THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM: A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

Melanie Zimmermann: The Relationship Between Domestic Violence and Terrorism: A Comparison Between The United Kingdom And The United States (Under the direction of Tobias Hof)

This paper aims to analyze the relationship between domestic violence and terrorism through a comparison of terrorist attacks in the United Kingdom and the United States from 2011 to 2016. Academic frameworks for this paper include the new crimeterror nexus, research on toxic masculinity and terrorism, and research on the relationship between mass shootings and domestic violence. Research from the two case studies shows a correlational relationship between terrorist and domestic violence, with high proportions of perpetrators having violent criminal histories, specifically histories of domestic violence. This paper holds that, based on the results of the research, addressing violence against women is a valid counterterrorism tool. This paper argues that it is important for academics and law enforcement to look at a violent criminal history, specifically of domestic violence, as a potential factor for radicalization.

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"What if we treated violence against women as a national security issue?" (Attiah, 2017)

Introduction

Why do individuals commit terrorist acts? This central question is the focus of national law enforcement agencies and academics of various fields who are trying to understand what makes terrorist "tick." Scholars have thoroughly analyzed various factors such as education, socioeconomic status, age, and religion in an attempt to understand who is more likely to become radicalized and eventually a terrorist. Recently, some scholars have begun to look into a correlation between a history of domestic violence and acts of terrorism. Despite a growing public interest in this topic, which is expressed in various news stories, as well as the prevalence of a history of domestic violence in the backgrounds of many major terrorist attacks, no in-depth research exists so far. American scholars in particular, however, have begun to investigate people who committed mass shootings and ask whether they showed a history of domestic violence. According to an analysis of New America's research, of the 48 perpetrators of lethal political violence in the U.S. since 9/11 whether they were motivated by jihadist, far right or black nationalist ideologies – eleven, or almost a quarter, had allegations or convictions of domestic violence or sexual crimes in their past (Bergen and Sterman, 2017)

This paper aims to understand acts of terrorism, which were carried out in the United States (U.S.) and the United Kingdom (UK) between 2011 and 2016, by analyzing a

possible link between the terrorists and a history of domestic violence. Both countries have experienced a large number of terrorist attacks in the last few years. The majority of these attacks were inspired by either right-wing extremists or Islamist extremists, often in the name of the Islamic State (ISIS). Both ideologies, as will be described later, show a particular concept of toxic masculinity.

By looking at the two case studies the paper will aim to shed new light on two separate but related issues: First, is a history of domestic violence a potential indicator for susceptibility for radicalization? And second, whether there is a relationship between individuals who commit an act of terror and a history of domestic violence. By doing so this paper aims to contribute to the ever-growing literature on terrorism and to develop a better understanding of the importance of criminal histories to terrorism. Understanding the indicators that may determine if someone is more likely to commit an act of terror is vital for academia, law enforcement, and the general public.

To approach these issues, this paper will first define key terms for this paper. It will review the new crime-terror nexus and its relevance to domestic violence and terrorism. Next, it will delve into literature on the topic of toxic masculinity, violence, and terror. Then, it will provide some anecdotal evidence showing a relationship between domestic violence, mass shootings, and terrorism. Following the establishment of an academic framework, this paper will provide data gathered from the START Global Terrorism database, which collects data on terrorist attacks in the U.S. and UK from 2011 to 2016. Using the data on these attacks, this paper will examine the perpetrators to determine if they have a history of domestic violence. Following this research, this paper will discuss the strategic implications of my findings.

Due to the fact that there is not a significant amount of academic literature on the topic of domestic violence and terrorism, this paper will rely heavily on statistics, government reports, and news articles as supplements to the academic frameworks previously determined (literature on the crime-terror nexus and toxic masculinity and terrorism). The aim of this research is to gain an understanding of the relationship between domestic violence and terrorism at a transatlantic level, with a comparison of two English speaking countries that have serious problems with right-wing extremism and Islamist extremism.

This paper is examining whether there is a relationship between perpetrators of domestic violence and acts of terror. However, it is important to understand that this does not mean that all perpetrators of domestic violence commit acts of terror or mass killings, just that a history of domestic violence may be a valid indicator of that happening (Martin, 2017).

Importantly, the time period of research for this paper is from 2011 to 2016. The majority of terrorist attacks occurring in this time period are inspired by either right-wing extremism or Islamist extremism. To further clarify, this paper is not aiming to prove causation, but to explore a relationship between domestic violence and terrorism.

Domestic Violence and Terrorism: Definitions, Similarities, and Differences

Before examining the relationship between domestic violence and terrorism, one must first define the two key terms: domestic violence and terrorism. According to the U.S. Department of Justice domestic violence is

"A pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone" (Justice.gov, 2018).

The UK cross-government on the other hand defines domestic violence as

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional" (Gov.uk, 2018).

