Translating Conceptualizations Into Practical Suggestions: What the Literature on Radicalization Can Offer to Practitioners

Holly F. Young, Magda Rooze, and Jorien Holsappel

Translating Conceptualizations Into Practical Suggestions: What the Literature on Radicalization Can Offer to Practitioners

Holly F. Young, Magda Rooze, and Jorien Holsappel
Impact, Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, Diemen, The Netherlands

This article explores what the research literature on radicalization offers to practitioners who are coming into contact with a group which is potentially vulnerable to radicalization. This literature provides comprehensive examinations of the socioeconomic context in which extremism and radicalization can flourish, the psychological processes that individuals undergo before extremism and radicalization develop further into terrorism. and factors that can influence deradicalization and disengagement. We explore how the expertise contained within scientific literature on this subject can be seen through a practical lens and translated into practice for professionals working with young people who might be open to the messages of radical groups. We identify key figures who can play positive roles during the deradicalization process and provide suggestions as to how they might do so.

Keywords: radicalization, teachers, religious leaders, police

The purpose of this article is to gather together a selection of the comprehensive academic literature on extremism, radicalization, and terrorism. This literature has been selected from the broad pool on the subject because it has direct relevance to describing the radicalization process and identifying indicators that might help with prevention activities for professionals in contact with vulnerable populations.

Our analysis of this literature aims to distill conclusions that might be used to support professionals working with populations that could be vulnerable to radicalization. Radicalization, if unchecked can proceed to become terrorism. Individuals coming into professional contact with this population are uniquely placed to play a preventative role.

Method

This article is one of the results of TERRA (Terrorism and Radicalisation: European Network-Based Prevention and Learning Program), a 2-year research program undertaken by Impact Knowledge and Advice Centre in the Netherlands and the Association of the Victims of March 11, Madrid, from Spain. Funding for this project was provided by the European Commission Directorate General of Home Affairs. A follow-up program, TERRA II was launched in August 2014 and will roll out the other products of TERRA I in the form of trainings given Europe-wide to professional people who might be confronted with radicalization in the line of their work.

TERRA's research began with a literature search and review. We filtered the immense body of literature covering radicalization according to its relevance to the mandate of this project. The literature included here does not,

HOLLY F. YOUNG acquired her PhD from the University of Glasgow in 2007. She now works as a researcher and policy advisor for Impact, a national knowledge and advice center for psychological care concerning critical incidents. Impact is based in the Netherlands. Holly has worked on several international projects and is now focused on radicalization and terrorism.

MAGDA ROOZE is a clinical psychologist specialized in child and youth psychology. She also has a master's in business administration. She currently works for Arq Psychotrauma Expert Goup as a senior advisor on European affairs and is the project leader of Terra.

JORIEN HOLSAPPEL acquired her PhD in religious studies from the University of Groningen in 2010. She now works as a researcher and policy advisor for Impact. Her specializations are rituals, spiritual care following disasters, and psychosocial care following disasters from a public health perspective. She worked on TERRA from 2013–2014.

CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING THIS ARTICLE should be addressed to Holly F. Young, Impact, Arq Psychotrauma Expert Group, Nienoord 5, Diemen 1112XE, the Netherlands; E-mail: h.young@impact.arq.org

therefore, attempt to represent all of the literature available on the subject of extremism, radicalization or terrorism, but focuses geographically on Europe, on models that describe a radicalization process, on signals that might indicate that someone is in the process of radicalizing, on which professional groups might have an influence on this process and on how this influence might be used to steer someone away from violence and toward integration in European society. For this reason, specific theories, for example on terror management or on methods used by radical groups to contact vulnerable individuals, have not been included in this review. No distinction is made either between types of radicalization (left or right wing, Islamist, separatist, etc.) because the models we found—discussed below—suggest that the causes and progress of a radicalization process tend to be the same no matter what the political, social, or religious cause.

Several tools have been produced on the basis of this literature, tailored specifically for the professional groups identified by the literature review as being particularly relevant. These tools have been designed to explain to these professionals why and how their involvement is desirable and to give some indicators that might show that someone might be radicalizing. They include recommendations on what to do—and what not to do—in this situation. These tools have been produced by TERRA's researchers and an international group of experts. These experts included academics, representatives from the professional fields we identified as being particularly relevant, victims of terrorism, former radicals and former terrorists. They have been piloted throughout Europe in a series of focus groups and adjusted to reflect the feedback we received during that process. This article reflects the essential findings of the literature review.

Definition of Terms

Although we can usefully conclude that all terrorism is the end product of a process of radicalization, it does not hold true that all radicalization processes lead to terrorism. Indeed, Borum (2011) warned that equating the two is deeply ill-advised, pointing out that "most people who hold radical ideas do not engage in terrorism" (p. 8). Many authors offer definitions of radicalization, variously concluding that it expresses a "personal and political transformation" (Christmann, 2012) to an "increasing . . . commitment to intergroup conflict. Descriptively, radicalization means change in beliefs, feelings, and behaviors in directions that increasingly justify intergroup violence and demand sacrifice in defense of the ingroup" (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008).

For the purposes of this article, we found the broad definition offered by Schmid (2013) to be helpful, as it encompasses both individual and group processes:

> An individual or collective (group) process whereby, usually in a situation of political polarization, normal practices of dialogue, compromise and tolerance between political actors and groups with diverging interests are abandoned by one or both sides in a conflict dyad in favor of a growing commitment to engage in confrontational tactics of conflict waging. These can include either (i) the use of (non violent) pressure and coercion, (ii) various forms of political violence other than terrorism, or (iii) acts of violent extremism in the form of terrorism and war crimes. The process is, on the side of rebel factions, generally accompanied by an ideological socialization away from the mainstream or status quo—oriented positions more radical or extremist positions involving a dichotomous world view and the acceptance of an alternative focal point of political mobilization outside the dominant political order as the existing system is no longer recognized as appropriate or legitimate. (p. 18)

Schmid's (2013) definition successfully includes both the individual and group process and places this process in its context. An essential feature of the radicalization process is that the views of the radicalizing individual or group is increasingly at odds with the accepted norms of the society they are situated within.

