

TERRORISM: THE EFFECT OF POSITIVE SOCIAL SANCTIONS

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

Research shows that relative deprivation, mental illness, culture, ideology, and various forms of social learning are often identified as factors that can lead an individual to terrorism. However, understanding the value of influences in the form of positive social sanctions through social contact has not been fully explored throughout terrorist studies. In regards to influencing behavior, positive social sanctions elicit a desired behavior which is reinforced through praise or rewards. By utilizing a case study approach, this thesis looks to determine the significance of positive social sanctions through social contact on select individuals who have committed an act of terror in the United States, from the time period of 2002-2012.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Defining Terrorism.....	2
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	5
Frustration Aggression.....	6
Relative Deprivation .....	8
Why Men Rebel: Redux .....	10
Mental Illness.....	12
Rational Choice Theory .....	14
Culture .....	15
Ideology .....	17
Social Learning.....	18
Positive Social Sanctions .....	19
Groups, Status, and Sanctions.....	21
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....	25
Hypothesis .....	25
What Types of Cases Did We Choose For Our Case Studies?.....	28
How Did We Choose Our Case Studies? .....	28
Data Collection: What Sources Did We Use?.....	29
What Type of Information Did We Seek?.....	30
Total Pool of Relevant Terrorist Cases from the Global Terrorism Database and Related Search, 2002-2012 .....	32
Findings .....	35
Analysis .....	38
CHAPTER FOUR: TERRORISM CASE STUDIES/MUSLIM POPULATION .....	42
Hesham Mohamed Hadayet.....	42
Sayyid Qutb .....	44

John Allen Muhammad.....	48
Lee Boyd Malvo .....	51
Naveed Afzal Haq.....	53
Abdulahkim Muhammad .....	57
Major Nidal Malik Hasan .....	62
Anwar al-Awlaki.....	68
CHAPTER FIVE: TERRORISM CASE STUDIES/NON-MUSLIM POPULATION .....	71
Jim David Adkisson .....	71
James Wenneker von Brunn.....	75
Andrew Joseph Stack III.....	78
James Lee.....	81
Wade Michael Page.....	82
Analysis .....	84
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION.....	87
Domestic Terrorism vs. International Terrorism.....	88
Propaganda.....	89
Right Wing Extremism .....	90
Findings .....	91
LIST OF REFERENCES .....	97

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. Reported cases of positive social sanctions.....	34
Figure 2. Reported cases of major events before the incident. ....	34
Figure 3. Frequency of criminal records.....	35
Figure 4. Religious background.....	35

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Age, Sex, Place of Birth, Education.....	32
Table 2: Motive, Target Type 1, Fatalities .....	32
Table 3: Religion, Marital Status, Means of Social Contact.....	33
Table 4: Positive Social Sanctions, Major Event Before Incident .....	33
Table 5: Criminal Record, Primed in U.S., Influences .....	34

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

On November 5, 2009, U.S. Army Major Nidal Malik Hasan shot and killed thirteen people and wounded thirty two others at a military institution in Fort Hood, Texas (Pike, 2011, para. 1). Unlike the September 11, 2001 attacks that included perpetrators who were citizens of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon and the UAE, Major Hasan was born in Virginia to parents who moved to the United States from Palestine. Prior to the attack on Fort Hood, Major Hasan expressed anti-American and extremist views pertaining to U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East (Pike, 2011, para. 9). It was later discovered that Major Hasan exchanged a number of e-mails with an al-Qaeda recruiter named Imam Anwar al-Awlaki, asking for spiritual guidance, regarding the act of jihad and the use of violence.

During the exchange of e-mails, Major Hasan received ideological support from Anwar al-Awlaki in the form of positive social sanctions. As it turns out, Anwar al-Awlaki praised Major Hasan for his extremist views, and attempted to justify the act of jihad against the United States (Pike, 2011, para. 9). Subsequently, Major Hasan carried out the attack on Fort Hood. The question that many may ask is what caused Major Hasan to become radicalized and commit this act of terror? This individual was 39 years old, not married and described by some as socially isolated, paranoid, and disturbed by his work with soldiers (Pike, 2011, para. 9). Similarly, why do we find individuals, like Major Hasan, who are born, raised or primarily residing in the United States, joining the jihad or committing acts of terror?

Barbara Crenshaw (1983), author of *Terrorism, Legitimacy, and Power* points out when she quotes Irving Louis Horowitz that “terrorism has become a mode of doing politics”

(Crenshaw, 1983, p. 143). For groups like al-Qaeda and its affiliates, the Aryan Nations, the Earth Liberation Front, and the Animal Liberation Front, (to name only a few), political violence in the form of terrorism is the primary vehicle for attempting to create a political, social and ideological change. Referring to radicals in West Germany in the 1960's, Konrad Kellen (1998), author of *Ideology and Rebellion: Terrorism in West Germany* states that “when there was no substantial response to their political drives among either the elite or the masses, their ideology turned them into terrorists (Kellen, 1998, p. 47).

Though, ideology may be a causal factor for terrorism, the study of positive social sanctions and its effect on terrorism remains to be a relatively unexplored explanation. In regards to influencing behavior, sanctions elicit a desired behavior which is reinforced through praise or rewards. The terminology “praise” can be described as the expression of approval, commendation, or admiration. The terminology “rewards” can be described as giving somebody something, tangible or not, in return for a behavior or action. An examination of positive social sanction and its effect on individuals provides us with an opportunity to make an evaluation on a potential cause for terrorism, concerning individuals who have committed an act of terror in the United States from the time period of 2002-2012.

### Defining Terrorism

In order to undertake the challenge of discovering what causes an individual to commit an act of terror, particularly in the United States, this research will first establish a definition of terrorism. The definition of terrorism is often used interchangeably with the word terror, which



causes confusion with other types of concepts that incorporate similar characteristics, such as violent behavior, and criminal activities. There are many activities, from wars, to crimes committed by individuals, or groups of people that were intended to strike terror into their adversary. In this context, the scope of definitions concerning terrorism is limitless (Griset, 2002, p. 2).

According to Pamela Griset, there are more than one hundred definitions of terrorism; moreover, the varying definitions present a bewildering array of approaches to uniformly define terrorism. The Office of the Law Revision Counsel of the U.S. House of Representatives defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents” (Griset, 2002, p. 2). In contrast to the definition above, U.S. federal courts along with state and local governments do not share the same definition of terrorism as the U.S. House of Representative's definition.

As a result of the varying definitions of terrorism, the meaning given to terrorism is often subjective and not likely to be reached by a consensus. In order to decide which activity is a terrorist act and which one is not, this research has adopted the Global Terrorism Database's criterion for identifying terrorist activities. The reason why this research chose the Global Terrorism Database is because this database includes systematic data on domestic as well as international terrorist incidents that have occurred in the time period of 1970-2011. Moreover, the Global Terrorism Database criterion establishes a uniformed basis to approach the definition of terrorism in this research. The Global Terrorism Database's criterion is divided into three

qualifying sections that must be met before case studies are examined and data included in this research.

Criteria one requires that the act must be aimed at attaining a political, religious, economic, or social goal. In terms of economic goals, the sole pursuit of profit does not satisfy this criterion (“Global Terrorism Database,” 2012). This goal must include the pursuit of a systemic economic change within a society as a whole (“Global Terrorism Database,” 2012). Criteria two requires that there must be evidence of an intention to intimidate, coerce, or convey some other message to a larger audience as opposed to simply the immediate victims (“Global Terrorism Database,” 2012). If any of the planners or decision-makers behind the attack intended to intimidate, coerce, or publicize the act then the criteria is met (“Global Terrorism Database,” 2012). Finally, criteria three requires that the action must be outside the context of legitimate warfare activities. Therefore, the act must be outside the parameters permitted by international humanitarian law, which prohibits the deliberate targeting of civilians or non-combatants (“Global Terrorism Database,” 2012).

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

With the rise of domestic and homegrown terrorism in the United States the need to understand what causes an individual to commit an act of terror has become ever more pressing. Over the years there have been many attempts to develop theories explaining the causes of terrorism (Kennedy and Zillmer, 2006, p. 285); however, there have been no conclusive or widely accepted models. Scholars from various fields of study (Political Science, Sociology, and Psychology) have used various explanations to try and explain the cause of terrorism ranging from mental illness to the adoption of a radicalized ideology. The challenge in presenting a literature review that discusses the causes of terrorism is based on the reality that there are a number of studies explaining the terrorist phenomenon, most with different accounts and theoretical underpinnings. A considerable portion of terrorist literature, which is represented in this review, is based on Ted Gurr's frustration aggression and relative deprivation theories, as well as theories and explanations profiling mental illness, rational choice, culture, ideology, and various forms of social learning and positive social sanctions theories.

What is missing from terrorist literature to date is substantive research and analysis focusing on the value of influences in the form of positive social sanctions. Positive social sanctions elicit a desired behavior which is reinforced through praise or rewards. These praises or rewards may be important factors that lead an individual to commit an act of terror. Furthermore, the effect of positive social sanctions on behavior has been widely supported by many scholars (Latané, Fairchild, Sedikides & Jackson, Molm, Ryan, Wahrman) in various

fields of study (Political Science, Psychology, Sociology). Because of this support, positive social sanctions may prove to be one of the more useful explanations for the cause of terrorism.

In addition to positive social sanctions, the frustration aggression theory is a good representation of the terrorist population, commonly known to have grievances against society, governments and institutions. This theory focuses on aggressive behavior which influences people to act out their frustrations if “they believe that they stand a chance of relieving some of their discontent through violence” (Gurr, 1970, p. 210). Because there have been many cases where this theory applies (Hesham Mohamed Hadayet, Naveed Afzal Haq, Andrew Joseph Stack III), the frustration aggression theory is also a useful explanation for the cause of terrorism. Though, it is important to note that there is no predominant theory explaining why an individual may commit an act of terror. The following literature review represents a collection of key theories that have been used to explain terrorism.

### Frustration Aggression

“Why Men Rebel” by Ted Gurr (1970) is an impressive work concerned with the question of what causes political violence. The central hypothesis for this book is based on the concept of relative deprivation, which is the discrepancy between what people think they deserve (value expectations) and what they think they can get (value capabilities). According to Gurr, if there is a significant difference between expectations and capabilities, then there is a likelihood of political violence (Gurr, 1970, p. 24). Further, Gurr develops the “frustration aggression” model which theorizes that frustration produces aggressive behavior, influencing people to act

out their frustrations if “they believe that they stand a chance of relieving some of their discontent through violence” (Gurr, 1970, p. 210).

Ted Gurr’s theory of political violence is contingent upon one psychological principle of aggression and dismisses two competing psychological theories, which argue that aggression is a learned response (Chalmers Johnson) or entirely instinctual (Freud and Lorenz) (Morales, 1973, p. 5). The independent variables in this theory are the discrepancies between value capabilities and expectations. The dependent variables in this theory are the magnitude and different forms of political violence. The magnitude of political violence includes the scope, intensity and duration of violence, while the different forms of political violence include turmoil, internal war, and amongst many other forms, terrorism (Gurr, 1970, p. 24).

Authors Margolin Joseph, Joseph M. Firestone, Paul Wilkinson, and Hudson Rex have heavily researched and developed main arguments concerning the viability of Ted Gurr’s frustration aggression model. According to Hudson (2005) author of “The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who Becomes a Terrorist and Why?” the frustration aggression hypothesis is prominent in literature to date and can be used as a basis for explaining terrorism. Further, Joseph Margolin (1977), author of “Psychological Perspectives in Terrorism” argues that “much terrorist behavior is a response to the frustration of various political, economic and personal needs or objectives”. This argument is centered on the frustration aggression hypothesis (Margolin, 1977, p. 270).

Other scholars on the other hand have discharged the frustration aggression hypothesis as being simplistic and based on the assumption that aggression is always the consequence of

frustration without consideration of other potential causal factors (Hudson, 2005, p.19).

According to Joseph M. Firestone (1974) author of “Continuities in the Theory of Violence”

Gurr has the tendency to focus on one central model concerning the psychological state of individuals as the ultimate premise behind political violence. Moreover, Gurr does not consider “relations between types of absolute deprivation, other social conditions at various levels of specificity, and the incentive system” which all may account for political violence (Firestone, 1974, p. 141).

Paul Wilkinson (1975) in “Political Terrorism” also discharges the frustration aggression model for having “very little to say about the social psychology of prejudice and hatred...” In addition to this, Wilkinson argues that fanaticism plays a significant role in encouraging violence. Concurrently, Ted Gurr’s analysis on what causes political violence revolves around few concepts and does not account for other factors, such as thoughts, personal beliefs, standard of living, and especially religion. According to Wilkinson, political violence cannot be comprehended or analyzed properly outside the context of terrorists’ ideologies, beliefs and lifestyles (Wilkinson, 1975, p. 133).

### Relative Deprivation

According to Gurr (1970) relative deprivation can happen in three ways. First, "decremental deprivation" occurs when the value expectations remain constant even though the capabilities of the collective fall (Gurr, 1970, p. 47). For example, immigrants who take unskilled jobs may increase the supply of labor in the field while as a consequence lower the

demand or conditions for unskilled labor (Gurr, 1970, p.47). Second, "aspirational deprivation" occurs when the value expectations rise while capabilities remain the same. An example of this phenomenon might be an individual's exposure to a higher standard of living compared to that of their own, and thereby increase their expectation in life, even though they cannot increase their standard of living at a desirable point in time (Gurr, 1970, p. 51). Third, "progressive deprivation" occurs when the expectations of an individual grow along with his or her capabilities, however, the individual's capabilities either do not keep up or start to decrease (Gurr, 53). An example of this would be economic depression in a growing country (Gurr, 1970, p. 53). Allen Kruger (2007), author of "What Makes a Terrorist" rejects the relative deprivation hypothesis and argues that poverty and education, two variables that influence expectations and capabilities, are not robust indicators of involvement in terrorism and argues that there is no empirical basis to support such claims (Kruger, 2007, p. 2).

Moreover, in regards to Ted Gurr's hypothesis on relative deprivation, Gurr does not test his hypothesis empirically in any manner; for example, he does not use any psychological or attitudinal testing which would have gauged or characterized the actual existence of relative deprivation. Such testing would have provided a valid measure of an individual's social attitude or psychological state of mind that relates to value expectations. Nevertheless, Gurr determines the existence of relative deprivation through correlations between assumptions (Morales, 1973, p. 11). According to Edward N. Muller (1972) "developing an operational system based on macro indicators (value expectations and value capabilities) is not an appropriate way to begin

testing a theory conceptualized largely in terms of psychological characteristics of individuals” (Muller, 1972, p. 929).

### Why Men Rebel: Redux

Based upon Ted Gurr’s (2011) critique of his previous work in “Why Men Rebel: Redux How Valid is its Arguments 40 years on?”, “Why Men Rebel” was written in the late 1960s as a response to the growing political violence in postcolonial states, particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia. Gurr states that “Why Men Rebel” prompted strong theoretical critiques from prominent scholars such as Charles Tilly, Theda Skocpol, and Sidney Tarrow. These critiques suggested that Ted Gurr should have analyzed mass social movements (Tarrow), social and political structures (Skocpol), and political mobilization (Tilly) (Gurr, 2011, para. 9). In response, Ted Gurr argues that in light of forty years of research and reflection, the core of the “Why Men Rebel” model remains valid but is incomplete. However, Gurr fails to specify in detail which part of his theory remains valid and/or incomplete.

Furthermore, Gurr states that people with diverse identities, desires and beliefs should be central to the analysis of contemporary conflict (Gurr, 2011, para. 7). Ted Gurr’s original research concerning relative deprivation and the frustration aggression model did not incorporate all of these factors mentioned in his later work. In Ted Gurr’s recent work “Why Men Rebel: Redux How Valid are its Arguments 40 years on?”, he argues that in order to understand grievances we must first examine where people stand in society and what they experience. Furthermore, Ted Gurr mentions the necessity to analyze and take into account an individual’s



ethnic, religious, political, and social identities. According to Gurr, the politics of identity are central to understanding people's reference group, their susceptibility to appeal for political action and their sense of collective injustice.

Though, relative deprivation and the frustration aggression concepts are fundamental to exploring why people engage in political violence, which incorporates the act of terrorism, there are many people who meet the conditions of relative deprivation, are unhappy with their lives, yet choose not to become politically violent or terrorists. Ted Gurr's research failed to conduct any empirical testing, such as attitudinal or psychological studies to explain when, why, and how grievances become politicized and subsequently expressed in terrorist acts. Moreover, Gurr's hypothesis was generalized, without specification of a particular population group.

To get a better understanding of the causal mechanism for political violence, Ted Gurr's research might analyze one population group within a controlled environment that creates the conditions of relative deprivation and then compares two sub-population groups, one of which engages in political violence and one in which the group does not. Further research under these specifications, along with attitudinal and psychological testing may reveal discrepancies between the two sub-population groups indicating significant factors present in the politically violent group and not the other. These possible discrepancies may support or challenge Gurr's claim of how value expectations and capabilities interrelate, and suggest other factors that may lead an individual to political violence.