In this paper, domestic violence will be considered synonymous with the phrase "everyday terrorism" as defined by Professor of Human Geography, Rachel Pain, as a form of terrorism and violence that "instills fear through coercive control" (Stark, 2007; Pain, 2014: 536). Pain states that domestic violence includes physical but also "psychological and emotional tactics including threats, isolation and undermining self-confidence" which

results in fear, terror, and ultimately control (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Stark, 2007; Pain, 2014: 532).

Similar to the term "domestic violence," there are various ways to define terrorism, with definitions differing nationally and internationally. Terrorism can be understood through the lens of global terrorism as an extension of everyday terrorism, defined by Pain as: "an attempt to impose or disrupt an order through violence and fear" which "aims to have these effects within 'macro-political geographic settings' (Flint and Radil, 2009: 151; Pain, 2014: 536)."

For the purpose of this paper, this definition by Ganor will be used:

"The terrorists' primary aim is to create fear within the target population, with the intention that this fear is translated into pressure on the government to accede to the terrorists' demands in order to stave off further terrorist attacks" (Ganor, 2004).

The term lone-wolf is also important to understand. Lone wolf terrorism is defined by academics Bakker and de Graaf as including:

"individuals that are inspired by a certain group but who are not under the orders of any other person, group or network. They might be members of a network, but this network is not a hierarchical organization in the classical sense of the word" (Bakker and de Graaf, 2011).

When comparing the definitions of "terrorism" and "domestic violence," there seem to be many similarities between both concepts. Each involves the intention to create fear and control one's victims (Pain, 2014; Taub, 2016). Some academics have even defined

domestic violence as "intimate terrorism" (Taub, 2016). Deborah Epstein, who runs Georgetown University Law Center's domestic violence clinic, states, "Violence is the perpetrator's means of enforcing that control — and of punishing any attempts to break it" (Taub, 2016). Ferber analyzes domestic violence as restorative in the same way as terrorism, as a "reclamation of lost but rightful authority" (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 885). Furthermore, Ferber argues:

"And like terrorism's goal of frightening an entire population into submission to this restoration of unchallenged masculine authority, so too, is the goal of domestic violence the frightening of an entire class of people, namely women, into subjection to men's rightful authority over them. Only with such a restoration do terrorists, either political or interpersonal, regain their masculinity." (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 885)

Domestic violence, like terrorism, cuts across categories of class, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and incomes (McCue, 2008; Pain, 2014: 532). The similarities in intention – control, intimidation, fear – are certainly worthy of further analysis.

Notably, there are key differences between "everyday terrorism" (domestic violence) and global terrorism - different inspirations, motivations, political or non-political goals, and scale; however, the similarities are still worth considering. One can think of global terrorism as a "large scale version" of domestic violence (Heitler, 2011).

It is important to note, as Kullman and Rodgers do, that though all terrorist activities are based in extremist ideology, very few people who actually hold these ideologies go on to become terrorists (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 879). The same thought process can be applied to the case of domestic violence. Though many terrorist activities are perpetrated by those with histories of domestic violence, not all those who commit acts of domestic

violence go on to become terrorists. This can be seen by the examples examined in this paper.

Of the 37 terrorist attacks examined in this research, 16 were perpetrated by those inspired by the extreme right, 16 of them were inspired by extreme Islam, and five fall into the "other" category. Many of the attacks in this paper are inspired by the Islamic State, which will be referred to as ISIS. The focus on two ideological inspirations for terrorist perpetrators is useful because it allows this paper to further delve into ideas such as toxic masculinity which play a key role in both Islamist extremist and right-wing extremist ideologies.

Importantly, this paper holds that a "history of domestic violence" also includes growing up in a family in which domestic violence is common. For example, watching one's mother get abused by a father, or being abused oneself is defined as having a history of domestic violence; domestic violence is prominent and existent in this perpetrator's background. An example of this is Mohammed Abdulazeez, who shot and killed four people in Chattanooga, Tennessee in July 2015. He grew up in an abusive household in which his mother was beaten by his father, often and in front of Abdulazeez and his siblings (Cbsnews.com, 2015). This kind of upbringing can impart skewed and gendered values on those who grow up in this environment.

The Crime Terror Nexus

In their groundbreaking paper entitled "Criminal Pasts, Terrorist Futures: European Jihadists and the New Crime-Terror Nexus," Rajan Basra and Peter Neumann successfully redefine the traditional crime-terror nexus by examining the criminal histories of 79 European jihadists from the years 2011 to 2016. Basra and Neumann examine different narratives that would appeal to criminals to become terrorists and analyze that many skills transfer from one illegal activity to the other, noting that personal needs or wants of criminals often align well with those of terrorists (Basra and Neumann, 2016). This report led to many further reports by the same authors, examining the crime-terror nexus in greater detail. They argue that people who are attracted to ISIS-inspired terrorism share the same counter-cultural message of "redemption through strength, power, and violence" (Basra and Neumann, 2016). Additionally, Basra and Neumann state that ISIS is recruiting not through traditional modes such as universities but through prisons and European underclasses, thus targeting those who are already marginalized from society and have criminal associations. ISIS is recruiting those who have previously engaged in illicit acts or violence (Basra and Neumann, 2016).

