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A Typology of Homegrown Terrorists

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A TYPOLOGY OF HOMEGROWN TERRORISTS

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Criminal Justice

by
Cynthia Estella Quintero
December 2014

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ABSTRACT

Since the 9/11 attacks by Al Qaeda members against the United States, counterterrorism has become a top priority for policymakers and academic researchers. A critical aspect of this mandate is the prevention and intervention of future terrorist attacks by U.S.-based jihadist and Salafist extremists. This study aims to generate a typology of homegrown terrorists who have been prosecuted by the United States federal government for terrorism offenses within the United States since the 9/11 attacks. The current study uses a sample of 115 cases, involving 194 offenders.

Three clusters of offenders who share a set of demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics were identified through a two-step cluster analysis. These clusters include: Cyber Attackers, Convert Affiliates, and Trained Allies. Clusters also exhibited variation in the nature of terrorist activity and degree of operational success. The unique characteristics of each cluster suggest possible policy implications for international travel, cyber regulation, and community outreach programs to address the unique threats posed by subgroups of offenders. Efforts to prevent future terrorist plots and attacks may be more effective if the type of offender is considered.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

The September 11, 2001 Al Qaeda attacks resulting in nearly 3,000 deaths and billions of dollars in financial losses was the worst terrorist attack in American history. Since then, the United States government has made counterterrorism a top priority. While the threat from foreign-based operatives continues, a growing concern among scholars and practitioners alike has been the analysis and interdiction of homegrown terrorism involving citizens and residents of the United States. While homegrown extremist movements range across a wide variety of ideologies, which include racist, anti-government, and animal liberation movements, this study examines jihadist and Salafist extremists who reside in the United States. This research focus springs from a documented change in terrorist operational and recruitment strategy. In addition to orchestrated attacks by operatives, Al Qaeda and related movements now have a bifurcated strategy of inspiring radical Islamic American citizens and residents outside of their command structure to undertake terrorist attacks within the United States. These individuals and cells, such as the April 2013 Boston Marathon assailants, are the focus of this analysis.

Key components of the counterterrorism effort by law enforcement include not only undercover informants and intelligence gathering, but offender analysis

as well. Identifying the common characteristics of individuals who were radicalized into violent Islamist ideology will aid efforts to not only detect plots, but will ultimately prevent attacks against the United States. Understanding more about the type of individuals who become homegrown terrorists will generate policy implications that extend beyond the immediate strategic concerns associated with investigating terrorist threats to prevention strategies that can be deployed by customs and immigration services, integrated into community outreach and partnership efforts, and incorporated into web-based surveillance.

Statement of the Problem

Homegrown plots and attacks by Islamic radicals represent the most frequent terrorist incidents in the post September 11 period and pose a unique threat to law enforcement (U.S. House, Committee on Homeland Security, 2012). While Al Qaeda and its affiliates still seek to directly attack American targets, they have broadened their strategy to include not only their own foreign-based members to launch operations, but non-member sympathizers already present in the United States. Individuals are now being radicalized by Islamic ideology through interaction with: experienced extremists, the Internet, social media websites, recruiters stationed in the United States, and interaction with radicalized inmates in prison (U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2012).

The presence of homegrown terrorists already residing in the United States presents an acute vulnerability to the American homeland. Estimates of the number of homegrown Islamic plots occurring within the United States since 9/11 range from 63 to 188. These estimates vary widely due to case inclusion criteria and differences in how terrorism is defined (Bergen, Lebovich, Petruso, Rowland, & Greenwald, 2012; Bjelopera, 2013; Jenkins, 2010; Southern Poverty Law Center, 2011). Given the critical threat posed by U.S.-based attacks, it is critical to generate a well-constructed definition to identify relevant cases so as to better understand the nature of this problem.

In the current study, three criteria were used to identify cases. First, offenses were classified as incidents of homegrown terrorism based on the citizenship status of the main perpetrators. Homegrown terrorists are individuals who act against their home nation, both through domestic and foreign criminal terrorist behavior. This includes any prosecuted case involving:

the unlawful use, or threatened use, of force or violence by a group or individual, based and operating entirely within the United States or Puerto Rico, committed against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof in furtherance of political, social, religious, or ideological objectives. (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.; White, 2006)

By narrowing case selection to those incidents that occurred within the United States (second criteria) and not at locations of U.S. jurisdiction abroad (e.g., a

military base), the results will lend themselves more directly to developing local interdiction policies. Finally, it is important to consider a wider range of activity that was studied previously. When studies include a broad range of terrorist behavior—e.g., attacks, attempted attacks, plots, and material support to terrorist organizations--more information is available to support developing a policy-oriented typology.

Purpose of the Study

This study examines homegrown Islamic extremists who were prosecuted since September 11, 2001 with the intent of developing an offender typology that differentiates subgroups of offenders based on a unique set of personal, social, and criminal behavioral characteristics. While extensive terrorism literature exists, little work has been done in the area of developing a typology of homegrown terrorists. Moreover, while the extant literature depicts how terrorist plots are intercepted, no one has of yet used incident details to help generate a profile of homegrown terrorists. It is argued that a clearer understanding of the different groups of individuals involved in homegrown terrorism can be derived from using information drawn from all homegrown terrorist cases, including both plots and attacks. Being more inclusive in selecting cases to use when developing an offender typology stands to generate a more comprehensive typology than what is currently available. In turn, the resulting classification

system may offer a clearer direction for developing post-event investigation techniques and strategies to prevent future incidents on the American homeland.

Importance of the Study

Homegrown Islamic radicals, who have plotted and successfully attacked the United States, as well as those individuals who provide material support to terrorism, pose a significant threat to the United States. Radicalization of U.S.-based individuals widens resources available to terrorist organizations, even when there is no intent to foment specific violent jihadist plots (Bjelopera, 2013, p. 29). For example, Cedric Carpenter and Lamont Ranson were prosecuted for providing material support when they sold illegal driver licenses, birth certificates, and social security cards to people they thought were members of a foreign terrorist organization, Abu Sayyaf (Bjelopera, 2013, p. 31). There is also subset of homegrown terrorists who are radicalized in the United States prior to undertaking travel overseas for military training and operational support. These radicalized individuals have successfully communicated with terrorist organization officials while in the United States and have gained operational support for their terrorist activity.

Just as scholars have not been able to devise a demographic profile of homegrown terrorists, neither has there been a conclusive set of factors able to predict radicalization. Many channels exist (e.g., social experiences, family ties, foreign travel, and religion) and they may all play a role in the radicalization

process. Including radicalization channels in the analysis may yield a set of common traits or behaviors that are operationally useful for prevention to both government and moderate religious communities. Some of these may be “pre-radicalization” (Bjelopera, 2013. p. 13) factors, which federal and state law enforcement, in collaboration with communities, can use to detect, monitor, and ultimately prevent criminality.

Terrorism enforcement and counterterrorism measures result in a tremendous expenditure of taxpayer dollars. For example, The Human Rights Watch organization reported that it costs approximately \$27,251 annually to detain one individual in federal prison (Rona, 2012). In comparison, the estimated cost of a major homegrown terrorism case, U.S. v Batiste et al., involving a six-person plot to bomb Chicago's Willis Tower and government buildings in South Florida exceeded \$10 million dollars (Munzenrieder, 2009). In addition, it is estimated that billions of dollars have been expended for counterterrorism efforts and congressional oversight (Congressional Budget Office, 2012).

A closer look into the specific demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics of U.S.-based offenders, stands to reveal patterns in these offenders' lives. By doing so, this study will contribute materially to the growing body of scholarship dedicated to uncovering risk factors for radicalization, as well as the work aimed at developing prevention strategies to combat homegrown terrorism. However, a cautionary note is in order. Given the specificity of the

inclusion criteria used, this examination is limited to offenders based in the United States and cannot be applied to foreign-based operatives.

Thesis Outline

Chapter two provides an overview of the literature describing homegrown terrorism. Of particular relevance are those studies analyzing case details, as well as offender demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics. The discussion will also present estimates of the number of terrorist plots, attempted attacks, successful attacks, and instances of material support to terrorism targeting the United States by U.S.-based individuals.

Chapter three describes the methods and analysis. This study collected information about individual defendants involved in homegrown terrorism crimes that resulted in indictments, pleas, or convictions from prosecutions by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) that occurred or were processed post September 11, 2001 to March 2014. Individuals being tried in proceedings originating out of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba that involved foreign enemy combatants prosecuted in military tribunals were excluded. Only individuals who are U.S. citizens, permanent residents, or those who have resided in the U.S. for at least five years irrespective of their legal status were included in this study. The final sample included approximately 194 offenders. The selected cases included plots, attacks, and cases of material support to terrorist organizations. Cluster analysis was then used to identify groups of homogeneous offenders who

shared similar case details and demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics.

Chapter four presents the results of the study. This study hypothesized that clusters of terrorists who have attacked within the United States since 9/11 would not align fully with the three tier categories of homegrown terrorists found by Thachuk, Bowman, and Richardson (2008). Instead, it was hypothesized that several subgroups would emerge that differentiated offenders based on type of involvement (e.g., material support, plotting, or successful attack) and group affiliation (e.g., Al Qaeda compared to other groups). It was argued that each cluster would exhibit a distinct set of characteristics drawn from each of the four categories of case and offender characteristics.

This study found that while three subgroups exist within the homegrown offender pool, each exhibiting a unique configuration of case details, demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics, the clusters did not align with the level of involvement in terrorist activity or formal group affiliation. The study found three clusters of offenders. Those clusters were Cyber Attackers, Convert Affiliates, and Trained Allies. These distinctive groups of offenders signals a typology of homegrown terrorists that have plotted, attempted to attack, attacked, and provided material support to terrorist organizations against the United States. The typology signals policy implications to detect and prevent future terrorist plots and attacks against the United States.

Chapter five discusses the policy implications and limitations of the current study. Specifically, the study suggests that certain preventative measures can be implemented to avoid future terrorist attacks, such as community outreach programs between mental health services, law enforcement, and community services. Moreover, the study indicates that it is necessary to closely monitor international travel and cyber activity that is associated with radicalization channels. Suggestions for the improvement of future research are also presented, such as a more detailed examination of mental health issues and whether certain mental illnesses, when seen in combination with other circumstances, predispose individuals to be influenced by radicalization efforts. This line of inquiry would also benefit from future studies that aim to identify precursor behavior that leads to terrorist activity. At the end of this paper, two appendices are provided to describe the variables and references used in this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

After the 9/11 attacks by Al Qaeda, violent jihadist terrorist plots and attacks became a primary concern for agencies involved in law enforcement and national security. Homegrown terrorism also became a research focus for political, legal, and criminological scholars. While terrorist incidents appeared to have peaked in 2009, the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings illustrate that the threat to the American homeland continues. “The Congressional Research Service (CRS) estimates there have been 63 homegrown violent jihadist plots and attacks since 9/11, with 42 of those occurring from 2009 to 2012” (Bjelopera, 2013, p. 1).

According to various scholars and congressional officials, homegrown terrorism is a growing threat, due to increased radicalization of homegrown individuals and the proliferation of plots and attacks against the United States that originate within the country (Jenkins, 2010; Pregulman & Burke, 2012; U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2008; Wilner & Dubouloz, 2010). U.S. officials routinely warn about the nature of the terrorist threat against the homeland. Attorney General Eric Holder, stated the “...United States is facing multidimensional threats which ought to be seen in context of a much more varied and longstanding threat picture,” at a 2010 News

Conference after the attempted Times Square Bomb in New York City by Faisal Shazhad (as stated in Mantri, 2011, p. 89). In 2011, the Committee on Homeland Security in the U.S. House of Representatives, held four hearings to stress the present threat by Al Qaeda's radicalization efforts among Muslim-Americans (Kurzman, 2012).

A key area of concern involves those cases in which terrorist propaganda or extremist associates have radicalized U.S. citizens, residents, and domiciled visitors. Al Qaeda and its affiliates have evolved beyond their original hierarchical operational structure to a multi-channel operation that includes the dissemination of propaganda and training materials through Internet blogs, radical websites, social networking sites, and jihadist literature (Lahoud et al., 2012). While scholars are beginning to investigate homegrown terrorism, a detailed typology of offenders that can be used to craft effective intervention strategies is lacking. This is partially due to the variety of definitions used for homegrown terrorism and the sometimes-limited availability of defendant information.

Prior attempts to produce a succinct profile or typology of homegrown terrorists have failed to identify policy relevant patterns. For instance, it has been found that many of these individuals are male, in their 20s at the time of arrest, and U.S. citizens (Kurzman, Schanzer, & Moosa, 2011). Some scholars, such as Thachuk et al. (2008), argue that homegrown Islamic terrorists fall into one of three categories based mainly on citizenship status: legal or illegal immigrants, second and third generation Muslims, and converts to Islam (p. 2). However,

homegrown terrorists differ in social circumstances, with variations in their occupation, education, and criminal history, among other factors. Other scholars have examined paths of radicalization, in attempting to determine what makes a homegrown individual become a terrorist (see for example Silber and Bhatt, 2007). Three radicalization channels are thought to exist; recruitment by terrorist officials, self-radicalization, and exposure to Islamic propaganda on the Internet. However, these paths are not mutually exclusive. More information needs to be collected to identify whether different channels, and combinations thereof, reach unique groups of people. In sum, while the existing literature describes how terrorist plots are intercepted, a working typology of homegrown terrorists remains elusive. Two factors contributing to the limited success of prior studies are that a) they used a small set of predictor variables, and b) a lack of robust analytic techniques to identify subgroups within the population.

This chapter will introduce what is currently known about offenders involved in homegrown terrorist plots against the United States from post 9/11 to March 2014. After summarizing the demographic and social characteristics of offenders, this chapter reviews the behavioral characteristics thought to be associated with homegrown terrorist activity, such as existence of a criminal record, involvement with a radicalized group, being a religious leader, international travel, access to weapons and other materials, and conversion to Islam. The chapter will then discuss how Al Qaeda influences U.S. persons through various radicalization and recruiting channels; including the Internet,

extremist propaganda, and terrorist training, among others. This will then lead into a short discussion of the general strain theory because there is some suggestion that suffering different types of strain may prime a person toward being receptive to radicalization. Next the literature review will discuss how defining terrorism affects efforts to identify relevant cases when examining homegrown terrorism and how this contributes to the inability of prior scholars to craft a useful typology. Finally, the research questions and hypotheses are listed.

Terrorist Characteristics

Demographic, Social, and Behavioral Characteristics

There is no single demographic profile for Muslim American terrorist suspects and perpetrators (Kurzman, 2012; Kurzman et al., 2011). Kurzman, Schanzer, and Moosa (2011) found that over half of the Muslim-American suspects were in their 20s at the time of their arrest, the majority were U.S. citizens, and came from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. In their analysis, Kurzman et al. (2011) found that only one of the perpetrators was a female, but because she was involved in international terrorism she was not considered a homegrown individual.

Kurzman (2012) found that ethnicity ranged from African American, Arab, Somali, South Asian, White, and other. While there were no dominant ethnicities, there was an absence of Somali Americans compared to previous years. In a subsequent analysis, Kurzman (2013) studied Muslim American perpetrators in

2012 and compared the findings to a prior study: the demographics did not differ greatly.