## Mental Illness

Jerrold Post (1998) argues that individuals who join, participate or commit an act of terror have been known to exhibit the characteristics of psychological abnormalities (see also Sageman 2004). Kellen (1998) also uses the explanation of psychopathy as a reason for terrorist motivation and argues that in many cases terrorists have experienced some form of psychological trauma leading to two results: seeing the world in an unrealistic light, and being motivated to commit acts of extreme violence (Kellen, 1998, p. 43). However, in Post's later work (2007) "The Mind of the Terrorist" he avoids stating that terrorists suffer from psychopathy, but offers other potential explanations as to why individuals become terrorists, such as being raised by a family that supports terrorism, or having experienced some sort of injustice as a child.

In regards to disorders, psychological abnormalities, psychological damage and mental illness, modern Western psychiatry identifies adult behavioral disorders according to a multi axial classification system (Axis I & Axis II). Axis I classification refers to major clinical illnesses and Axis II refers to personality disorders, which have previously been associated with terrorists (Victoroff, 2005, p.12). These disorders, as described by the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, also known as "DSM-IV-TR", are associated with abnormal behavioral tendencies, usually involving several areas of the personality, and are generally associated with personal and social disruption. Some of these disruptions may include

“a pervasive pattern of disregard for and violation of, the rights of others beginning in childhood and continuing into adulthood” (Victoroff, 2005, p. 12).

Separate from personality disorders, psychosis also has been associated with terrorism and refers to a loss of reality and primarily is categorized in the subgroup of Axis I disorders. Such disorders include schizophrenia, major depression, and bipolar disorder among many others (Victoroff, 2005, p.12). Though insanity is not a behavioral science term adopted by the DSM, it is a legal term implying psychosis (Victoroff, 2005, p.12). Therefore, a psychotic or insane person is considered to be so mentally disordered that he or she does not know right from wrong. However, a sociopath does know right from wrong and chooses wrong for intrinsic reasons without conscience (Victoroff, 2005, p.12). With the proper diagnosis, some terrorists may fall into either category. However, according to Crenshaw (2000), diagnosing terrorism from a distance only serves to “taint terrorism with a pathology aura” (Crenshaw 2000, p. 407).

Nevertheless, Jeffrey Swanson (1990), author of “Mental Disorder, Substance Abuse, and Community Violence: An Epidemiological Approach”, conducted a study looking at the overall incidence of violence in different parts of the United States. University based research teams conducted structured diagnostic interviews nation-wide consisting of 3,000 to 5,000 household adults, and over 1,000 residents in nursing homes, psychiatric hospitals and prisons. His findings showed that after excluding people with substance abuse problems, only 7 percent of individuals having serious mental illness (depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disease) had committed acts of violence. However, the rest of the population, which demonstrated no signs of mental illness, had a rate of only 2 percent. According to Dr. Swanson, the vast majority of people with mental

illness are not violent; however, persons who are mentally ill are three times more likely to commit an act of violence than people who are not mentally ill. Therefore, a diagnosis of mental illness can partially explain why some individuals become terrorists and are able to carry out horrific attacks without conscience.

### Rational Choice Theory

The Rational Choice Theory focuses on individual behavior in the pursuit of personal interest, and the central unit of analysis is the rational actor. By applying the Rational Choice Theory approach to explain terrorist behavior, theorists' are able to focus on the rational calculations behind terrorism and elucidate the causal mechanism involved (Victoroff, 2005, p. 14). According to Victoroff, if terrorists are not mentally ill or considered sociopaths then one might argue that they are rational. However, to argue that terrorists make rational calculations and consequently view the act of terrorism as the optimum strategy, at the cost of innocent life in order to accomplish a political goal, might make the premise behind rational behavior in the rational choice theory questionable (Crenshaw, 1992; Wilson, 2000).

Martha Crenshaw (2000) argues that the inherent inhumanity of attack against innocent civilians challenges the typical understanding of rational behavior. Based on concerns over the motivations behind terrorist actions, some scholars have proposed that typical terrorists are not rational actors, and reject the Rational Choice Theory (Brannan, 2001, p. 24). Nevertheless, historical evidence suggests that at times terrorism is a practical and a low cost strategy that

seldom achieves one's ends (Sandler and Enders, 2004, p. 14). Still history provides examples of outcomes where political violence in the form of terrorism has had a desired effect on the target. For example, terrorist operations by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) subsequently led to British accommodations allowing the Irish to have a free state. More recently, al Qaeda's transnational campaign and attack on the New York City World Trade Center in 2001 may not have removed the U.S. military presence from Saudi Arabia, but it has served as a terrorist recruiting tool (Whittaker, 2001, p. 5).

According to Crenshaw (2005) "When it comes to terror, the beginning of wisdom is to recognize it as a strategy". Based on the Rational Choice Theory, terrorists make rational calculated decisions, and view terrorism as the optimum strategy to accomplish their political goals. If Crenshaw is right about terrorism being a strategy then there is a link between the strategy of terrorism and a calculated decision; similarly, it can be inferred that there is a link between a calculated decision and a rational thought. Nevertheless, the Rational Choice Theory does not explain why some individuals who share virtually identical political positions become terrorists and others do not.

### Culture

There are many differences observed among cultures; however, Weinberg and Eubank (1994) identified a key cultural variable that is relational to terrorist activities. They proposed that terrorism expresses itself differently in collectivist versus individualist cultures. The argument behind this theory is contingent upon the idea that in a collectivist culture a person's

identity is primarily derived from society, linking the individual's personal well-being to the well-being of their own social group or in-group, as opposed to another social group or out-group. Conversely, in an individualist culture, a person's identity is derived from independence and self-reliance while opposing external interference within one's own interests by society (Victoroff, 2005, p. 21). Weinberg and Eubank argue that collectivists would be more likely to carry out a terrorist attack on out-groups, than individualists, and less likely to attack someone from their own society with a similar cultural background or identity. Conversely, individualists' would be less constrained to attack individuals from their own society with a similar cultural background or identity (Victoroff, 2005, p. 22).

In Weinberg and Eubank's research, they used psychological rankings of IBM corporate employees in forty nations. A scale of individualism/collectivism was used, ranging from zero to one hundred, zero being the least individualistic and one hundred being the most. The results showed that U.S. citizens were the most individualistic with a score of 91. Israelis were considered to be in the middle with a score of 54, and Third World nations tended to be the most collectivist, such as Pakistan at 14, and Colombia being at 13. The authors compared these rankings with reports of terrorist activity from the years 1968-77. Furthermore, data supported their predictions that collectivists or terrorists from collectivist cultures are more likely to attack foreigners while individualists or terrorists from individualist cultures were more likely to attack nationals or individuals from other cultures (Weinberg and Eubank, 1987, p. 241).

Concerning terrorist studies, Weinberg and Eubank's research contained major methodological flaws that may limit their findings. First, their sample population was not

diversified, and only included IBM corporate employees. Under these specifications, the sample population that Weinberg and Eubank used could not have represented an entire population's culture. For example, individuals who were employed by IBM at the corporate level may have achieved a higher level of education than the majority of individuals in society at large. Nevertheless, if in fact these findings are valid, then researchers can determine if an individual from a particular country is more inclined to target certain groups of people and whether or not his or her culture is an inhibitor of such action, which would include terrorist acts as well.

### Ideology

According to C.J.M. Drake (1998) author of "The Role of Ideology in Terrorists' Target Selection," ideology is concerned with beliefs, values, principles and objectives of individuals. Some ideologies, particularly separatism or politicized religion may include elements of historical, supernatural and mythical beliefs (Kramer, 1991, p. 32). Importantly enough, ideology provides a motive and framework for violent action, which includes terrorism (Drake, 1998, p. 53). Leaders of political groups tend to have a specific ideology with clear objectives, while followers derive sufficient motivation by belonging to the group and adhering to its dislike of a given enemy (Drake, 1998, p. 53).

In regards to terrorists, most groups' ideologies are unique. However, the following are elements and "isms" used to classify different ideologies that categorize terrorist groups: religion, separatism, liberalism, anarchism, communism, fascism, conservatism, single-issues, and organized crime (Drake, 1998, p. 54). It is important to note that these ideological categories

are not mutually exclusive. Further, it is possible for one group to hold multiple ideas (Drake, 1998, p. 54). For example, the Palestinian group Hamas can be described as both a religious and separatist group (Cubert, 1992, p. 32).

### Social Learning

Bandura's (1973, 1998) social learning theory of aggression indicates that violence is the result of the imitation of aggressive behavior, and terrorist behavior is a consequence of the cognitive re-construal of moral imperatives (Myers, 1978, p. 5). An example of this can be where teenagers living in a society dealing with political struggles witness terrorist behavior and seek to imitate it or learn from accounts of terrorist activities. Social learning that creates and reinforces the acceptance of terrorism may also take the form of individuals being taught revolutionary jihad in many madrasas and religious schools for young Muslim boys.

The recent resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism has caused an increase in the violence of this message (Sageman, 2004, p. 121). Moreover, evidence supports the claim that a minority of prominent transnational Muslim terrorists was educated in madrasas and potentially exposed to the social learning of violence (Sageman, 2004, p. 69). Social learning of terrorist behavior has also been fostered via the dissemination of terrorist ideology and philosophy in communiques, audiotapes, compact disks, books and websites.

In sum, it is plausible that teaching or exposure to extremist ideology may influence some individuals toward terrorism, and can be explained through social learning. However, the theory of social learning does not explain why only a small number of individuals out of hundreds of



thousands of students educated for jihad in madrasas, exposed to publications, and the public glorification of terrorists as heroic martyrs have become terrorists themselves. According to Taylor and Quayle (1994), not everyone from those communities becomes a terrorist, although some may be subject to similar influences (see also Sageman, 2004). As a result, social learning may only help animate the small minority who turns to political violence; however, this theory fails to explain why this happens.

### Positive Social Sanctions

There have been considerable efforts expended to understand behavioral responses to social sanctions in the field of social behavior. Few sanctions are either entirely individual or collective in impact. Almost all individuals are members of groups, composed of families, friends, co-workers, neighbors or others with whom individuals interact (Molm, 1990, p. 425). The effect that sanctions against any one individual will have is dependent on the extent that members of a group and groups themselves are interdependent. In groups that are interconnected (Molm, 1990, p. 425), a reward or sanction received by an individual also benefits other group members. Therefore, the individual sanction will serve to inhibit a secondary collective sanction targeting and affecting the group. Group members tend to urge one another to comply with external conditions to avoid triggering externally induced punishments (Molm, 1990, p. 425). Compliance may come in the form of participating in acts of terrorism. This means that intragroup normative controls increase the effects and efficacy of sanctions. In regards to

terrorism, therefore, members exposed to positive social sanctions may be induced to violent action because of group dynamics.

There has been relatively little attention paid to social sanctions, whether positive or negative, and how these relate to the study of terrorism and the theoretical literature. On the other hand, social sanctions for anthropologists and sociologists constitute a central component of the normative process and as a motivator of individual and collective action. Giddens recalls that norms and rules have to do with sanctions: “*rules relate on the one hand to the constitution of meaning, and on the other to the sanctioning of modes of social conduct*” (Giddens, 1984, p. 18). Furthermore: “*Normative components of interaction always centre upon relations between the rights and obligations ‘expected’ of those participating in a range of interaction contexts. The normative elements of social systems are contingent claims which have to be sustained and ‘made to count’ through the effective mobilization of sanctions in the contexts of actual encounters*” (Giddens, 1984, p. 30).

Furthermore, the Social Impact Theory proposed by Bibb Latané in 1981, incorporates the use of social forces and the role of positive social sanctions. Bibb Latane's theory begins with the idea that social impact is the result of external social forces on an individual and influences behavior. Key elements of this theory include the strength of the source, the number of sources exerting the impact, and the immediacy of the event. Social Impact Theory also uses mathematical equations to predict the degree of social impact created by specific social interactions (Latané, 1990, p. 1). According to Bibb Latané, social impact is a phenomenon by which people affect one another in various social situations. This affect can occur in the form of

daily experiences, communal bonds or positive social sanctions.

Social Impact Theory explores the effect of social situations and can help predict the social impact on a target audience with regards to positive social sanctions. The shortcomings of this relate to the questionable assumption that people who are susceptible to social impact are generally passive and accept other peoples' influences without consideration of additional situational and predisposing factors that may alter the effectiveness of the social impact. Such mediating factors can include an individual's education, socio-economic status, religion and ideology. Nevertheless, studies conducted by Sedikides and Jackson testing Latané's theory, do in fact show that the general premise of the Social Impact Theory is sound; and moreover, that social pressure and influences, which can include positive social sanctions do influence behavior (Ryan, 2012, p. 6). Elements within this theory and the results from Sedikides and Jackson's tests, particularly those in relation to social influences, provide validity for the central premise of the Social Impact Theory and the potential influential power of positive social sanctions in explaining terrorists' motivations and actions.

### Groups, Status, and Sanctions

Ralph Wahrman (2010), author of "Status, Deviance, and Sanctions: A Critical Review" creates a review that concentrates on experimental studies on status, deviance and situations in which subjects become aware of the existence of group status, sanctions and its norms. Understanding how group dynamics work, the role status plays within groups, and how sanctions elicit desired behavior may provide further avenues of exploration and analysis in terrorist

studies. According to Ralph Wahrman, group members abide by the norms of a group. The reason for such conformity is based on the perspective that group members either voluntarily accept the norms of the group as proper and reasonable, or reject the validity of these but adhere to them due to the fear of sanctions by group members who are committed true believers (Wahrman, 2010, p. 92).

Of further note, Wahrman's review indicates that high-status members in a group, comparable to a terrorist group leader, for example, have less to fear from sanctions. Moreover, the studies conducted by Wahrman have determined that nonconforming high-status members of a group are frequently not sanctioned. There are two explanations as to why high status individuals in a group are often able to avoid sanctions. One reason suggests that high status and power often go together, serving to protect such high-value members, whereas less powerful members in a group are more likely to fear retaliation and therefore do not act on their intuitions or perceptions (Wahrman, 2010, p. 94). The second reason is based on the notion that behavior is perceived differently depending on who is the actor. This means that nonconformity within the group by high-status and powerful members is not seen as deviance and thereby not over scrutinized because it is seen as innovation, and tolerable idiosyncrasy. Group members see this as the function and privilege of certain group members because of their status and power.

Determining whether or not these ideas are valid and the circumstances under which power and status and social levels within the group dictate whether or not an individual is susceptible to sanctions requires additional investigation. To this end, Wahrman has conducted further research on group membership, and the dynamics of status and sanctions. According to

Wahrman, groups do not value all members equally. Moreover, some members have higher value to the group because they possess rewarding or potentially rewarding qualities and abilities, and their fellow members reward these individuals with social approval. Norms are thought of as a range of permitted behaviors or a single permissible behavior. In groups, norms are prevalent and may be seen as matters of high consensus, or some of the consensus may be thought of as a contingent attribute of norms rather than part of the definition of consensus (Wahrman, 2010, p. 94). Moreover, this author concludes that high status tends to protect the possessors from sanctions whereas individuals who lack power and status in relationships or in a group are more susceptible to the influence of sanctions.

In regards to all of the theories and explanations represented in this review, each one presents a plausible explanation for the causes of terrorism. In addition to this, it is reasonable to say that many terrorist cases have developed under different circumstances and for different reasons; whereas one case may be reasonably the product of mental illness (Naveed Afzal Haq, James Lee, John Allen Muhammad) and another maybe ideological (Jim David Adkisson, James Wenneker von Brunn, Wade Michael Page). Because of these different reasons and circumstances, it is prudent to say that out of these explanations, each one may not be both a necessary and sufficient condition for terrorism.

In light of this literature review, the frustration aggression theory seems to be most representative of the terrorist population, clearly indicating that a significant number of terrorists have expressed grievances and frustration towards the government, society and institutions. Further, studies conducted by Sedikides and Jackson testing Latané's theory on social impact, as

well as the positive social sanctions theory indicate that social pressures and influences do have an effect on behavior, especially violent behavior. This further indicates that positive social sanctions along with the frustration aggression theory are at least, in some cases, a sufficient condition for individuals being influenced to engage in terrorist activities. Therefore, the goal of this thesis is to contribute to the terrorist literature and substantive research and analysis by primarily focusing on the role and value of positive social sanctions in explaining terrorist motivations. Indeed, as noted in this literature review, positive social sanctions may be one of the more useful explanations for the cause of terrorism.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

In order to evaluate the importance and effect of positive social sanctions on individuals who have committed acts of terror in the United States, and to further test the impact of positive social sanctions as a useful explanation for terrorism, the following will serve as the central hypothesis of this analysis.

### Hypothesis

Hypothesis: *Individuals who receive positive social sanctions that promote terrorism are more likely to commit an act of terror than individuals who do not receive positive social sanctions that promote terrorism.*

The effect of positive social sanctions on behavior has been widely supported by many scholars (Latané, Fairchild, Sedikides & Jackson, Molm, Ryan, Wahrman). Individuals who are exposed to positive social sanctions may be at risk of becoming influenced to commit acts of terror, as seen with the case of Major Hasan. Further examples of this phenomenon may include membership in right wing hate groups, where members encourage one another to commit acts of terror for an ideological, political or social cause. Such elicitation of behavior may be reinforced through praise or rewards, otherwise known as positive social sanctions.