Despite the fact that one key element of the crime-terror nexus revolves around the transition from organized crime to terrorism, the notion of a criminal past that is relevant to a terrorist future can be applied to those not necessarily involved previously in organized crime but violent crime more generally. Of the European terrorists examined by

Basra's and Neumann's original study, 65 percent had a history of violence (Basra and Neumann, 2016). The study states, "the prevalence of violent histories (65 percent) is notable" (Basra and Neumann, 2016). They do not, however, specify the exact violent history of each extremist and do not examine whether they were involved in violent or petty crime (Basra and Neumann, 2016: 37).

Another study by Globesec also confirms a correlation between as criminal past and terrorism. According to the Globesec report, one third of convicted terrorists have a criminal past, ranging from records of robbery, drug trafficking, homicide, use of illegal weapons, assault, or domestic violence (Rekawek et al., 2017). This paper aims to examine one aspect of violent histories: domestic violence.

Whereas Basra and Neumann analyzed European jihadis, this paper examines whether a violent criminal history exists for terrorist perpetrators specifically in the UK and U.S. from 2011 to 2016, with a particular focus on an official or unofficial record of domestic violence. This is not an examination of an organized-crime crime-terror nexus, but more of a lone-wolf crime (domestic violence) - lone wolf terror nexus.

Basra and Neumann do not contend that criminals are deliberately targeted or recruited by extremists, as evidence on this topic is not conclusive. However, it is to be noted that there is a new convergence of ideologies of criminals and terrorists, allowing the existence of a criminal past to create susceptibility to a terrorist future. One example to illustrate the crime-terror nexus is the British jihadi group Rayat al- Tawheed. It joined ISIS in 2014 and specifically target criminals as recruits (Basra and Neumann, 2016: 29). A slogan commonly used by Rayat al- Tawheed is "sometimes people with the worst pasts create the best futures" (Basra and Neumann, 2016: 29). The slogan is presented next to

text explaining, "jihad is a purification no matter who you are or what sins you have, no good deeds are needed to come before it" (Basra and Neumann, 2017: 4). Regardless of these blatant attempts to recruit criminals, Basra and Neumann were skeptical of the success of this particular campaign (Basra and Neumann, 2016). ISIS has notably encouraged both the use of crime for jihad (funding) and the recruitment of criminals for jihad in propaganda and released features (Basra and Neumann, 2017: 2).



An unpublished study by Jeremy Moss, a serving UK Metropolitan Police officer, used Police National Computer Records to examine criminal histories of 143 converts to jihadism from 1992 to 2016. Each individual in his study was either a citizen of the UK or a legal resident. His research showed that at least 47 percent of converts who traveled to

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¹ Photo used by British extremist group Rayat al- Tawheed, found in 2016 Basra and Neumann article in Perspectives on Terrorism.

Syria from the UK had previous criminal convictions. Moss found that 52 percent of the individuals in his study had at least one crime-related conviction, caution, or a penalty notice for disorder for a criminal matter that was not related to extremism or terrorism. When extremist convictions were taken into account in his study, 88 percent of individuals had a criminal record of either extremism or non-extremism charges. 17 percent of individuals in his study had more than 10 criminal convictions (Basra and Neumann, 2017: 1-4).

In 2008, Silke argued against the legitimacy of the crime-terror nexus. He stated that criminal factors are not present in the lives of jihadis and that many terrorists do not come from criminal backgrounds or do come from backgrounds that would tend to protect from criminal activity, such as high education levels or middle to higher income households (Silke, 2008). He argues that this makes terrorists a separate and distinct group than criminals, rather than acknowledging the potential links between the two groups. However, his arguments were made before ISIS officially existed and before ISIS-inspired terrorism became prevalent. Basra's and Neumann's new crime-terror nexus is specifically redefined to be relevant to the age of ISIS-inspired jihadism.

The redefined crime-terror nexus, as well as the hard data from Basra and Neumann showing the violent criminal histories of recent European jihadis has strong implications for policy and gives this paper a basis to examine histories of domestic violence against modern day terrorists. The key takeaway from Basra's and Neumann's research that is most relevant to this paper is stated in their own words: "The central point is not just that they are criminals, but that their criminality is relevant to their extremism, as it can affect how they radicalize into violence and how they operate once they are radicalized" (Basra

and Neumann, 2017: 1). This paper argues that criminality, specifically a history of domestic violence, is relevant to terrorist extremism and can affect how individuals radicalize into violence.

Toxic Masculinity and Terrorism

The terrorist attacks examined in this paper include attacks by Islamist extremists as well as right-wing extremists. An area for analysis is the relationship between these two ideologies, their views on women, and whether this influences the actions of followers or their potential histories of domestic violence. Ideologies such as Islamist extremism and right-wing extremism share a common vision of women and their inferior role in society. They seem to share similar ideas of gender roles and both have aspects of toxic masculinity prevalent in their cultures. Ferber et al. argue that many terrorists groups are saturated with gendered ideology, both in their views of the world and in their action and political mobilization (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 870). It is possible that these types of terrorism more specifically may result in at least a correlational relationship with domestic violence and terrorism. This is based on the assumption that those who are more likely to be a part of right wing extremist or Islamist extremist ideologies would share similar characteristics, including attitudes towards women. This section of this paper will examine this topic.