Kurzman (2013) found that 35 percent of all the Muslim American perpetrators since 9/11 were converts to Islam. Moreover, Kurzman (2013) found no common educational level among the perpetrators. The same was true for occupation; they ranged from working class individuals to unemployed individuals. It is important to note that these findings only apply to the offenders of plots and attacks. Kurzman (2013) does not discuss the ethnicity, occupation, education, and other relevant characteristics of those who provided material support to terrorist organizations.

Thachuk et al. (2008) generated a typology of homegrown terrorist individuals that includes three categories. First, there is the category of immigrants who have come to the United States for a more prosperous life. These individuals are young and tend to pursue a college education. These immigrants enter the United States with some kind of permit or through illegal means.

The second category is the second generation, U.S. citizen and non-U.S. citizen, children and grandchildren of the first category adults. These individuals are also second and third generation Muslims who are following their parents' religion. Thachuk et al. (2008) claims these individuals can feel, at times, as outcasts within their new home. As a result, some of these individuals feel confused within both cultures; the cultural they were raised in and the newly

acquired American culture. In addition, it is at the time of alienation that these second and third generation Muslims feel it necessary to protect Islam from non-Muslims. As a result, this may be the trigger point in which they commit violent acts against the United States.

The last category consists of individuals who decide to convert to Islam. Those that convert do not usually come from a Muslim community or family. They convert to Islam to find religious ideology, marital status, or guidance from others (Thachuk, Bowman & Richardson, 2008). Many times they convert while in prison. For example, there is the case of Hispanic American, Jose Padilla, who was recruited into Islam while serving a prison sentence in Miami (Vidino, 2009). Many times, authorities are unable to distinguish converts since they are instructed not to alter their appearance and blend in with their community (Thachuk et al., 2008).

In comparison to Thachuk et al.'s (2008) categories of terrorists, Vidino's (2009) analysis of homegrown jihadist terrorism in the past 30 years further distinguishes homegrown cases by the number of players in the attempted or carried out attack, by placing them into clusters and lone wolves. Clusters are those who are native or immigrants to the U.S. for a long period of time and have formed their terrorist group within the U.S. Lone wolves work by themselves without any direct guidance from terrorist leaders (Vidino, 2009).

An example of a well-known cluster was the "Lackawanna Six," who were sentenced in December 2003 after being trained in Afghanistan by Al Qaeda

(Federal Bureau of Investigation, Counterterrorism Division, 2007). The members of the Lackawanna Six were all U.S. naturalized citizens of Yemeni descent (Federal Bureau of Investigation, Counterterrorism Division, 2007). There was also the Portland Seven cluster that provided support to the Taliban in Afghanistan (Vidino, 2009). An example of a lone wolf homegrown terrorist is that of Derrick Shareef who attempted to buy grenades to bomb a shopping mall in Chicago and was arrested after talking to a federal informant (U.S. Department of Justice, 2007).

In his analysis of 20 case studies of homegrown terrorism who were affiliated, but not members of Al Qaeda or Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Alexander (2011) found that nearly all the plotters were men, many were converts to Islam, and not born in the United States. Further, Alexander (2011) found that some had a criminal history, varying degrees of education, and differed in their marital and parental statuses.

Those offenders that were successful in killing people on U.S. soil during their attack worked alone and used a handgun on their targets (Alexander, 2011; Jenkins, 2010). These cases were that of Hadayat, Haq, and Bledose. Alexander (2011) notes that the individuals involved in these 20 case studies were mostly influenced by available material online or in some other indirect manner. Moreover, these individuals did not receive any formal training and lacked the skills to carry out these attacks. It did not take more than some mere planning and execution from the offenders.

In another study, by the NYPD, Silber and Bhatt (2007) found that most of the homegrown terrorists were men, although an increase of female terrorists was noted. However, the role of women in terrorist operations was not as attacker or plotter but as a supporter. Additionally, the average age of individuals was less than 35. Silber and Bhatt (2007) specifically point to the characteristics of these individuals that would make them unnoticeable to law enforcement and Americans surrounding them: they look like any other citizen, are involved in their community, and have ordinary jobs (Silber & Bhatt, 2007). Lastly, Silber and Bhatt (2007) found that these terrorists tend to be second and third generation immigrants living in the United States. This compliments the characteristics that Thachuk et al. (2008) describes within the three categories of homegrown terrorists. Again, it is important to note that the analysis done by Silber and Bhatt (2007) does not include all cases of homegrown terrorism. The authors decided to include only five total plots in order to study the radicalization and characteristics of these homegrown terrorists more closely.

Terrorism and the Internet

Radicalization

Homegrown terrorists often use basic tools found on the Internet to facilitate and support their terrorist operations. With the increased use of the Internet, homegrown individuals no longer have to await recruitment or specific instructions in plotting attacks against the United States. Terrorist organizations,

like Al Qaeda and al-Shabaab, are taking advantage of the Internet to influence recruits. Al Qaeda and other terrorist propaganda is readily available to access, share, and self-radicalize homegrown individuals. Scholars conclude that this online propaganda and cyber jihadism, allows radicalized individuals to create various social platforms to preach their ideology and follow the ideology of others.

Thachuk et al. (2008) state “[T]he Internet allows groups to create and identify dedicated insiders—and to maintain fervor in those already dedicated to the cause—on a global scale” (p. 3). It also provides an opportunity for individuals to self-radicalize, such as naturalized citizen, Samir Khan, who was able to easily create Islamic propaganda on the Internet (Thachuk et al., 2008). Khan, who was eventually killed in Yemen, did not have to leave his house to radicalize others and give advice on how to fight jihad over the Internet.

The following are just some examples of homegrown terrorists who have used the different mechanisms of the Internet to support their terrorist attacks and plots.

- Mohamed Osman Mohamud used Google street view to survey his target location in Portland, Oregon (Pregulman & Burke, 2012).
- Tarek Mehanna and co-conspirators, who were charged with terrorism, translated terrorist propaganda from Arabic to English and shared them on violent Islamic websites (Bjelopera, 2013).

- Samir Khan eventually became an editor of Al Qaeda's *Inspire* magazine, which includes articles on bomb-making instructions and methods to murder Americans. (U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2012).

Terrorist organizations no longer restrict their ideological websites, forums, or blogs from the public. Homegrown terrorists can now search for others who are seeking the same guidance or find others to ultimately conspire against the United States. For example, social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook are used to post jihadist speeches and share links to other Islamic websites and other terrorism content. These social media platforms also allow other like-minded individuals to “like” or repost content, therefore spreading the popularity of the specific user and its content on a much faster and larger scale. For instance, al-Shabaab's rap video on YouTube, *Blow By Blow*, discussed the history of the fight for jihad (U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2012). As of May 22, 2014, the *Blow by Blow* video has had a total of 21,623 views on YouTube (AbuAyrow, 2009).

Al Qaeda no longer restricts its recruitment efforts to foreign language speakers. For example, in 2007, the terrorist organization made an effort to make their online materials more accessible by posting in English and adding subtitles to its videos (U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2008). In addition, speeches by terrorist leaders, such as al-Zawahiri, appeals to U.S.-based jihadist individuals by directly calling on “...blacks in

America, people of color, American Indians, Hispanics, and all other oppressed...” (U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2008, p. 7). Radicalized individuals do not necessarily have to travel abroad for training due to the large array of YouTube videos and online literature.

In an analysis of YouTube jihadist channels, Klausen, Barbieri, Reichlin-Melnick, and Zelin (2012) found that in a period of three months, 41 YouTube accounts were found with jihadist content. More specifically, these accounts resembled extremist propaganda of a British banned terrorist organization, al-Mujahiroun, but nonetheless inspired by Al Qaeda. Their study concluded that all 41 accounts were separate channels but, in fact, they were organized and controlled by al-Mujahiroun. Klausen et al. (2012) notes that this kind of multiplicity of YouTube channels is an effort to create more busy work, and ultimately to drain more law enforcement resources, as there is a larger amount of material to sift through and attempt to delete. An investigative report by the U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (2012) states that there is a rising trend in computer literacy among radicalized individuals and that many use the Internet in furtherance of their terrorist activities.

Scholars have not found a specific path to radicalization (Silber & Bhatt, 2007). Instead, it has been found that individuals may radicalize due to different events, social influences, or dramatic experiences throughout their lives. Some examples of avenues of radicalization are interaction with terrorist organization

members or recruiters, self-radicalization through the Internet and Islamic literature, peer influences, overseas travel, and incarceration (U.S. Senate, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2008). Internet use, specifically the availability of propaganda material, recruitment content, and videos on social networking sites draw connections to radicalization means for homegrown offenders. These radicalization factors point to social activity signaling specific use of the Internet in furtherance of terrorist activity. Similarly, negative experiences or life events may also lead toward terrorist behavior.

Strain

Just as the path to radicalization is not concrete, there is no specific path to criminality either. However, studies have supported Robert Agnew's (1992) general strain theory, which defines three types of strain or pressures that individual's experience, which can lead to delinquency in attempting to cope with those strains. Agnew's (1992) general strain theory is based on the idea that when people experience negative life events they are more inclined to engage in criminal activity. There are three major types of strain; the individual's inability to achieve desired goals, the loss of meaningful relationships or valuables, and the unforeseen negative experiences (Agnew, 1992).

Agnew (1992) found that individuals who failed to achieve positively valued goals, such as financial prosperity, status and respect, and autonomy are more apt to get involved in criminal behavior. Those individuals who are not able

to attain these achievements under normal circumstances resort to crime to achieve them due to its importance in their life. The loss of positively valued stimuli can also cause strain. Loss refers to a broken relationship with a friend or a theft of a valued object, like a car. This then leads the individual to delinquency because he or she attempts to prevent the loss, retrieve what has been taken away, or seeks revenge for what has happened. Lastly, presentation of negative stimuli refers to abuse, negative school experiences, homelessness, and others. These negative experiences may lead individuals to break the law in order to escape such situations.

Agnew's (1992) general strain theory is reflected in a more specific example of negative experiences faced by individuals that may lead to delinquency, such as injustices in the criminal justice system and its procedures. For example, homegrown terrorists may feel that law enforcement's questioning and scrutiny of their religious ideology as unjust and thus may revenge against or engage in criminal activity. Scheuereman (2013) examined the effects of interactional, procedural, and distributive injustices and delinquency. The study indicated a likelihood of violence when the offenders experienced procedural injustice. The individuals of the study expected the procedures to be consistent across all cases, non-bias decisions, and fairness for all those involved. Instances in which procedural justice was present, the individuals felt no control over the situation, since it was believed no one was at an advantage over anyone else.

Moreover, if procedural injustice is present, the individual feels anger, resentment, and betrayal leading to violent activity. The study found that when individuals experienced procedural injustice, they were 2.40 times more likely to respond violently to the situation than if they experienced any of the other two injustices (Scheuerman, 2013, p. 380). These findings support Agnew's (1992) general strain theory in which individuals may seek revenge or feel betrayal from their inability to cope with the experienced strain and therefore commit criminal offenses.

Scheuerman's (2013) study can be applied to individuals who convert to Islam while they are incarcerated, who then engage in acts of terrorism. These individuals may feel anger, resentment, or betrayal by the criminal justice system when initially prosecuted for other crimes. It may well be the case that these individuals who were convicted, felt betrayed by their country, resorted to other Muslim inmates and Islam ideology for guidance and revenge against the United States. Procedural injustices can indicate precursors to terrorist activity by U.S. offenders.

Al Qaeda Presence in the United States

As discussed previously, Al Qaeda is now made up of various cells and individuals who seek to attack the United States. The number of Al Qaeda operational groups continues to increase, Thachuk et al. (2008) report 40 and counting since January 2005. Al Qaeda has increasingly used the Internet to

reach recruits in the United States. According to Pregulman and Burke (2012), Al Qaeda may soon choose to virtually train their recruits due to the enormous volumes of online propaganda available to homegrown individuals who follow their ideology.

U.S. officials are now referring to Al Qaeda inspired plots and attacks as franchised terrorism due to Osama bin Laden's decentralization leadership since the beginning of the war on terrorism in 1996. Al Qaeda depends, in part, on self-radicalized individuals already residing in the United States to commit violent attacks. Since not all participants of Al Qaeda in the United States directly communicate with Al Qaeda, Sageman (2008) refers to them as wannabes of a new social movement. As previously discussed, these individuals turn to available electronic literature and propaganda for guidance. Due to Al Qaeda's changing organizational structure, Bruce Hoffman and Marc Sageman disagree on whether the threat stems from radicalized participants who meet and plot on the Internet or from Al Qaeda organization members (Sciolino & Schmitt, 2008). Ultimately, Al Qaeda remains a terrorist organization with flexibility in both recruiting and operational tactics in fighting the United States.

Capturing the Extent of Homegrown Terrorism

The literature previously discussed provides some insight into the characteristics of individuals who commit acts of homegrown terrorism against the United States. A common profile of homegrown terrorists has not been

established from current research, although some common demographic characteristics have been found among them, such as U.S. citizenship, in their 20s at time of arrest, mostly men; variations are present among offender demographics (Kurzman et al., 2011). One scholar, Thachuk et al. (2008) has categorized homegrown terrorist individuals into three different categories, ranging from alienated first generation immigrants to socially isolated converts to Islam that decide to act against the United States. While Thachuk et al. (2008) offer a useful starting point, a more detailed typology may be constructed by analyzing a broad set of homegrown individuals that commit acts of terrorism within the United States.

Defining Homegrown Terrorism

There are many definitions for homegrown terrorism. The definitions vary across law enforcement agencies as well as throughout studies conducted by academia. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (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” (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). More specifically, in their 2002-2005 terrorism publication, the FBI defined domestic terrorism as:

the unlawful use, or threatened use, of force or violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States or Puerto Rico without foreign direction committed against persons or property to

intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives. (Federal Bureau of Investigation, Counterterrorism Division, 2007)

The DOJ, National Security Division, which prosecutes terrorism cases, defines domestic terrorism as:

acts within the U.S. that are dangerous to human life, violate federal or state criminal laws, have no actual connection to international terrorists, and appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, influence domestic government policy through intimidation or coercion, or affect the conduct of our government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping. (U.S. Department of Justice, Offices of the United States Attorneys, n.d.).

White (2006) discusses the complexity of defining terrorism due to controversy in its application and contradictions among the legal statutes. Definitions of terrorism often vary based on the agency's priorities and mission objectives. Some definitions are more specific than others, encompass a larger group of people than others, and address different dimensions in each. Hoffman (1998) notes that the FBI's definition of terrorism, unlike the State Department's definition, addresses the psychological dimension of the terrorist act since it acknowledges those actions in which the individual intimidates or uses coercive measures towards their target. Nonetheless, Hoffman (1998) notes that the Department of Defense's definition of terrorism is the most complete because it

highlights the threats of terrorism as much as the acts of violence and considers the religious, ideological, and political objectives of the offense. Similar to the complexity of defining terrorism, variations occur when defining homegrown terrorism.

Most law enforcement agencies, like the FBI, use their domestic terrorism definitions to encompass homegrown terrorism. While an act of homegrown terrorism usually has some religious, ideological, or political objective in mind, it is the particular offender, target, and location of the violent act that distinguishes this specific type of terrorism. The Center for Strategic and International Studies defines homegrown terrorism as “extremist violence perpetrated by U.S citizens or legal U.S. residents, and linked to or inspired by Al Qaeda’s brand of radical Sunni Islamism” (Pregulman & Burke, 2012, p. 1). Bjelopera (2013) defines homegrown terrorism as “terrorist activity or plots perpetrated within the United States or abroad by American citizens, legal permanent residents, or visitors radicalized within the United States” (Summary section, para. 1).