Further, in order to test the above hypothesis and evaluate the effect of positive social sanctions on individuals who have committed an act of terror in the United States, this research

will select a statistically representative sample of terrorist cases in the United States from a specified time period and measure key characteristics and outcomes of each case. To select such a sample for this research, it is necessary first to create a complete list of relatively recent terrorist attacks occurring in the past decade. The reason behind selecting cases that occurred within this time frame is to have a narrow focus on acquiring data and to prevent the incorporation of excessive data from relatively longstanding terrorist cases, which may not be a fitting representation of the modern-day character of domestic and homegrown terrorism. The modern-day character of terrorism may be a relevant factor in terrorism studies, especially in regards to the spread of globalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and its effect on information and technology. Information and technology include the use of the internet, social media sites, chat rooms and media outlets, all of which have been known to be mediums for terrorist recruitment and the spread of extremist ideology.

If we could construct a sampling list consistent with all terrorist accounts that occurred in the United States from 2002-2012, we then would need to collect information about each case chosen for the sample. Due to the reality that much information about terrorist cases is widespread, we would need to obtain only relevant data from over 100 incidences (“Global Terrorism Database,” 2012), in order to conduct an all-encompassing and proper analysis from within this time frame. Relevant data concerning this research would contain information pertaining to the indication of an individual’s exposure to positive social sanctions and its effect.

However, this research did not have the resources available to adopt such a large-scale approach by way of gathering relevant information and consistent data from over 100 incidences



of terrorist cases, nor were we confident that we could overcome the considerable sampling and data collection problems it would entail, such as obtaining enough information from all the perpetrators who were either inaccessible or deceased. Much of the data that this research was interested in included privy information from primary and secondary sources that may have been classified, such as details about conversations that occurred between the perpetrator and social contacts, copies of email messages, letters, records of phone calls and conversations, chat room activity, and other forms of communication (face to face) that might have indicated incidences where the perpetrator received positive social sanctions. To acquire this data from over 100 incidences, with limited access to information, makes such a research technique problematic. As a result, this research has adopted a case study approach in the attempt to prove or disprove this research's hypothesis as indicated earlier.

Case study research calls for selecting a few examples of the terrorist phenomenon and then intensively examining the characteristics of those examples. By closely examining a relatively small number of terrorist cases, and comparing and contrasting them, this research will be able to learn about significant features concerning this phenomenon and how it varies under different circumstances. After deciding to adopt a case study approach and considering the data collection that would be required, this research has determined that analyzing eleven terrorist cases from the time period of 2002-2012 in the United States would be sufficient. The determination of choosing a sample size of only eleven cases and the time frame above was for the purpose of expedience in the attempt to include relatively modern cases that had enough information available to collect.

### What Types of Cases Did We Choose For Our Case Studies?

Because we could not hope to reflect the full diversity of terrorist cases in the United States, this research has decided to focus on selected cases that have resulted in at least one fatality. Choosing cases that included at least one fatality was also for convenience of further narrowing down the selection of case studies, in a controlled fashion. Such cases also incorporated a unique characteristic that cases lacking fatality or the loss of life do not have. Such a key component may be reflective of the terrorist's conscience and resolve to commit such acts, which further indicate a difference in the terrorist's character and psyche, compared to the majority of the United States population (non-homicidal). Further, each case selected must have met the Global Terrorism Database criterion identifying true terrorism cases. Each case must have shown that the act was aimed at attaining a political, religious, economic, or social goal. The act must also have shown that there was an intention to intimidate, coerce, or convey some other message to a larger audience, and the act was outside international humanitarian law.

### How Did We Choose Our Case Studies?

The overarching point to note about this research and case selection process is that the process was not random but rather as objective as we could make it. This research first acquired data from the Global Terrorism Database which is an open-source database that includes information on terrorist events around the world from 1970 through 2011. This research first set the criteria in the Global Terrorism Database to find terrorist incidents between the years 2002 to

2011, rendering 31, 166 incidents. This research then limited the query to incidences in the United States, yielding 168 results. Further, the terrorism query was limited to cases of terrorism that met the Global Terrorism Database three qualifying criterion, indicating true acts of terrorism.

Moreover, the three qualifying criterion for terrorism by the Global Terrorism Database is outlined in this paper under “Defining Terrorism” in the introduction chapter. In addition to narrowing down the search parameters for adequate terrorist cases, all ambiguous cases and unsuccessful attacks were excluded, narrowing down the results to 86 incidences. This research then chose 10 cases out of the results that had at least one fatality. Finally, research over the internet was conducted in search of recent terrorist attacks that incorporated the year 2012, that also happen to meet the Global Terrorism Database criterion. Following this search, one case was discovered in the specified time frame and added to the analysis.

#### Data Collection: What Sources Did We Use?

This research was limited to analyzing data from open media sources, Global Terrorism Database, news reports and unclassified government reports pertaining to the selected case studies containing individuals who have committed an act of terror in the United States from the time period of 2002-2012. In regard to these reports, this thesis attempted to establish a frequency analysis, to determine which characteristics were common amongst the terrorists selected. The characteristics that this research looked for involved the identification of positive social sanctions, criminal records, education, age, ideology, birth place, religion and amongst

many other factors, reports indicating major incidences occurring in the perpetrators' lives before the attacks. In regards to incidences that have occurred before terrorist attacks, this research has established a standard of recording major incidences related to death in the family, financial hardship, and relational hardship.

### What Type of Information Did We Seek?

The search strategy focused on identifying relevant biographical literature on each case study. This research began by utilizing academic search premier, peer reviewed sources, including journal articles, books, along with government databases and news agencies. Because this topic is sensitive in nature and requires access to privy information to provide a more analytical thrust, the inaccessibility of some primary source documents to the general public may cause unintended bias in some of the quantitative analysis, with regards to positively identified cases of incidences and factors. In addition to finding biographical material and literature for each case study, this research also focused on researching terrorism, casual mechanisms for terrorism, relative deprivation, group dynamics, sociology, psychology, and amongst many others, political violence.

Moreover, this research focused on recording data pertaining to each individual case study that indicated the occurrence of "major events before the incident". The terminology "major events before the incident" is characterized as life-altering events occurring in the perpetrators life before the terrorist attack. This research has recorded "major events" that occurred in the perpetrators life within a 10 year time frame of the terrorist attack. The reason

why this research chose a 10 year time frame is because according to the NYPD intelligence division, terrorists who enter into the second phase of the radicalization process (self-identification stage) are largely influenced by both internal and external factors (major events). These factors or major events can predicate further radicalization and lead an individual to terrorism within a matter of days to years (Silber, Mitchell, and Arvin, 2006, p. 32).

For expediency, and to narrow down the results of recorded “major events”, this research chose to select a time frame of 10 years, in order to record such events occurring in the perpetrators lives, which falls within the expected time frame of an individual to enter into the self-identification stage (begins to explore radical ideology), outlined by the NYPD intelligence division (Silber, Mitchell, and Arvin, 2006, p. 32). Furthermore, “major events” consists of financial hardship and burden, loss or lack of employment, personal relationship issues, family issues, marital issues, and amongst many other issues, anything that could create deficiency or disruption in satisfying Maslow’s four lowest needs (Goble, 1970, p. 62).

According to Maslow, deficiency needs or the four lowest levels in Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs are similar to instincts and play a major role in motivating behavior. They include esteem needs (achievement, status, prestige etc.), social needs (love, family, affection, relationships etc.), safety needs (freedom from war, conflict, and oppression, stability/financial stability, order etc.), biological and physical needs (basic survival needs, food, water, shelter, etc.) (Goble, 1970, p. 62). If these “deficiency needs” are not met or are disrupted through “major events” in a person’s life, as a consequence, the individual may feel anxious, tense and exhibit the characteristics of relative deprivation, frustration, and or aggression. As a result, these

events may cause an individual to engage in acts of violence or even terrorism (Goble, 1970, p. 62). The following is a summary of the key data and selected cases included in this study.

Total Pool of Relevant Terrorist Cases from the Global Terrorism Database and Related Search, 2002-2012

**Table 1: Age, Sex, Place of Birth, Education**

DATE	CITY	PERPETRATOR 1	AGE DURING INCIDENT	SEX	PLACE OF BIRTH	EDUCATION
7/4/2002	Los Angeles	Individual (Hesham Mohamed Hadayet)	41	M	Egypt	Unknown
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (John Allen Muhammad)	41	M	United States	Secondary
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (Lee Boyd Malvo)	17	M	Jamaica	Secondary
7/28/2006	Seattle	Individual (Naveed Afzal Haq)	30	M	Pakistan	Post-Secondary
7/27/2008	Knoxville	Individual (Jim David Adkisson)	58	M	United States	Post-Secondary
6/1/2009	Little Rock	Al-Qa'ida (Abdulhakim Muhammad)	23	M	United States	Post-Secondary
6/10/2009	DC	Individual (James Wenneker von Brunn)	88	M	United States	Post-Secondary
11/5/2009	Kileen	Individual (Major Nidal Malik Hasan)	38	M	United States	Post-Secondary
2/18/2010	Austin	Individual (Andrew Joseph Stack III)	53	M	United States	Post-Secondary
9/1/2010	Silver Spring	Individual (James Lee)	43	M	United States	Unknown
8/5/2012	Oak Creek	Individual (Wade Michael Page)	40	M	United States	Unknown

**Table 2: Motive, Target Type 1, Fatalities**

DATE	CITY	PERPETRATOR 1	MOTIVE	TARGET TYPE 1	FATALITIES
7/4/2002	Los Angeles	Individual (Hesham Mohamed Hadayet)	Political, Ideological	Airports & Airlines	3
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (John Allen Muhammad)	Political, Ideological, Religious	Private Citizens	10
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (Lee Boyd Malvo)	Political, Ideological, Religious	Private Citizens	10
7/28/2006	Seattle	Individual (Naveed Afzal Haq)	Political, Ideological, Religious	Private Citizens	1
7/27/2008	Knoxville	Individual (Jim David Adkisson)	Political, Ideological, Religious	Private Citizens	2
6/1/2009	Little Rock	Al-Qa'ida (Abdulhakim Muhammad)	Political, Ideological, Religious	Military Personnel	1
6/10/2009	DC	Individual (James Wenneker von Brunn)	Political, Ideological, Religious	Private Citizens	2
11/5/2009	Kileen	Individual (Major Nidal Malik Hasan)	Political, Ideological, Religious	Military Personnel	13
2/18/2010	Austin	Individual (Andrew Joseph Stack III)	Political, Ideological	Government (General)	2
9/1/2010	Silver Spring	Individual (James Lee)	Political, Ideological	Journalists & Media	1
8/5/2012	Oak Creek	Individual (Wade Michael Page)	Political, Ideological, Religious	Private Citizens	7

**Table 3: Religion, Marital Status, Means of Social Contact**

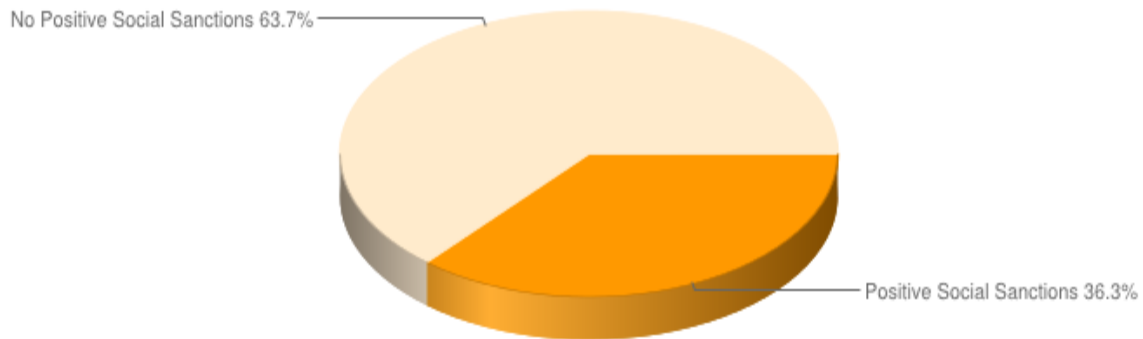
DATE	CITY	PERPETRATOR 1	RELIGION	MARITAL STATUS	MEANS OF SOCIAL CONTACT
7/4/2002	Los Angeles	Individual (Hesham Mohamed Hadayet)	Muslim	Married	Personal Contacts
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (John Allen Muhammad)	Muslim	Not Married	Personal Contacts
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (Lee Boyd Malvo)	Muslim	Not Married	Personal Contacts
7/28/2006	Seattle	Individual (Naveed Afzal Haq)	Muslim Convert	Not Married	Group Affiliations
7/27/2008	Knoxville	Individual (Jim David Adkisson)	Non-religious	Not Married	Personal Contacts
6/1/2009	Little Rock	Al-Qa'ida (Abdulahkim Muhammad)	Muslim Convert	Married	Personal Contacts
6/10/2009	DC	Individual (James Wenneker von Brunn)	Evolutionist	Unknown	Unknown
11/5/2009	Kileen	Individual (Major Nidal Malik Hasan)	Muslim	Not Married	Personal Contacts
2/18/2010	Austin	Individual (Andrew Joseph Stack III)	Anti-Catholic	Married	Unknown
9/1/2010	Silver Spring	Individual (James Lee)	Anti-religious	Unknown	Unknown
8/5/2012	Oak Creek	Individual (Wade Michael Page)	Atheistic-racist	Unknown	Group Affiliations

**Table 4: Positive Social Sanctions, Major Event Before Incident**

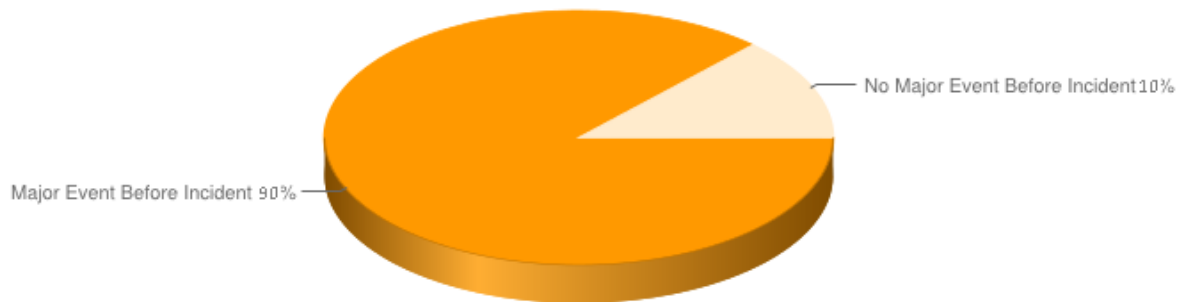
DATE	CITY	PERPETRATOR 1	POSITIVE SOCIAL SANCTIONS	MAJOR EVENT BEFORE INCIDENT
7/4/2002	Los Angeles	Individual (Hesham Mohamed Hadayet)	None reported	Yes
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (John Allen Muhammad)	Yes	Yes
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (Lee Boyd Malvo)	Yes	Yes
7/28/2006	Seattle	Individual (Naveed Afzal Haq)	None reported	Yes
7/27/2008	Knoxville	Individual (Jim David Adkisson)	None reported	Yes
6/1/2009	Little Rock	Al-Qa'ida (Abdulahkim Muhammad)	Yes	None Reported
6/10/2009	DC	Individual (James Wenneker von Brunn)	None reported	Yes
11/5/2009	Kileen	Individual (Major Nidal Malik Hasan)	Yes	Yes
2/18/2010	Austin	Individual (Andrew Joseph Stack III)	None reported	Yes
9/1/2010	Silver Spring	Individual (James Lee)	None reported	Yes
8/5/2012	Oak Creek	Individual (Wade Michael Page)	None reported	Yes

**Table 5: Criminal Record, Primed in U.S., Influences**

DATE	CITY	PERPETRATOR 1	CRIMINAL RECORD	PRIMED IN US	INFLUENCES
7/4/2002	Los Angeles	Individual (Hesham Mohamed Hadayet)	Yes	Yes	Unknown
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (John Allen Muhammad)	Yes	Yes	Nation of Islam, Jamaat al Fugra, Osama Bin Laden, Al-Qaida
10/2/2002	DC	Individual (Lee Boyd Malvo)	Yes	Yes	John Allen Muhammad
7/28/2006	Seattle	Individual (Naveed Afzal Haq)	Yes	Yes	Islamic Center of the Tri-Cities
7/27/2008	Knoxville	Individual (Jim David Adkisson)	Yes	Yes	Unknown
6/1/2009	Little Rock	Al-Qa'ida (Abdulahakim Muhammad)	Yes	Unknown	Anwar al-Awlaki
6/10/2009	DC	Individual (James Wenneker von Brunn)	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
11/5/2009	Killeen	Individual (Major Nidal Malik Hasan)	None Reported	Yes	Anwar al-Awlaki, Abdulhakim Muhammad
2/18/2010	Austin	Individual (Andrew Joseph Stack III)	None Reported	Yes	Unknown
9/1/2010	Silver Spring	Individual (James Lee)	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
8/5/2012	Oak Creek	Individual (Wade Michael Page)	Yes	Yes	White Supremacy, Neo-Nazi, Hammerskins