The topic of masculinity as a driver of terrorism, or even an insecurity or need to restore honor that could provoke terrorism is not new. Terrorism can be perceived as a manifestation of masculinity, in which a male is willing to make sacrifices in the name of violence towards a greater goal (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 873). However, the connection

of this problem of masculinity being related to both domestic violence and terrorism is new.

Masculinity, or threats against masculinity, can be seen as a driving force behind Islamist extremism. In this way, it is honor, shame, humiliation, and outdated gender values which drive men to feel that their masculinity is being threatened and terrorism, everyday or global, is an appropriate response to this threat. According to Stern, "Holy wars take off when there is a large supply of young men who feel humiliated and deprived; when leaders emerge who know how to capitalize on those feelings; and when a segment of the society is willing to fund them. They persist when organizations and individuals profit from them psychologically or financially. But they are dependent first and foremost on a deep pool of humiliation" (Stern, 2003; Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 876). Aspects of Islamist extremist ideology reflect overly masculine values, such as the idea that martyrs will receive 72 virgins in heaven (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 876).

Aslam argues that Muslim men (extremists) use militant Islam and terrorism to achieve goals of "regaining self worth and masculine efficacy" (Aslam, 2012). Braudy supports the analysis of masculinity within Islamist extremism, stating that militant Islam is based on "a nostalgia for a past religious purity so firmly on a particular style of warrior masculinity" (Braudy, 2003: 549). Islamic fundamentalism, according to Braudy, aims to establish a global definition of ideas such as civilization and masculinity that are based on particular gendered beliefs (Braudy, 2003: 545).

ISIS specifically is an organization that serves as a direct organizer or at the least inspiration for many attacks in this paper's data. As an organization ISIS is a magnet of toxic masculinity; ISIS and its followers support and often perpetuate violence against

women, and attracts followers who agree with their gendered view of the world in which men are superior to women. The opportunity to gain multiple wives, 72 virgins, or rape female captives is a lure for foreign fighters to join ISIS or travel to war zones to participate in their militant Islam. It is a toxic masculinity which is at the heart of Islamist extremism (Smith, 2017).

The same feelings of shame, honor, or anger that cause Islamist extremism to feel the need to reassert their masculinity through violence are prevalent and ongoing amongst the extreme right. White men appear to be those most in power, and thus if they feel a threat to their identity or hegemony, may act violently to maintain it. As Ferber argues "White supremacists recruit new members based on the assumption that the white race, and white masculinity, are under attack" (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 880). Far right and white supremacist movements appeal to outdated patriarchal values (Braudy, 2003: 549). These movements offer white men the opportunity to prove their masculinity, sometimes through violence and terrorism (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 880).

Kimmel compares the far right in the U.S. with extremist Islamist groups such as Al Qaeda, stating, "All these groups, I argue, use a variety of ideological and political resources to re-establish and reassert domestic and public patriarchies. All deploy 'masculinity' as a form of symbolic capital, an ideological resource," (Kimmel, 2003: 605). Brison, discussing the motivation of the Taliban, states, "a kind of religion motivates the Taliban, but the religion in question, I'd say, is not Islam [but] insecure masculinity" (Brison, 2002: 439). Terrorists often become radicalized or involved with terrorist activities when they feel disenfranchised or threatened and to provide themselves with a sense of power (Stern, 2003; Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 876).

Particular to domestic terrorism in the U.S., Kullman and Rogers have found that terrorism often appears when groups feel threatened by changing social, political, or cultural contexts (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 877). Oftentimes, for the right-wing and Islamist extremists, feelings of disenfranchisement or threat can be caused by the changing nature of male-female relations, the changing role of women outside of the home, and general female emancipation. Men might feel powerless, humiliated, or shameful at the breakdown of traditional patriarchy (Ferber, 2008). In relation to domestic violence, many analysts note that men more commonly beat their wives "not when their patriarchal authority is fully asserted, but when it is challenged and when it breaks down" (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 885).

Ferber and Kimmel take the concept of masculinity and terror further, defining contemporary terrorism and terrorist movements as gendered "enactments of masculinity" (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 870). They draw comparisons between the hyper-masculinity of white supremacist movements and Islamist terrorism, drawing on examples of wardrobes and images used in messaging (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 871). Terrorism, as an act of political violence allows young men who are "yoked to a sense of aggrieved entitlement to seek retaliatory revenge against one's perceived enemies, to restore that damaged masculinity" (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 874).

Psychologist John Horgan, PhD, who directs the Pennsylvania State University's International Center for the Study of Terrorism, conducted interviews with 60 former terrorists. He found anger, alienation, and disenfranchisement to be common psychological tendencies amongst those more open to terrorist recruitment and radicalization (DeAngelis, 2009). These feelings, all of which can be related to masculinity, anger at

changing gender roles, and alienation due to shame or a loss of honor, can fuel terrorist sentiments.

