public in the case of a terrorist attack. In order to better prepare the public against potential threats, it is of utmost importance to identify existing gaps, define priorities and focus on developing approaches to address those. We have created a computational framework that will help to answer some of the hypothetical "what if" questions in the event when public safety is under threat. When creating this framework, we used an interdisciplinary approach where we combined and explored research by social and computing scientists. This framework allows us to understand individual and group dynamics during disasters and emergency situations. The characteristics of crowd behaviours are modeled based on social science research findings and our own virtual environment experiments with real human participants. Developing this framework, we hope to provide providing decision support, threats response planning, and risk assessment. The importance of bridging disciplinary perspectives and lessons learned when creating our framework will be discussed. Current challenge and future directions will also be examined.

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Day 2, Panel 2

Laura Huey

The Gray Cygnet Problem in Terrorism Research

The recent release of information about two young men from Ontario with Al Qaeda generated surprise in their hometown. Much of the local gossip focused on the fact that, although from immigrant families, neither was of Middle-Eastern, and thus Muslim, origin. Something similar had happened once before. In 2006, a 2nd generation Fijian, Steven Chand, was arrested for participation in the Toronto 18 plot. Intriguingly, Chand's case produced not so much as a ripple in the sea of terrorism studies. Within this paper I explore this fact and what it tells us about the need to re-evaluate how we study domestic radicalization. To do so, I am employing a variant of Taleb's concept of 'the gray swan' event: 'the gray cygnet.' In essence, what I argue is that these three cases represent anomalies. It for this very reason they are important to understand and to use to test the strength of existing models of domestic radicalization.

Benjamin Ducol

A Radical Sociability: In Defense of an Online/Offline Multidimensional Approach to Violent Radicalisation

Over the last decade, many experts have witnessed the emergence of an incredible number of online spaces (i.e. websites, blogs and forums) openly advocating extremist discourses (e.g. jihadi, far-right, radical ecology) and the legitimate use of violence to advance political agendas. While the impact of these online spaces on individual violent radicalization continue to puzzle scholars, little attention has been paid to explore and conceptualize the multidimensional interactions between these virtual spaces and social networks in which people engaged in political violence/terrorism are traditionally embedded in the real world. As far as the Internet affects the modes of communication, friendship, and sociability among people, a comprehensive understanding of radicalization phenomena cannot avoid to take into consideration the virtual dimension of current radicalisation processes. At the same time, these online spaces should not be overestimated as autonomous from the social reality. Our theoretical approach – career oriented framework - allows us to focus on the dialectical processes between online and offline radical sociability. It emphasizes that continuity and change are inseparable, and that social constraints and opportunities, both in real and online networks, may influence but never totally determine the contingencies of individual path toward a radical engagement. Based on trial documents and terrorist testimonies from France and Belgium, we propose a multidimensional analysis of offline/online trajectories of individuals that have been involved in radical careers such as terrorism or violent political activism.

Thomas Holt

Exploring the Phenomena of Civilian Cyberwarriors

The general public increasingly uses technology to engage one another and discuss domestic and international social issues. At the same time, the Internet has become a vital tool to support critical infrastructure and sensitive government systems. This convergence has created a unique opportunity for disruptive attacks and political expression by civilians and nation-states alike. Though government and military agencies are establishing policies to deter nation-state level attacks, there is a need to understand "civilian cyberwarriors," or individuals without state sponsorship who engage in malicious activities against their home country or foreign nations. This presentation will examine the behavioral and attitudinal factors that affect individual willingness to attack various targets on and off-line with a sample of college students from multiple nations. The implications of this study for law enforcement, intelligence agencies, and policy-makers will be discussed to identify prospective threat scenarios and proactively understand the threat of civilian cyberwarriors globally.

Sue-Ming Yang

What Produces Change in Terrorist Activities? Introducing two Innovative Methods to Systematically Examine Terrorism over Time

Terrorism research has historically been characterized by a high number of qualitative case studies. While case studies provide useful information about terrorism, they are limited in terms of generalizability. The availability of more and more quantitative data on terrorism pushes the need for methods that can account for longitudinal development to study terrorism. This study introduces two innovative statistical approaches, Group-Based Trajectory Analysis and Series Hazard Modeling, and reviews how they can be useful on the study of different terrorism problems. Using real data drawn from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), this study demonstrates that Trajectory Analysis is useful in revealing terrorist groups with different developmental trends, fatality, and ideological orientations. Moreover, Series Hazard Modeling further helps identify important events that lead to the escalation and decline of a highly active terrorist group.