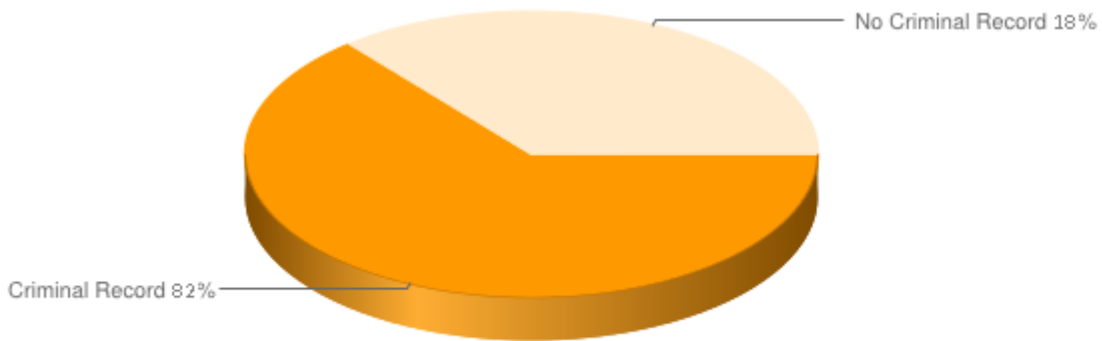


**Figure 1. Reported cases of positive social sanctions.**

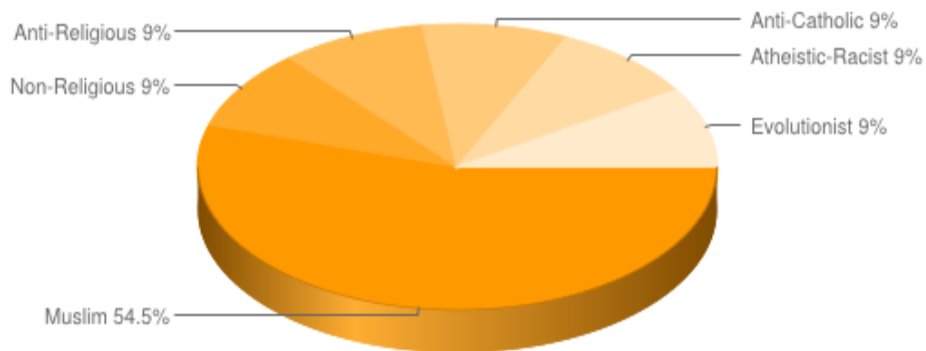


**Figure 2. Reported cases of major events before the incident.**





**Figure 3. Frequency of criminal records.**



**Figure 4. Religious background.**

### Findings

The empirical data listed above is based on eleven recorded cases of terrorist acts from the years 2002-2012. The empirical data includes a list of only successful terrorist attacks that resulted in at least one fatality and meets this research's criteria to be designated as a terrorist attack. Before the analysis of data, one disclaimer must be noted. The identification of a factor by the term “yes” or “no”, within good reason may be quantifiable. In addition, the identification

of a factor by the term “unknown” or “none reported”, within good reason may also be quantifiable. However, both identifications remain ambiguous incomplete and may not necessarily indicate that there was an occurrence of such a factor.

Therefore, comparing the aggregated amount of data in this analysis, with the inclusion of unknown factors may involve unintended bias. As a result, the concluding analysis of data recorded will primarily focus on the more reliable indication of a factor by the term “yes” or “no”, and note the disclaimer that the potential non-existence of the factor indicated by “unknown” or “unreported” may not necessarily indicate the actual non-existence of a factor. Thereby, the presence of factors indicated as such may potentially be higher than zero percent. But, if the factor is indicated at least once in the data set, this research is able to acknowledge at minimum that the existence of such a factor with regard to each individual case is greater than zero percent.

Moreover, if the presences of factors are indicated with high frequency within a sample population, this research will be able to argue that such frequencies exist minimally at a certain frequency. If this frequency is high, this research may be able to make assumptions derived from this data with respect to a controlled sample population group. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to state that any research that incorporates some kind of quantitative analysis potentially may have inherent limitations or bias because of incomplete and ambiguous data. In spite of this, the analysis of research data presented in this paper will make clear any disclaimers in the attempt to avoid improper comparison of data that could be affected by any potential misidentification or misinterpretation of factors.

After analyzing the data sets above, this research determined that 100% of the perpetrators were male. The mean average for the age of the perpetrators is thirty-nine years. The average age of the perpetrators is forty-one years. At least 72% of all the cases listed in the data set positively indicated that religion served as an important motivating factor. Moreover, out of the 72% of cases that indicated religion was a motivating factor, 54.4% were Muslim, 9% had no claimed religious affiliation, 9% were considered to be anti-Christian and anti-Jewish evolutionists, 9% were critical of organized religion, 9% were anti-religious, and 9% were considered to be atheistic White supremacists.

In regards to the method of attack by the perpetrators, at least 82% participated in an armed assault, 9% or one individual utilized an explosive device, and 9% or one individual utilized an airplane. The total number of fatalities caused by these perpetrators number fifty-two deaths, of which 82% were caused by armed assault, 9% by explosive devices, and 9% by an airplane attack. Out of the total number of fatalities, 88% were classified as politically, ideologically, and religiously motivated acts of terrorism. And 12% out of the total number of fatalities were classified as politically and ideologically motivated terrorism.

Out of all of the cases listed in the data set, 18% of the perpetrators were noted as having only a secondary education, while 55% had a post-secondary education, and 27% were classified as “unknown” (no information discovered). Out of the percentage of perpetrators that were listed as having a secondary education, 100% were identified as being politically, ideologically, and religiously motivated. Additionally, out of the percentage of cases listed as having a post-secondary education 30% were classified as politically, ideologically, and religiously motivated.

Further, research shows that 82% of perpetrators were noted as having a criminal record, and out of these, 89% were considered politically, ideologically and religiously motivated. In regards to marital status, at least 27% of the perpetrators were identified as being married.

Through empirical research, the data set listed above indicates that at least 73% of perpetrators have reported or been identified as having some form of regular social contact with an individual, while for 27% specific social relationships were listed as “unknown”. Out of the percentage of perpetrators having social contacts, at least 36% were identified as receiving positive social sanctions. Moreover, 73% of the perpetrators compiled in the data set were listed as being primed in the United States, and out of that terrorist grouping, a full three-fourths or 75% were categorized as being politically, ideologically, and religiously motivated. Finally, 90% of perpetrators experienced a major incident or critical occurrence in their lives prior to the terrorist attack

### Analysis

Through the analysis of these data sets, this research was able to determine that there are few major factors that are noteworthy with the terrorist cases included in the dataset. This research has determined that out of the eleven cases selected at least 36% of perpetrators specifically were noted as having received positive social sanctions. In analyzing this data and considering its significance, the fact that only 36% of an entire sample population received positive social sanctions, suggests that this percentage is not high enough to be sufficiently significant in either qualitative or quantitative terms because it represents less than half of the

sample population. However, the inherent limitations of the data set do not completely invalidate the potentially important role of social sanctions as a basis for terrorist motivations.

In recording cases for this data analysis, the access to primary sources, such as personal testimonies of whether or not individuals received positive social sanctions might not have readily been acquired in all case studies, primarily due to the fact that some perpetrators were incarcerated or deceased. In fact, there is a possibility that many more individuals in this sample did receive positive social sanctions, and possibly when questioned by investigators, in attempts to locate additional individuals who may have been accessories in the terrorist acts, refused to respond or failed to reveal the truth. Thus, the perpetrators might have denied the existence of incriminating supportive actions and actors or withheld information, in an attempt to protect other assailants. With these findings in mind, this research will have to focus on the specific cases where the existence of positive social sanctions is already known to be present. Therefore, the analysis will determine the effect of positive social sanctions in selected case studies, as opposed to providing a holistic, and more comprehensive, multi-case analysis of all the terrorist cases in the database. This limited and focused analysis will note the presence, frequency, and significance of positive social sanctions.

In regards to the cases that did in fact exhibit characteristics of receiving positive social sanctions, some questions may arise as to why that is the case. According to Kennedy and Zillmer, individuals tend to seek communal bonds before they enter into a terrorist group or before they can be influenced to commit acts of terror. The need to maintain and seek communal bonds may make positive social sanctions play a more influential role in the cases exhibiting

positive social sanctions. In contrast to this analysis, one might argue that all of these selected cases also may have been the result of some type of mental illness. Because this research was not able to systematically diagnose any of the perpetrators with a mental illness based on scientific research, this possibility can only be theoretical.

In regards to the analysis of the data presented above, out of the 72% of cases wherein perpetrators indicated that religion was a factor behind their motivation, in three-fourths or 75% of those cases the perpetrators were identified as being Muslim. This information might be a significant finding, especially in regards to religious based terrorism, and the Muslim population. However, because the sample population of terrorist cases was selected out of 86 incidences (mentioned in this paper's methodology section) and was based on relatively limited available information pertaining to each case, it is possible that the sample population is biased and not truly randomized. If this is the case, then the frequency of the true Muslim population represented in all of the domestic and homegrown terrorist cases may be at a lower percentage rate, compared to that of individuals who have not claimed any religious affiliation, anti-Christian, anti-Jewish evolutionists, individuals who are critical of organized religion, anti-religious individuals and atheistic White supremacists.

In addition to this, out of the percentage of perpetrators that was listed as having a secondary education, 100% of the Muslim population was represented. Out of the percentage of cases that were classified as having a post-secondary education, 50% were listed as Muslim. This shows that 83% of the terrorists that were listed as Muslim had at least a comparable education and 17% of the terrorists that were not listed as Muslims had at least a comparable education.

These statistics clearly refute the idea that all terrorists, particularly Islamic terrorists are uneducated. In fact, in the sample population presented in the data set, the Muslim population is more educated than the non-Muslim population.

Finally, through the aggregation of data this research has determined that 82% of the perpetrators had a criminal history, 73% were recorded as single, and 90% had a major incident occur in their lives before the attack. Based on the analysis by Silber, and Bhatt (2007), most terrorists are considered to be remarkably normal in regards to not having a criminal history. Data from this thesis does differ than that of Silber, and Bhatt in regards to the criminal records of perpetrators. What may account for this differentiation is the fact that the sample population in this thesis only includes individuals who have committed an act of terror that resulted in at least one fatality, whereas data from Silber, and Bhatt focused primarily on jihadist or jihad-Salafi ideology. Nevertheless, data from this research may support Silber, and Bhatt's analysis on the self-identification phase of radicalization, where individuals tend to be influenced by both negative internal and external factors (economic, social, political, personal), prior to exploring extremist ideology. At least 90% of the cases in this research have indicated a major incident or negative internal and external factor occurring in the lives of the perpetrators before terrorist attacks.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: TERRORISM CASE STUDIES/MUSLIM POPULATION**

This chapter will analyze terrorist cases representative of the Muslim population. The uniqueness of religious based terrorism under the pretext of the Islamic faith, ideology and or jihad warrants the need to categorize such cases into a separate chapter. Though, some of the cases represented in the sample Muslim population are not religious based, an overwhelming majority of the cases in this chapter are. Throughout this chapter, relevant biographical literature on each case will be analyzed. Biographical literature concerning this research will contain information pertaining to the indication of an individual's exposure to positive social sanctions and its effect. Moreover, this chapter will attempt to determine which characteristics are common amongst the terrorists cases selected. The characteristics that this research is looking for involves an individual's exposure to positive social sanctions, criminal records, education, age, ideology, birth place, religion and amongst many other factors, reports indicating major incidences occurring in the perpetrators life before the attack, which may cause relative deprivation.

### Hesham Mohamed Hadayet

On July 4, 2002 Hesham Mohamed Hadayet murdered two Israelis and wounded four others at the Los Angeles International Airport ("FBI Justice," 2003). During the attack Hadayet was shot and killed by a security guard. Hesham Hadayet was an Egyptian-American who immigrated to the United States in 1992 ("FBI Justice," 2003). After he arrived in the United States Hadayet applied for asylum, telling the INS that the Egyptian authorities falsely accused



and arrested him for being a member of the Islamic Group Gama'a al-Islamiyya ("FBI Justice," 2003). The INS denied Hadayet's asylum request in 1992 and subsequently Hadayet was placed in removal proceedings from the United States; however, after Hadayet did not receive the notice of his immigration hearing date due to an incorrect mailing address, the EOIR terminated the proceedings ("Evaluation and Inspection," 2003).

Although asylum was denied, Hadayet was allowed to obtain temporary residency and work permission through an appeal in 1996. This temporary residency and work permission lasted until August 1997, when his wife won legal residency status for their family in a federal visa lottery ("Evaluation and Inspection," 2003). Hadayet maintained his green card and operated a limousine business while residing in the United States for over a decade. Hadayet was married with at least one child ("Evaluation and Inspection," 2003).

Still, with regards to Hadayet there was a potential yet questionable link, contingent upon the credibility of the Egyptian government during the 1990's that establishes Hadayet as a member or former member of a terrorist group. The Islamic Group Gama'a al-Islamiyya is an Egyptian Sunni Islamist group that is on the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Terrorist Organizations list ("FBI Justice," 2003). If in fact Hadayet was involved with the Islamic Group Gama'a al-Islamiyya, it would be reasonable to assume, based on group dynamics and norms outlined by Wahrman, that Hadayet was ideologically and religiously aligned with the group's position on religion, western society, and the existence of the state of Israel. According to Federal investigators, following the attack there was no evidence linking Hadayet to any terrorist

organization, and in regards to this research there has been no information indicating that Hadayet received positive social sanctions for the attack through such organizations.

Even so, the Islamic Group Gama'a al-Islamiyya's ideological and political platform is inherently anti-Semitic and against Israel's existence in the Middle East. Moreover, this group periodically promotes and quotes Sayyid Qutb who is considered to be an influential Islamic fundamentalist who inspired Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda and other affiliated terrorists and terrorist organizations to commit acts of terror. This group utilizes literature by Sayyid Qutb, such as newsletters and leaflets that were quoted from his manifesto, called the Ma'alim fi al-Tariq ("FBI Justice," 2003). If in fact Hesham Mohamed Hadayet was a member of the Islamic Group Gama'a al-Islamiyya, it would be highly likely that he was exposed to this group's ideological, religious and political platform; which is primarily contingent upon Sayyid Qutb's teachings.

### Sayyid Qutb

Sayyid Qutb's ideological and religious teachings postulate a "qualitative contradiction between western culture, the religion of Islam and excludes the validity of all other systems and religions" which includes Judaism (Choueiri, 1990, p. 123) The written works of Sayyid Qutb include the "Milestone" and the "Social Justice in Islam", which views the West as a neo-crusading force (Qutb, 2000, p. 267). These influential writings have been adopted by prominent transnational terrorist organizations, such as Al-Qaeda, the Islamic Group Gama'a al-Islamiyya and homegrown terrorists groups inside the United States, including Salafi jihadists. Qutb's

teachings emphasize Islam as a “sui generis” (unique) and “transcendental” set of beliefs, which exclude the validity of all other values and concepts, including western culture and Israel’s state of existence (Choueiri, 2010, p. 115). Sayyid Qutb’s teachings also discerned the differences between the doctrinal foundations of Islam and the modern philosophical currents within Islam. As a consequence of these discerned differences, Islamic fundamentalism is opposed to the intellectual and philosophical currents related to enlightenment, secularism, nationalism, democracy and other religions, including Judaism (Choueiri, 2010, p. 123).

Additionally, Hadayet’s intent was to influence the U.S. government’s foreign policy in the Middle East in regards to Palestine and Israel. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice confirmed that Hesham Mohamed Hadayet’s shooting was an act of terror (“FBI Justice,” 2003). Hesham Mohamed Hadayet clearly had an embedded hatred inside of him that led him to commit a terrorist attack, killing innocent people in order to make a political and ideological statement in an attempt to coerce or intimidate the United States government.

The question that one may ask is where did this hate come from and why did he commit this act? Moreover, was he mentally ill? In order to properly state a claim of mental illness, as to being the reason why Hesham Mohamed Hadayet committed the terrorist act, would require a diagnosis. This diagnosis would have to encompass identifiable characteristics with regard to Hesham Mohamed Hadayet. These characteristics may include signs of cognitive impairment and signs of irrational thought. These characteristics must include the absence of a reasonable motive. According to Victoroff, author “The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches”, a psychotic or insane person is considered to be so mentally

disordered that he or she cannot know right from wrong. However, a sociopath does know right from wrong and chooses wrong for intrinsic reasons without the qualms of conscience (Victoroff, 2005, p. 12). Based on the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, mental illness is the lack of comprehensibility.

Did Hesham Mohamed Hadayet lack comprehensibility? Was he mentally ill? In addition to this, was there an irrational motive, logic or reason behind this attack? Reasonably, all of these questions could be a possibility and establishes a basis for a credible argument of mental illness. However, without further evidence, this research cannot properly diagnose Hesham Mohamed Hadayet as being mentally ill.

This case study analysis argues that there was a potential motive of hate, possibly even an irrational motive that resonated from political and ideological beliefs; though this cannot be proven, because he was killed during the attack and did not leave incriminating and irrefutable evidence linking him to such beliefs. However, if beliefs were the factor, where did they come from? The answer to these questions depends upon a number of factors. First, these acts have been consistent with many of the actions taken by members of the terrorist organization, such as the Islamic Group Gama'a al-Islamiyya. In addition to Hadayet's upbringing in Egypt, his religious teachings, political and ideological background may have been molded by this terrorist organization with which he was linked by the Egyptian government. One thing that has been identified with some certainty in this case is that this act could have been driven by a number of factors, such as Hadayet's failing limousine business, a suffering marriage, mental illness in the form of insanity, and the fact that his wife and children had recently left for Egypt.