Consistency in defining homegrown terrorism would yield more robust results across varying studies in academia and law enforcement alike, which would then lead to improved policy implications. Lastly, a concrete definition of homegrown terrorism and homegrown offenders would present researchers with a mechanism to filter through terrorism cases in order to only include homegrown terrorism attacks in their research.

Deciding Which Cases to Include

According to various studies, the number of homegrown Islamic plots in the United States in the post September 11 period ranges from 63 to 188 owing to different definitions and inclusion criteria (Bergen et al., 2012; Bjelopera, 2013; Jenkins, 2010; Southern Poverty Law Center, 2011). These cases of terrorism range from plots, attacks, attempted attacks, violent jihad training, and material support to terrorist organizations. Similarly, the Heritage Foundation, which conducts research on various disciplines, has kept track of terrorist plots since the attacks of 9/11. In their latest report, the Heritage Foundation (Zuckerman, Bucci, & Carfano, 2013) reported 60 terrorist plots and attacks against the United States (See Figure 1. The number of terrorist plots and attacks, by year, from 2001 to 2013 in Appendix A). More specifically, 53 of those terrorist plots were prevented before terrorists acted upon them, 4 were successful attacks, and 3 were prevented by civilians. Most importantly, 49 of these cases were homegrown terrorist plots and attacks.

Dahl (2011) states there was an average of 9 plots per year (including overseas and domestic extremist) from 2005 to 2009, the peak years. In 2010, the number increased to 13, but that includes 2 overseas plots and a domestic extremist plot (Dahl, 2011). Other scholars have tracked the number of homegrown terrorist plots by Muslim Americans.

Kurzman's (2011) study of Muslim-American terrorists found that Muslim American suspects and perpetrators peaked in 2009, with an average of more

than 40 per year compared to the average of 14 in prior years (para. 1). In 2012, Kurzman found that Muslim-American terrorism had decreased in 2011.

Specifically, there were “20 Muslim Americans indicted for violent plots in 2011, compared to 26 in 2010” (Kurzman, 2012, “Muslim-American Terrorism Down in 2011”, para. 1). In total, there were 193 indicted Muslim-Americans for violent plots since 9/11 (Kurzman, 2012).

While Congressional officials have warned of a potential increase in plots and attacks by Muslim Americans, evidence contradicts these claims. In the last two years, there has been a decrease since the peak in 2009. Kurzman (2012) found that this decrease is due to the number of individuals successfully carrying out attacks, rather than just plotting. In 2010, six Muslim Americans carried out attacks, whereas in 2011, only one individual did; Yonathan Melaku (Kurzman, 2012). Melaku was prosecuted for a shooting incident at military buildings in Virginia (Kurzman, 2012).

As discussed, research entities like the Heritage Foundation and The New American Foundation, law enforcement agencies, and scholars have also kept a record of terrorist attacks, but none have compiled a comprehensive data set of acts of homegrown terrorism, to include both attacks and plots. For instance, The Global Terrorism Database maintained by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) does not include those instances where attacks were attempted but unsuccessful due to intervention by authorities (Dahl, 2011). Also, the National Counterterrorism Center tracks

incidents, but does not include plots that were never initiated or attempted (Dahl, 2011). While these agencies and organizations hold valuable information on some terrorist incidents, they are not enough to get a complete picture of homegrown terrorists acting against the United States.

In his study, Dahl (2011) examines unsuccessful terrorist plots since 1987 to October 2010, with a total of 176 attacks. However, only 103 were considered domestic attacks, but those included right wing and antigovernment extremism. Dahl's (2011) findings do not give insight to the demographic characteristics of the perpetrators involved in the attacks. Dahl's (2011) research does not provide an exact number of homegrown plots and attacks by U.S. persons within the United States. Moreover, Dahl's (2011) analysis does not include instances of material support to terrorism by homegrown individuals.

Jenkins (2010) states there have been a "total of 46 cases of domestic radicalization and recruitment to jihadist terrorism" (Preface section, para. 2) between September 2001 and 2009. Those incidents include domestic individuals who were accused of providing material support and those who traveled overseas. "While incidents of homegrown terrorism decreased slightly in 2011 from their peak in 2009 and 2010, such acts continue to occur with disturbing frequency" (Pregulman & Burke, 2012, p. 2). Jenkins (2010) reports there have been "more cases of radicalization in 2009 than any year since Sept 11, 2001" (p. 1).

Homegrown terrorism has evolved into acts of violence committed by American citizens, naturalized citizens, and those that have remained in the United States for a long period of time. As Jenkins (2010) states, “America's perception of the terrorist threat today differs greatly from the perception of 35 years ago (p. 25).” The 1970s was a unique decade for terrorism. Bombings on U.S. soil represented American terrorism at the time. The current terrorism experience is that of radicalized and non-radicalized individuals plotting and carrying out terrorist attacks on U.S. soil. However, unlike the terrorists of 9/11, homegrown terrorists are native to the country they are attacking and represent a unique, yet diverse group of offenders.

A 2012 policy report by the Muslim Affairs Council reported a total of “135 plots by U.S. originated non-Muslim perpetrators against the United States since 9/11” (Beutel, 2012, p. 2), but that includes racist, anti-government, and animal liberation movements related plots. Moreover, there have been “60 total plots by U.S. and foreign-originated Muslim perpetrators since 9/11,” but that includes both U.S. territory and abroad (Beutel, 2012, p. 4).

There have been more cases of material support to terrorist organizations than actual terrorist attacks and plots (Thachuk et al., 2008; Kurzman, 2012). 18 United States Code (U.S.C.) Section (§) 2339A, providing material support to terrorists is defined as “any property, tangible or intangible, or service, including currency or monetary instruments or financial securities, financial services, lodging, training, expert advice or assistance, safe houses, false documentation

or identification, communications equipment, facilities, weapons, lethal substances, explosives, personnel” (Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute, n.d.). According to Kurzman (2012), since 9/11, there have been 462 Muslim Americans indicted for material support to terrorist organizations, almost double of those for violent plots or attacks. However, this figure must be taken with caution since it includes cases the FBI classified as “terrorism-related” in 2010, although they did not involve terrorism charges (Kurzman, 2012, “Support for Terrorism,” para. 2).

Hassan Moussa Makki, Sayed Mustajab Shah, and Earnest James Ujaama are just a few of the homegrown terrorist individuals that have been convicted of providing material support to terrorist organizations and other charges. These individuals were involved in funding Hezbollah through cigarette contraband and drug trafficking funds to support the Taliban (Thachuk et al., 2008). It was noted in Kurzman’s (2012) study that, in recent cases, material supporters handled a lesser volume of currency in their offenses. The largest amount that has been seen was more than a million dollars and the lowest amount was less than \$100,000 (Kurzman, 2012). However, it should be noted that the actual dollar amount involved is not known for all cases. It is difficult for law enforcement to detect these individuals since they are not committing a specific terrorist attack (Pregulman & Burke, 2012).

Unlike the inconsistent tracking of terrorist plots and attacks, there is a more comprehensive account of successful terrorist attacks and associated

casualties since 9/11. There have been a total of 33 fatalities since 9/11 from successful plots and attacks (Kurzman, 2012). While the number of casualties does not compare to the number of attempted and successful attacks, it remains a concern for the American people and law enforcement personnel. Nonetheless, variations of definitions of homegrown terrorism and differing criteria used by scholars and law enforcement to determine homegrown individuals makes it difficult to know the exact number of homegrown plots and attacks against the United States since 9/11.

Due to the inconsistencies in the definition of terrorism, the number of total homegrown terrorism plots is not concrete. Scholars and agencies have tracked these incidents through different definitions and therefore the numbers do not align with each other. Until all terrorist plots and attacks are examined by one single definition, the true count of terrorist incidents will not be uncovered and therefore be properly examined.

Research Aims and Hypotheses

Since past studies did not use a comprehensive set of cases and clear inclusion criteria to examine only U.S. citizens, legal residents, and those who have resided in the United States for a long period of time, efforts to generate a useful offender typology have failed. It is also expected that broadening the list of covariates will generate a more useful offender classification schema.

Three research questions drive this study. First, this study sought to determine whether all homegrown terrorist individuals fall within the three categories found by Thachuk et al. (2008). And if not, is there sufficient evidence that unique offender profiles could be generated among the individuals living in the United States whom have engaged in homegrown terrorism activity? And finally, is it possible to craft an offender typology that is specific enough to inform interdiction strategies? Based on the literature reviewed, it is expected that these questions would be tested with the following hypotheses.

1. Individuals residing in the United States who have been involved in terrorist activity since 9/11 will not align fully with the 3 tier categories of homegrown terrorists found by Thachuk et al. (2008).
2. Instead, it is hypothesized that the study will find several clusters, each with a different set of characteristics drawn from each of the four categories of case and offender characteristics (demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics, as well as case details). These clusters will align with:
 - a. Level of involvement, meaning that a unique profile will emerge for individuals providing material support compared to those plotting attacks, being unsuccessful at operationalizing a plan, and those launching successful attacks.

- b. Type of group affiliation, meaning unique profiles will be evident for Al Qaeda linked terrorists compared to other groups.
3. The offender subgroups will be distinct enough to generate unique interdiction and crime prevention policy.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study aimed to develop a typology of homegrown terrorists that can support investigation efforts and will help generate effective prevention strategies. This chapter begins with a description of the sampling process that generated approximately 115 homegrown terrorism cases that were handled by U.S. federal courts between September 11, 2011 and March 2014. Next, the chapter reviews the data collection process used to obtain information about the case details, demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics of those who have chosen to plot, attack, attempted to attack, or have provided material support to terrorist organizations. The chapter also presents the various types of sources of information that were used and their completeness and reliability is discussed. A description of the two-step cluster analysis used to generate the typology is also presented. The chapter concludes with statistical representations and descriptions of the bivariate correlations performed among the case details and offender characteristics that were utilized in the study.

Sample

The sample was generated from 115 federal homegrown cases handled by the U.S. Department of Justice since the Al Qaeda attacks of September 11,

2001. Cases were identified from existing lists of homegrown jihadist cases compiled by various research organizations and federal law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI, The Southern Poverty Law Center, The Heritage Foundation, The New American Foundation, The Investigative Project on Terrorism, and others. To supplement this list of cases, additional searches were made using Google's search engine using the following terms: "homegrown terrorism cases," "homegrown terrorism cases since 9/11," "domestic terrorism cases," and "domestic jihadist terrorist cases." All cases, with at least one defendant that satisfies the definition of a homegrown terrorist were included in the study.

The cases being examined generated approximately 194 individuals that were involved in homegrown terrorism plots, attacks, attempted attacks, and material support to terrorist organizations. Some of the cases involved multiple offenders (up to 12), and in some cases multiple homegrown terrorist offenders. Since some of the cases involved foreign-based individuals (non-U.S. persons), the number of non-U.S. persons involved in each case was noted but individual information was not collected. The sample did not include those defendants who had their charges dismissed or those tried in state court. The sample excluded trials originating out of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba that involved foreign enemy combatants prosecuted in military tribunals.

Data Collection

Information about defendants in these 115 cases was obtained through publicly available sources, such as DOJ Press Releases, official court documents, official government reports, government websites, research organizations, and media articles and reports. The unit of analysis was the offender: each offender was coded separately. In total, 34 variables were constructed, this includes case details (5 variables) and offender characteristics (29 variables) divided into: personal demographics (e.g., age, sex, citizenship, ethnicity affiliation, education, etc.); social characteristics (e.g., reported religious affiliation, former military experience, and radicalization to terrorism); strain (failure to achieve positive valued goals, loss of positive valued stimuli, and presence of negative stimuli); and behavioral characteristics (e.g., reported criminal history, reported Imam leader, offender type, etc.) Described below (See Appendix B for a complete list of variables), these variables were used for the typology for two reasons: first, these characteristics are supported in the extant literature as being key factors differentiating offenders; and second, these variables represent the kind of information that would be easily available to law enforcement throughout the course of a criminal investigation on terrorism.

Variables

Case Details. Five variables captured case details for each offense: type of offense, terrorist organization affiliation, number of offenders involved, number of U.S.-based co-conspirators, and number of co-conspirators who were non-

U.S. persons. The type of offense was determined mainly by whether the offender was able to carry out a plot or not, or if their crime was providing material support to a terrorist organization. Therefore, description of offense was coded as 1 = Material Support to Terrorism/Conspiracy to Provide Material Support to Terrorism, 2 = Plot to Attack, 3 = Attempted Attack, and 4 = Successful Attack. Terrorist organization affiliation refers to the specific terrorist organization affiliated with the offense, coded as 1 = Al Qaeda, 2 = other, and 3 = none. Details for the number of offenders, both U.S. persons and non-U.S. persons were collected for each case. The number of offenders involved, number of co-conspirators involved, and number of co-conspirators who were non-U.S. persons were all coded as a continuous variable.

Demographic Characteristics. Nine variables captured demographic characteristics: age, gender, citizenship status, immigrant generation, ethnicity, education, occupation, reported marital status, and reported to have children. The individual's age was coded as a continuous variable by years old. Gender was coded as simply 1 = male and 0 = female. Citizenship status at time of offense/arrest will fall into one of five categories, based on legal status: 1 = U.S. Citizen (U.S. born), 2 = Naturalized U.S. Citizen (non-U.S. born), 3 = Legal Permanent Resident (LPR), 4 = Visa holder (student, tourist), or 5 = undocumented (illegally residing in the country). The offender's generation level of immigrating to the United States was coded as 1 = 3rd generation, 2 = 2nd

generation, 3 = 1st generation. The offender's ethnicity affiliation was recorded as text, and then recoded as a social/cultural group or nation of origin.

The offender's level of education was coded as 1 = less than high school, 2 = completed high school, 3 = technical school, non-college, 4 = some college, 5 = completed college (BA/BS), 6 = some graduate school, 7 = completed graduate school (M.A.), or 8 = some/completed Doctorate (Ph.D.). The offender's occupation fell under three different categories. Those categories were 1 = Professional (physicians, architect, teachers), 2 = Semi-Skilled (police, military, mechanics, small business owners, and students), and 3 = Unskilled/None. Reported marital status at the time of offense/arrest was coded as 1 = married or 0 = unmarried. Lastly, the reported to have children variable was coded as 1 = if the offender had one or more children or 0 = if the offender was known to not have any children.

Social Characteristics. Eight variables measured social characteristics: reported religious affiliation, reported former military involvement/training, reported suffering from or diagnosed mental illness, and five factors of terrorism influence and radicalization means.