Thus, to conclude, experiences of humiliation can provide one reason far acts of terrorism, as well as for acts domestic violence (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 878; Stern, 2003). Ferber and Kimmel state, "In this way, acts of terrorism resemble traditional wars less well than they remind one of domestic violence" (Ferber and Kimmel, 2008: 884-885). It is these apparent connections - crime-terror nexus, domestic violence, toxic masculinity within extremist ideologies, and modern day terrorism - this paper intends to analyze

Mass shootings and Domestic violence

This section aims to dive deeper into the idea that terrorists, more commonly than histories of religion or ideology, have histories of domestic violence. It will analyze this connection by first examining the relationship between mass shootings and domestic violence. Some research on the relationship between mass shootings and domestic violence exists, and this essay will look into this research in order to gain insight into the relationship between terrorism and domestic violence. Although mass shootings in the U.S. are different to terrorism, they have many similarities that useful for analysis of an area of research that is underdeveloped. Mass shootings and terrorism are both inspired by a wide range of ideologies, involve the use of violence on a large scale, are often perpetrated by men, and are a way for the perpetrators to exorcise some form of control.

Everytown for Gun Safety (EGS), a gun control advocacy group in the U.S., analyzed FBI data on mass shootings in the USA from 2009 to 2015 (Taub, 2016). EGS found that, "57 percent of the cases included a spouse, former spouse or other family member among the victims — and that 16 percent of the attackers had previously been charged with domestic violence" (Taub, 2016). These statistics, particularly the latter, are notable. The 16 percent of cases are only the perpetrators who had been charged with domestic violence, thus this statistic excludes any unreported acts, which are both more common and more difficult to verify.

Another notable, if not incredibly telling, statistic from EGS shows that despite the fact that those who committed acts of domestic violence account for approximately 10 percent of all gun violence in the U.S., domestic violence perpetrators account for 54 percent of mass shootings between 2009 and 2016 (Fulton, 2017).

Because this is a relatively new area of research, there have not been other studies to prove whether or not there is a causal relationship, or even a proven correlation between perpetrators of domestic violence and those who commit acts of terror or mass shootings. However, some experts have weighed in on this discussion as it has featured prominently in the media. According to James Alan Fox, a Northeastern University professor who studies mass killings, which can include terrorism and mass shootings, the relationship between domestic violence and such wider-scale violence appears to be anecdotal (Berman, 2017).

Fox is currently doing research with a doctoral student on mass killings and building a data set with expanding categories. According to his research, the most common factor in mass killings is that people killed members of their own families. Out of the 318 mass killing incidents between 2006 and 2016, about fifty percent involved family members killing other family members (Berman, 2017).

Importantly, Fox's research showed that approximately one out of six mass killers (not to be confused with mass shooters) in his dataset had a history of domestic violence (Berman, 2017). However, Fox stated that he would not consider this to be a "major predictor" of mass killings. One in six is a suggestive percentage, and one worth looking into more completely, which is the intention of this research. A question for Fox would be what other indicators from his database have such a high fraction of accuracy? In an

interview, Fox stated that most mass killers do not have a history of domestic violence, but most do tend to have a history of unhappiness (Berman, 2017). He has also noted in an interview with PBS that there are tens of millions of cases of domestic violence in the U.S. each year but only 20 mass shootings. Fox stated, "if domestic violence was truly a causal factor here, boy, we would have a much bigger problem with mass murder than we do" (Epstein and Fox, 2017). This is not a valid argument to dismiss a history of domestic violence as at least a valid indicator of those who may go on to commit acts of terror. Causation is not proven but a relationship appears to exist. One out of six is still an incredibly large proportion of mass killers with a history of domestic violence. It is true that not all people with a history of domestic violence become terrorists, but a significant number of terrorists have a history of domestic violence. Any one factor that has exists with such a large proportion of terrorists is worth looking into, for prevention efforts and policy changes.

Political scientists Robert Spitzer states that "The anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a link to the extent that people who commit mass shootings are acting out through an expression of extreme violence, some kind of rage, some kind of grudge, some kind of anger" (Martin, 2017). Psychologist Clark McCauley, who studies the psychology of mass violence and terrorism (Taub, 2016), however, notes that he is not aware of research finding a causal relationship between domestic violence and terrorism (Taub, 2016). It is true that there is not research finding a causal relationship – not because there is no causation or correlation, but because that field has not yet been researched. Just because there is not already proof of a connection does not mean that a connection does not exist. McCauley states that a common characteristic of mass killers is grievance, a feeling that

someone has wronged them (Taub, 2016). This may be the case, but it does not disprove a connection between domestic violence and terrorism.

Notably, a significant amount of anecdotal evidence from the U.S. connects domestic violence to acts of terror. Everytown for Gun Safety analyzed all the FBI data on mass shootings in the US from 2009 to 2015, and found that 16% of the attackers had previously been charged with domestic violence (Freeman, 2017).