The difficulty of defining the term *terrorism* is equally widely remarked on in the literature on the subject to the point that Shafritz, Gibbons, and Scott (1991) concluded that it is "unlikely that any definition will ever be generally agreed upon" (p. 260). This difficulty appears to originate in the scope of activities which are considered to be terrorist actions, the purpose for which these activities are carried out, and the vocabulary which surrounds them: "one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter" (Moghaddam, 2005).

For the purposes of our discussion, we emulate Neumann and Rogers (2007), who follow the United Nations High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Changes, who defined

terrorism as "any action . . . that is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or noncombatants, when the purpose of such act, by its nature and context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act" (United Nations, 2004).

Extremism and radicalization are considered here to be a divergence from mainstream ideas toward another political, religious or social agenda, and terrorism the use of violence to oblige others to conform to these beliefs.

There is some consensus within the academic literature that just as radicalization can, but does not necessarily, lead to terrorism, disengagement from terrorist activity can, but does not necessarily, mean that an individual or group no longer holds radical views. In other words, disengagement and deradicalization are not the same thing. Reinares (2011) has been clear on this issue, noting that while personal circumstances such as a new relationship or the birth of a child could often prompt those engaged in terrorist activity (in this case involvement with the Basque separatist group ETA) to leave violent activism behind, a more fundamental step back from the ideology of the group was not necessarily concurrent with this process.

Our study takes a practical, preventative approach. There is now extensive research in the field of deradicalization and terrorism, rendering various models of the psychosocial, economic and political factors which lead someone to metamorphose from an ordinary civilian into an armed combatant, prepared to take lives in the name of his cause and, in some cases, sacrifice his own.

This research has mostly been produced by academics, and the challenge is to translate this vital knowledge into programs that can be used by practitioners working on the front lines of radicalization—those, such as school teachers, law enforcement agents, and youth and social workers, who come into daily contact with potentially vulnerable communities and individuals. Our focus is on professionals who interact with a vulnerable young population.

In the first part of this article, we consider the various models that illustrate a pathway toward radicalization, with an emphasis on what they can tell us about the process itself, how it might be recognized, and which key figures might influence its progress. In the second part, we

move on to provide practical recommendations derived from the research to support practitioners working with young people vulnerable to radicalization.

The Psychological Models of the Radicalization Process

The difficulty of conducting empirical research into terrorism is much lamented in the literature on the subject. Fully fledged terrorists seldom survive the attacks they carry out, many taking their own lives in the process. Those who do survive are frequently disinclined to participate in research on the topic. Despite this, many academic researchers have successfully created models to describe the psychological process which an individual experiences during the radicalization process.

To metamorphose from an ordinary citizen into a fully fledged terrorist, the individual must progress through a psychological and practical process.

Models that describe this process in current literature are manifold. Ostensibly, all document the process through which an ordinary member of the public forms a certain set of beliefs, seeks a group that seems to appropriately reflect them, and ultimately, carries out an act of violence against civilians in the belief that this act will somehow further the aims of this group. These theories vary drastically in scope, and a closer examination illustrates that they do not tend to contradict one another but instead to complement one another, some highlighting in greater detail one stage in the process than another.

We focus on three particular models for the purposes of our discussion. These are Moghaddam's (2005) Staircase to Terrorism model, McCauley and Moskalenko's (2008) 12 mechanisms model and Doosje and de Wolf's (2010) matrix. These models, respectively, describe the psychosocial essence of the radicalization process, place it into a broader social and political context, and develop the model along a probable time line and identify key figures who can play a role along the way.

Moghaddam's (2005) Staircase to Terrorism model provides a valuable resource for a prevention and deradicalization based approach. Its focus is individual at a psychological level, and it tracks the radicalizing individual from ordi-

nary civilian all the way through to fully operational terrorist up five conceptual "stairs" on a staircase, beginning on the ground floor and ending on a fifth stair—the terrorist act itself.

He described the ground floor as being composed of the general perception of a population of their material conditions. Crucial to this perception are the elements of fairness and just treatment. Moghaddam (2005) used the phrase of "perceived deprivation" to express the psychological phenomenon by which an individual feels that he, and his fellow members of an ethnic, religious, political, or even professional group do not have the same advantages as those from other groups. This perception can guide an individual's' behavior, leading them up the staircase. The sense that they are unable to influence this situation through legitimate means can lead them to progress to the first floor, which Moghaddam titled "perceived options to fight unfair treatment" (p. 163). On this stair, an individual's progress up the staircase can be halted by having access to legitimate means through which to address the perceived unfairness. These legitimate means might be, for example, legal proceedings, or the opportunity to participate in democratic processes which can positively influence the situation of their group. If these options are not available, however, their sense of injustice might be crystalized yet further, leading them to the next floor: "displacement of aggression" (p. 164).

The key factor that Moghaddam (2005) highlighted here is that it is the individual's perception of their context which guides their behavior. Consequently, certain subculture norms could guide individuals to perceive society as closed and unjust. In this respect, Moghaddam's model places the highest emphasis on "soft power" and the struggle to influence normative systems, including in the sphere of electronic communications. Its focus is therefore laid on prevention.