Hadayet was left alone and depressed on his birthday during the day of the attack; which constitutes one of three major incidences that happened in Hadayet's life prior to the attack ("FBI Justice," 2003). Based on the Silber and Bhatt (2007) research on the radicalization process, such events can account for a cognitive opening or crisis in their lives which leads an individual to be receptive to new ideas or, according to Pamela Griset, view these events as unacceptable conditions evoking strong negative feelings: "It's not right, it's not fair and it's your fault" (Griset, 2002, p. 2). Through this process, whether explained by either the NYPD's radicalization phase or by Griset's individual-psychology-based explanations, the major incidences that occurred in Hadayet's life could have motivated him to commit this act of terror, while blaming Israelis for it all. Perhaps even such mundane issues that occurred in Hadayet's life may have psychologically pushed him over the edge, rendering him temporarily crazy, that is, not cognitive of his actions and for all intents and purposes mentally ill. Once again, because there has been no official diagnosis by a psychologist, this research can only speculate as to his state of mind and mental condition.

Prior ideological alignments to a culture in a society, that is, a situation wherein a group of people have general hatred or distrust of another group of people or society, may also be a determinant for terrorist activities. In this case, Egyptians may generally dislike Israelis and the Israeli government because of their defeat in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war and because of the territory claimed in the aftermath of the conflict. This is a reasonable motive, in the sense that it is plausible, and if not impossible it can be equally attributed to the case of Hadayet. Moreover, this analysis can also argue that not every person who grew up in Egypt or a culture that has a

dislike or hatred for Israel will commit an act of terror. Moreover, not every member or individual who has a questionable association with a radicalized Islamic group, such as the Islamic Group Gama'a al-Islamiyya, will participate in their activities; however, those who exhibit the characteristics of hatred towards a particular group of people or have affiliation with terrorist organizations may be ideologically aligned with such groups.

In reference to the aggregated data of terrorist cases reviewed in this thesis, Hadayet is listed as being politically and ideologically motivated. Because this case analysis did not find any specific reference to the attack being motivated by religion but rather by politics, foreign policy and ideology, this thesis research did not place Hadayet in the category of being motivated by religious reasons. Finally, lacking additional evidence, this case was not categorized as an example of the perpetrator receiving and being motivated by positive social sanctions.

#### John Allen Muhammad

John Allen Muhammad along with his partner Lee Boyd Malvo were both convicted of killing ten people in the 2002 Beltway sniper attacks. Prior to the attacks in 1979, John Allen Muhammad enlisted in the Louisiana National Guard. Muhammad also joined an organization called the Nation of Islam in 1987 (Williams, 2002, para. 11). Muhammad later left the Nation of Islam and began to admire Al-Qaeda and modeled his beliefs after this terrorist organization. The Nation of Islam and al-Qaeda are ideologically different. The Nation of Islam has little to no record of promoting terrorism, the global caliphate or even the violent interpretation of jihad. Conversely, al-Qaeda advocates terrorism, jihad and the global caliphate. In comparison, the

Nation of Islam would view al-Qaeda as extreme. In addition, while Muhammad was in the military he qualified with the U.S. armed forces standard infantry M16 rifle, while earning the Expert Rifleman's Badge (Williams, 2002, para. 5). Following the 1994 Gulf War Muhammad was discharged from the military (Williams, 2002, para. 1). The beginning of negative events that would occur in Muhammad's life leading up to the terrorist attacks starts with marital issues, and potentially indication of mental issues. Muhammad was divorced twice and his second wife Mildred Muhammad obtained a restraining order against him. Mildred Muhammad also obtained custody of John Allen Muhammad's child ("Sniper's ex-wife," 2003).

In 1999 Muhammad violated his restraining order, kidnapped his children and fled to Antigua while engaging in immigration and credit card fraud ("Sniper's ex-wife," 2003). During this time, John Allen Muhammad became associated with Lee Boyd Malvo, who later became his partner in the Beltway sniper attacks ("Sniper's ex-wife," 2003). After Muhammad's arrest for the Beltway shootings, authorities claimed that Muhammad admitted he admired Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda. Moreover, Malvo's psychiatric witness testified that Muhammad had indoctrinated Malvo to believe that his involvement in the Washington, D.C. shootings would help him build a new nation of only young pure black people in Canada (Schwisow, 2003, para. 1). Malvo supported this idea, and provided positive social sanctions for their cause through praise, which was religious, political and ideological in nature.

Malvo agreed to cooperate with Muhammad in exchange to being able to achieve a certain goal. This goal was to establish a utopian society in Canada. Muhammad orchestrated the idea, and was the ring leader of the group ("Sniper's ex-wife," 2003). Based on this analysis,

the group dynamics here are limited to only two people: Lee Boyd Malvo and John Allen Muhammad. Both members provided emotional, practical and cognitive support to one another in an effort to commit acts of terror (“Sniper’s ex-wife,” 2003). Their ideological, religious and political platform mirrors that of Osama bin Laden, who calls for jihad and terrorist attacks against the United States. However, both members in this group reasonably lack rational thought. This lack of rational thought is based on the pretense that, both these individuals believed that they could develop a utopian society, commit acts of terror, and wage a successful campaign of jihad on a nation that has resources to counter such plots exponentially. In addition to this, such plots have been foiled before, and very rarely if ever succeeded through the vehicle of terrorism, since terrorism is a strategy contingent upon one of the lowest forms of asymmetrical warfare. Based on this analysis, the motive for Malvo and Muhammad was illogical and by definition may represent a sign of cognitive dissonance and mental illness or insanity.

During John Allen Muhammad's day in court in 2006, in Maryland, Lee Boyd Malvo confessed that their plan consisted of multiple phases in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. Phase one was mapping out locations, and planning their escape routes (Mount, 2006, para. 4). This way the perpetrators could quickly leave the area on a path already outlined after the shootings. According to Malvo, John Allen Muhammad's goal in phase one was to kill six Caucasian people daily for one month. Malvo stated that heavy traffic interfered with their goals and the lack of a clear shot and exit strategy prevented them from carrying out their goal (Mount, 2006, para. 5). Phase two consisted of targeting women, and law enforcement officers. This phase also included the use of explosives (Mount, 2006, para. 6). The third phase was to extort millions of dollars



from the U.S. Government and with the funds recruit new African American members from orphanages and train them in Canada (Mount, 2006, para. 7). Their goal was to train members based on a radicalized Islamic belief system that promoted violence, killings of innocent people, and the coercion of the government.

### Lee Boyd Malvo

Lee Boyd Malvo was born on February 18, 1985, and was a participant in the 2002 Beltway Sniper attacks in 2002. According to Malvo, Muhammad had orchestrated the plan to commit the attacks and kill six people daily for a month in order to terrorize the nation (Mount, 2006, para. 1). The beltway attacks caused the deaths of ten people in total. Malvo believed Muhammad when he told him that they would be able to extort \$10 million dollars in ransom from the U.S. Government in order to establish a utopian society for homeless children in Canada (Siegel, 2003, para. 17). This is a type of elicitation for a behavior through the potential of rewards, represents a prescribed form of positive social sanctions. Lee Boyd Malvo and his mother named Una Sceon James met John Allen Muhammad in Antigua in 1999 (Siegel, 2003, para 13). Una and Muhammad subsequently developed a strong friendship and later Una left Antigua for Florida. Una left her son with Muhammad, and planned on having him follow her at a later date

Malvo arrived in Miami Florida in 2001 as an illegal alien (“Bio: Lee Boyd Malvo,” 2006). In December 2001 Malvo was apprehended by Border Patrol in Bellingham, Washington. Malvo was released in January 2002 where he later caught up with Muhammad (“Bio: Lee Boyd

Malvo,” 2006). In 2002 Malvo traveled to Bellingham, Washington and lived in a homeless shelter with Muhammad who enrolled him in high school. Muhammad was falsely listed as his father. Moreover, Malvo did not make any friends according to his classmates (“Bio: Lee Boyd Malvo,” 2006). After being arrested for the 2002 Beltway sniper attacks, Malvo made his defense based on the notion that he was in fact insane and was under Muhammad's control. In addition to this, one of Malvo's psychiatric witnesses testified that Muhammad had indoctrinated him (“Bio: Lee Boyd Malvo,” 2006). This testimony shows that Muhammad had influential power over Malvo and that promoting his cause through positive social sanctions influenced Malvo.

Malvo was homeless at the time, had no father figure besides Muhammad, was isolated and only had close ties with Muhammad. By the examination of this case it is reasonable to say that Muhammad and Malvo were potentially both mentally ill; however, such diagnosis and characterization may be substantially different and not the case in the court of law. On this point, social impact theory, due to Malvo's continual interaction with Muhammad, the frequency of it, and the impact of Muhammad's position as a father figure, indicates that the utilization of positive social sanctions would be and appear to have been influential.

Muhammad was the ring leader in the 2002 Beltway sniper attacks. As a ring leader he himself provided positive social sanctions to Lee Boyd Malvo, eliciting praise and rewards for a desired behavior and by doing so influencing him to partake in these terrorist acts. Muhammad's motives were based on Islamic jihad and arguably mental illness or insanity. In relation to positive social sanctions, Muhammad can be positively identified as an individual utilizing this

tool to influence Malvo and in a social group setting provide each other both material and psychological support for their cause.

In addition to the analysis above, concerning Lee Boyd Malvo and John Allen Muhammad, we have considered various possibilities as to why these individuals committed an act of terror. The use of positive social sanctions has been indicated as present with these two case studies; however, there is also more to the story. The question of insanity and illogical behavior is important as well for further analysis. According to Jerrold Post, terrorists' reason differently than normal people; their reasoning process is characterized by terrorist psychology. Post argues that political terrorists are driven to commit acts of terror as a consequence of psychological forces (Post, 2005, p. 25). Does this mean that a certain kind of person is drawn to terrorist activities because of their psychological state? In general terms, the promises made by Lee Boyd Malvo, by nature were irrational and improbable and can indicate mental illness.

#### Naveed Afzal Haq

Naveed Afzal Haq went on a deadly shooting spree inside the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle on July 28, 2006. Naveed Haq's family is from Pakistan and his father helped establish the local Islamic Center in the Tri-Cities area (Feit and Kiley, 2006, para. 21). Naveed Haq graduated from High School in 1994 and after high school Haq attended college and then dentistry school at the University of Pennsylvania. Haq never graduated from dentistry school but went to Washington State University where he received a degree in electrical engineering (Feit and Kiley, 2006, para. 2). By many accounts Haq was unable to maintain a steady job (Feit

and had only a few close friends. This means that Haq had little personal influences in his life and was primarily isolated.

Haq was briefly married in 2001 in Pakistan; the marriage was arranged; however unconsummated when he returned to America without his bride (Feit and Kiley, 2006, para. 19). Prior to the shooting incident Haq was arrested for public exposure at a mall in Kennewick, Washington in March 2006. He was allegedly harassing women and exposed himself in public. Reports also show that Haq was taking medication for bipolar disorder and that he was unhappy with his life. Haq's parents had witness Haq deal with his mental illness throughout his life (Feit & Kiley, 2006, para. 19). In addition to Haq's mental health, sources have confirmed that Haq would offhandedly make anti-Semitic remarks from time to time, even around his few friends (Feit & Kiley, 2006, para. 30).

Haq grew up as a Muslim; however, he later disavowed Islam. Following his departure from Islam, Haq converted to Christianity and attended the Word of the Faith Church in Kennewick, Washington, and was baptized in December 2005 (Feit and Kiley, 2006, para. 24). After a few months of going to the Word of the Faith Church, Haq stopped attending the bible study group. According to the group leader, Albert Montelongo, Haq seemed depressed because his family did not support his decision to convert to Christianity. Haq stated that he converted to Christianity because he perceived too much anger in Islam. In addition to this, Haq mentioned to one of his few friends that he was moving to Seattle to search for employment (Feit and Kiley, 2006, para. 4).

According to a friend, at one point Haq was working as a security guard at a department store. Six weeks later Haq e-mailed his friend saying that he had started a new job at a Home Depot store. Many people closely tied to Haq thought it was odd that he was an educated individual, had an engineering degree, and took unskilled jobs. Moreover, Haq had trouble staying employed. After a short period of time Haq eventually began going back to his father's Islamic Center of Tri-Cities and met with the senior member of the organization who had previously bailed him out of jail for the public exposure case at the mall (Feit and Kiley, 2006, para. 20). Haq converted back to Islam and attended his father's Islamic Center of Tri-Cities on a regular basis.

On July 28, 2006, Haq began his shooting spree at the Jewish Federation of greater Seattle, Washington. During the shooting, it was reported that Haq stated, "I'm not upset at people. I'm upset at your foreign policy" (Feit and Kiley, 2006, para. 9). During the attack, Haq also told 911 operators that "These are Jews and I'm tired of getting pushed around and our people getting pushed around by the situation in the Middle East" (Feit and Kiley, 2006, para. 9). He also demanded that the United States remove its forces from Iraq. Haq latter surrendered and was arrested by police outside. The question that one may ask is what caused Haq to go on a rampage on this particular date? Was Haq connected to a terrorist group, or was he radicalized? Did Haq experience major events in his life causing a cognitive opening which led him to this attack? Some of these questions can be answered by the analysis of Haq's life, beliefs, affiliations and what was going on in the international arena at the time.

Based on this case study, we see that Haq, prior to the shooting was isolated, lacked meaningful communal bonds and showed signs of mental illness. He was a single man and initially dissatisfied with Islam. At this time Haq only had his immediate and possibly only one friend who he listed on Friendster. He stated that his family did not support his decision to convert to Christianity. Haq could not hold a steady job and in addition to this, major events occurred in his life prior to the attack, which included his inability to keep a job. Eventually, after converting to Christianity, Haq went back to his father's Islamic center of tri-cities where he converted back to Islam. In this case there is no proof or evidence that Haq received positive social sanctions for his actions. Haq showed signs of mental illness which can be a factor in determining what influenced Haq to commit this terrorist act. Based on his own words, during the attack, Haq was tired of getting pushed around and through the rest of his statements he showed anger and frustration towards Israel and the Jewish people along with U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

Considering Naveed Haq's personal accounts, John Allen Muhammad's ideological, political and religious standings, and Hadayet's motives, there seem to be common themes and characteristics among the perpetrators in these cases. The cases of Hesham Mohamed Hadayet, John Allen Muhammad, Lee Boyd Malvo, and Naveed Afzal Haq, all referenced so far in this analysis, were associated with or were directly involved with some form of ideology that opposed Israel and/or U.S. foreign policy. And at the same time, each individual could potentially be categorized as mentally ill. Each individual in the cases studied so far had a criminal record, some more extensive than others; and these perpetrators all appear to have been

familiar with the criminal justice system. Based on this analysis, these individuals tend to have similar characteristics, which include a criminal record, an ideology of hatred derived potentially from exposure to a particular political or religious ideology, and a record of major incidences occurring in their lives that may have caused feelings of relative deprivation. And not least, some cases indicated possible or actual exposure to positive social sanctions.

According to Pamela Griset, terrorist motivation has a three stage process. Stage one begins with conditions that appear to be unacceptable to an individual: "It's not right." Stage two follows with anger and resentment along with a sense of injustice (Griset, 2002, p. 2). This idea resonates with Haq's comment, stating that these are Jews and I'm tired of getting pushed around, and Lee Boyd Malvo's along with John Allen Muhammad's discontent with the United States. Stage three is when the issue becomes personal and the individual blames someone else for his or her troubles. Though Pamela Griset's three stage process cannot be fully applied to each case study in this research, many of the cases do resonate with these processes and can also show some form of commonality indicating possible determinants for terrorist activities. Moreover, mental illness may also be a catalyst for such stages, further leading an individual to commit an act of terror.

#### Abdulkhikim Muhammad

On June 1, 2009 Abdulkhikim Mujahid Muhammad opened fire in a drive by shooting on soldiers at the Little Rock recruiting office. He killed Private William Long. The same day he was captured and arrested for the shooting and during his capture he told the police that he

intended to kill as many Army personnel as possible. Abdulhakim Muhammad had an SKS rifle, two handguns, and a Mossberg International 702 rifle, with military books in his car. Muhammad stated that he was sent by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and that “the attack was justified according to Islamic Law and the Islamic Religion” (Goetz, 2010, p. 1).

In regards to Muhammad’s biography, he graduated from Craigmont High School in Memphis, Tennessee in 2003 and attended Tennessee State University in Nashville, Tennessee, for three semesters (Goetz, 2010, p. 1). He also converted to Islam at the age of 19 at Masjid As-Salam, which is a mosque located in Memphis, Tennessee. According to Goetz, Muhammad said, “I’ve loved jihad ever since I became Muslim” (Goetz, 2010, p. 1). By 2007, Muhammad was deeply religious and subsequently became a jihadist (Goetz, 2010, p.1).