Terrorism in the U.S. and the UK

This research comparatively examines terror attacks in the U.S. and the UK from 2011 to 2016 to determine the extent to which their perpetrators have a history of domestic violence.

The attacks in this study were selected from the START Global Terrorism database by using two criteria: first, the attack was successful. For the purposes of this paper, success is defined as attacks that resulted in at least one injury or fatality. The second criteria is that attacks involved firearms, explosives, fake weapons, or vehicles. This covers the majority of large-scale attacks and allows to eliminate attacks via letter bombs or other methods in which the attacker remains anonymous, which would prevent the examination of his or her criminal history. The START Global Terrorism database has a search function in which one can apply any necessary criteria and the function will produce a list of attacks sorted in date order. This research used this function to find all cases fitting the criteria stated above during the years 2011 to 2016. These years were chosen to examine recent terrorism in the UK and U.S. over a five year period. As the START Global Terrorism database is only updated to 2016, this paper chose to stop in 2016 as well to ensure thorough research through a database, rather than research that misses attacks.

Once a list of attacks fitting the criteria was produced by the START Global Terrorism database, this essay examined each case individually to determine whether the perpetrators had a history of domestic violence. This information was found using open

source materials, including news sources and court documents. In a few occurrences multiple perpetrators were involved in a single attack; in this case, all perpetrators' histories were examined.

Attacks in the U.S. from 2011-2016:

There were 32 attacks in the U.S. from 2011 to 2016 that fit the above criteria. Details about these attacks can be founded in Appendix 1, including whether or not they had a history of domestic violence or an unrelated violent criminal history. Of the attacks twelve were inspired specifically by right-wing extremism and 15 were inspired specifically by Islamist extremism. The others were inspired by a multitude of other ideologies as shown in Appendix 1.

Of the 32 attacks, four of them were perpetrated by the same attackers (Tsarnaev brothers / Boston bombers), as the START Global Terrorism Database considered each of the four violent attacks by the brothers separately rather than as one event. In addition, three of the attacks were committed by the same perpetrator at different times, meaning that though there were three separate attacks to look into, the data pointed to the same perpetrator. Three perpetrators were unknown.

This leaves 24 attacks in which each attack was carried out by a different, known perpetrator. Eleven out of 24 of these attackers (46 percent) had an indisputable history of domestic violence. Four out of 24 (17 percent) had a history of violent crime but not domestic violence specifically. Combined, 15 out of 24 (62 percent) of the perpetrators in the U.S. have a violent criminal record. This illustrates that a clear majority of terrorist

attacks in the U.S. from 2011 to 2016 were perpetrated by someone who already had a violent criminal background. Additionally, almost half (46 percent) had a clear and unquestionable history of domestic violence. If law enforcement could focus some efforts on violence against women (domestic violence), it would have the potential to nearly halve the number of terror attacks. This could have profound effects for policy and law enforcement practices.

To give some background on domestic violence in the U.S., there are on average, according to the National Coalition for Domestic Violence, "nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the U.S. (NCADV). During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men." Additionally, the NCADV states that intimidate partner violence accounts for 15 percent of all violent crime in the U.S. (Ncadv.org, 2018).

To counter domestic violence, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994, making domestic violence a national crime and subjecting it to federal laws in the instance of overburdened state and local criminal justice institutions (Justice). Congress also changed parts of the Gun Control Act in 1994 and 1996, making the possession of guns by domestic violence abusers a federal crime in certain situations. This is a point of contention in America as many people who should not have access to guns find a way to get them anyway. Generally, most domestic violence cases in the U.S. are dealt with by state and local authorities unless specifically breaking a more serious federal law (United States Department of Justice, 2018).

Notably, statistics or information on the number of perpetrators of domestic violence in the U.S. is not available. All statistics on domestic violence in the U.S. focus on the numbers of victims and not the numbers of perpetrators. If this number of domestic

violence perpetrators were available, it would be of use to this study and for further examination of the relationship between domestic violence and terrorism.

This paper will now examine notable cases to demonstrate a possible link between domestic violence and terrorism. Thereby, attacks motivated by both right wing extremism and Islamist extremism will be discussed.

Example 1: Boston Bombings

Two of the most infamous terrorists in the U.S. in recent time are Dhokazar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev, brothers who were the perpetrators of the Boston Marathon bombings. The Boston Marathon bombings occurred on April 15, 2013, and included two bombs near the end of the race. The bombings killed three people and injured 264 others. Tamerlan Tsarnaev died after a shootout with police and Dhokazar Tsarnaev was taken into police custody after a man-hunt. Dhokazar Tsarnaev was eventually sentenced to death (CNN Library, 2017).

Dhokazar Tsarnaev was a culprit and a terrorist, but he was the younger brother and appears to have been more of an accomplice than initiator. However, more relevant to this paper is the background of Tamerlan Tsarnaev, who was arrested in 2009 on charges of domestic assault and battery. Authorities responded to a 911 call from a woman who claimed that Tamerlin Tsarnaev had struck her in the face. When asked by police, Tamerlin Tsarnaev admitted to hitting the woman and was arrested. Tamerlin Tsarnaev was a golden gloves boxer and trained in mixed-martial arts (Mosk and McPhee, 2013). Charges were eventually dropped following a jury trial in 2010 so that they would not negatively

affect his application for U.S. citizenship (Mosk and McPhee, 2013; Herszenhorn, Sontag and Kovaleski, 2013).