On the second floor, some individuals feel that injustices'(real or perceived) which they experience cannot be redressed through legitimate means, and these perceptions form the basis for a new morality. This involves laying the blame for the unjust situation at the feet of the group perceived to be in a better position, and accepting that terrorism is morally acceptable. This view has been supported within other literature, for example by Stern (2004), who

argued that the terrorist comes to see himself as perfectly morally "good." Horgan (2008) added that sense as a necessary characteristic for an individual who eventually joins a violent group "Crucially, the person has to believe that engaging in violence against the state or its symbols is not inherently immoral" (Horgan, 2008, p. 85) Thus, 'the ends justify the means' thinking develops.

On the third floor, "moral engagement," this parallel morality becomes more developed within the individual, leading him to believe that an ideal society is achievable, and that any means are justified to achieve it. It is on this floor that commitment to a terrorist organization or cause takes place.

At this point, those who become morally disengaged from mainstream society and morally engaged with "terrorism is justified" thinking develop into "lone wolves," or they work with only one or two others rather than having actual operational links to extensive terrorist networks.

Moghaddam (2005) posited that once an individual has progressed to the fourth floor, "solidification of categorical thinking and perceived legitimacy of the terrorist organization," they have connected to a terrorist organization, and it has become central to their daily life. They now function as a member of a terrorist cell, from which they receive a great deal of positive attention, both from a recruiter and from a cell leader. In the case of a lone wolf, self-generated terrorist individuals and small groups, the reinforcement of behavior is often through the Internet. This reinforcement is also sustained through a "parallel universe" that is created by the terrorist individual, a universe that is completely secretive and sees mainstream society as evil and a justifiable target for terrorist attacks.

The fifth and last floor is called "the terrorist act and sidestepping of inhibitory mechanisms." At this stage, the individual, now a fully fledged terrorist either as a lone wolf or a terrorist cell member, categorizes civilians firmly as "them," in the "us and them" formulation, and justifies violence against them in this way. The terrorist act is carried out through sidestepping mechanisms that usually prevent civilians from harming one another (such as pity), through the speed at which a terrorist act is carried out, allowing no time for the terrorist to establish any contact or emotional connection with their

victims, and the belief that the act is perpetrated against an enemy population.

Critics of Moghaddam's (2005) theory are few and far between, with one example from Lygre, Eid, Larrson, and Ranstorp (2011). Their literature review sought to find evidence to support Moghaddam's theory in studies on terrorism. They concluded that while the phenomena described on each floor were broadly supported by empirical evidence, movement from one floor to the next was less clearly visible in academic research. They suggest not to consider the stairs as necessarily linear, but as "components" of the process of radicalization, with an increasing likelihood of terrorism when the components converge in a certain situation.

Lygre et al.'s (2011) research confirms that Moghaddam's (2005) theory is a sound one. Support for his "floors" is strong, and their argument that transition from one floor to the next is not supported by written evidence does not form any obstacle to the use of his work as a basis for a basis for a preventative approach, as what fails to show clearly in the academic research—that an individual moves up these floors—is amply demonstrated in the worldwide news on a regular basis—that people who were once civilians mobilize up the staircase to carry out terrorist attacks.

This perspective of radicalization as a mix of certain distinctive components has been proposed by McCauley and Moskalenko (2008) in their 12 mechanisms model (Please refer to Table 1). Their model by no means contradicts Moghaddam's model (2005), but rather sets it into a broader context. They identify three domains in which radicalization can take place: individual, group, and mass:

Within this model, most terms are self explanatory. We might add that on an individual level, "joining a radical group—the slippery slope" describes the process in which the individual experiences an increasing degree of commitment to and involvement with the group. "Joining a radical group—the power of love" shows how an individual is recruited through family or friendship ties. "Extremity shift in likeminded groups" refers to how contact with like minded group members lead to a polarization of the views of group members as a result of the confirmation which they receive from one another. At a group level, the authors identify four mechanisms: extreme cohesion under iso-

Table 1

McCauley and Moskalenko's (2008) 12 Mechanism Model

Level of radicalization	Mechanism
Individual	1. Personal victimization
	2. Political grievance
	3. Joining a radical group—the slippery slope
	4. Joining a radical group—the power of love
	5. Extremity shift in like-minded groups
Group	6. Extreme cohesion under isolation and threat
	7. Competition for the same base of support
	8. Competition with state power—condensation
	9. Within group competition—fissioning
Mass	10. Jiu-jitsu politics
	11. Hate
	12. Martyrdom

Note. From "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism," by C. McCauley and S. Moskalenko, 2008, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *20*, p. 418. Copyright 2008 by Taylor & Francis Group.

lation and threat, competition for the same base of support, competition with state power and within—group competition in which factions of the group become more polarized in comparison with other factions of the same group, potentially leading to a greater degree of radicalization. At the most macro level, their model includes a mass level, in which the authors identify three possible mechanisms: Jiu-jitsu politics (in which a population can solidify in support for a leader or movement as a result of external threat, hate (in which an "out group" is portrayed as so remote they become dehumanised in the eyes of the whole population, thereby justifying acts of extreme violence, and martyrdom, where the memory of those who have died for the mass cause is revered and appears to personify the cause itself.

If we compare Moghaddam's (2005) Staircase model to that of McCauley and Moskalenko (2008), it is evident that most factors in the 12 mechanisms model (following the third mechanism) connect to Steps 3 to 5 in the staircase. From this we can conclude that as the power of the context increases, degrees of personal free-

dom decrease, as individuals move up the staircase. In the first steps, the individual perception of environment is crucial and emphasis is on psychological factors, while in the later stages specific actors, ideologies and group processes are increasingly influential. These factors are vital to preventative tools such as those created by TERRA.