On the sixth anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks, Abdulhakim Muhammad left to visit Yemen in 2007. He stayed for 16 months, supposedly visiting the country and to teach English at an institution while learning Arabic and furthering his understanding of Islam. However, according to Jihad Watch, Muhammad studied jihad with a local Islamic scholar. While he was in Yemen he married a woman from South Yemen who worked as an elementary school teacher (Goetz, 2010, p. 1). Muhammad says that he got in contact with Anwar al-Awlaki during his journey and was helped by him to plan the attack. According to various sources reporting on this matter, Muhammad knew people in Yemen who would have helped him get started with training but didn't do so at the time for security reasons (Goetz, 2010, p. 1). Moreover, he was “asked many times to carry out a martyrdom operation in America” but “didn't have the proper training in regards to explosives” (Goetz, 2010, p. 1).



While attempting to receive training he was arrested at a roadside checkpoint on November 14, 2008 (Sparago, 2007, p. 34). He was arrested because he had overstayed his visa, and he was holding a fraudulent Somali passport. He also had explosive manuals and literature by Anwar Al-Awlaki, along with videos and literature about daily operations of jihadists around the world. Abdulhakim Muhammad was imprisoned for over two months and began planning to carry out jihadi attack against the U.S. while he was in prison. According to James E. Hensley Jr., Muhammad's lawyer, Muhammad was radicalized by Islamic fundamentalists while in prison. This thesis argues that this may not be the case because Muhammad was caught in possession of explosive manuals and literature by Anwar Al-Awlaki. In addition to this, it was reported that Muhammad was actually training for jihad prior to his arrest (Goetz, 2010, p. 1).

Nevertheless, this thesis will explore the premise of the prison system as a potential factor for Muhammad's radicalization. According to Sparago, prisons are considered to be an ideal place for terrorist recruitment or even further radicalization. It is not uncommon for prison inmates to turn further to religion during their incarceration. In prison, individuals who share similar religious and ideological beliefs form support groups and establish communal bonds with one another (Sparago, 2007, p. 34). Potentially the social impact on Muhammad of the prison experience would have been even greater than socialization in the outside world because of the immediacy of the source of social impact and the especially influential power of positive social sanctions in such a confined and constrained context. The result of the friendships and group support networks made in this vulnerable environment could lead many disconnected,

impressionable young men and women to become captive to further extreme ideologies (Sparago, 2007, p. 34).

On January 29, 2008, after being released from prison Muhammad was deported back to the United States. Muhammad revised his plan for training and carrying out a terrorist attack with the help of the Mujahedeen, al-Qaeda Organization in the Arabian Peninsula (DeMillo, 2010, p. 1). After his return to the United States, Muhammad stayed with his parents in Memphis. He later moved to Little Rock where he began to work for his father as a driver in his parent's tour bus business (Bartels, 2009, p. 1). He was subsequently investigated by the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force for his suspicious traveling activities and his arrest in Yemen. The FBI had been monitoring some Somali Americans traveling from Columbus, Ohio and Somalia for jihadist training. And because of Muhammad's previous arrest in Yemen and activities in the United States, along with his attempt to travel to Somalia, he became a person of interest to the FBI (DeMillo, 2010, p. 1).

Despite all of this, Muhammad began planning his jihad attack for weeks. He bought several guns that were secondhand to avoid FBI scrutiny, and also stockpiled ammunition and bought a .22-caliber rifle at Wal-Mart specifically in order to determine if he was being watched by the FBI (DeMillo, 2010, p. 1). Muhammad's initial plan was to assassinate three Jewish rabbis in Little Rock, Memphis, and Nashville. Muhammad's plan was also to target military recruitment centers, from the south to the nation's capital. He targeted Jewish organizations in the northeast and investigated recruiting centers in at least five states, including ones in New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Louisville (Thomas, 2009, p. 1). Muhammad's father name Bledsoe

stated, "Our children are in danger," and that "It seems to me that Americans are sitting around doing nothing about radical extremists. This is a big elephant in the room."(Liptak, 2003, p. 1).

Following his arrest, Muhammad stated at length, "It's a war out against Islam and Muslims, and I'm on the side of the Muslims point blank ... The U.S. has to pay for the rape, murder, bloodshed, blasphemy it has done and is still doing to the Muslims and Islam. So consider this a small retaliation, the best is to come Allah willing. This is not the first attack, and won't be the last" (Liptak, 2003, p. 1). Muhammad also stated that he did not believe that his action was murder, because he believed that American military actions in the Middle East justified his violent response (Liptak, 2003, p. 1). Moreover, he did not feel guilty because he believed that murder is when a person kills another person without a justified reason and Muhammad believed that his actions were justified (Bartels, 2009, p. 1).

Following his arrest, Muhammad ultimately pled guilty and stated that he was a "soldier in al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula", and described the shooting as a "jihadi attack" (Liptak 1). Muhammad also stated that "I wasn't insane or post-traumatic, nor was I forced to do this act. The attack was justified according to Islamic Laws and the Islamic Religion"(Liptak, 2003, p. 1). Further, Muhammad made clear that he was led by an al-Qaeda group in Yemen which was led by al-Awlaki and al-Wahishi. He was explicit about his relationship to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, stating, "...yes, I'm affiliated with them.... Our goal is to rid the Islamic world of idols and idolaters, paganism and pagans, infidelity and infidels, hypocrisy and hypocrites, apostasy and apostates, democracy and democrats, and re-launch the Islamic caliphate ... and to establish Islamic law (Shari'a)"(Stolberg, 2011, p. 1).

According to Muhammad's own admission, he did in fact receive strong positive social sanctions from multiple sources. He was motivated by Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, and by his own account mentored and advised by Anwar al-Awlaki who is a leading Al-Qaeda recruiter. Muhammad also admitted that individuals in Yemen were willing to train him for a jihad, particularly to utilize explosive devices; however, after being arrested by authorities he was not able to receive the training. Through his prison experience, Muhammad was able to intensify his beliefs and ideas towards jihad and the goal of spreading and advancing Islam and realizing a future Islamic caliphate. However, Muhammad already had developed communal bonds and social contact with Anwar al-Awlaki before he was arrested. And Anwar al-Awlaki was well known for his recruiting tactics that involved providing positive social sanctions and other encouragement in order to influence individuals to join the Islamic jihad.

#### Major Nidal Malik Hasan

Major Nidal Malik Hasan was a United States Army officer who is the accused perpetrator in the November 5, 2009, Fort Hood shooting (Pike, 2011, p. 1). Major Hasan was born in Virginia to parents who moved to the United States from Palestine. Hasan joined the Army while he was in college and became a psychiatrist at Fort Hood, Texas (Pike, 2011, p. 1). Prior to Major Hassan's shooting at Fort Hood, he had expressed anti-American and fundamentalist views that had been brought to the attention of the FBI (Pike, 2011, p. 1). It was discovered that Major Hasan had exchanged e-mails with Imam Anwar al-Awlaki asking for spiritual guidance, or in other words positive social sanctions, regarding the pursuit of jihad and

violence. Al-Awlaki, who was linked to several attacks by radical Muslims, quickly supported the Fort Hood operation because he believed it was against a military target. Thus the Fort Hood shooting attack became, as was described by the Senate committee, “the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil since September 11, 2001 (Pike, 2011, p. 1).

Hasan’s biography is uneventful. He joined the United States Army after high school and served eight years while attending college. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 1995 with a bachelor’s degree in biochemistry. Hasan later attended a medical school at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Science, and earned his medical degree in 2003 (Blackledge, 2009, p. 1). According to the *Washington Post*, Major Hasan delivered a presentation titled, “The Koranic World View as It Relates to Muslims in the U.S. Military,” during his residency at Walter Reed. Hasan recommended that the Department of Defense should give Muslim Soldiers the option of being released from military duties as “conscientious objectors” to increase troop morale and decrease adverse events (Priest, 2009, p. 1).

Retired Colonel Terry Lee, who had worked with Hasan, recalled that the fatal shooting of the two recruiters in Little Rock, Arkansas by Abdulhakim Muhammad influenced Hasan. Lee told Fox News that Hasan made negative remarks against the American military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan stating that “Muslims should stand up and fight against the aggressor”, referring to the U.S., and all the while he became more agitated and frequently argued with soldiers (Hosenball, 2009, para. 5). As evidenced by such statements and opinions, this thesis argues that Hasan was in or entering into the second phase of radicalization, that is the self-identification

phase. Individuals in this phase have demonstrated that they can become readily influenced by both negative internal and external factors.

In reference to Pamela Grist's individual based explanation of terrorism, Major Hasan was in the stage of believing that there were unacceptable conditions in his life, or the "It's not right" stage. In the Hasan case the U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan was such a factor. This shooting took place less than a month before Major Hasan's deployment to Afghanistan, suggesting that his imminent deployment may have served as a major contributing and motivating factor for his actions (Hosenball, 2009, para. 5). Moreover, Hasan seemed happy about the shooting in Little Rock, with the exception of how the suspect was treated after he was caught. Further, Hasan specifically argued that the United States should get out of Iraq and Afghanistan.

In contrast to Major Hassan's extreme views and behavior, his relatives in Palestine and the United States who spoke to the press declared that Major Hasan was a peace loving and deeply religious man who served his country proudly, but suffered from racial harassment (Mcfadden, 2009, p. 1). This analysis also suggests that such perceptions and beliefs of harassment can potentially be a catalyst for radicalization or a motivating factor for an individual to commit an act of terror. Hassan's cousin, Nader Hasan, argued that Major Hasan came to dread war after counseling soldiers who had returned with post-traumatic stress disorders (Mcfadden, 2009, p. 1). He was also strongly against the prospect of deploying after he was told about the horrors his patients saw over there (Mcfadden, 2009, p. 1). These factors and catalysts, especially the belief that the U.S. should not be in Iraq and Afghanistan, can be considered key

elements leading to frustration-aggression, and aversive stimulation. These elements only intensified Hasan's beliefs, further leading him to emotional arousal and the third phase of the radicalization process. Ultimately these factors served to accelerate both radicalization and the outbreak of violent behavior.

Military records indicate that Hasan was unmarried (Mcfadden, 2009, p. 1). According to one of Major Hassan's cousins, he was a practicing Muslim who became more devout after his parents' deaths in 1998 and 2001, respectively (Mcfadden, 2009, p. 1). His cousin did not recall him ever expressing any radical or anti-American views (Mcfadden, 2009, p. 1). In 2001, Hasan attended the Dar al-Hijrah mosque in the Falls Church area. This particular mosque was also attended by two September 11 hijackers (Hani Hanjour and Nawaf al-Hazmi) and by Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, who was convicted of providing material support to al-Qaeda. Anwar al-Awlaki was the mosque's imam at the time and was deeply respected and followed by Major Hasan. Evidence indicates that Hasan sent Awlaki as many as twenty email messages prior to his attack at Fort Hood, Texas. Some of the e-mails sent by Hasan to Awlaki included statements, such as: "Can you make some general comments about Muslims in the U.S. Military?" And "Would you consider someone like Hasan Akbar or other soldiers that have committed such acts with the goal of helping Muslims/Islam (Lets just assume this for now) fighting Jihad and if they did die would you consider them Shaheeds (Martyrs)?" ("Awlaki E-Mail Exchange," 2012).

These questions were answered by Awlaki and according to the U.S. Government the responses by Awlaki helped promote terrorist acts on U.S. soil and contributed to Hasan's actions. This, therefore, is a clearly identified form of positive social sanctions represented by

Anwar Awlaki's support and responses to Hasan's questions in pursuit of religious, political and ideological guidance. The communication between Major Hasan and Anwar Awlaki was through the use of the internet, primarily e-mail. Studies indicate that the internet is one of the most useful tools of terrorist recruiters and can also provide a venue for education and a supportive forum and outlet for positive social sanctions that ultimately may motivate violent action (Sparago, 2007, p. 38). After the al-Qaeda camps were destroyed in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, the jihadi and al-Qaeda movement had to turn to other resources to recruit and train their members. As various governments' search and destroy various terrorist training camps in numerous countries, internet supporters within the extremist movement have created virtual training camps and recruitment centers, and continue to indoctrinate through online publications, chat rooms, and discussion boards. Jihadists along with other terrorists use these online resources to raise funds, share information, and provide positive social sanctions for their terrorist actions (Sparago, 2007, p. 38).

In addition to the use of online resources and the internet for these ends, the virtual recruitment or indoctrination process provides the individual with a high degree of anonymity making the terrorist movement much harder to track, infiltrate and destroy. These advantages of the internet make it an ideal place for recruitment and indoctrination because there are few limits and no physical borders. Someone in Saudi Arabia, for example, can now communicate, network, establish communal bonds, and receive positive social sanctions for an action by a jihadist across the world. The internet has made the terrorist movement a global endeavor and greatly expanded the realm of recruitment accordingly (Sparago, 2007, p. 44).



The use of the internet has also become a major propaganda tool for al-Qaeda. Indeed, al-Qaeda's former leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, established the web as a tool of the global jihad, mobilizing computer literate allies who inspired extremists throughout the world, even including the United States. Zarqawi, along with others like him, have harnessed the internet as a multipronged tool to recruit, teach and inspire other jihadists around the world (Sparago, 2007, p. 38).

The FBI investigated Hasan's internet activities and intercepted at least 18 e-mails between him and Anwar al-Awlaki between December 2008 and June 2009 (Hess, 2009, p. 1). Terrorism expert Jarret Brachman said that Hasan's contacts with al-Awlaki should have raised red flags (Hess, 2009, p. 1). Anwar al-Awlaki has been known to utilize social-psychological literature, and positive social sanctions to promote al-Qaeda's ideology and terrorist attacks (Hess, 2009, p. 1). According to Brachman, al-Awlaki was a major influence on radical English-speaking jihadists internationally. In one of the e-mails sent by Hasan to al-Awlaki, Hasan states "I want to join you" in the afterlife. Hasan also asked al-Awlaki when jihad is appropriate and whether it is permissible to kill innocents by a suicide attack (Ross, 2009, p. 1). Through this analysis of the Hasan case, we are able to determine that by asking Anwar-Awlaki for advice, Hasan was in fact seeking guidance and social support, and establishing communal bonds with Anwar al-Awlaki (Hess, 2009, p. 1). In the months before the shooting, Hasan continued to contact al-Awlaki to discuss how to transfer funds abroad without it coming to the attention of authorities (Hess, 2009, p. 1). Through these conversations, Anwar al-Awlaki provided positive

social sanctions which spiritually, ideologically and politically supported and motivated Hasan to commit the Fort Hood Attack.

### Anwar al-Awlaki

Anwar al-Awlaki was an American and Yemeni imam who was an educator and engineer (“NEFA Foundation”, 2009). According to U.S. Government officials, Anwar al-Awlaki was a senior talent recruiter and motivator of Islamic jihad throughout the world, and he was involved in the planning of multiple operations carried out by al-Qaeda throughout the world (“NEFA Foundation”, 2009). Anwar al-Awlaki operated a Facebook page and posted various YouTube videos promoting jihad and terrorist activities against the west. He utilized propaganda and positive social sanctions on a daily basis in the venue of social networking sites and the internet in order to lure individuals to join a radical social movement that promotes international terrorism. U.S. officials claim that Anwar al-Awlaki spoke with and preached to a number of al-Qaeda members and affiliates, include three 9/11 hijackers, as well as Major Hasan and Abdulhakim Muhammad.

According to the Nine Eleven Finding Answers Foundation, Anwar al-Awlaki has the ability to write and speak in fluent English which allowed him to be an influential figure in inciting English speaking Muslims to commit acts of terror (“NEFA Foundation,” 2009). Anwar al-Awlaki states in *44 ways to support Jihad*: “Most of the Jihad literature is available only in Arabic and publishers don’t want to take the risk of translating it” (“NEFA Foundation,” 2009).

All of these writings were influential forms of propaganda tailored to manipulating minds, hearts and souls.

Anwar al-Awlaki wrote *44 ways to support Jihad* (January 2009), and it became the key essay that provided a step by step guide for how to advance jihad (“NEFA Foundation”, 2009). Within this jihadist literature, Awlaki writes, “the hatred of Kuffar (those who reject Islam) is a central element of our military creed”, and he argues that all Muslims must participate in jihad by either doing so in person, or by funding it or by writing to promote it. He also states that all Muslims should remain physically fit and train with firearms in order to be ready for the battlefield (“NEFA Foundation”, 2009). These statements directly support terrorist activities and were presented to individuals who have committed such acts.

Anwar al-Awlaki also wrote for an online publication called Recollections. He wrote numerous lectures posted to YouTube, such as *The Battle of Hearts and Minds* (Shance, 2010, p. 1). Through an analysis of these literary works, FBI agents identified al-Awlaki as a known important senior recruiter for al-Qaeda and an influential spiritual motivator (Shance, 2010, p. 1). He has also been suspected of being involved in a dozen terrorism plots in the United States of America, United Kingdom, and Canada. These include the suicide bombers in the 2005 London bombings, Islamic terrorists in the 2006 Toronto terrorism case, the 2007 Fort Dix attack plot, the 2009 Little Rock military recruiting office incident, and the 2010 Times Square bomber. In each case the suspects were devoted followers and adherents to al-Awlaki’s message and lectures, to which they faithfully listened on laptops, audio clips and cd’s (Shance, 2010, p. 1).