Example 2: Chattanooga Attack

Mohammad Youssuf Abdulazeez opened fire on a military recruiting station and a second military location in Chattanooga, Tennessee on July 16, 2015. He killed four U.S. Marines and injured three others (Blinder, Fausset and Schmidt, 2015). Abdulazeez was also killed (Cbsnews.com, 2015).

Abdulazeez grew up in a household with domestic violence, rather than being the perpetrator of this violence himself. This type of childhood experience can impart gender values and displays of power on impressionable children. According to 2009 court documents, Abdulazeez's mother, Rasmia Ibrahim Abdulazeez, filed divorce from her husband of 28 years based on claims of violence. The divorce was never finalized. Nonetheless, the documents state that his mother was repeatedly beaten by her husband, including in front of Mohammad Youssuf Abdulazeez and his four siblings. Rasmia stated that on one occasion, she was beaten badly enough to flee their home and take shelter in a crisis center. She went as far as to request a restraining order and custody of their youngest child. The documents also show that sometimes her husband had been abusive to the children (Abdulazeez), striking them on occasion (Cbsnews.com, 2015).

Example 3: San Bernardino Attack

Syed Rizwan Farook is another example of someone who grew up in an abusive home and went on to become a terrorist. One December 2, 2015, Syed Rizwan Farook and

his wife Tashfeen Malik attacked an office holiday party in San Bernardino, California with multiple guns, killing 14 people and injuring 22 more. Farook, according to court records, grew up in a home in which is mother was abused by his father and he and is his siblings had to step in to protect her (Hamilton, 2015). His parents divorced in 2006, with divorce papers showing multiple examples of his father's verbal and physical abuse. The mother also filed a domestic violence protection petition in 2006 (Southern California Public Radio, 2015)

Example 4: Colorado Springs Attack

On November 27, 2015, Robert Lewis Dear entered a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs with a semiautomatic rifle, killing three people and injuring nine others (Fausset, 2015). Dear has been charged with 179 counts from the shooting, but following the evaluation of state psychiatrists, has been deemed incompetent to participate in his defense as of February 2018 (Benzel, 2018). William Bain, 4th Judicial District Chief Judge, has ordered for Dear to continue to stay at the Colorado Mental Health Institute Pueblo, where he has been since a different judge ruled that he was "unable to separate delusions from reality" in May 2016 (Benzel, 2018). Under Colorado state law, Dear must be evaluated by state psychiatric professionals every 90 days; he has been ruled incompetent each time so far and will have his next hearing on May 21, 2018 (Benzel, 2018).

Legal documents show that Dear was arrested for domestic violence against an exwife (Fieldstadt, 2015). Barbara Micheau, who was married to Dear for seven years, cited claims of domestic violence in a sworn affidavit as part of her divorce case. In her affidavit, Micheau describes Dear as a philanderer and gambler who kicked her and beat her head

against the floor. Her statements acknowledge several occasions in which he hurt her physically and state that she he kicked her and pulled her hair on many occasions (Fausset, 2015).

Example 5: Lafayette Attack

John Russell Houser opened fire in a movie theater in Lafayette, Louisiana, on July 23, 2015. He killed two people and himself and injured nine others (Alter, 2015). Houser had an online history of right-wing extremism and anti-government sentiments (Khorram, Ellis and Payne, 2015).

The Associated Press obtained documents showing that in 2008, Houser's family asked for a temporary protective order against him due to his "extreme erratic behavior" and "ominous as well as disturbing statements" (Alter, 2015). These documents state that Houser committed "various acts of family violence" (Alter, 2015). His wife Kellie was so concerned that she took care to remove all guns and weapons from their home. His wife filed a domestic violence complaint against him in 2005, but he was never formally arrested or charged. He had also previously been arrested in 1989 and 1990 for arson. Notably, Houser has a long and recorded history of mental illness (Alter, 2015).

Attacks in the UK from 2011-2016:

There were five attacks in the UK that fit the above criteria. Three of these attacks were by the same perpetrator. The details of these attacks are included in the Appendix 1, including whether or not they had a history of domestic violence or an unrelated violent

criminal history. Out of the three perpetrators, none had a definitive documented history of domestic violence but two have a violent criminal history.

Of the five attacks, four were inspired by right-wing extremism and one was inspired by Islamist extremism. It is to be noted that the UK is an entirely different environment than the U.S.; guns are regulated much more tightly and the UK does not have the same prevalence of gun violence. This means that the type of terrorist attacks that are more common in the U.S., such as terrorist attacks committed with weapons, like the one in San Bernardino California, are less likely to happen in the UK.