Doosje and de Wolf's (2010) matrix use (Please see Table 2) Moghaddam's (2005) Staircase as the foundation for a yet further developed matrix. They translate the overview of social and psychological factors given in the Staircase model into indications of radicalization and the implications for prevention or deradicalization and identify key-figures who can play a role in intervention on each level of the radicalization process. Athough their database focuses on Islamic radicalization, their conclusions are of great value also to other forms of radicalization, because they deal with the process of radicalization, how those around the radicalizing person might notice their development, and communicate with other key figures about it.

The identification of key figures who can play a role in deradicalization is an important starting point. Their choices are also supported by Silke (2008) in his research on the characteristics of radicalized individuals. Silke suggested that the vast majority of terrorists are young (in their late teens or early 20s) and male, giving the following argument to support this theory:

> It is already well established in other spheres that young males are associated with a multitude of dangerous and high-risk activities . . . Statistics on violent crime consistently show that perpetrators are most likely to be males between 15 and 25 years of age . . . this is a very robust finding that is remarkably stable across cultures and regions . . . more crime in general is committed by teenagers and young adults than by any other age category. Adolescence brings with it a dramatic increase in the number of people who are willing to offend, and cross-cultural studies tend to show that the peak age for male offending has generally been between 15 and 18 years of age, falling off quickly for most individuals as they grow older. (Farrington, 2003)

He notes, then, that young males between the ages of 15 and 25 are particularly at risk, and as a result of Moghaddam's (2005) model we were able to further clarify that members of minority ethnic, religious, social or professional groups are additionally vulnerable. Doosje and de

Wolf's (2010) research provides a vital additional insight—that certain professional groups can be seen as especially influential. Policymakers and those in local government bear a responsibility to ensure that resources are well spread over communities and that no one group feels isolated nor deprived in comparison with another. A community approach, in which the relevant professional groups can communicate with and support each other, should be supported at policy level— otherwise any initiative in this field will be isolated and its impact limited. The broader the implementation of a community approach is, the wider its reach and impact can be.

The young age of the target group means that they are still of school age, putting teachers and other educators or youth workers in a key position. The search for a religious identity among parts of this group, which is further discussed in the following paragraphs, places religious leaders in a prominent place. Police and other law enforcement workers also obviously play a vital role. Moghaddam and Solliday's (1991) work depicts how members of ethnic minorities in particular can feel negatively targeted by the media, leading us to add journalists to this list of target groups.

There is surprisingly little to be found in the literature on the role of families—and yet they must play a role in observing changes in the behavior of a radicalizing individual and should be supported by the professionals connected to this field. The only recommendation that we feel able to make regarding these groups, therefore, is that the professional groups connected to this situation bear the importance of the family in mind and provide support to them in any way possible. Further research into this field is much needed.

It is on the basis of this research that we suggest that teachers and other youth and community workers, religious leaders, law enforcement personnel, journalists, and policymakers should form the target groups of prevention and deradicalization programs.

Target Groups

Moghaddam's (2005) Staircase to Terrorism model makes it clear that on the ground floor— that is, the general population—it is those groups who are in a less privileged position who

Table 2
Matrix of Doosje and de Wolf (2010)

Social psychological factors	Signals	Deradicalization programs should	Key figures
Ground floor			
• Frustration because of relative deprivation and discrimination	• Is potentially open to explaining ideology	• Support reduced feelings of deprivation	• Municipality, government, schools, media
• Uncertainty	• Searching for positive social identity	• Stimulate social creativity	• Municipality, government, mosque
• Openness to close others	• Influenced by others	• Create contact with people who can provide positive influence	• Municipality, government, schools
First floor			
• Hope for improvement versus frustration in case of failure	• Losing faith in justice of 'the system'	• Take away feelings of a 'glass ceiling'	• Municipality, government, schools, media
	• Loosing belief in effectiveness old groups	• Stimulate the effectiveness of the own group	
Second floor			
• Search face-to-face and via Internet	• Exploration of radical ideology	• Present other groups with clear ideology	• Municipality, mosque
• 'Commitment' to the group			
Third floor			
Uncertainty about status within the group	New member begins to:	• Prevention of isolation	• Significant others and acquaintances
	• Isolate himself from former environment	• Point out costs of group membership	
Stronger belief in the group through:	• Dress and behave like prototypical members of the group	• Present alternative groups	
• Reciprocity principle	• Rebelling against other groups particularly those very similar to the own group	• Provide information on the power of the group over the individual	• Schools
• Cognitive dissonance	• Adopt another name	• Signaling and pass on of signals	• Municipality, government, mosque, clubs, employ
• Justify efforts			• Schools
• Depersonalization			
• Polarization			
• Learning through role models			
• Foot-in-the-door principle			
• Use of power			• Significant others and acquaintances
Fourth floor			
More commitment to the group through:	• Members become less noticeable as a result of their increasing participation in a shadow world	• Signaling and pass on signals	• Teachers, community workers, youth workers, youth care institutions, police officers, guards, neighbors, parents, and close others
• Fusion of personal and social identity	• Prepare an attack		• Infiltrators

(*table continues*)

Table 2 (*continued*)