Anwar al-Awlaki influenced many other extremists to join jihadist terrorist organizations through propaganda and positive social sanctions. Alessa and Carlos Almante, who are two American citizens from New Jersey, allegedly attempted to join al-Qaeda after having watched several of al-Awlaki's videos and sermons (Shance, 2010, p. 1). Zachary Chesser, nicknamed Abu Talha al-Amrikee, another American citizen who was arrested for attempting to provide material support to Al-Shabaab, also told U.S. Federal agents that he watched online videos featuring al-Awlaki and exchanged several e-mails with the persuasive imam (Shance, 2010, p. 1). These videos along with literature provided by Anwar Al-Awlaki were a form of positive social sanctions and were used to influence and persuade individuals of all walks of life to join their cause and commit acts of terror.

In conclusion, this case study has shown that Major Hasan, who was in contact with Anwar al-Awlaki, was in fact and by his own admission receiving positive social support from a senior talent recruiter and motivator of Islamic jihad globally. Anwar al-Awlaki operated a Facebook page and created YouTube videos that served as a major component of al-Qaeda's recruitment strategy. Moreover, based on the nature of the relationship between Major Hasan and Anwar al-Awlaki, this case study determined that the e-mails exchanged between the two, the advice given to Hasan by Awlaki, and the clear promotion of terrorism by Awlaki served to achieve radical ideological, political and religious goals.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: TERRORISM CASE STUDIES/NON-MUSLIM POPULATION**

This chapter will analyze terrorist cases representative of the non-Muslim population. The uniqueness of non-Muslim based terrorism cases, in which motivations for terrorist actions are justified under the pretext of advancing ideological and political ends, as well as in a few cases, religious goals, warrants the categorization and analysis of such cases in a separate chapter. Throughout this chapter, biographical literature relevant to each case will be presented and compared. Biographical material related to this thesis research primarily will focus on information pertaining to an individual's exposure to positive social sanctions and their effects on terrorist motivations and actions. Moreover, this chapter will attempt to determine which characteristics were most common amongst the terrorist actors selected. Specifically, the analysis will focus on the following key characteristics: positive social sanctions, criminal records, education, age, ideology, birth place, religion, and reports indicating major incidences occurring in the selected perpetrators' lives prior to the terrorist attacks.

### Jim David Adkisson

On July 27, 2008, Jim David Adkisson fatally shot two people at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee (Hickman, 2008, p 1). Adkisson later stated that his hatred for liberals, African Americans and homosexuals motivated him to target the church and to commit the act of terror (Hickman, 2008, p 1). During the shooting he fired a

shotgun at church members present in the congregation, ultimately killing two people and wounding several others. Immediately after the shooting incident, Adkisson was stopped and restrained by church members (Hickman, 2008, p 1). According to a sworn affidavit, Adkisson stated that on July 27, 2008, he targeted the church because of its liberal teachings, and that he believed that all liberals should be killed because of the way they were running the country (Hickman, 2008, p 1). He also felt that the Democrats tied the country's hands in the war on terror. Adkisson explained that because he could not target the leaders of the liberal movement directly, that then he would target individuals who had voted them into office (Hickman, 2008, p 1). Reports indicated that Adkisson had held these beliefs for at least ten years, and that his former wife, from whom he was estranged, was also a member of the church in the 1990's (Fowler, 2008, p. 1).

On February 4, 2009, Adkisson pled guilty to the killing of the two Unitarian Universalist Church members and was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole (Mansfield 1). In his manifesto, he noted that he had included on his list of wished for targets the Democratic members of the House and Senate and the hundred people who were “screwing up America”, according to the infamous list formulated by right-wing activist Bernard Goldberg (Mansfield, 2009, p. 1). Adkisson's manifesto also cited among his grievances his inability to find a job and that his food stamps were being cut. Finally, his manifesto indicated that he had intended to keep shooting until police arrived, and that he had expected to be killed by the police (Mansfield, 2009, p. 1).

In this case study no evidence has been uncovered revealing that Jim David Adkisson received positive social sanctions prior to his terrorist actions. In fact, Adkisson appears to have been influenced by the literature of right wing political talk show hosts and authors. Throughout Adkisson's manifesto, he repeatedly expressed his negative feelings towards Democratic members of the U.S. House and Senate. So the question that one may ask is why did Adkisson attack a church? And what may have been the determinant factor or factors in his decision? What made him ultimately decide to take the lives of individuals? A number of possible answers may help one understand the motivations and causes behind Adkisson's violent actions. However, it seems significant that officers found inside Adkisson's house revealing literature and materials, such as "Liberalism is a Mental Health Disorder" by radio talk show host Michael Savage, "Let Freedom Ring" by talk show host Sean Hannity, and "The O'Reilly Factor," by television talk show host Bill O'Reilly. Most likely these materials, which were politically aligned with the conservative right-wing, and were adamantly opposed to liberal politics and the Democratic Party, were influential in forming Adkisson's radical mind set.

Knoxville Police Chief Sterling P. Owen stated that Adkisson specifically targeted the Unitarian church because of its liberal and progressive beliefs, and was not focusing on a particular member or members of the congregation. According to Chief Owen, "It appears that the church had received some publicity regarding its liberal stance." The chief noted that the church had a "gays welcome" sign and regularly ran announcements in the News Sentinel about the meetings of friends and family members of lesbians and gays at the church. These announcements, along with recent negative events that had occurred in Adkisson's life, such as

not being able to find a job and losing food stamps, may have served as determinant factors that explained his terrorist attack.

Adkisson stated that his hatred for the liberal movement was not necessarily connected to any hostility toward Christianity or religion per se, but rather was focused on the political advocacy of the church. The church's Web site proclaimed that it had worked for "desegregation, racial harmony, fair wages, women's rights and gay rights" since the 1950s. More recent ministries involved emergency aid for the needy, school tutoring and support for the homeless, as well as a cafe that provided a gathering place for gay and lesbian high-school students. Adkisson did not appear to be a member of any church himself.

Could the literature by right wing political activists and talk show hosts found in Adkisson's possession have served to indoctrinate him? Indeed Adkisson admitted that part of his list of targets came directly from the list of Bernard Goldberg, a right wing political activist. Moreover, were Adkisson's views against liberalism and the Democratic Party similar to those of the right wing talk show hosts to whom investigators had linked him? Was there an underlying message in the propaganda material and literature found in Adkisson's place of residence that supported the notion that the political Left and the Democratic Party were the cause of many of America's problems? Answers to these questions can only be obtained by further examining the evidence presented. However, this thesis also recognizes that Adkisson had experienced major personal events prior to committing the terrorist attack, and that this is important factor to be considered. These negative personal events—extended unemployment, loss of food stamp privileges and economic hardship—could have served as the catalyst or accelerator for



Adkisson's decision to commit the terrorist attack. Terrorism research has shown that, in addition to other determinants and factors, major issues in the lives of the perpetrators appear to have been linked to the frustrations of attackers and possibly pushed them to commit the acts of terror.

### James Weneker von Brunn

James Weneker von Brunn was born on July 11, 1920. This perpetrator shot and killed one person at the United States Holocaust Memorial in Washington, D.C., on June 10, 2009 ("Guard Slain," 2009). During the attack, James Weneker von Brunn was shot by security guards, but survived and was subsequently arrested. He was charged with first degree murder and firearms violations. Nevertheless, while awaiting trial, von Brunn died on January 6, 2010. James Weneker von Brunn was a White supremacist and a Holocaust denier ("Guard Slain," 2009). He had written numerous anti-Semitic essays and had created an anti-Semitic website called The Holy Western Empire (Lovino, 2009, p. 1). James Weneker von Brunn was the author of a 1999 self-published book called *Kill the Best Gentiles*, which praised Adolf Hitler and further denied the existence of the Holocaust (Hall, 2009, p. 1).

According to his biographical details, he seemed a somewhat puzzling and unlikely terrorist figure. During his childhood years, Von Brunn was considered by his family and friends to be a sensitive and artistic individual, and his first future career aspiration was to be a painter. On August 1938, Von Brunn attended college and enrolled in Washington University in St. Louis. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in journalism in April 1943. During his time at the

university, von Brunn was a football player and the president of a fraternity, the Sigma Alpha Epsilon chapter (“Guard Slain,” 2009). He served in the United States Navy from 1943 to 1957, commanding PT Boat 159 during the fighting in the Pacific theater of World War II (“Guard Slain,” 2009). Following his military career, von Brunn worked as an advertising executive and producer in New York City for twenty years. In the late 1960's he moved to Maryland and continued advertising and resumed painting. He was later arrested for driving under the influence after an altercation at a local restaurant in 1966 (Ruane, 2009, p. 1). Von Brunn was also arrested in 1981 for attempted kidnapping and hostage taking of several members of the Federal Reserve Board (Silverstein, 2009, p. 1). Von Brunn described the action as a citizen’s arrest for acts of treason. During the incident, he complained of high interest rates. He was also convicted in 1983 for burglary, assault, weapons charges, and attempted kidnapping and Brunn's sentence was completed by September 1, 1989 (Silverstein, 2009, p. 1).

Von Brunn was a member of the now defunct American Friends of the British National Party, which is a group that once raised funds in the United States for the far Right and for the rights of Whites in the British National Party (BNP). Von Brunn was charged in U.S. Federal Court on June 11, 2009, with first degree murder and firearms violations. Serving as a political activist group, the American Friends of the British National Party had been founded by an ultra-conservative British expatriate, Mark Cotterill, in January 1999. This reactionary organization provided financial assistance for the British National Party from U.S. supporters and fostered links between far Right groups and individuals in the United States and the United Kingdom (“American Friends,” 2009). According to the BNP Chairman Nick Griffin, the group made

significant contributions to the BNP's 2001 general election campaign. However, the group later disbanded after legal attacks from the Southern Poverty Law Center in 2001 (“American Friends,” 2009).

In this case study there is no evidence specifically showing that James Wenneker von Brunn received positive social sanctions for his actions; however, Adkisson was active in right-wing political groups, such as the American Friends of the British National Party. This group advocated for the rights of white individuals and recruited members who happened to be part of White supremacist groups and neo-Nazi’s. The individuals who participated in the BNP have also generally been affiliated with hate groups. If in fact Adkisson was in close relation with members of these groups, it is reasonable to say that he shared their similar hate-based views on the Jewish people, and that, at some point in time, these groups and their beliefs provided social support to him and other members. Such support most likely worked to propagate hatred towards non-whites and to promote the need to take action on behalf of their shared beliefs. Despite the fact that there is no solid proof that Adkisson's prior involvement with far right organizations led him to perpetrate the terrorist attack, there is evidence showing that Adkisson had held his radical, anti-Semitic beliefs for decades.

According to his book, *Kill the Best Gentiles*, Adkisson lists and labels his perceived threats to the United States and White people. Within this book Adkisson illustrates ahistorical beliefs and old conspiracies about the Jewish people, their secret agenda and the perceived threat it posed to all Americans. Along with these anti-Semitic beliefs, Adkisson also labels other minorities in his book as threats, portraying these in strongly negative terms in order to justify

his hateful beliefs. It is worth noting that Adkisson was not just a simple-minded individual who may have been readily susceptible to positive social sanctions or unduly influenced by a dangerous social support group. Rather, Adkisson had had an excellent education, had served as an officer in the Navy, had held important leadership positions throughout his life, and had even studied journalism and worked many years in advertisement. One factor that this analysis can account for is that Adkisson had an extensive criminal record. His history of criminality was the one indisputable characteristic that was similar to almost all of the cases studied in this thesis, such as the cases of John Allen Muhammad, Naveed Afzal Haq, Abdulhakim Muhammad, James Wenneker von Brunn, and Wade Michael Page.

### Andrew Joseph Stack III

On February 18, 2010, Andrew Joseph Stack III flew his Piper Dakota plane and crashed it into Building I of the Echelon office complex in Austin, Texas (Cronan, 2010, p. 1). He killed himself and an internal revenue service manager. The field office was located in a four-story building with other federal and state government agencies operating in the building. Before the crash, Stack posted a suicide note dated February 18, 2010, to his business website (Cronan, 2010, p. 1). Approximately one hour before the crash he allegedly burned down his \$230,000 house.

Stack's personal history indicated that he was a software consultant. He grew up in Pennsylvania and had two brothers and two sisters. Stack was orphaned at the age of four and spent time at a Catholic orphanage. He later studied at Harrisburg Area community college from

1975-1977, but did not graduate (Cronan, 2010, p. 1). He was also first married to Ginger Stack; however, the relationship ended in divorce. The two had one daughter named Samantha Bell. Stack along with his first wife incorporated Prowess Engineering. In 1994 he failed to file a state tax return. In 1995 Stack started a company, Software Systems Service Corporation, which was suspended in 2004 for nonpayment of state taxes (Stack, 2010, p. 1). The IRS subsequently took away the special tax status provided to software consultants, and this event might have set off the anti-IRS incident by Stack. In 1994, Stack also had obtained a pilot's license and he owned a Velocity Elite XL-RG plane in addition to the Piper Dakota he flew and crashed.

In Stack's suicide note, he expressed his displeasure with the U.S. Government, the bailout of financial institutions, General Motors, Enron, politicians, unions, and drug and health care insurance companies, as well as the Catholic Church (Gold, 2010, p. 1). Stack also described his life as an engineer. He makes much of his meeting with a poor widow who never got the pension benefits she was promised, as a consequence of the effect Section 1706 of the Tax Reform Act of 1986 had on independent contractors and engineers. The suicide note also mentioned the numerous times that Stack experienced issues and problems with taxes, debt and the IRS; he seemed to have had a long running feud with this organization (Gold, 2010, p. 1). He may have targeted the IRS field office located in Echelon I because it performed tax audits, investigations, seizures and collections (Gold, 2010, p. 1). The suicide note ended with the desperate words, "I saw it written once that the definition of insanity is repeating the same process over and over and expecting the outcome to suddenly be different. I am finally ready to stop insanity..." (Stack, 2010, p. 1). After an investigation, the United States Department of

Homeland Security issued a statement saying that Stack's attack did not appear to be linked to any organized international terrorist group (Gold, 2010, p. 1).

There was no record that Andrew Joseph Stack received positive social sanctions for his actions. He was a lone individual who experienced personal and economic hardships, and appeared frustrated and depressed by major events that occurred in his life shortly before the plane attack. The IRS was in the process of revoking the license of his company; he owed back taxes and felt that there was a personal vendetta between him and the IRS. Moreover, Stack did not like the bailouts of General Motors and other economic policies implemented by the U.S. government. Stack committed an act of terror by flying his plane into the IRS building primarily in a misguided and unsuccessful attempt to influence government policy and to turn his frustrations into a newsworthy public statement. The major determinant for this terrorist attack appeared to have been the personal issues and negative events that occurred in his life—tax and anti-government grievances, and business setbacks. These events most likely encouraged Stack to feel that the circumstances were not right and especially unfair, and had to be addressed through a violent course of action. Perhaps, these incidents created a cognitive opening for Stack that primed him to look for and/or acquire an anti-government ideology based on anger, hate and vengeance, and to act out these feelings by the attack on the IRS office. Moreover, perhaps all of these variables suggest that mental illness and even a temporary insanity best explain Stack's motivations. All of these factors may be valid as bases for speculation and conjecture; however, only the factors that can be documented with some evidence and a degree of certainty will be utilized in the concluding analysis of these cases.

## James Lee

James Lee is a gunman that was shot dead by police after he took a number of people as hostages at the Discovery Channel headquarters in Maryland when his idea for a television show was rejected. However, all three of Lee's hostages escaped without injury (Protok, 2010, p. 1). The incident began when Lee walked into the building entrance waving a gun and wearing metallic canisters strapped to his body. Although one device appeared to explode as he was gunned down, most of the 1900 people in the building were able to escape safely. Lee was considered to be an Eco fascist who believed that immigrants were “breeding filthy human children and helping destroy the planet”. Earlier in 2008, Lee was arrested at a rally he had organized outside at the same building. He had demanded that the channel should help find solutions to the global population growth and the extinction of many animal species.

Because Lee posted a list of demands on his MySpace page before invading the Discovery building, investigators were able to piece together what had motivated him. It appeared that Lee had started out as an environmentalist, but that he later became an extreme activist who had no qualms in committing an act of terror. On his MySpace page he had called for a revolution, and he was explicit in his set of demands stating, “Nothing is more important than saving...Lions, Tigers, Giraffes, Elephants, Froggies, Turtles, Raccoons, Ants, The humans? The planet does not need humans”(Protok, 2010, p. 1). Lee invaded the building in an attempt to force the station to introduce programming that would promote population control and sanctions against warfare and its destruction of the planet (Protok, 2010, p. 1).

Lee had no prior history or record of mental illness. Nor was there any evidence that he had received positive social sanctions for his terrorist act. However, one might argue that since his rambling manifesto lacked rationality that it is possible that he may have been imbalanced or insane. Prior to this terrorist attack Lee already had amassed an extensive criminal record. Over time, he appeared to have undergone a radicalizing change that readied him for the terrorist attack. It can be inferred on the basis of this analysis that Lee appeared to have felt an intense desire and need to take further action to realize his political and ideological agenda. He viewed the Discovery Channel as part of the problem and was determined to have his demands be met. The main determinants for Lee's terrorist act appear to have been his exposure and progression inside the Environmentalist movement.