The offender's reported religious affiliation was recorded as text. Reported former military involvement or training within the United States was simply coded as 1 = yes or 0 = No. Mental illness was coded using a scale computed by summing the offender's reported suffering from or diagnosed mental condition, coded as 1 = for each condition or 0 = if none. The defendant was considered to

have a mental illness history if at some point he or she received any psychiatric care or was diagnosed with a mental illness prior to or during their criminal proceedings. Those conditions are: 1) mental health issues, mentally troubled, or mentally ill, 2) schizophrenia, 3) hallucinations, 4) bipolar disorder, 5,) depression, 6) anxiety, and 7) Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Terrorism influence and reported radicalization was coded as five different variables. The first variable indicated whether the defendant was radicalized via the Internet as 1 = yes or 0 = no. The remaining four variables specified the type of radicalization means; social networking sites (ex: Facebook) 1 = yes or 0 = no, extremist propaganda (ex: Inspire Magazine) 1 = yes or 0 = no, email or direct contact with a terrorist official(s) 1 = yes or 0 = no, and overseas training with terrorist organizations 1 = yes or 0 = no. To be coded as 1 for using a social networking site, the defendant must have been influenced by speeches or other material available by terrorist leaders via YouTube, Twitter, or other social networking sites. Extremist propaganda refers to situations where defendants were known to have read Muslim, jihadist, or other materials encouraging violent acts against the United States. Lastly, overseas training captures overseas travel for violent (jihad) training from terrorist organizations.

Strain. The amount of strain or stress the offender experienced in their life was recorded using 3 factors: failure to achieve positive goals, loss of positive experiences or acquisitions (positive valued stimuli), and the presentation of negative experiences or losses (negative valued stimuli). All three were

measured by summing the offender's life events/occurrences in which they experienced each type of strain. Failure to achieve positive goals was measured using the following examples of strain: 1) acquisition of wealth, 2) status and respect, and 3) autonomy. Loss of positive experiences or acquisitions was measured using the following examples of strain: 1) death of friend/romantic partner, 2) divorce, 3) separation, 4) theft of a valued object, 5) loss of a good job, and 6) loss of a car for a period of time. Lastly, the presentation of negative experiences or loss was measured using the following examples of strain: 1) abusive parent, 2) boss who puts undue strain on individual, 3) parental unemployment, 4) deaths in the family, 5) illnesses in the family, 6) homelessness, and 7) economic hardship/poverty.

Behavioral Characteristics. Eight variables were used to measure behavioral characteristics: reported criminal history, offender type, role of offender within group, reported Imam leader, reported international travel, instrumentality, convert to Islam, and prior religion before converting to Islam. Criminal history was simply coded as 1 = having a criminal background or 0 = not having a criminal background. The criterion for having a criminal background was based on any prior arrests or convictions within the United States. The offender type refers to the method in which the terrorist offense was carried out, 1 if carried out alone or 2 if acted with others in a group. Additionally, the role of the offender within the group was measured by and coded as 1 = leader or 2 = non-leader.

Reported Imam leader was coded simply as 1 = yes or 0 = No. The reported international travel variable was measured by indicating whether the offender traveled outside of the United States in pursuit of guidance, training, funding, etc. in furtherance of their offense. Reported international travel was coded as 1 = yes or 0 = no. The instrumentality involved refers to the weapon the offender actually used or had discussed to use in their terrorist operation. The following categories captured the intended or actual use of materials during the attack: 1 = weapons (e.g., handguns, WMD), 2 = general supplies, 3 = explosives, 4 = safe houses and support (e.g., target lists, passports, driver's licenses, surveillance, etc.), 5 = funding, 6 = jihad training, and 7 = multiple instrumentalities. Conversion to Islam/Muslim, was coded as 1 = yes, 0 = no. Lastly, the offender's prior religion before converting to Islam was recorded as text.

Data Quality and Concerns

To ensure the most accurate information was used, sources were assessed and data from the most highly ranked source was preferred. The highest ranked data used in this study were official court documents. The data was collected mainly from Department of Justice court documents, such as indictments, criminal complaints, judgments, sentencing memorandums, and others. Moreover, press releases were also examined to gather the necessary information. Those instances in which the information was incomplete, that is, not

all court documents are available; the researcher turned to media reports and articles that discussed specific details and characteristics of the case and offender(s) involved. Reporters can easily make mistakes when collecting information for their journal articles and news reports. Since a different level of investigatory rigor may be applied to each case, media sources are also apt to suffer from reliability issues.

Media sources were essential to the data collection process since they include specific details about the offender's background that are not noted in the legal documents. This information is often derived from interviews and other sources of information, such as public records and previous publications of the offenders' achievements. Nonetheless, the offenders' characteristics were collected in order to have the most complete amount of information as possible. The researcher only recorded information that was found credible and found among multiple sources. That is, information that differed among sources was not recorded. Therefore, the information had to match among the sources to be recorded in the final coding of the variables. This was done to ensure the most accurate information possible was collected and recorded.

Data Analysis Procedures

This study aimed to derive an offender typology useful for profiling homegrown terrorists. The first step was to examine bivariate correlations among event details and each set of characteristics. Following the bivariate coefficient

correlations, two-step cluster analysis was conducted using all variables, except immigrant generation. The aim of a cluster analysis was to partition offenders into number of groups or clusters that were maximally similar or homogeneous with respect to a number of selected variables. Specifically, the study utilized the two-step cluster method since both continuous and categorical variables were collected.

In this cluster analysis, the log-likelihood distance was used to form clusters. Clusters are identified with a process based on the reduction of the log-likelihood distance (Zhang, Ramakrishnon, & Livny, 1996; Chiu, Fang, Chen, Wang, & Jeris, 2001). This means that groups are combined into clusters if a decrease in log-likelihood is observed. This hierarchical clustering process assumes normal distributions for continuous and multinomial categorical variables (Zhang et al., 1996; Chiu et al., 2001). It is also assumed that the variables are independent of each other. No missing values are allowed (Zhang et al., 1996; Chiu et al., 2001); list wise deletion of cases occurred.

When conducting the two-step cluster analysis, the number of clusters was set to be determined automatically with a maximum of 15 clusters. Lastly, the Schwarz's Bayesian Criterion (BIC) was used to determine the number of optimal clusters. Comparing ratio of change in successive analyses determines whether merging groups and thus reducing the number of clusters improved the fit of the model (Zhang et al., 1996; Chiu et al., 2001). Offense type and terrorist affiliation variables were used to test/confirm the clusters. The final stage of

analysis involved generating a cluster cross-tabulation with the results of the final cluster classification for the two models: type of offense and terrorist affiliation. The combination of these analyses generated unique offender subgroups. All analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 21.

Description of the Sample

Case Details

Table 3.1 shows the type of offenses included in the sample along with the terrorist affiliation of the defendants. Most cases involved situations where offenders provided material support to terrorist organizations and the majority of the individuals were affiliated with Al Qaeda (34.0 %).

Table 3.1

Description of Case Details

| Variable | Valid Percent (n) | % Missing |
|---|----------------------|--------------|
| Offense Type | (194) | 0.0 |
| Material Support to Terrorism | 64.4 | |
| Plot to Attack | 29.4 | |
| Attempted Attack | 4.6 | |
| Successful Attack | 1.5 | |
| Terrorist organization affiliation | (194) | 0.0 |
| Al Qaeda | 34.0 | |
| Other | 43.8 | |
| None | 22.2 | |

Note. The total sample includes 194 individuals

Table 3.2 describes the number of offenders and number of co-conspirators (both U.S. persons and non-U.S. persons). The number of offenders involved in a single terrorist incident ranged from 1 to 12 individuals. When plots or attacks involved co-conspirators, there was an average of 2.7 U.S. persons present. The mean for the number of non-U.S. persons involved was much less (.57).

Table 3.2

Descriptive Statistics for Key Independent Variables

| Variable | Mean (Standard Deviation) | Range (min-max) |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Number of offenders | 3.82 (3.23) | 11 (1-12) |
| Number of co-conspirators | 2.77 (3.26) | 11 (0-11) |
| Number of co-conspirators non-U.S. persons | .57 (1.23) | 5 (0-5) |
| Age | 31.72 (11.48) | 58 (17-75) |

Note. The total sample includes 194 individuals.

Demographic Characteristics

Table 3.3 reports offender demographics. Of the 194 offenders, 186 were male and the average age was 31.7 years old. In addition, approximately 45.5% of the sample offenders were in their 20s at time of their arrest (45.5%, n= 80). Approximately 45.6% of the sample were U.S.-born offenders and an additional

34.4% were naturalized. These demographic characteristics support the previous findings of Kurzman et al., (2011).

Table 3. 3

Description of Demographic Characteristics

| Variable | Valid Percent (n) | % Missing |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Male | 95.9 | 0.0 |
| Citizenship | (182) | 6.2 |
| U.S. Born | 45.6 | |
| Naturalized | 32.4 | |
| Legal Permanent Resident | 15.4 | |
| Visa Holder | .5 | |
| Undocumented | 6.0 | |
| Education | (94) | 51.5 |
| Less than High School | 17.0 | |
| Completed High School | 12.8 | |
| Technical School, non-college | 2.1 | |
| Some college | 45.7 | |
| Completed college | 8.5 | |
| Some graduate school | 3.2 | |
| Completed graduate school | 4.3 | |
| Some Doctorate/Completed | 6.4 | |
| Doctorate | | |
| Occupation | (131) | 32.5 |
| Professional | 21.4 | |
| Semi-Skilled | 32.8 | |
| Unskilled | 45.8 | |
| Reported Marital Status | (189) | 2.6 |
| Married | 39.2 | |
| Unmarried/Single/Divorced | 60.8 | |
| Reported Did Have Children | 34.0 (188) | 3.1 |

Note. The total sample includes 194 individuals. In all dichotomous variables, only the yes values are reported.

The ethnic affiliation of the sample was diverse: Pakistani (13.3%, $n = 22$), African American (12.1%, $n = 20$), and Caucasian (9.7%, $n = 16$). The education level among the sample varied widely from high school dropouts to doctorates. The occupation status among the sample also varied from unskilled laborers to professional sector careers. This variation in education and occupation echoes previous findings. For example, in his study, Kurzman (2013) did not find a

common level of education and occupation among the individuals. In regards to occupational status, they ranged from working class individuals to unemployed individuals.

Social Characteristics

Table 3.4 indicates the description of the social characteristics that were collected. Only two religious affiliations appeared for the offenders in the data set. Those were Muslim (64.3 %) and Jewish (0.8%). The majority of the offenders did not have prior military experience or training. Less than 10 percent of the sample was reported to be suffering from a mental illness. Reported radicalization resulted in a significant variable in which almost all offenders had been radicalized through one or more avenues of radicalization.

Table 3.4

Description of Reported Social Characteristics

| Variable | Valid Percent (n) | % Missing |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| Religious Affiliation | (126) | 35.1 |
| Muslim | 64.3 | |
| Jewish | 0.8 | |
| n/a | 34.9 | |
| Former Military Experience/training | 7.7 (194) | 0.0 |
| No. of Diagnosed Mental Illnesses | (193) | 0.5 |
| None | 91.2 | |
| 1 | 6.7 | |
| 2 | 1.6 | |
| 3 | 0.5 | |
| Radicalization via: | | |
| Internet | 30.6 (193) | 0.5 |
| Social Networking | 15.0 (193) | 0.5 |
| Extremist Propaganda | 26.4 (193) | 0.5 |
| Email/ Direct Communication | 13.0 (193) | 0.5 |
| Overseas Terrorist Training | 15.0 (193) | 0.5 |

Note. The total sample includes 194 individuals. In all dichotomous variables, only the yes values are being reported in the table above.

Strain Variables

Offenders in general, experienced few reported negative experiences or life events involving strain. It must be noted, as discussed as a limitation, that this variable was difficult to record since it was uncommon for news reports and court documents to discuss the offender's life experiences of strain. Table 3.5 indicates that there were more occurrences of a presence of negative stimuli than the other two types of strain.

Table 3.5

Description of Strain Variables

| Variable | Valid Percent (n) | % Missing |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| Failure to achieve positive valued goals | (193) | 0.5 |
| No occurrences | 97.9 | |
| 1 event | 1.6 | |
| 2 events | .5 | |
| Loss of positive valued stimuli | (193) | 0.5 |
| No occurrences | 99.5 | |
| Presence of negative stimuli | (192) | 1.0 |
| No occurrences | 80.7 | |
| 1 event | 12.0 | |
| 2 events | 5.7 | |
| 3 events | 1.0 | |
| 5 events | .5 | |

Note. The total sample includes 194 individuals.

Behavioral Characteristics

Table 3.6 provides a description of the behavioral characteristics collected in this study. The terrorists being examined were mostly first time offenders, with no prior convictions. There were more offenders that committed their terrorist attacks or plotted with other individuals rather than acting alone. Interestingly, many offenders traveled overseas (44.0 %) in furtherance of their crime. It was found that offenders used either one type of instrumentality (handgun, personnel to fight jihad, etc.) or a combination of these mechanisms in their terrorist operations. Often, money was collected and individuals were recruited to support terrorist organizations. Lastly, a majority of offenders were, in fact, converts to

Islam (63.5 %). This provides partial support to Thachuk et al.'s (2008) third category of terrorists, which are third generation converts to Islam.

Table 3.6

Description of Behavioral Characteristics

| Variable | Valid Percent (n) | % Missing |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| Reported Prior Criminal History | 13.3 (188) | 3.1 |
| Offender Type | (193) | 0.0 |
| Alone | 35.2 | |
| Group | 64.8 | |
| Role of Offender | (147) | 24.2 |
| Leader | 8.8 | |
| Non-leader | 46.9 | |
| n/a | 42.9 | |
| Imam | 3.1 (194) | 0.0 |
| International Travel | 44.0 (193) | .5 |
| Instrumentality | (190) | 2.1 |
| Weapons | 10.0 | |
| General Supplies | 5.8 | |
| Explosives | 19.5 | |
| Safe houses and Support | 5.8 | |
| Monetary Funding | 14.2 | |
| Self as personnel for jihad | 27.4 | |
| Multiple | 17.4 | |
| Convert to Islam/Muslim | 63.5 (126) | 35.1 |
| Prior Religion (Before converting to Islam) | (194) | |
| n/a | 82.3 | |
| Catholic | 10.4 | |
| Christian | 2.1 | |
| Episcopalian | 2.1 | |
| Muslim | 1.0 | |
| Christian/Catholic | 1.0 | |
| Buddhism | 1.0 | |

Note. The total sample includes 194 individuals. In all dichotomous variables, only the yes values are being reported in the table above.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter reports the findings of the study. The discussion begins with a description of the significant bivariate correlations. The chapter also presents the key findings of the two-step cluster analyses evaluated against three variables: terrorist affiliation, type of offense, and event type. Four separate groups of offenders were identified through each cluster analysis; this was reducible to three characteristically unique sets of offenders based on the evaluation variables—Cyber Attackers, Convert Affiliates, and Trained Allies. Finally, the chapter considers whether these results offer support or refute the study hypotheses.

Results of Bivariate Correlations

First, before conducting the cluster analysis, bivariate coefficient correlations were examined among all of the variables (33), excluding immigrant generation since this information was missing for too many of the offenders of the study. Bivariate correlations were examined for three case details with each of the other three variable categories—demographic, social (including strain), and behavioral characteristics—separately.

Case Details and Demographic Characteristics

Table 4.1 provides the Spearman's rho correlation coefficients among three case detail variables and six personal demographic variables. Four notable correlations were found. First, there was an inverse correlation between reported marital status and type of offense variables ($r_s (189) = -.151, p < .05$). This significant finding suggests that married offenders were less likely to be involved in a successful terrorist attack, therefore more likely to be involved in plots or providing material support to terrorist organizations. Second, there was a positive significant correlation between occupation and type of offense variables ($r_s (131) = .193, p < .05$). This suggests that offenders employed or associated with an unskilled occupation level were more likely to be involved in a more successful attack.