Social psychological factors	Signals	Deradicalization programs should	Key figures
• Increase of power of the group	• Members start dressing and behaving in a more western fashion again	• Take care that 'detectors' know where they can go to	
• Change in self image because of functional role	• Express hate against 'unbelievers'		
	• Teach new members the 'true doctrine'		
	• Produce legacy		
	• Resocialize by instilling fear		
		• Questioning violence as a means	
Fifth floor			
• Commit to an attack	• Make a (video) testament	• Signaling and pass on signals	• Infiltrators
• Avoid inhibitory mechanisms through:	• Withdraw all money from the bank	• Point out irrational character of used justifications	• Infiltrators
• Moral exclusion by dehumanization	• Expression of moral exclusion of other groups	• Openly acclaim doubters	• Infiltrators
• Apocalyptic thinking			
• Belief in a just world			
• Decrease of own responsibility by compliant state			

might be more vulnerable to radicalization than others. This implies that ethnic or political groups who are in a minority or opposition position would be more likely to contain radical factions than would those within the majority. However, difficulties in identifying which members of these groups might be especially vulnerable have been clearly shown in the literature. Sageman (2004) has noted that radical individuals can be found from all walks of life—those who are well educated and those who are less so, those who are from poor backgrounds, and those who are from wealthy ones. Silke (2008) has shown that despite the apparent irrationality of their actions, those who commit terrorist acts are not usually suffering from a mental disorder.

Further, focusing attention on one particular ethnic or political group could even have negative consequences for well-intentioned researchers, practitioners, or policymakers, as is shown by Bux (2007) who argued that far from leading to greater integration and cooperation with Britain's Muslim population, Britain's domestic policy of attempting to foster greater bonds between police and Muslim communities can lead entire sections of the community to feel that they have been singled out for negative attention.

Recommendations

The general findings of research on this subject allow us to make some recommendations to the target groups identified here. General findings indicate that

1. Recommendations should be broad, bearing in mind that some ethnic, political, and religious groups are more vulnerable than others, but by no means singling these groups out explicitly.
2. A preventative approach should be youth-oriented, placing educators and schools in a central role and making use of youth-friendly media (Silke, 2008 pp. 104–105).
3. Gender bias in those who radicalize should not be explicitly named when creating recommendations but should be born in mind.

Teachers and Youth Workers

Besides the parents of a teenager, teachers are arguably the most important adult figures in a young person's life. Christmann's (2012) review confirmed Silke's (2008) and Sageman's (2004, 2008) suggestions that young people are especially vulnerable, proposing that a search for identity (in the case of his review, which is about Islamic extremism in the United Kingdom, this is a religious, Islamic identity, but his point is equally relevant to a broader, social identity) or, more specifically, a confirmation of identity through interaction with like-minded individuals, is a crucial factor that prompts young people to seek out radical groups. The specific issues of identity conflicts for young people from an Islamic background growing up in a Western society is further illustrated by Moghaddam and Solliday (1991) who identified a problem that they named the "good copy" problem—that is, the situation in which an ethnic or religious group develops the sense that it and its members can only at best hope to be a good copy of the society into which it seeks to assimilate. On a macro level, this phenomenon can, they argued, affect whole countries; on a micro, individual level, it can cause great tensions for young Muslims growing up in the West. Research by de Koster and Houtman (2008), who examined right wing extremism in the Netherlands, confirms that the sense of searching for identity at a young age is applicable not only to religious groups but to political ones also.

The theory that a search for identity can lead, if not channeled in a more positive way, to radicalization, is reflected by the *Learning Together Toolkit* (2008), an online resource developed by the British government. This web site has been created to be used by schools seeking to address radicalization through a preventative approach. It suggests that within a school context, this search for identity is particularly bound to the curriculum of certain subjects, indicating that religion, citizenship, and history are key subjects for schools keen to engage in prevention. It further points out that radical groups tend to use narratives as a highly emotive (and therefore effective) tool in convincing potential recruits of the legitimacy and urgency of their cause. Lee and Leets (2002) also point out that storytelling can be an effective tool for

radical groups online. Staub (2007), in his article "Preventing Violence and Terrorism and Promoting Positive Relations Between Dutch and Muslim Communities in Amsterdam," also places schools in a central role in prevention work, suggesting that a lot of prejudice from White Dutch communities toward the Muslim population, and vice versa, stems from ignorance about one another's history, culture, and feelings about modern Dutch society. He argued that this lack of knowledge can contribute to a dehumanization of the "other" population—a factor that, when placed in the context of Moghaddam's (2005) Stairway, can play a very influential role in the movement up the floors and should therefore be tackled at grass root level. Staub further pointed out that the teaching of history—especially, a version of history that is acceptable to and agreed on by both ethnic groups, is crucial, both to the humanizing of the "other" group, truthfully looking at past wounds, and building a shared, positive vision of the future. He recommended a policy of information exchange between the two groups, especially in schools, to tackle underlying ignorance and misunderstanding, to foster contact at a profound level, and to promote a vision of the future that both ethnic groups feel reflect their identity and hopes.

It is evident that teachers are in a unique position to implement prevention activities and that some clear recommendations can be derived from these findings:

1. The teachers of some subjects are especially relevant to prevention activities, as their subjects are most closely bound to issues surrounding personal, religious, political, or ethnic identity. These subjects are history, religion, mother tongue and foreign languages, and other subjects dealing with issues such as citizenship (derived from the *Learning Together Toolkit* [2008] and input from our expert group).
2. Teaching of history should focus on building a foundation for the future in which all ethnic and religious groups feel able to invest and that allows pupils a sense of their place as an individual in history (derived from Staub, 2007).
3. Teaching of religion should focus on awareness of comparative religions and

promoting a positive religious identity (Staub, 2007; Rothschild, Abdollahi, & Pyszczynski, 2009).

4. All teachers can usefully be provided with tools which help them to recognize the signs that a pupil is engaged in a radicalization process (derived from the assertion of Doosje and de Wolf [2010] that each stage of this process is visible in the behavior of the individual) and support them in engaging in a community approach to tackle this issue.