#### Wade Michael Page

Wade Michael Page was an Army veteran and a rock singer whose bands specialized in hateful lyrics. He took the lives of six people and wounded three others when he opened fire in a Sikh temple in Oak Creek Wisconsin on August 5, 2012 (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1). During the attack at the temple officers shot Wade Michael Page to death. Wade Michael Page had ties to White supremacist groups and he was also the leader of a white power band called End Apathy. Authorities have labeled this shooting as an act of domestic terrorism. Special agent of the FBI Teresa Carlson stated "We don't have any reason to believe that there was anyone else" involved in this attack at the time (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1).



A neighbor of Page named Peter Hoyt stated that he often stopped by Page's place of residence to chat with him during morning walks and said that he was stunned that the man he knew could have done something so violent (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1). Hoyt also stated that Page told him that recently in early June he had broken up with his girlfriend (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1). According to Peter Hoyt, Page had not seemed to be visibly upset but that he seemed to have been more emotionally distressed.

J.M. Berger, who is an author and analyst on counterterrorism and runs a web site, stated that Page had a history with the White supremacist movement. A song called "Welcome to the South" by Definite Hate found online refers to race war. The lyrics and album art of Definite Hate echo the views and vocabulary of the Hammerskins or Hammerskin Nation, which is a White supremacist group founded in Dallas in 1988 (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1). This group's focus is the promotion and production of white power rock music. This group held several annual concerts that included Hammerfest. Also Hammerskin Nation is considered to be one of the most organized white power skinhead groups in the United States (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1). According to the SITE monitoring Service, which follows White supremacist trends, Page had an extensive presence on white nationalist websites and the Hammerskin's website. Page had also visited sympathetic websites, such as Storm Front which is another White supremacist website (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1).

In June 1994, Wade Michael Page was arrested by El Paso police and charged with criminal mischief (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1). He was intoxicated and was playing pool at a bar and began kicking large holes in the wall with his boots. Page pleaded guilty to the charge and was

sentenced to 90 days in jail and paid the fines. After having left the Army, Page lived for several years in North Carolina where he owned a property that Wells Fargo bank foreclosed on in January (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1).

There has been no official report indicating that Wade Michael Page received positive social sanctions for his actions; however, he was a member of multiple groups that promoted hatred for non-whites. Moreover, Wade Michael Page was affiliated with other hate groups, such as the neo-Nazis and the Hammerskin's that are notorious for committing acts of extreme violence, murder and terrorism. By virtue of his leadership role in bands, such as Definite Hate, Page would have more than likely had support for any violent action against non-whites, Muslims, Sikhs and other minorities.

### Analysis

In summarizing the key points relevant to and shared by all of these selected cases, one can note, firstly, that the majority of the individuals involved in terrorist acts had a criminal record. Secondly, all the perpetrators experienced major negative events in their lives prior to their attacks. These events included major economic crises and setbacks, chronic unemployment and problems with the government and/or the IRS, as well as personal issues with loved ones, such as divorces and recent break ups. Thirdly, many of the terrorist prone individuals had in their possession social-psychological literature, and/or ideological and political propaganda. Others created their own propaganda through their radical activism. Most of the cases detailed in this chapter involved perpetrators deeply immersed in their beliefs; they were fanatical true

believers who were readily encouraged or led into terrorist activities. Positive social sanctions may not have played a significant role in these case studies, with the exception of Michael Wade Page. Social sanctions were more instrumental in this case because of Page's strong group membership. In brief, this chapter reveals that human motivations are indeed complex and not always crystal clear; indeed there are many factors that may cause an individual to commit an act of terror.

Based on the sample population selected for this research, it was clear, however, that in the majority of the cases perpetrators had criminal records. In addition to this finding, in the majority of terrorist cases that were reviewed, the key perpetrators had a catastrophic or catalyzing event or events occur in their lives prior to the terrorist incident. These two factors appear to be universally shared across the two sample population groups, that is, by both the Muslim and the non-Muslim cases. However, the Muslim population group (that reflects the least unintended bias) exhibited a higher frequency of religious and politically motivated violence. Moreover, importance of the use and receipt of positive social sanctions in inspiring terrorist acts, at minimum remains tentative because of the limitations of data and the classification system from which cases were drawn. For example, in a number of cases, the role of social sanctions and presence of ideological and political indoctrination were classified as "unknown." This absence of information, therefore, neither confirmed nor disconfirmed the central hypothesis of the thesis. However, in more than half of the sample Muslim population, social sanctions and ideological and religious politicization were noted as present. These cases

demonstrate an important role for positive social sanctions through the use of the internet, social network sites, close personal contacts, contacts in prisons, mosques and other venues.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION**

This research has determined that there are many reasons why an individual is led to commit an act of terror. In terms of the hypothesis proposed by this thesis, the results indicate that positive social sanctions have not been shown to play a significant role in influencing terrorist activities in the case samples investigated. However, mental illness and involvement with supportive social groups have been found to be determinants that can lead an individual to commit an act of violence or terror. In addition, the thesis supports the argument that exposure to radical literature and to political and ideological propaganda has had a facilitating impact. In many of the cases listed in this research, the terrorist perpetrators were influenced by such literature that served to indoctrinate them and motivate their violent actions. For example, representative of such radicalizing literature and communications were the essays and e-mails by Anwar Al-Awlaki to Major Hasan, or Abdulhakim Muhammad, or even the anti-liberal speeches of right wing political activists. The central story line in the literature that was found in the possession of many terrorist perpetrators, such as Major Nidal Malik Hasan, and in the literature that was disseminated by Anwar al-Awlaki focused on the rightness of violent action on behalf of a just political and/or religious cause. Often such literature was employed in conjunction with other propaganda material.

An individual's exposure to propaganda through other means than radical writings has also been shown to be a factor that influenced individuals to commit acts of terror. Throughout the late 20<sup>th</sup> century Islamic based terrorism and cases of homegrown terrorism have used

religion as a form of propaganda. For example, the Ku Klux Klan utilized religion along with culture to disseminate their racist ideology to potential recruits and promote the cause of white supremacy. This form of propaganda elicits hate and targets both the hearts and minds of potential recruits.

### Domestic Terrorism vs. International Terrorism

In many cases, domestic terrorists, such as Abdulhakim Muhammad, John Allen Muhammad, James Wencker von Brunn and Major Nidal Malik Hasan (to name only a few) are often influenced by persons or factions outside the United States. Conversely, international terrorists, such as the hijackers in the September 11 attacks have been known to be influenced, primed, and or radicalized elsewhere in their host nations, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon and the UAE. The reason behind the differences between how a domestic terrorist becomes influenced and an international terrorist may be because domestic terrorists lack a sufficient amount of ideological support needed for their cause in their host nation (United States), while international terrorists do not.

Although, many indoctrinating materials (internet blogs, e-mail messages, social network sites, videos) used by terrorist recruiters on a global scale are vast and may take the place of physically being in a supportive environment or society; direct ideological support for domestic and homegrown terrorism, in the form of positive social sanctions, may be a needed or sufficient condition for radicalization, in some cases (Major Hasan, Abdulhakim Muhammad). This

support is hard to come by without the threat of vicarious reinforcement in a host nation, such as the United States.

Nevertheless, this may not be the case for international terrorists residing in nations or states that generally adhere to or have adopted a radicalized ideology. For example, members of al-Qaeda and their affiliates in Afghanistan, Iraq, Egypt, Yemen, Pakistan and elsewhere may find it easier to gain ideological support for their actions in a society that is use to war, violence and Jihad. Further, in some tribal areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan (Pashtun tribal areas), regions outside of government controlled Yemen (Sanna) and pockets of civilization in North Africa and South East Asia, many members of their society support extremist militants and have adopted a radicalized ideology (“National Counterterrorism Center,” 2013). Such an environment, in some cases, may be a needed or sufficient condition for radicalization that is sought ought by potential terrorists, as seen with Abdulhakim Muhammad who traveled to Yemen. Conversely, domestic terrorists, such as Major Hasan used the internet in place of physically being in an environment that would have been more supportive of his actions.

### Propaganda

The use of religion as a form of propaganda has been enhanced during the 1990s by various terrorist organizations (Cull, 2003, p. 1). This enhancement replaced political ideology as the most important source of propaganda, especially with Islamic based terrorism. In the late twentieth century there was an emergence of Islamic based terrorism that referenced Islamic doctrine as a justification for jihad and terrorist activities (Cull, 2003, p. 1). However, this form

of religious-based terrorism is not solely isolated to Islam but includes far right extremists in the United States who are anti-Semitic and express hatred toward other races and religions.

Nevertheless, the newly formed brand of militant Islam, in particular, enticed potential recruits with propaganda disseminated by terrorist organizations like the Al Qaeda network.

There was some opposition to these extremist views of Islam by Muslim theologians who rejected the militant jihadist ideology and biased interpretations of the Koran (Cull, 2003, p. 1). The propaganda used by extremists is directed to both the believers and the unbelievers in the West and the entire world. All forms of Islamic terrorism have been known to be a byproduct of religious propaganda. In some cases well-educated young men from good families were enticed to commit acts of terror for the promise of a life of pleasure in paradise with some seventy or seventy-two virgins. Documents that were published following the September 11, 2001 terrorists attacks against the United States showed that the high-jackers were exposed to religious and political propaganda which prepared the attackers, silenced their doubts, and further nurtured their feelings of being the special instruments of their God (Cull, 2003, p. 1). By targeting major sites and creating catastrophic damage with their attacks these terrorist ensured maximum global coverage of their acts, which in turn served as an effective form of propaganda (Cull, 2003, p. 1).

### Right Wing Extremism

The Hammerskin Nation is a White supremacist group that focuses on the promotion of white power rock music. This group is considered to be one of the best organized white power skin head groups in the United States (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1). This hate group is linked to several



other countries and has a white supremacy ideology. One of the group's unique tactics in its function as an organization that occasionally promotes terrorism is its recruitment of disillusioned young people. Violence is a major part of the skinhead subculture (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1). This organization has been known to commit a large number of violent hate crimes across the United States for the purpose of terror. These crimes range from beatings, to murder. In the case of the Sikh temple shooting, Wade Michael Page, a White supremacist, killed several people (Yaccino, 2012, p. 1).

According to Wahrman, members in groups, of all sizes, abide by the norms of the group. Michael Wade Page along with James Wennecker von Brunn were members of right wing hate groups. By nature of group self-definition, norms within such groups may incorporate the use of political, religious and ideological violence. Within these norms, whether agreed upon or not, the group dynamics and utilization of sanctions have been known to coerce individuals into violence. Generally speaking, individuals in these groups may not all be mentally ill, but rather, motivated by hate or a similar ideology. The shared, hate-based ideology resonates within such groups and can be a facilitator for terrorist activities.

### Findings

What motivates an individual to commit an act of terror? The answer to this question depends upon a number of factors, such relative deprivation, mental illness, culture, ideology, and various forms of social learning can all lead an individual to terrorism. This research has approached the issue of what motivates an individual to commit an act of terror by examining a

sample of relevant cases. In particular, this thesis has proposed the hypothesis that an individual who has received positive social sanctions through various forms of supportive social contact will be more likely to commit an act of terror than someone who has not received positive social sanctions through social contact. In order to test this hypothesis the research focused on eleven case studies of terrorist perpetrators who have committed acts of terror between the years 2002 to 2012. The case study analysis considered comparative data pertaining to each case, specifically age, place of birth, education, religion, sex, social influences, exposure to positive social sanctions, and reported major events occurring before the terrorist attack.

The findings were non-conclusive for multiple reasons. Because some data was listed as “unknown”, and did not indicate a definite “no”, the comparison of the two population groups could not be achieved without some inherent bias, and because of this potential bias, the comparative analysis could not determine the significance and importance of certain factors. The reason for these data problems rests with the inability to acquire actual primary source data about the terrorist perpetrators and the specific factors instrumental in the terrorist attacks. Routinely only government agencies are privy to detailed information and/or the perpetrators themselves also may withhold important information. In general, no data analysis is without problems such as an expected level of unintended bias. Nevertheless, this research was able to conduct a relatively useful and suggestive analysis of how the central hypothesis applied to one of the population groups, specifically the Muslim population group. The analysis indicated that 67% of the entire Muslim population in this data set was recorded as having received positive social sanctions.

In reality, this percentage might not be all that different from what potentially could be the case in the non-Muslim population group if more information had been available. One might speculate that this percentage potentially might even turn out to be higher in the non-Muslim cases. The fact that the presence of positive social sanctions in three cases in this population group were listed as “unknown” only means that there was no specific information as to whether the perpetrators had received positive social sanctions or not. Thus this incomplete data can only weakly challenge the hypothesis. In short, by conducting this original research, we have determined that positive social sanctions are potentially a factor in at least 67% of the Muslim population group, while the percentage of individuals in the non-Muslim population receiving positive social sanctions could be more than 0%. On a scale ranking the various factors that have been most frequently present in all the cases, this research has discovered that on a hit count of “yes” or “no”, perpetrators having experienced a major event before the terrorist attack was listed at 90.0%. Second, perpetrators that had a criminal record prior to the terrorist attack were listed at 81%. Third, perpetrators who were listed as committing a terrorist attack for a political, ideological, and religious reason were listed at 72.7%. Finally, perpetrators that were being primed in the United States were listed at 72.7%.

In regards to other factors that can lead an individual to commit an act of terror, evidence presented in this research points to multiple factors, such as social support groups, potential insanity, propaganda, literature presented to the target audience, and major events that occur in the perpetrators lives prior to the attack. This research has also determined that the radical interpretation of religious doctrine is a major factor in Islamic based terrorism. Through this

analysis we are able to determine that such an interpretation of the literature is also a major factor vital for any given individual and is the source of information generally used to reference an ideology and promote action.

Furthermore the internet is one of the most useful tools of terrorist recruiters and facilitators. This venue can be used to disseminate propaganda, literature and provide positive social sanctions. This was the case with Major Hasan and Anwar al-Awlaki. The internet is utilized as a communication tool and an educational forum for recruiters and recruits. After the al Qaeda camps were destroyed in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, the jihadi and al-Qaeda movement had to turn to other resources to recruit and train their members. As governments searched out and destroyed various terrorist training camps in numerous countries, internet supporters within the extremist movement created virtual training camps, and expanded recruitment and indoctrination through online publications, chat rooms, and discussion boards in the United States. Jihadists and terrorists have used these online resources to raise funds, share information and recruit (Sparago, 2007, p. 38).

Finally, this thesis has conducted multiple case studies on eleven individuals. These studies reveal that jihadist recruiters were influential in regards to the radicalization of many of the perpetrators who have committed an act of terror. These recruiters have also systematically provided positive social sanctions for terrorist activities and operations. An example of this would be the exchange of e-mails and other forms of communication between Anwar al-Awlaki and various recruits such as Major Hasan and Abdulhakim Muhammad. According to U.S. Government officials, Anwar al-Awlaki was a senior talent recruiter and a promoter for Islamic

jihad throughout the world. This individual has been linked to many terrorist activities and recruitments. Anwar al-Awlaki operated a Facebook page and many YouTube videos that are a major component of al-Qaeda's recruitment base.

By using social networks and posting videos Anwar was able to reference literature, argue that participating in jihad would be beneficial to the participant and the cause. Based on this analysis Anwar al-Awlaki was able to provide positive social sanction to countless individuals, disseminate propaganda, and literature that indoctrinated many individuals including Major Hasan and Anwar al-Awlaki. U.S. officials claim that Anwar al-Awlaki spoke with and preached to a number of al-Qaeda members and affiliates, including three 9/11 hijackers and helped motivate these individuals to commit acts of terror.

After completing an original research with data sets and case studies this thesis was able to determine that there are a few major factors that are common to each terrorist case. The majority of cases examined showed that the perpetrators were generally well educated and on average had prior criminal records. Based on a ranking system developed in the concluding chapter, this thesis has determined that major events that have occurred in the terrorist lives prior to the attacks is the most common shared phenomenon; second to that is a criminal record prior to the attack; following that is the political, ideological and religious motivation; and then perpetrators being primed in the United States. These findings are generally contradictory to other findings reported by the NYPD intelligence division, especially in regards to criminal records. However, this research does have a different sample population, and research method. Moreover, a good portion of the cases examined in this research appeared to have individuals

with sociopathic (John Allen Muhammad, Lee Boyd Malvo), and psychotic (James Lee, Naveed Afzal Haq) tendencies. Because of this, it is prudent to say that mental illness is a relevant or even intervening factor in the cause of terrorist activities.

Furthermore, and most notably, 90% of the cases listed in this research have revealed that at some point in time a major incident occurred in the perpetrator's life before the terrorist attack. These incidences, in some cases, may have been life-altering events, possibly even causing frustration and/or-- relative deprivation. Certainly many of these events that took place in the perpetrators' lives (divorce, breakups, lack of employment, financial burden, and incarceration) may have created a discrepancy between what these perpetrators thought they deserved in life (value expectations) and what they believed they could get out of life (value capabilities), thus causing frustration. Major incidents that occur in peoples' lives may influence them to act out their frustrations if "they believe that they stand a chance of relieving some of their discontent through violence" (Gurr, 1970, p. 210).

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