Table 4.1

*Nonparametric Inter-item Correlation Coefficients for Demographic**Characteristics*

| Measure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|---------|--------|-------|
| 1. Type of Offense | 1.000 | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Number of Co-Conspirators | -.023 | 1.000 | | | | | | | |
| 3. Offender Type | -.065 | .775** | 1.000 | | | | | | |
| 4. Citizenship | .060 | -.027 | .004 | 1.000 | | | | | |
| 5. Gender | .102 | .066 | .010 | .038 | 1.000 | | | | |
| 6. Reported children | -.076 | -.030 | -.017 | -.061 | -.061 | 1.000 | | | |
| 7. Education | -.188 | -.098 | -.203 | .030 | | -.084 | 1.000 | | |
| 8. Reported Marital Status | -.151* | .063 | -.005 | -.020 | -.047 | .615** | .019 | 1.000 | |
| 9. Occupation | .193* | -.052 | .025 | -.021 | -.089 | -.203* | -.499** | -.225* | 1.000 |

Note. *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The third substantive finding was an inverse correlation between occupation and having children ($r_s(128) = -.203, p < .05$). Those who were reported to have children tended to have a lower professional status associated with an unskilled occupation. The fourth substantive pattern was a positive significant correlation between occupation and education variables ($r_s(70) = -$

.499, $p < .01$). Offenders with a lower professional status associated with an unskilled occupation.

It is also worth mentioning that the positive correlation between offender type and number of co-conspirators involved was of sufficient strength to suggest that only one of these variables needed to be included in the cluster analysis ($r_s(192) = .775, p < .01$). It is likely that the two variables are actually capturing the same information. Those offenders that acted in a group were likely to have a larger number of co-conspirators involved in the terrorist plot or attack.

Case Details and Social Characteristics

Table 4.2 provides the Spearman's rho correlation coefficients among three case detail variables and seven social characteristics variables. Many notable correlations were found. First, there was a positive significant correlation between reported mental illness and type of offense variables ($r_s(193) = .204, p < .01$). This suggests that offenders that were reported to be suffering or diagnosed with some kind of mental illness were more likely to be involved in a more successful terrorist attack. Second, there was an inverse correlation between reported mental illness and number of co-conspirators variables ($r_s(191) = -.144, p < .05$). This significant finding suggests that offenders that were reported to be suffering or diagnosed with some kind of mental illness were more likely to have fewer co-conspirators involved in their plot or attack.

Table 4.2

Nonparametric Inter-item Correlation Coefficients for Social Characteristics

| Measure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|--|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| 1. Type of Offense | 1.000 | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Number of Co-Conspirators | -.023 | 1.000 | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Offender Type | -.065 | .775** | 1.000 | -.069 | | | | | | |
| 4. Reported Military History | .025 | .016 | -.069 | 1.000 | | | | | | |
| 5. Reported Mental Illness | .204** | -.144* | -.016 | .110 | 1.000 | | | | | |
| 6. Radicalization via the Internet | .019 | -.066 | .014 | .059 | .039 | 1.000 | | | | |
| 7. Radicalization via social networking | .048 | -.027 | .004 | .040 | .079 | .602** | 1.000 | | | |
| 8. Radicalization via extremist propaganda | .042 | .020 | .020 | .045 | .031 | .648** | .570** | 1.000 | | |
| 9. Radicalization via direct communication | -.019 | .021 | .024 | -.054 | -.062 | -.089 | -.119 | -.056 | 1.000 | |
| 10. Radicalization via overseas terrorist training | -.108 | .265** | .156* | .040 | -.127 | -.122 | -.136 | -.088 | .356** | 1.000 |

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Attending overseas jihadist training camps was also correlated with a couple of case details. The third substantive finding was a positive significant correlation between radicalization via overseas training and number of co-conspirators variables ($r_s(191) = .265, p < .01$). Offenders that were radicalized overseas in terrorist training camps were more likely to have acted with more co-conspirators in their terrorist offense. A fourth substantive pattern was a positive

significant correlation between radicalization via overseas training and offender type variables ($r_s (192) = .156, p < .05$). Offenders that were radicalized overseas in terrorist training camps were more likely to have acted in a group versus alone.

Finally, several important correlations emerged regarding Internet radicalization channels. There was a positive significant correlation between radicalization via social networking and radicalization via the Internet variables ($r_s (193) = .602, p < .01$). Offenders who were radicalized through social networking sites also used the Internet as a means of radicalization. Also, a positive significant correlation exists between radicalization via extremist propaganda and radicalization via the Internet variables ($r_s (193) = .648, p < .01$). Offenders who were radicalized through extremist propaganda material were also likely to be radicalized through the use of the Internet.

Radicalization via extremist propaganda and radicalization via social networking variables were also significantly related ($r_s (193) = .570, p < .01$). Offenders who were radicalized through extremist propaganda material were also likely to be radicalized through the use of social networking sites. And, offenders who reportedly were radicalized via overseas training were more likely to have direct communication with terrorist officials ($r_s (193) = .356, p < .01$). Offenders who were radicalized through attending overseas terrorist affiliated training camps were also likely to be radicalized through communication, either direct or via email with terrorist officials.

Case Details and Strain Variables

Table 4.3 provides the Spearman rho correlation coefficients among three case detail variables and three strain variables. Two notable correlations were found. First, there was a positive significant correlation between the presence of negative stimuli and type of offense variables ($r_s (192) = .315, p < .01$). Offenders who experienced negative stimuli (strain) in his or her life were less likely to be involved in a successful terrorist plot or attack. There was also a positive significant correlation between the failure to achieve positive stimuli and presence of negative stimuli variables ($r_s (192) = .234, p < .01$). Offenders who were unable to achieve positive stimuli, such as autonomy were also likely to experience negative stimuli in his or her life, such as parents getting divorced or the death of a family member.

Table 4.3

Nonparametric Inter-item Correlation Coefficients for Strain Variables

| Measure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|--|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| 1. Type of Offense | 1.000 | | | | | |
| 2. Number of Co-Conspirators | -.023 | 1.000 | | | | |
| 3. Offender Type | -.065 | .775** | 1.000 | | | |
| 4. Failure to achieve positive stimuli | 0.370 | .028 | .004 | 1.000 | | |
| 5. Loss of positive stimuli | | | | | 1.000 | |
| 6. Presence of negative stimuli | .315** | .046 | .014 | .234** | | 1.000 |

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Case Details and Behavioral Characteristics

Table 4.4 provides the Spearman rho correlation coefficients among three case detail variables and five behavioral characteristics variables. Seven notable correlations were found. The first set of findings pertained to type of offense. There was a positive significant correlation between the type of offense and reported criminal history ($r_s (188) = .210, p < .01$). Offenders involved in a more successful terrorist offense were more likely to have a reported criminal history. There was also an inverse correlation between type of offense and reported international travel ($r_s (193) = -.193, p < .01$). Offenders involved in a more successful terrorist offense were less likely to have traveled internationally in furtherance of their terrorist offense.

Instrumentality, the range of resources and weapons used during the attacks, were associated with two case details. There was an inverse correlation between type of offense and instrumentality ($r_s (190) = -.466, p < .01$). Offenders involved in a more successful terrorist offense were more likely to use conventional weapons during their terrorist operation than other mechanisms, such as funding, jihad training, or a combination of these. A positive significant correlation was observed between number of co-conspirators and instrumentality ($r_s (188) = .213, p < .01$). Terrorist offenses in which there were co-conspirators involved were more likely to use a greater type of instrumentality, such as jihad training or multiple instrumentalities in their offenses.

Table 4.4

Nonparametric Inter-item Correlation Coefficients for Behavioral Characteristics

| Measure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|-------------------------------------|---------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| 1. Type of Offense | 1.000 | | | | | | | |
| 2. Number of Co-Conspirators | -.023 | 1.000 | | | | | | |
| 3. Offender Type | -.065 | .775** | 1.000 | | | | | |
| 4. Reported Imam | -.016 | -.054 | -.055 | 1.000 | | | | |
| 5. Reported Criminal History | .210** | .044 | .003 | -.065 | 1.000 | | | |
| 6. Reported Convert to Islam/Muslim | .084 | -.108 | -.080 | -.092 | .375** | 1.000 | | |
| 7. Instrumentality | -.466** | .213** | .116 | .010 | -.102 | -.112 | 1.000 | |
| 8. Reported International Travel | -.193** | .184* | .060 | -.039 | -.066 | -.096 | .298** | 1.000 |

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Two other correlations warrant attention. A positive significant correlation was observed between number of co-conspirators and reported international travel ($r_s (191) = .184, p < .05$). Terrorist offenses in which there were co-conspirators involved were more likely to have traveled internationally in furtherance of their crime. Another substantive pattern was a positive significant correlation between reported criminal history and reported convert to Islam ($r_s (125) = .375, p < .01$). Offenders with a reported criminal history were also likely to be converts to Islam. Lastly, there was a positive significant correlation between reported international travel and instrumentality ($r_s (189) = .298, p < .01$). Offenders who traveled overseas in furtherance of their crime used more advanced instrumentalities or multiple instrumentalities for their planned plot or attack.

Results of Cluster Analysis

Model 1: Clustering by Terrorist Affiliation

The cluster analysis revealed four clusters of offenders who had similar case details, demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics assessed against the evaluation variable, terrorist affiliation: 1) Internet Radicals (heavily radicalized group of offenders with no terrorist organization affiliation), 2) Deviant Associates (Al Qaeda affiliated non-radicalized, group offenders), 3) Trained Jihadists (Al Qaeda group offenders who traveled abroad), and 4) Mobile Lone Wolves (Al Qaeda, heavily radicalized group offenders). The cluster summary

indicated nine important variables, which generated these clusters. Those variables were terrorist affiliation, offender type (alone and group) reported international travel, radicalization via the Internet, radicalization via extremist propaganda, radicalization via social networking sites, radicalization via email or direct communication with terrorist officials, and radicalization via overseas training with terrorist organizations. Table 4.5 provides results. To develop a more comprehensive description of each cluster, notable demographic characteristics are described where distinct patterns appear.

Table 4.5

Two-Step Cluster Illustrating Radicalization Channels Evaluated by Terrorist Affiliation

| | Cluster 1: Internet Radicals | Cluster 2: Deviant Associates | Cluster 3: Trained Jihadists | Cluster 4: Mobile Lone Wolves |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Terrorist Affiliation | None (41.2%) | Al Qaeda (51.0%) | Al Qaeda (50.0%) | Al Qaeda (43.2%) |
| Offender Type | | | | |
| Alone | 23.9 % (16) | 0.0 % | 10.4 % (7) | 65.7 % (44) |
| Group | 28.5 % (35) | 39.8 % (49) | 31.7 % (39) | 0.0 % |
| Radicalization Factors | | | | |
| International travel | 22.9 % (19) | 0.0 % | 55.4 % (46) | 21.7 % (18) |
| None | 29.9 % (32) | 45.8 % (49) | 0.0 % | 24.3 % (26) |
| Foreign training | 3.6 % (1) | 0.0 % | 96.4 % (27) | 0.0 |
| None | 30.9 % (50) | 30.2 % (49) | 11.7 % (19) | 27.2 % (44) |
| Extremist propaganda | 86.0 % (43) | 0.0 % | 12.0 % (6) | 2.0 % (1) |
| None | 5.7 % (8) | 35.0 % (49) | 28.6 % (40) | 30.7 % (43) |
| Internet materials | 83.1 % (49) | 0.0 % | 6.8 % (4) | 10.2 % (6) |
| None | 1.5 % (2) | 37.4 % (49) | 32.1 % (42) | 29.0 % (38) |
| Social networking sites | 96.6 % (28) | 0.0 % | 0.0 % | 3.4 % (1) |
| None | 14.3 % (23) | 30.4 % (49) | 28.6% (46) | 26.7% (43) |
| Direct communication | 16.0 % (4) | 24.0 % (6) | 60.0 % (15) | 0.0 % |
| None | 28.5 % (47) | 26.1 % (43) | 18.8 % (31) | 26.7 % (44) |

Note. The bolded figures represent important results. N is reported in parentheses.

Cluster 1 represents a group of Internet radicalized defendants as apt to work in a group or alone without any affiliation to terrorist organizations. These individuals had no discernable, direct links to recognized terrorist organizations. However, they were radicalized through extremist material and social networking mechanisms available through the Internet. Extremist propaganda, online resources, and social networking sites may materially contribute in two manners to their criminal behavior: these materials foster their radicalization, and through accessing these sources, individuals may find co-conspirators to carry out their attacks. On average these defendants committed their offense in a group of 3.1 offenders, with an average of 2.2 U.S.-based co-conspirators. This suggests that in reaching out to others, individuals often encounter foreign-based operatives.

Although this group of defendants had no direct links to terrorist organizations, the majority (68.6%) provided material support to a terrorist organization. This can be due to the fact that the majority were U.S. born citizens that did not travel overseas. There were three prominent ethnicities that stood out in the cluster, Pakistani (17.0%), Jordanian (10.0%), and Caucasian (10.0%). Interestingly; these defendants were mostly Muslim (69.8%), single (66.0%), and had some college education (65.5%). Lastly, the defendants grouped into Cluster 1 ranged in age from 17 to 45 although there were more offenders in their 20s at their time of arrest and held unskilled occupations.

Cluster 2 represents a group of non-radicalized Al Qaeda affiliated defendants as apt to work in a group as alone. Even though these offenders had

direct links with Al Qaeda, there was an absence of radicalization, contrary to Cluster 1. This suggests that this group of defendants was influenced through other means. On average, these defendants committed their offense in a group of 4.7 offenders, with an average of 3.4 U.S.-based co-conspirators.

Cluster 2 defendants were involved in material support to terrorist organizations (57.1%) and plots to attack the United States (42.9%). This cluster consisted of African American (12.5%) converts to Islam (64.0%), who were single (73.3%) and had some college education (42.9%). This cluster had the most females (5 out of the 8 of the entire data sample) of all the clusters. Additionally, the cluster was represented by 49.0% U.S. born citizens, many of whom held unskilled occupations (43.8%).

Cluster 3 represents a group of radicalized and Al Qaeda affiliated defendants who were as apt to work in a group as alone and traveled abroad in furtherance of their crime. Similar to Cluster 2, these offenders had direct links to Al Qaeda officials and members. This group of defendants was radicalized through terrorist training camps and direct communication with terrorist officials by means of international travel. On average, these defendants committed their offense in a group of 6.1 offenders, with an average of 5.1 U.S.-based co-conspirators. This suggests that despite overseas travel for operational support and training, defendants maintained their relationships with U.S.-based individuals in order to carry out their terrorist offenses.

In general, the individuals in this cluster were younger than observed in other clusters (e.g., 14.0% were 25 years old at the time of the crime). A large portion of the defendants were of Yemeni (16.3%) or Pakistani (11.6%) descent. Cluster 3 included many offenders who were U.S. born citizens (44.2%). Contrary to the previous two clusters, there was a variety in the type of instrumentality these defendants used and planned to use, explosives (17.8%), jihad training (44.4%), and a combination of various weapons and devices (24.4%). The majority of the offenders were born into a Muslim family (80.6%) and most were married with children (83.9%).