5. The use of narrative is important and impactful in the recruitment process. A vital skill which a toolkit for teachers should include is the teaching of the analysis of narratives for accuracy and bias. Students should be able to question extreme narratives and could helpfully be exposed to alternative narratives, with an emphasis on critical thinking (de Koster & Houtman (2008); Lee & Leets, 2002).

Religious Leaders

It is evident that the factors described here in relation to teachers can also have implications for religious leaders, and more can be found in the literature on the subject. Griffin (2012) suggested that radicalization can be the expression of a group or individual's need to find meaning, a search for *nomos*. In a globalized, postmodern world, he argued, a vital human drive can be left unmet—that is, "the drive to orient our lives toward the fulfilment of a higher cause or purpose whose significance transcends that of our own brief existence" (p. 24). Assertions within the literature that a search for a religious identity can be a key factor leading young people to seek out radical groups provides a clear view of how religious leaders are well placed to offer guidance, support and positive influence in the lives of these people. Rothschild et al. (2009) provided a scholarly contribution to this discussion, asserting, on the basis of quantitative studies among 113 and 121 participants, respectively, in two studies that laying emphasis on the compassionate teachings of Christianity and Islam reduced support for military or violent action, as long as this information is received from someone perceived as a legitimate religious authority. If we combine these findings with those of Christmann (2012) and Staub

(2007), it becomes clear that religious leaders have a vital role to play in prevention. It is likely that a young person in search of a religious identity will come into contact—probably frequent and close contact—with a religious leader. If that religious leader promotes a compassionate, loving world view, and a positive religious identity, emphasizing the positive role an individual can play in society, we might theorize that the individual will be more inclined to develop a religious identity which, rather than turning to violence and extremism, leans instead toward brotherhood and compassion, both characteristics that are clearly visible in the leading religions of the West now, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Silberman, Tory, Higgins, and Dweck (2005) provided a sobering reminder that religion can be seen as a double-edged sword that can be used to promote violence and resist change just as well as to promote compassion and peace.

On a more practical level, literature has suggested that radical elements, most notably recruiters, might be identifiable to religious leaders. In their excellent study of recruitment to terrorist organizations in the United Kingdom, Neumann and Rogers (2007) asserted that mosques used to be a recruiting ground for radicals but that this is no longer so, as mosques have been placed under scrutiny by law enforcement bodies. However, they suggested that certain behavior is still very visible; visiting clerics who seek to lecture the devout during worship, people distributing leaflets, and those who approach young or vulnerable members of the community to draw them into a more radical group (although this activity usually takes place outside the mosque).

Religious leaders are well placed to

1. Observe the climate within the place of worship, and any activity which they feel might be undertaken by radicals (Neumann & Rogers, 2007).

2. As a vital point of contact for young people seeking religious identity, they can emphasis love, brotherhood, and compassion to ensure that this identity is a positive one, rather than veering toward radicalization "Help each other toward piety and righteousness. Do not help each other toward sin and enmity" (Qur'an 5:2) (De-

rived Rothschild et al., 2009, and input from experts connected to TERRA.)

Journalists

Increasingly, certain elements appear from within the literature that are relevant to several key groups. Some guidelines for journalists already exist, (see, e.g., Sindelarova & Vymetal, 2006 and Vymetal, Vitousova, Cirtkova & Kloubek, 2008), but we suggest that journalists can play a vital role in tackling some of the issues underlying the causes of radicalization, especially issues on identity, ignorance, or misunderstanding of ethnic, religious, or political groups who are living within the same country.

We have already touched on Moghaddam and Solliday's (1991) good copy theory. Within this theory, and on an individual level, a young person from an ethnic minority group, living in the West and searching for identity might be presented with the sense that he can, at best, become a good copy of his Western peers. This feeling could be influential in a sense of "perceived deprivation" as identified by Moghaddam's (2005) Staircase as a key factor in the beginning of a radicalization process. Further up the staircase, a sense of "us and them" plays a key role, along with the dehumanization of "them."

The portrayal of ethnic or religious minorities in the media can play a crucial role in the formation of both of these identities—group and individual—especially for young people. An inventory of current activities in this field is necessary before we provide recommendations on it. However, from the theoretical standpoint, it is clear that promoting a positive identity within the media at large for members of ethnic and religious minorities through, for example, making children's TV programs about families from non-Western backgrounds or providing examples of members of a minority ethnic group contributing positively to European society could help to promote a sense that members of ethnic or religious minorities need not feel that they can only aspire to being a good copy of their Western counterparts. Fair reporting on events is also crucial; that is through reporting without a rhetoric that underlines a sense of "us and them." Leudar, Marsland, and Nekvapil (2004) provided an interesting discussion of how George Bush, Tony Blair,

and Osama Bin Laden all utilized the "us and them" terminology to mobilize support for their respective policies in the wake of the September 11 attacks. Sageman (2008) also underlined the dangers of reporting on the words of radical clerics within the media; this can, he pointed out, mistakenly convey a sense that their words reflect the Islamic religion as a whole or the general beliefs of a Muslim population. He further pointed out that as young men are often attracted to radical groups in search of fame, it is inadvisable for journalists to place too much emphasis on the arrest of terrorists and to avoid a triumphalist portrayal, as again this can underline an "us and them" mentality.

In addition to noting that young males appear to be the demographic group most prone to radicalizing, Sageman includes thrill and fame seeking behavior as a factor influencing young men in their gravitation toward a radical group. This aspect (which is not reflected in Moghaddam's [2005] Staircase model) provides some valuable insights for our discussion of the implications of the literature review for practitioners working with young people, with particular regard to journalists.