Cluster 4 represents a group of heavily radicalized defendants who primarily acted alone in their terrorist offenses. These individuals had direct links to Al Qaeda, although little information was available regarding how they were recruited into jihad: prior direct contact with Al Qaeda operatives and Internet-based indoctrination were absent. However, these offenders managed to travel overseas for operational support from Al Qaeda members and officials. This cluster had the most highly educated defendants with 21.1% with some college and another 21.1% with or in pursuit of a Ph.D. degree. However, there were more unmarried than married offenders. Like the other clusters in this analysis, there was a predominance of Pakistani (14.6%) and Caucasian (14.6%) offenders versus other ethnic affiliations.

Model 2: Clustering by Type of Offense

This cluster analysis tested whether defendants could be grouped by offense type, meaning that unique characteristics may be visible among those choosing to provide material support to terrorist activity compared with individuals who engage in or attempt a direct attack against a U.S. target. The cluster analysis indicated four types of offender types according to the evaluation variable, type of offense: 1) Semi-Skilled Radicals (unmarried radicalized offenders), 2) Deviant Converts (unmarried, non-radicalized offenders), 3) Professional Trainees (married offenders with children who received terrorist training), and 4) Web-Based Radicals (married offenders, radicalized through electronic media).

Clusters were defined by eight variables: type of offense, reported marital status, reported children, reported international travel, radicalization via the Internet, radicalization via extremist propaganda, radicalization via social networking sites, and radicalization via overseas training with terrorist organizations. However, it should be noted that the evaluation variable, type of offense, was not correlated with cluster composition. In other words, all clusters indicated group of defendants involved in only material support to terrorist organizations. Unique clusters were not found for groups of defendants involved in plots, attempted attacks, and successful terrorist attacks. Table 4.6 provides results.

Table 4.6

Two-Step Cluster Illustrating Radicalization Channels Evaluated by Type of Offense

| | Cluster 1: Semi-Skilled Radicals | Cluster 2: Deviant Converts | Cluster 3: Professional Trainees | Cluster 4: Web-Based Radicals |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Type of Offense | | | | |
| Material Support to Terrorism | 66.7 % | 45.8 % | 70.7 % | 75.0 % |
| Marital/Children | | | | |
| Married | 22.1 % (15) | 0.0 % | 60.3 % (41) | 17.6 % (12) |
| Unmarried | 30.3 % (33) | 44.0 % (48) | 0.0 % | 25.7 % (28) |
| Children | 19.4 % (12) | 12.9 % (8) | 64.5 % (40) | 3.2 % (2) |
| No children | 31.3 % (36) | 34.8 % (40) | 0.9 % (1) | 33.0 % (38) |
| Radicalization Factors | | | | |
| International travel | 21.0 % (17) | 3.7 % (3) | 25.9 % (21) | 49.4 % (40) |
| None | 32.3 % (31) | 46.9 % (45) | 20.8 % (20) | 0.0 % |
| Foreign training | 3.6 % (1) | 0.0 % | 35.7 % (10) | 60.7 % (17) |
| None | 31.5 % (47) | 32.2 % (48) | 20.8 % (31) | 15.4 % (23) |
| Extremist propaganda | 85.7 % (42) | 0.0 % | 2.0 % (1) | 12.2 % (6) |
| None | 4.7 % (6) | 37.5 % (48) | 31.3 % (40) | 26.6 % (34) |
| Internet materials | 82.1 % (46) | 0.0 % | 3.6 % (2) | 14.3 % (8) |
| None | 1.7 % (2) | 39.7 % (48) | 32.2 % (39) | 26.4 % (32) |
| Social networking sites | 96.2 % (25) | 3.8 % (1) | 0.0 % | 0.0 % |
| None | 15.2 % (23) | 31.1 % (47) | 27.2 % (41) | 26.5 % (40) |

Note. The bolded figures represent important results. N is reported in parentheses.

Cluster 1 represents a group of unmarried radicalized offenders. These individuals were radicalized through propaganda materials and social networking mechanisms available through the Internet. These same offenders traveled

overseas in furtherance of their crime. This group included terrorist incidents with an average of 3.0 participants and with an average of 2.0 U.S.-based co-conspirators.

This group of offenders with a non-Al Qaeda terrorist affiliation was mostly Pakistani (16.2%), Jordanian (10.8%), and Caucasian (10.8). Most were Muslim (68.3%) and U.S. born citizens (53.2%). This cluster was represented by semi-skilled offenders with some college education (63.0%).

Cluster 2 represents a group of unmarried, non-radicalized defendants. These defendants were not radicalized through any of the radicalization means collected. Nor did these defendants travel overseas; rather they were influenced within the United States. This group of offenders was almost equally both material supporters to terrorist organizations and plotters of terrorist attacks (45.8% and 43.8%, respectively).

This group included terrorist incidents with an average of 3.4 offenders and with an average of 2.1 U.S.-based co-conspirators. Additionally, these supporters and plotters had no terrorist affiliation and many were U.S. born citizens (50.0%) A large portion were African American (30.0%) and most were either Muslim (44.0%) or converts (53.8%). Cluster 2 had 38.0% offenders with some college education and an unskilled occupational status.

Cluster 3 represents a group of married defendants with children. Many of these defendants received overseas terrorist training. The overseas terrorist training was the major influencing factor for this group of defendants. This group

included terrorist incidents with an average of 3.8 offenders, with an average of 2.8 U.S.-based co-conspirators, and .3 non-U.S.-based co-conspirators. Cluster 3 represented offenders with a non-Al Qaeda affiliation, who were mostly U.S. born citizens (45.9%), Caucasian (15.4%) and Pakistani (17.9%), and of Muslim affiliation (63.0%). Lastly, a large portion of these offenders held professional careers (41.2%) and had a college education (42.9%).

Cluster 4 represents non-radicalized married defendants. Rather than being radicalized through modern telecommunication channels, these defendants traveled overseas to attain support for their terrorist activity. This group included terrorist incidents in which the number of offenders involved on average was 4.7 offenders, with an average of 3.6 U.S.-based co-conspirators, and .5 non-U.S.-based co-conspirators. Offenders in this group were either Al Qaeda (52.5%) or non-Al Qaeda (47.5%) affiliated terrorists. Offenders were also primarily split between U.S. born (41.7%) and naturalized citizens (41.7%); although, most were Muslim affiliated (70.8%). A portion of those offenders were of Pakistani (13.2%) descent.

Model 3: Revised Offense Type

A final cluster analysis was performed to deal with a problem revealed in the second cluster analysis: the evaluation variable, type of offense was ineffective due to skewed frequency distribution. The problem was that there were too few cases of plotting, attempts, and completed attacks for the modeling process to uncover stable results. In the new variable, events involving a plot,

attempted, or successful attack were consolidated to compare against incidents where individuals only provided material support to terrorist organizations. Thus, the revised evaluation variable was coded: 1 = material support to terrorism and 0 = other.

This analysis revealed four clusters of terrorist offenders who had similar case details, demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics. Using event type as a confirmatory variable revealed four clusters: 1) Unmarried Attack Oriented Offenders, 2) Married Supporters, 3) Unmarried Plotters and Attackers, and 4) Unmarried Non-Radical Plotters and Attackers. The cluster summary indicated eight important variables: event type, reported marital status, reported children, reported international travel, radicalization via the Internet, radicalization via extremist propaganda, radicalization via social networking sites, and radicalization via overseas training with terrorist organizations. Table 4.7 provides results.

Table 4.7

Two-Step Cluster Illustrating Radicalization Channels Evaluated by Event Type

| | Cluster 1 Unmarried Attack Oriented Offenders | Cluster 2 Married Supporters | Cluster 3 Unmarried Plotters and Attackers | Cluster 4 Unmarried Non-Radical Plotters and Attackers |
|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Event Type | Other, 66.7% | Material Support, 54.2% | Other, 70.0% | Other, 75.0% |
| Marital/ Children | | | | |
| Married | 22.1 % (15) | 60.3 % (41) | 17.6 % (12) | 0.0 % (12) |
| Unmarried | 30.3 % (33) | 0.0 % | 25.7 % (28) | 44.0 % (48) |
| Reported Child | 19.4 % (12) | 64.5 % (40) | 3.2 % (2) | 12.9 % (8) |
| No children | 31.3 % (36) | 0.9 % (1) | 33.0 % (38) | 34.8 % (40) |
| Radicalization Factors | | | | |
| International Travel | 21.0 % (17) | 25.9 % (21) | 49.4 % (40) | 3.7 % (3) |
| None | 32.3 % (31) | 20.8 % (20) | 0.0 % | 46.9 % (45) |
| Foreign training | 3.6 % (1) | 35.7 % (10) | 60.7 % (17) | 0.0 % |
| None | 31.5 % (47) | 20.8 % (31) | 15.4 % (23) | 32.2 % (48) |
| Extremist propaganda | 85.7 % (42) | 2.0 % (1) | 12.2 % (6) | 0.0 % |
| None | 4.7 % (6) | 31.3 % (40) | 26.6 % (34) | 37.5 % (48) |
| Internet | 82.1 % (46) | 3.6 % (2) | 14.3 % (8) | 0.0 % |
| None | 1.7 % (2) | 32.2 % (39) | 26.4 % (32) | 39.7 % (48) |
| Social networking sites | 96.2 % (25) | 0.0 % | 0.0 % | 3.8 % |
| None | 15.2 % (23) | 27.2 % (41) | 26.5 % (40) | 31.1 % (47) |

Note. The bolded figures represent important results. N is reported in parentheses.

Cluster 1 represents a group of unmarried defendants who plotted, attacked, or attempted to attack (66.7%) against the United States. These defendants were radicalized through materials and social networking mechanisms available through the Internet. Due to the absence of international travel and not having any direct communication with terrorist officials, offenders in this cluster had a non-Al Qaeda terrorist group affiliation. These terrorist incidents involved on average of 3.0 offenders, with an average of 2.0 U.S.-based co-conspirators.

This group of offenders was characterized by U.S. born citizenship (53.2%); Pakistani (16.2%), Caucasian (10.8%), and Jordanian (10.8%) ethnic affiliation, Muslim affiliation (68.3%), some college education (63.0%), and unskilled occupation (48.4%).

Cluster 2 represents married offenders who provided some kind of material support to terrorist organizations. These offenders were not radicalized by any of ethnic/Internet-based means examined; however, they traveled overseas in support of their terrorist activity. These terrorist incidents involved an average of 3.8 offenders, with an average of 2.8 U.S.-based co-conspirators. In addition, this cluster indicated that these offenders were U.S. born citizens (45.9%), held some college education (42.9%), and held a professional career (41.2%). Many of these offenders were not Al Qaeda affiliated (51.2%). Most of the defendants in this cluster were Muslim (63.0%). The prominent ethnicity was Pakistani (17.9%).

Cluster 3 represents unmarried travelers who mostly plotted, attempted to attacks, and attacked against the United States. These defendants were not radicalized through any of the radicalization means examined; instead they traveled overseas to seek support and guidance for their terrorist activity. These terrorist incidents involved an average of 4.7 offenders, with an average of 3.6 U.S.-based co-conspirators. Cluster 3 individuals were both affiliated with Al Qaeda (52.5%) and non-Al Qaeda (47.5%) terrorist organizations. Interestingly, this cluster included the same number of U.S born and naturalized citizens (41.7% for each type). The offenders included in this group held some college education (40.7%) and had an unskilled occupation (65.4%).

Cluster 4 represents unmarried offenders who mostly plotted against the United States or were involved in an attempted or unsuccessful attack against the United States. Similar to Cluster 3, these defendants were not radicalized and did not travel overseas for terrorist activity support. Instead, these defendants sought support and guidance domestically. This group included terrorist incidents in which the number of offenders involved on average was 3.4 offenders, with an average of 2.1 U.S.-based co-conspirators. The terrorist affiliation for this group of offenders varied across Al Qaeda, non-Al Qaeda, and none; none of them were overrepresented in the group. Again, many of the offenders in this cluster were U.S. born citizens (50.0%). The largest ethnic group was African American (30.0%), and many defendants in this cluster were

converts to Islam (53.8%). This group of offenders' educational level ranged from some high school to completion of advanced degrees, such as a M.A. or Ph.D.

Model 1 and Model 3 Cluster Assignment Comparisons

A cross-tabulation (cross-tabs) analysis was performed for the cluster assignments that resulted from Model 3 and those of Model 1. Interestingly, it was found that those terrorist offenders of Cluster 1 are the same offenders for Model 1 and 3. These 46 offenders represent 26% of the total sample, creating a distinct group of offenders.

Unmarried and with some college education, this group of individuals are heavily influenced by radicalization materials available through the Internet social networking sites. While less apt to carry out successful attacks, their willingness to provide material support or to attempt attacks without having direct affiliations with terrorist groups makes them particularly dangerous. Their electronic footprint is the only way to identify and track these individuals.

Although not as distinguishable as the group of offenders described above, a second group of offenders was found, which were the unmarried non-radical mix of plotters and supporters of Model 3 and the deviant associates of Model 1. These plotters and supporters of terrorism represented 18% of the total sample. This group of offenders were U.S. citizens, unmarried, mostly converts to Islam, and had a high level of education. Lastly, the trained jihadists and mobile lone wolves were dispersed among all cluster of Model 3. Nonetheless,

the clusters shared offense and offender characteristics, including overseas travel, terrorist training, and terrorist affiliation. Table 4.8 provides results.

Table 4.8

Comparison of Model 1 and Model 3 Cluster Assignments

| Model 1: Terrorist Affiliation | Model 3: Event Type | | | | Row Total |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| | Cluster 1: Unmarried Attack Oriented Offenders | Cluster 2: Married Supporters | Cluster 3: Unmarried Plotters and Attackers | Cluster 4: Unmarried Non- Radical Plotters and Attackers | |
| Cluster 1: Internet Radicals | 46 people (26% of sample) <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Unmarried • U.S. citizens • Some college education | 0 (0%) | 2 people (1% of sample) <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Involved in plots • Unmarried • No children • Int. travel • Foreign training | 0 (0%) | 48 people <i>Joint characteristics</i> • No terrorist affiliation • Radicalization via propaganda, internet, social networking sites • Material supporters |
| Cluster 2: Deviant Associates | 0 (0%) | 10 people (6% of sample) <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Married with children • Int. travel • Foreign training • Muslim affiliated | 0 (0%) | 31 people (18% of sample) <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Involved in plots • Converts • Unmarried • Highly educated • U.S. citizens | 41 people <i>Joint characteristics</i> • Material supporters • No electronic radicalization • Al Qaeda affiliated |
| Cluster 3: Trained Jihadists | 0 (0%) | 17 people (10% of sample) <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Married with children • Direct communication w/ terrorist leaders • Muslim affiliated | 25 people (14% of sample) <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Plots • Both U.S. born and naturalized citizens • Some college • Unskilled occupation | 2 people (1% of sample) <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Plots • U.S. citizens • Converts to Islam • Highly educated • Unmarried | 44 people <i>Joint characteristics</i> • Material Supporters • Al Qaeda affiliated • Traveled overseas • Foreign training |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Cluster 4: Mobile Lone Wolves | 2 people (1% of sample) | 14 people (8% of sample) | 13 people (7% of sample) | 15 people (9% of sample) | 44 people |
| | <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Unmarried | <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Material Supporters • Professional career • Muslim affiliated | <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Plots and Material Support • Unmarried • U.S. born & naturalized citizens • Some college • Unskilled occupation | <i>Unique Characteristics</i> • Plots and Support • Sought support domestically • U.S. born • Converts to Islam • Unmarried | <i>Joint characteristics</i> • No electronic radicalization • Al Qaeda affiliated • Highly educated |

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Overall, this study found some evidence to suggest that homegrown terrorists can be parsed into clusters. Moreover, significant relationships were found among the case details and offender characteristics. This suggests that there are identifiable social and behavioral patterns among terrorist offenders that may be the focus of crime prevention efforts. Homegrown terrorists can be differentiated, albeit to a limited extent, by radicalization channels and terrorist affiliation, as well as type of offense. This chapter presents policy implications associated with the clusters of offenders found. The study revealed a typology of three groups of offenders ranging from Cyber Attackers to Convert Affiliates, and Trained Allies.

Bivariate Correlations Significant Findings

Demographic Characteristics

Contrary to what would be expected, the offenders who held a lower unskilled occupation were more likely to be involved in a more successful terrorist operation. While that may be surprising at first, terrorist attacks are now being plotted and acted upon using conventional tools and supplies at the disposal of virtually anyone. Therefore, expertise is not needed in the manufacture or assembly of special weapons to carry out an act of terrorism. It

was also found that offenders suffering or diagnosed with a mental illness were more likely to be involved in a plot or attack.

One of the implications associated with these findings is that mental health service providers should be trained to identify potential terrorist threats. A great deal of effort has gone into training law enforcement, but mental health providers may be in a good position to detect these individuals and prevent future criminal behavior. In addition, these offenders were also found to attack alone or with fewer co-conspirators than the other non-mentally unstable offenders.

Community outreach is needed between mental health services, criminal justice, and community services, particularly those faith-based programs housed within religious institutions. These civilian service providers are better positioned to identify vulnerable individuals or convicted offenders (prison-based programs) who are at risk for extremist radicalization and are likely to pose a threat to themselves and others. In the case of correctional settings, an extremist risk assessment tool could be added to intake and screening procedures so that vulnerable individuals are not housed with known activists. While this is already in place in some institutions, existing assessment tools/protocol could be modified to focus on religious affiliation and influence among inmates, particularly born again converts to Islam.

Mosques and other religious organizations can be involved in crime prevention efforts. Specifically, leaders of worship settings can be trained to identify individuals at risk or those who have a violent interpretation of the religion

and therefore pose a threat against the United States. Also, therapy, psychological evaluation, and treatment can be provided in order to prevent future extremism. There is also the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCP), which identifies those incarcerated and mentally unstable offenders and provide mental health treatment and substance abuse programs (Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, n.d.). This program is thought to increase the safety of the public by providing mentally ill offenders with the appropriate care they need. The JMHCP also helps in finding alternative prosecution methods for those mentally unstable where they can rehabilitate through treatment efforts rather than be given a punitive sentence for their offense (Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, n.d.). It may be possible to add an “extremist risk assessment” component to screening instruments used during intake. These modified risk assessments can extend the existing safety net by existing identifying individuals at-risk for radicalization.

Due to the possible occurrence of terrorism actions by mentally unstable individuals, additional research is needed. This study was not designed to examine mental health issues in detail. Future research is needed that is able to better evaluate the association between mental health and radicalization among homegrown terrorists. In addition, a future study would evaluate isolation issues for each of the participants in order to explain why these offenders are more likely to act upon with fewer co-conspirators than others.

Radicalization Processes and Case Details

The study findings indicated that terrorist offenders traveled overseas to terrorist training camps in furtherance of their crime. Specifically, offenders who traveled overseas to training camps were more likely to have more co-conspirators involved in their terrorist plot or attack. This indicates that generating networks with terrorist leaders and other terrorist officials and non-officials has not been replaced by the modern technology of the Internet and its various sharing of jihadist sources and communication outlets; such as extremist blogs, forums, and social media sites like YouTube. However, since there was no significant relationship between radicalization via overseas training and successful attack, it leads to indicate that the offender's overseas travel is operational support and not necessarily support to undertake the attack.

As discussed in the literature review, a single path to radicalization does not exist nor have we found conclusive evidence of a set of radicalization factors that indicate direct ties to terrorist activity. However, this study finds some support of the importance of Internet-based resources. It was also discovered that radicalization via the Internet, social media sites, extremist propaganda, and contact with terrorist officials has not fully replaced the operational support that is often attained by traveling overseas and attending training camps. All these methods of influence essentially work together in influencing, recruiting, and radicalizing individuals to commit acts of terrorism. Specifically, those that were

radicalized by the use of the Internet often also used social networking sites and extremist propaganda.

The availability of violent jihadist content and extremist propaganda is only one of the quandaries that law enforcement is faced with in attempting to intercept web-based violent jihadist content and the removal of online extremism. Due to the First Amendment's freedom of expression, terrorist individuals take advantage of American hosting companies to create their jihadist websites, forums, YouTube accounts, and other social media. There are many hosting companies, like GoDaddy.com and Dynadot.com that allow their customers to create a website, such as the RevolutionMuslim.com, without having to disclose their true identities by providing "care of" company addresses (Klausen, Barbieri, Reichlin-Melnick, & Zelin, 2012).

Another problem that law enforcement is faced with is that not all content can be removed, just because it is jihadist related. The content has to meet the imminent threat criteria (which is rarely the case) or violate the web hosts' terms of service (Klausen et al., 2012). Policy allowing law enforcement to interdict or shut down jihadist content is needed in order to minimize the number of individuals being radicalized online. An alternate solution would be some kind of systematic web crawling or Internet bot, within the World Wide Web (the Web) to capture who is accessing the extremist propaganda and the various blogs, websites, forums, etc. that are linked together and essentially accessed simultaneously. This web crawling system would identify specific targets, those

that are the most influential or attract the most viewers and this would aid in their removal from the Internet.

For example, there is the specially designed web crawling program that was used in a recent study by Kila Joffres and Martin Bouchard (2014) in which the researchers examined the effectiveness of different disruption strategies of child pornography websites on the Internet. One of its findings indicated hub attacks to be the most effective. Hub attacks are defined as targeting main websites with many links to other sites. Hub attacks were found to be effective in disrupting the network since this removes links between websites, therefore reducing the amount of available material and making it harder to find (Joffres & Bouchard, in press). Applied to the current study, this would mean targeting extremist or terrorist related websites that have a large array of links to other extremist or terrorist material on the Internet.

Systematically disabling critical websites could be an effective crime prevention strategy. It would serve to increase the effort needed to access extremist material, but also protects free speech since it is not invading individuals' access routes, but instead targeting the specific content of the Web in its entirety. While the findings do not yield all the avenues used by terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda, it can be stated that Al Qaeda attempts to radicalize and recruit via the Internet, extremist propaganda, overseas training, and direct communication is successful.

In addition to interdiction efforts by law enforcement via the Internet, in August 2011, the Obama Administration signed the National Strategy for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States (National Strategy for Empowering Local Partners) in order to combat terrorism in the homeland through community based approach (Bjelopera, 2014). While the National Strategy for Empowering Locals Partners has its strict goals and responsibilities in mind, it does not dictate exactly how these efforts will be administered. For example, the narrative discusses partnerships between law enforcement agencies and community leaders in order to provide information on the threat of homegrown extremism, but it does not give direction as to how those partnerships will be established. In addition, those partnerships will serve as the community's eyes to detect and prevent radicalization to violence. Ideally, this policy would meet with community leaders to provide information and training on detecting, reporting, and ultimately preventing radicalization of individuals that may lead to terrorist attacks against the United States.

Moreover, a prevention and intervention program like the National Strategy for Empowering Local Partners can be promising. But for a program to be effective, trust has to be built between law enforcement agencies and community leaders. Additionally, community leaders have to be trained and informed on the concept of radicalization and guidance to drive detection of such threatening individuals. Without proper training and relationship building, the

community will be reluctant or fearful of contacting law enforcement for help, guidance, or offer information.

Future research is needed to examine the quantity of the available jihadist content on the Internet and its access traffic by individuals, prior offenders and non-offenders. The examination of this data will yield to more rigorous regulation of the material viewed by individuals on the Internet and at what point that access will be prohibited or blocked. As already mentioned above, web crawling can be a useful tool for law enforcement and therefore another avenue of research for scholars. Scholars would be able to view the quantitative success that web crawling has on accessibility of extremist material by offenders.

Strain

The findings of the study supported Agnew's (1992) general strain theory. However, it should be noted that the researcher did not collect information on the specific motivation to commit the terrorist plot or attack. The findings indicated that those offenders who experienced negative stimuli (negative events or situations) in his or her life were less likely to be involved in a successful terrorist attack. Those offenders who experienced negative events or situations were also likely to not be able to achieve their goals in life, such as financial stability, respect, or autonomy. These results can also yield indication that those who are not successful or happy in their life achievements are less of a risk than others; such as radicalized individuals or mentally unstable individuals. While it can be stated that there is an indication of experiencing negative events in the offender's

life and criminal behavior, it is uncertain whether the offender chose to commit a crime out of revenge or prevention as theorized by Agnew (1992).

Behavioral Characteristics

It was found that those offenders involved in a more successful plot or attack had a prior criminal record, in which they were prosecuted. Furthermore, those that had a criminal history were likely to be converts to Islam. The data collected indicated instances of offenders who converted to Islam by their own will or through the influence of others. As discussed in the discussion of radicalized individuals, greater links between non-radicalized mosques and prisons are necessary in order to prevent the dissemination of unstable or violent interpretations of Islam.

Due to the fact that offenders with a prior criminal history are likely to engage in a successful plot or attack indicates more stringent probation terms and agreements may be needed. Specifically, monitoring or prohibiting Internet activity may be a condition of release. Furthermore, since those with a criminal record are also likely to be converts to Islam, religious privileges in prison should be regulated more closely. Currently, the First Amendment is a major protective barrier for prison inmates and the specific material they can receive and mail out, specifically extremist or propaganda material.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) reports that prison officials are allowed to withhold some material, on a case-by-case basis, mainly determined by prison safety. If a magazine article or set of articles is a threat to the safety of

the prison environment, the facility is allowed to remove only that unsafe material (American Civil Liberties Union, 2010). However, when it comes to outgoing mail, inmates can reach out to extremist groups freely without disruption from prison officials. Again, prison officials can only intervene, if that outgoing correspondence discusses escape plans, threats, running an illegal business, and blackmail. However, this list can be extended to include extremist radicalization, specifically violent jihadist ideology.

In addition, the activity within mosques may also need more vigilant surveillance. Since offenders who had a criminal record were also converts to Islam, religious leaders with access to convicted individuals require careful examination. Regular, intensive screenings and background checks should be conducted on all religious leaders and Imams authorized to regularly visit inmates in prison. Prison officials can create a trusted list of allowed religious leaders instead of allowing anyone into prison visitation sessions.

Future research should examine the various types of offenses by homegrown offenders in order to identify any significant patterns in prior convictions that may act as a precursor or transitioning behavior prior to committing or planning to commit an act of terrorism. This type of identification would again be useful among community leaders, religious leaders, and law enforcement. Community leaders and mosque leaders serve as the primary eyes of law enforcement in providing investigative leads and tips. This identification

would result from training, trust, and a communal dedication to identifying individuals at risk.

Additionally, an examination of Muslim inmates who turn towards violent behavior when released from prison will widen the known reach of radicalization within prison and its effects when released from prison. This goes along the basis of a web crawling system for probation officers and task force officers to use on released offenders. Again, probation officers would be the primary responders to these types of intelligence gathering that would lead to targeting larger networks of radicalized individuals.

Cluster Analysis Significant Findings

The cluster analysis indicated a total of four clusters dependent of a case detail variable: terrorist affiliation and nine offender characteristic variables. The results of the cluster analysis support the study's hypotheses. The four groups of offenders that shared case details and offender characteristics were: 1) Internet Radicals, 2) Deviant Associates, 3) Trained Jihadists, and 4) Mobile Lone Wolves. A second set of clusters, the typology of homegrown terrorists, resulted from the case detail variable: event type and eight offender characteristic variables. Those groups were Cyber Attackers, Convert Affiliates, and Trained Allies. As expected, these groups did not concur with Thachuk et al.'s (2008) three categories of homegrown terrorists: legal or illegal, second and third generation Muslims, and converts to Islam (p. 2). Instead, the groups discovered

in the study were similar and distinct in regards to marital status, foreign travel activity, and radicalization factors. These sharing characteristics among the groups presented policy implications from effective web-crawling software and stringent travel procedures.

Terrorist Affiliation

The first cluster of offenders with multiple Internet-based radicalization channels resembles Alexander's (2011) analysis of homegrown jihadist terrorists that have been trained online yet with no formal terrorist training. This was also the case with this cluster of offenders who were radicalized by jihadist material and social networking sites online but yet had no direct communication or formal terrorist training. Due to the significant radicalization through extremist material and social networking mechanisms available through the Internet, an effective web-crawling program that will interdict not only those central nodes of extremist material but also the terrorist officials or member nodes that facilitate networking among prospective terrorist individuals. As a result, a filtration system such as a web-crawler would identify a number of key words to target popular extremist websites in order to remove them from the Internet. A successful web-crawling system would be key in disrupting the multiplicity of YouTube accounts publishing jihadist material as indicated by Klausen et al.'s (2012) study that revealed 41 jihadist YouTube accounts to be interconnected.

Second, the foreign travel activity of homegrown terrorists, both U.S. citizens and non-U.S. citizens and their interaction with terrorist officials suggests

a more stringent travel policy. A pre-screening and a series of questions should be made, similar to when foreign nationals are in the process of being granted a visa for temporary visits. Such factors are considered before a foreign national is granted permission to visit the United States: the purpose of the trip, the individual's intent to depart the United States after their trip; and/or the individual's ability to pay all costs of the trip. The answers to these questions will give insight to the true motives and reasons of why those individuals want to travel to those destinations and therefore be able to prevent travel when feasible. Moreover, the individuals who are less suspicious to the community and law enforcement; those with legitimate jobs blend in with the rest of society and this may help them to pursue their terrorist agendas.

A pre-screening in which the individuals' Internet activity is monitored to see if he or she has had a pattern of accessing jihadist material on the Internet would aid detection of at risk individuals. This type of web screening can also be done when individuals are being considered for a visa approval from the United States. In addition, the United States would work closely not only with equivalent Department of State officials in those destination countries but also American consulates, if present in those countries. This global effort would effectively detect supporters who may be conspiring with others abroad, recruiting abroad, and receiving operational support abroad as well. Nonetheless, this type of screening and collaboration efforts would prevent radicalized individuals from gaining further terrorist influence and support overseas.

Since the offenders in the second set of clusters had some college education, prevention outreaches at school institutions would also guide the student body and faculty in detecting these students. Schools often have some kind of restrictions on the content that can be accessed on the Internet while on school premises. Internet surveillance is needed to prevent relationships from being developed with terrorist officials and recruiters. The school can take further action by setting up a system that records pings when a student attempts to access extremist propaganda and social networking sites with violent jihad content. This record of pings can then be given to law enforcement for investigation leads and intelligence. These efforts would entail task force working groups between technician support personnel, police, and various faculty officials.

The last cluster of the analysis included a group of offenders who were neither radicalized nor traveled abroad. While these offenders lacked the operational support abroad and the influencing channels of the other cluster, they were able to carry out operations in support of terrorist organizations and plotted against the United States. This cluster can be closely aligned to Thachuk et al.'s (2008) third category, which consists of converts to Islam. Therefore, this cluster needs to be interdicted at a domestic level in which converts unite to worship the violent perspective of Islam. This group of offenders held unskilled jobs and some, while few, had a presence of negative experiences. Those who had negative experiences might have been the reason for turning to Islam in order to

find more positive life experiences, as indicated by Agnew's (1992) general strain theory.