The following recommendations for journalists can, therefore, already be derived from the literature:

1. This group should avoid a rhetoric in which a sense of "us and them" is underlined (Leudar et al., 2004; Moghaddam 2005; and Staub, 2007).
2. Promote a positive identity for ethnic and religious minority groups, including providing positive examples of cooperation between minority and majority groups and of minority contributions to majority society (Moghaddam & Solliday, 1991; Staub, 2007).
3. Avoid negative reporting on specific ethnic and religious groups (Moghaddam & Solliday, 1991).
4. Avoid "feeding" the thrill-seeking tendency of young men at risk of radicalization by reporting on aspects of terrorist activity which might be construed as exciting and adventurous (Sageman, 2008).
5. Be aware of the importance of reporting on discrimination (input from TERRA's

group of experts and a recommendation from the pilot of TERRA's tools).

Policy Makers

It is clear that radicalization and the prevention of it should be high on the agenda of policymakers, because if it is not so, the measures suggested above can only form, at best, isolated initiatives of limited scope. If, on the other hand, key figures can depend on support from policy-making level, a broader approach can be taken, reaching a wider pool of young people within the country.

Among European literature, there were plenty of observations regarding policy that might support deradicalization. Most of these were derived from the fact that Europe has, comparatively speaking, a long history of terrorism, which has now yielded a small group of former radicals whose process of deradicalization has been studied. Alonso (2011), in a study of former ETA members and the circumstances surrounding their disengagement, names three key factors in the Spanish government's negotiations with ETA: (a) that ETA itself was not demanding political concessions in return for disbanding, (b) that the government was not offering political concessions, and (c) that the former radicals were offered social reintegration measures, which would allow them to start a new life, free from violence. Both of the studies, Gunaratna and Bin Ali's (2009) on two Egyptian ex-radicals who are now working against Al Quaeda, and Kassimeris' (2011) on two Greek ex-radicals, name a crucial psychological factor—that the key reason behind the decision to disengage was a gradual realization—leading to conviction—that violence did not in fact provide a means to reach the political end they sought. What is perhaps noteworthy about these case studies is that they illustrate that the processes which lead these individuals to disengage took place on a personal level. No concessions were offered on a political level, and as a result a personal shift took place—a disillusionment with the means that the terrorist group was using, an a recognition that violence would not achieve the political aims of the group. Reinares (2011) added an interesting point to this debate. His qualitative research among 35 ex-ETA activists revealed that although disengagement from terrorist activity could usually be attrib-

uted to one or more of three factors (structural, organizational, or personal), it was not necessarily concomitant with deradicalization. That is, the fact that people who had formerly been engaged in violent activity on behalf of ETA were no longer, so it did not necessarily mean that they no longer believed in ETA or supported their agenda on an ideological level.

McAuley, Tonge, and Shirlow (2009) offer an interesting study of post peace process Northern Ireland, and the role that ex-Loyalist Paramilitaries are playing in their communities. They point out that time in prison is often when an individual has access to possibilities for education and becomes more politically aware. Their point here indirectly supports Moghaddam's (2005) visualization and Staub's (2007) argument—that inequality and a lack of understanding of the "them" group can be key to radicalization. Had these former radicals had opportunities for education and developing political awareness at a younger age, perhaps they would not have radicalized at all.

Additionally, these authors point out that ex-radicals in this context can be key in community building programs. As former radicals can be seen as, for want of a better word, champions of a radical cause, their voices can lend extra strength to deradicalizing activities—for example, in Northern Ireland these former radicals worked with local youth groups to demilitarize local murals. Similarly, their support for liaison programs with the "other" (in this case, Catholic) community, was perceived as lending legitimacy and value to this process.

These recommendations pertain to policy and its interaction with the individual—but implications can also be found on a state level. Schmid (2013) pointed out, as we have seen, that a state that uses nondemocratic means to enforce its laws violates certain moral codes, thereby undermining any counter terrorism narrative that it might promote. Bellamy (2009) goes a step further, proving that in areas where torture is used as part of judicial process, terrorism becomes more lethal and more widely spread. He suggested that the use of torture violates the moral code on causing harm to civilians, thereby going some way toward justifying the harm of civilians by terrorist groups.

Some recommendations for policy makers can be derived from the literature, then, although its emphasis is slightly different to that

for the other key figure groups that are largely centered on prevention.

1. Policy makers at local and national level should promote and support prevention or deradicalization measures undertaken by the other key figure groups. Without their support, community approaches and cooperation lacks a solid foundation on which to operate. (This point emerged clearly from TERRA's pilot of its tools, and from input from its associated group of experts.)

2. Policy makers should oppose the use of torture and rendition in the judicial processes of the state, as these practices violate a moral code by harming civilians, and in doing so support the radical narrative (Schmid, 2013; Bellamy, 2009).

3. Offering personal, but not political, concessions to radicals, allowing them to disengage from the group without fear for their personal safety (Alonso, 2011).

4. Recognizing that ex-radicals can play a key role in community building programs in the aftermath of violence (McAuley et al., 2009).

This article identifies a target group for prevention and deradicalization activities; young males from groups—ethnic, religious, or even professional—which might be seen as minority or disadvantaged. It suggests that although an awareness of this increased vulnerability is helpful, singling any groups or individuals out for special attention is not. It further identifies groups who come into professional contact with these groups, and provides some recommendations specific to each group.

For more information about TERRA and its work, please see the TERRA Web page at http://www.terra-net.eu/.