A Typology of Homegrown Terrorists

The cross-tabulation provided a more in depth description of the three groups of offenders based on both terrorist affiliation and event type. The comparison signaled three main groups of offenders who should be the primary targets for interdiction and prevention of future terrorist activity. Those three groups of offenders were Cyber Attackers, Convert Affiliates, and Trained Allies. First, the comparison signaled a group that was exactly the same in both models: Cyber Attackers. This suggests there is, in fact, a unique group of offenders that are successful at providing material support to terrorism without direct affiliation from a terrorist organization. This research indicates that policy should be targeting these individuals through both a domestic and international approach, mainly through a monitoring and web-crawling policy since offenders are gaining Internet-based support, some of which derives from videos and other propaganda created by terrorist organizations.

The second group on the other hand, Convert Affiliates, is a group with mixed characteristics such as some college education, lack of web-based radicalization, no overseas travel, and conversion to Islam. These supporters pose a major threat to the homeland due to their close ties to terrorist organizations. Since these offenders do not conduct any international travel and

are not active on the Internet, their religious ties and college peers need to be examined. Specifically, these offenders primarily funded terrorist organizations.

The third group of offenders, which were both plotters and attackers who pose yet a different threat that, may be more difficult to prevent and detect than the others. These individuals were more highly educated, held U.S. citizenship, and traveled overseas for foreign training. Due to the lack of foreign nationality and radicalization, surveillance is difficult. Therefore, more stringent interdiction and surveillance of individual's monetary activity is needed. In depth investigation is needed when large amounts of money are being deposited, withdrawn, or transferred within accounts.

Law enforcement should not limit themselves on the array of civil and criminal penalties when individuals violate existing financial rules and regulations. Suspicious activity reports at financial institutions are already generated but not sufficient. Further, increased taxation on some of the materials, such as precursor chemicals bought by supporters and plotters may make it less likely for offenders to illicit funds and property since it will be at a higher cost. Lastly, task force officers can work in conjunction with the chemical industry, including manufactures and distributors, to detect offenders who attempt to purchase such materials for terrorist activity.

Future research would ideally examine groups of terrorist individuals based on the shared characteristics found in the clusters. As already discussed, additional research is needed to examine the vast amounts of available extremist

propaganda on the Internet and the number of individuals accessing that material on a day to day basis. In addition, travel patterns of terrorist offenders would be examined to infiltrate terrorist organizations present in those countries of interest.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations in this study. First, there were significant variations in the availability, accuracy, and depth of information from case to case. The availability and quality of information often depended on such factors as the scope and level of advancement of the plot and whether the plot was actually executed. For instance, an advanced plot or a completed attack generally resulted in a greater dissemination of information owing to the expanded focus by prosecutors and the news media. These cases often become high profile cases. High profile cases that were prosecuted through lengthy trials were more popular among different media outlets allowing the researcher access to more disseminated information.

Trials are not only lengthy, but often result in more information disclosed and publicity in the media than those in which pleas are entered. Those cases in which the offender underwent a trial produced more information about the offense and the defendant's background, radicalization, and operative modes versus those who plead guilty to the charges. Those cases that did not result in trials due to plea agreements, such as offenses of material support to terrorism yielded less information than the aforementioned. Moreover, because of national

security issues, prosecutors may intentionally dispose of cases by plea bargains to limit media access or information dissemination. This may limit the external generalization of the study findings.

The typology generated is more apt to apply to individuals involved in high profile cases that are involved in more advanced plots or are successful in executing their attacks. However, since the study also tracked unsuccessful plots and instances of material support to terrorism, a greater variation in offender characteristics was found than what prior research has found. It is important to note that the defendants' capability, risks, and operational expertise varied significantly. Thus, the variation in offender characteristics revealed during this study provides a wider insight to the type of offenders involved in homegrown terrorism.

Another limitation of the study was the availability of information for specific details of the offenders' background, specifically marital status, number of children, mental condition, former military experience, and conversion to Islam. Information for these variables were found to only be available when the offender did, in fact, have a spouse, children, a mental condition, former military experience, and was a convert to Islam. It was found that the varying news outlets specifically stated the presence of these variables only when it was known about the offender. On the contrary, if the offender was not married, did not have children, etc., it was not clearly stated in the news reports.

Similarly, the same problem arose with the means of radicalization and strain variables. This information was again only clearly stated when the defendant was, in fact, radicalized or experienced some type of strain in his or her life. Instances in which the offender did not become radicalized or experienced strain, was not noted in the court documents and news articles. The researcher had to assume an absence of radicalization and strain when it was not noted in the sources being used. While this information was found to be inconsistent among the participants of the study, the cluster analysis indicated significant findings involving these characteristics that are useful for future studies.

Another variable that was problematic was reported mental illness of offender. For example, information about an offender's mental condition is less available than simple demographic details such as age and ethnicity affiliation. The mental illness variable was also difficult to analyze because it is likely that many defendants with mental conditions failed to seek or receive mental health care. Second, some mental conditions may not meet the legal criteria, and thus may not be fully examined in a trial or plea agreement. Insanity is a legal designation, not a psychiatric one. As a result, there may be a greater number of people who experience psychiatric distress without that information being uncovered at trial. Moreover, the offenders' mental illnesses may not be revealed until they are undergoing criminal proceedings, therefore the information may be present but unavailable.

While it was the case that some of the offenders' mental illnesses were uncovered until their arrest and during their criminal proceedings, there were, in fact, cases in which mental illness was present. While the data set may not be complete for all the cases, specifically reported mental illness, the variables examined presented significant correlations with other offender characteristics.

Although limitations were uncovered during the course of this study, the findings contribute to the growing research efforts on homegrown terrorism and the individuals involved in terrorist operations. Moreover, this study presented a working typology of homegrown terrorists that can be used in future research. The typology offers a basis in classifying homegrown terrorists within the United States and policy for prevention and detection of homegrown terrorism.

APPENDIX A
TERROR PLOTS INCREASING

Figure 1. Terror Plots Increasing

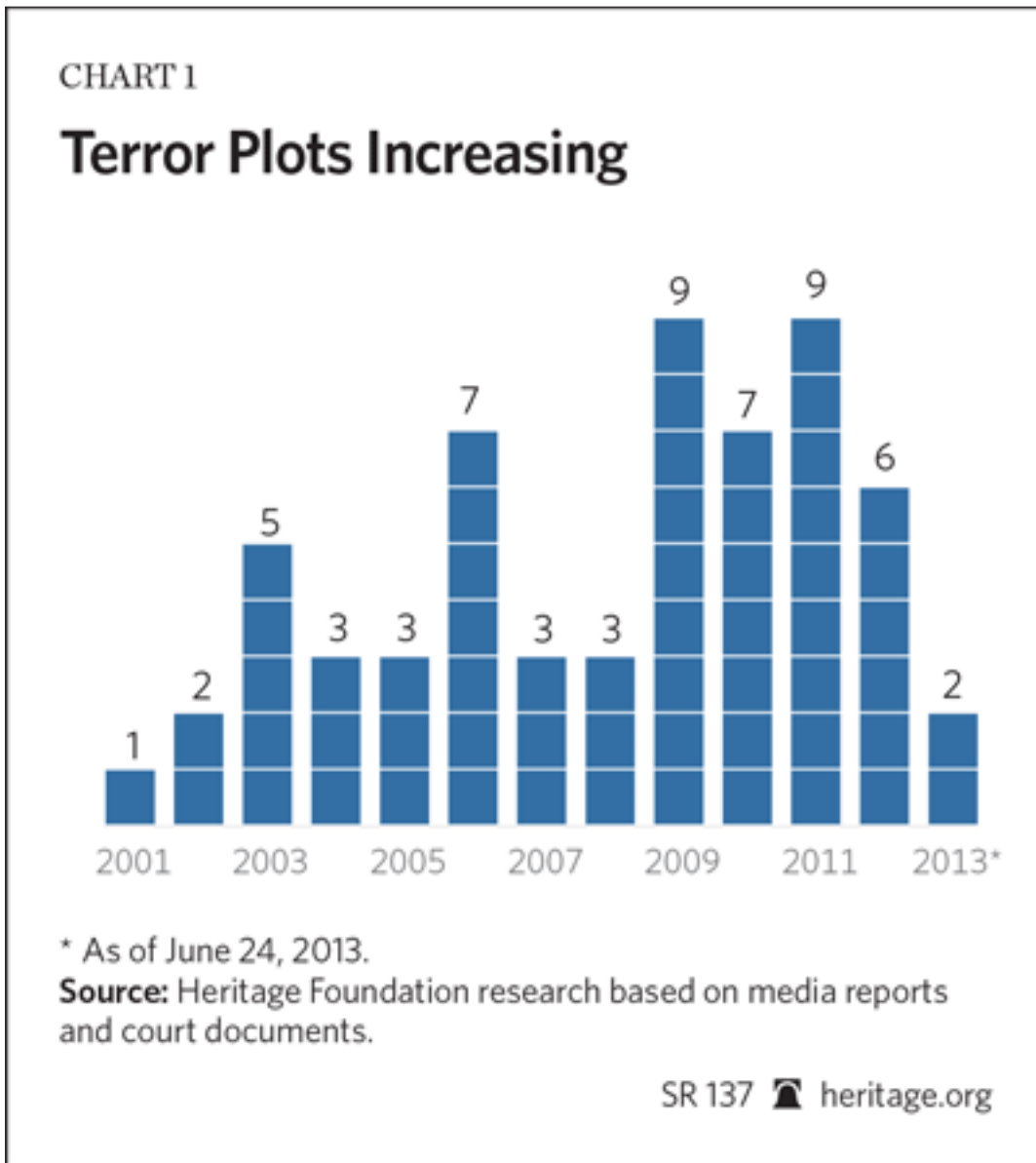


Figure 1. The Number of terrorist plots and attacks, by year, from 2001 to 2013.

Zuckerman, J., Bucci, S. P., & Carafano, J. J. (2013). *60 terrorist plots since 9/11: Continued lessons in domestic counterterrorism*. Retrieved from <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/07/60-terrorist-plots-since-911-continued-lessons-in-domestic-counterterrorism>

APPENDIX B
LIST OF VARIABLES

| | |
|---|--|
| <i>Case Details</i> | |
| Offense Type | Type of case committed by offender(s), coded: 1= Material Support to Terrorism/Conspiracy to Provide Material Support to Terrorism, 2=Plot to Attack, 3 = Attempted Attack, 4 = Successful Attack. |
| Terrorist organization affiliation | Specific terrorist organization affiliated with offense, coded: 1 = Al Qaeda, 2 = Other, 3 = None. |
| Number of offenders involved | Number of offenders involved in the offense, coded as a count variable. |
| Number of co-conspirators involved | Number of co-conspirators involved in the offense, coded as a count variable. |
| Number of co-conspirators who are non-U.S. persons | Number of co-conspirators involved in the offense, who do not hold any American citizenship, coded as a count variable. |
| <i>Offender Characteristics</i> | |
| <i>Demographics</i> | |
| Age at time of arrest | Age of the offender, coded by years old. |
| Gender/Sex | Dummy variable coded 1 if male, 0 if female. |
| Citizenship Status | A scale based on degree of legal American citizenship status, coded: 1 = U.S. Citizen (U.S. born), 2 = Naturalized U.S. citizen (non-U.S. born), 3 = Legal Permanent Resident (LPR), 4 = Visa holder (ex: student visa), 5 = Undocumented (illegally residing in the country). |
| Immigrant generation | Offender's generation level of immigrating to the United States, coded: 1 = 3 rd generation, 2 = 2 nd generation, 3 = 1 st generation. |
| Ethnicity affiliation | String variable, recoding the ethnic affiliation as a social/cultural group or nation of origin. |
| Education (highest achieved) | Offender's highest achieved education, coded: 1 = less than high school, 2 = completed high school, 3 = technical school, non-college, 4 = some college, 5 = completed college (BA/BS), 6 = some graduate school, 7 = completed graduate school (M.A.), 8 = some/completed Doctorate (Ph.D.) |
| Occupation (most recent) | Offender's most recent occupational status, coded: 1 = Professional (physicians, architect, teachers), 2 = Semi-Skilled (police, military, mechanics, small business owners, and students), 3 = Unskilled/None |

| | |
|---|---|
| Reported Marital status at the time of the offense/arrest | Dummy variable coded 1 if married/common law, 0 if single, unmarried, separated/divorced. |
| Reportedly have children | Dummy variable coded 1 if offender has one or more children, 0 if no children. |
| <i>Social</i> | |
| Reported religious affiliation | String variable |
| Reported former military involvement/training | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| Reported mental condition | A scale computed by summing offender's reported suffering from diagnosed/suspected mental condition, coded 1 = mental condition, 0 = no mental condition. 1) mental health issues, mentally troubled, mentally ill, 2) schizophrenia, 3) hallucinations, 4) bipolar disorder, 5) depression, 6) anxiety, 7) Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) |
| Reported radicalization/influence to terrorism via the Internet | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| Reported radicalization/influence to terrorism via social networking sites (ex: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| Reported radicalization/influence to terrorism via extremist propaganda (online, print) (ex: Inspire magazine, RevolutionMuslim.com) | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| Reported radicalization/influence to terrorism via email or direct contact with terrorist officials | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |

| | |
|--|---|
| Reported radicalization/influence to terrorism via overseas training with terrorist organizations | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| <i>Strain variables</i> | |
| Failure to achieve positive valued goals: | A scale computed by summing offender's failure to achieve the following positive valued goals, coded: 1 = event occurred, 0 = event did not occur. 1) acquisition of wealth, 2) status and respect, 3) autonomy |
| Loss of positive valued stimuli (i.e. positive experiences or acquisitions): | A scale computed by summing offender's loss of the following positive valued stimuli, coded 1 = event occurred, 0 = event did not occur. 1) death of friend/romantic partner, 2) divorce, 3) separation, 4) theft of a valued object, 5) loss of a good job, 6) loss of the use of a car for a period of time |
| The presentation of negative stimuli (i.e. negative experiences or loss): | A scale computed by summing offender's presentation of the following negative stimuli, coded 1 = event occurred, 0 = event did not occur. 1) abusive parent, 2) boss who puts undue strain on individual, 3) parental unemployment, 4) deaths in the family, 5) illness in the family, 6) homelessness, 7) economic hardship/poverty |
| <i>Behavioral</i> | |
| Reported Criminal record | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| Offender type | Method in which terrorist offense was committed, coded: 1 if acted alone, 2 if acted in a group. |
| Role of offender within group | Dummy variable coded 1 if leader, 2 if non-leader (group member). |
| Reported Imam leader | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| Reported international travel | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| Instrumentality | Instrumentality involved in offense, coded: 1 = weapons (ex: handguns, WMD), 2 = general supplies, 3 = explosives, 4 = safe houses and support |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| | (ex: target lists, passports, driver's license, surveillance, etc.), 5 = funding, 6 = jihad training, 7 = multiple instrumentalities |
| Convert to Islam/Muslim | Dummy variable coded 1 if yes, 0 if no. |
| Prior Religion | Religion prior to converting to Islam/Muslim, coded as a string variable. |

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