References

Alonso, R. (2011). Why do terrorists stop? Analyzing why ETA members abandon or continue with terrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 34,* 696–716. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2011.594944

Bellamy, A. (2009). Torture, terrorism, and the moral prohibition on killing non combatants. In W. G. K. Strikze, S. Lewandowsky, D. Denemark, J. Clare, & F. Morgan (Eds.), *Terrorism and torture: An interdisciplinary perspective* (pp. 18–43). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Borum, R. (2011). Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories. *Journal of Strategic Security, 4,* 7–36. http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/1944-0472.4.4.1

Bux, S. (2007). Muslim youths, islam and violent radicalisation: Addressing some myths. *The Police Journal, 80,* 267–278. http://dx.doi.org/10.1350/pojo.2007.80.3.267

Christmann, K. (2012). *Preventing Religious Radicalisation and Violent Extremism: A systematic review of the research evidence.* Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

de Koster, W., & Houtman, D. (2008, December). Stormfront is like a second home to me; On virtual community formation by right wing extremists. *Information, Communication & Society, 11,* 1155–1176. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13691180802266665

Doosje, B., & de Wolf, A. (2010). *Aanpak van Radicalisme; een psychologische analyse.* Amsterdam: European Union Council. Retrieved from http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:2002F0475:20081209:EN:PDF

Farrington, D. P. (2003). Developmental and life-course criminology: Key theoretical and empirical issues – the 2002 Sutherland award address. *Criminology, 41,* 221–255.

Gill, P. (2007). A Multi-dimensional Approach to Suicide Bombing. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 1.2.142221–159.

Griffin, R. (2012). *The terrorists creed: Fanatical violence and the human need for meaning.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gunaratna, R., & Bin Ali, M. (2009). De-radicalisation initiatives in Egypt: A preliminary insight. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 32,* 277–291. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10576100902750562

Horgan, J. (2008). From profiles to pathways and roots to routes: Perspectives from psychology on radicalization into terrorism. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 618,* 80–94.

Horgan, J., & Braddock, K. (2010). Rehabilitating the terrorists? Challenges in assessing the effectiveness of de-radicalization programs. *Terrorism and Political Violence, 22,* 267–291. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09546551003594748

Kassimeris, G. (2011). Why Greek terrorists give up: Analyzing individual exit from the revolutionary organization. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 34,* 556–571. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1057610X.2011.578551

Learning Together Toolkit. (2008). Retrieved from https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/_arc_SOP/Page11/DCSF-00804-2008

Lee, E., & Leets, L. (2002). Persuasive storytelling by hate groups online: Examining its effects on

adolescents. *American Behavioral Scientist, 45,* 6, 927–957.

Leudar, I., Marsland, V., & Nekvapil, J. (2004). On membership categorization: "Us," "them," and "doing violence" in political discourse. *Discourse and Society, 15,* 243–266.

Lygre, R. B., Eid, J., Larsson, G., & Ranstorp, M. (2011). Terrorism as a process: A critical review of Moghaddam's "Staircase to Terrorism." *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 52,* 609–616. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9450.2011.00918.x

McAuley, J., Tonge, J., & Shirlow, P. (2009). Conflict, transformation, and former loyalist paramilitary prisoners in Northern Ireland. *Terrorism and Political Violence, 22,* 22–40. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09546550903409528

McCauley, C., & Moskalenko, S. (2008). Mechanisms of political radicalization: Pathways towards terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence, 20,* 415–433. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09546550802073367

Moghaddam, F. M. (2005). The staircase to terrorism: A psychological exploration. *American Psychologist, 60,* 161–169. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.2.161

Moghaddam, F. (2006). *From the terrorist's point of view: What they experience and why they come to destroy.* Westport, CT: Praeger Security International.

Moghaddam, F., & Solliday, E. (1991). Balanced multiculutralism and the challenge of peaceful coexistence in pluralistic societies. *Psychology and Developing Societies, 31,* 51–72.

Neumann, P., & Rogers, B. (2007). *Recruitment and mobilisation for the Islamist militant movement in Europe.* London: King's College London.

Reinares, F. (2011). Exit from terrorism: A qualitative empirical study on disengagement and deradicalization among members of ETA. *Terrorism and Political Violence, 23,* 780–803. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09546553.2011.613307

United Nations. (2004). Report of the Secretary-General's high-level panel [Document A/59/565]. New York: Author.

Rothschild, Z., Abdollahi, A., & Pszczynski, T. (2009). Does peace have a prayer? The effect of mortality salience, compassionate values and religious fundamentalism on hostility toward out groups. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 45,* 816–827. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2009.05.016

Sageman, M. (2004). *Understanding terror networks.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Sageman, M. (2008). A strategy for fighting international Islamic terrorists *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,618,* 223–231.

Schmid, A. (2013). *Radicalisation, de-radicalisation, counter radicalisation: A conceptual discussion and literature review.* The Hague, the Netherlands: International Centre for Counter Terrorism.

Shafritz, J. M., Gibbons, E. F., Jr., & Scott, G. E. J. (1991). *Almanac of modern terrorism.* Oxford, England: Facts on File.

Silberman, I., Higgins, E. T., & Dweck, C. S. (2005). Religion and world change: Violence and terrorism versus peace. *Journal of Social Issues, 61,* 761–784. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2005.00431.x

Silke, A. (2008). Holy warriors: Exploring the psychological process of Jihadi radicalization. *European Journal of Criminology, 5,* 99–12. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1477370807084226

Sindelarova, B., & Vymetal, S. (2006). *Tragedies and journalists.* Prague: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

Staub, E. (2007). Preventing violence and terrorism and promoting positive relations between Dutch and Muslim communities in Amsterdam. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 13,* 333–360. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10781910701471397

Stern, J. (2004). *Terror in the name of God.* New York: Ecco.

Vymetal, S., Vitousova, P., Cirtkova, L., & Kloubek, M. (2008). *Journalists and victims of crime.* Prague: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.