Additionally, this study deliberately chose to exclude all Northern Ireland related terror in an attempt to focus on terror inspired by the right-wing extremism and Islamist extremism, rather than nationalist issues. This exclusion explains the lower number of attacks included in the study but allows the focus to stay on attacks that are related to toxic masculinity and domestic violence, rather than strictly territorial, nationalist, or sovereignty issues. Other reasons for a smaller data set in the UK include population size and access to guns, among others.

The case in which both perpetrators had a history of criminal activity is that of Michael Adebolajo and Michael Abedowale, the perpetrators of the May 22, 2013 Lee Rigby murder. Adebowale was involved with gangs growing up and was sentenced to 15 months in prison for drug related crimes. Adebolajo was jailed in 2006 for attacking two police officers and punching one of them in the face. He was also arrested in Kenya on suspicion of planning an Al-Qaeda inspired attack (Sengupta, Peachey and Brown, 2013).

To give some background on domestic violence in the UK, according to the UK's Office for National Statistics, police in the UK recorded 1.1 million domestic abuse-related

incidents and crimes in the year ending March 2017. Of these 1.1 million domestic-abuse related incidents, 46 percent were recorded as domestic abuse-related crimes, meaning that there were charges against the perpetrator. Domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police accounted for 32 percent of violent crimes in the year ending March 2017 (Ons.gov.uk, 2017). This is just an example of the extensiveness and severity of the problem of domestic violence. However, the new UK guidelines are promising and show that the government realizes the severity of the issue and is taking steps to minimize the problem.

On February 22, 2018, the UK government announced new sentencing guidelines for people convicted of domestic violence offenses in England and Wales, making it far more likely for them to go to prison. Courts were told that crimes that occur in the home should be considered more serious than crimes that occur elsewhere. The new guidelines will come into effect in May 2018 and will update previous guidelines last released in 2006 (BBC News, 2018). The 2006 guidelines state that those convicted of domestic violence crimes will "warrant a custodial sentence in the majority of cases" (Bowcott, 2018).

In the news in the last years, the relationship between domestic violence and terrorism has been a common theme, with journalists pointing at the connection whenever a new attack occurs. Journalist Joan Smith, has made statements such as: "Terrorism, like other manifestations of toxic masculinity, appears to begin in the home" (Smith, 2017). In reference to London Bridge attacker Rachid Redouane, Smith stated, "He has thus become the latest addition to a list of men whose extreme acts of violence towards strangers were preceded by attacks on women in a less public sphere" (Joan Smith).

Concluding Remarks: Strategic Implications and Policy Advice

As shown in the data, there is some sort of a relationship between domestic violence and terrorism. A high proportion of terrorists in the UK and U.S. between 2011 and 2016 have some history of domestic violence. The exact extent of causation cannot be determined, but the correlation is too strong to ignore, most specifically in the U.S. case.

The nature of the attacks examined, either their right-wing extremist or Islamist extremist origins, and the toxic masculinity present within these ideologies may explain part of the correlation. The other explanation is the existence of the new crime-terror nexus and the prevalence of violent criminal histories amongst terrorists. Toxic masculinity, domestic violence, and violent criminal histories should be areas of focus for law enforcement and policy makers in the fight against terrorism. This research shows, at least statistically, that the U.S. has a bigger problem with domestic violence perpetrators turned terrorists than the UK. The UK has less terrorist attacks overall and a smaller proportion of perpetrators with a history of domestic violence or a violent criminal history. Further research is necessary to determine exactly why there is this inconsistency. Access to guns, more than any other social or legal factors, may be at the heart of this difference.

The UK government made a positive step in this direction on February 22, 2018, with new guidelines on punishment for domestic violence crimes (Bowcott, 2018). Though the UK government has not done this specifically as a security measure, deeper scrutinization of anyone with a history of domestic violence might pay dividends for British

security. If the U.S. passed laws preventing those with criminal backgrounds or domestic violence charges from gaining access to guns and closed existing loopholes, it could pay dividends for American security.

One policy suggestion, or overarching rule that comes from this research, is that the improvement of services for women as well as responses to and systems for monitoring domestic violence could be valid preventative efforts against terrorism. Violence against women is both a criminal matter and a security matter and should be treated as such. Domestic violence can be a precursor, or warning sign of future larger-scale violence.

Journalist Soraya Chemaly states that domestic violence and the toxic masculinity that fuels domestic violence ("everyday terrorism") are the "canaries in the coal mine for understanding public terror, and yet this connection continues largely to be ignored, to everyone's endangerment" (Chemaly, 2016). She argues that other issues, such as racism, access to guns, or mental illness are all factors but that many of these issues begin in the home (Chemaly, 2016). The relevance of what happens in the home to what happens in the street, on city bridges, in concert arenas is something that security services and law enforcement should take into consideration. If law enforcement and counterterrorism officials monitored domestic violence, or even had it on their radar the way they do with other indicators of radicalization, it might be a valid preventative effort.

A second policy suggestion, bearing in mind the new crime-terror nexus and this research on the prevalence in histories of domestic violence, is that law enforcement should pay particular attention to those on their radar with violent criminal histories of any kind, whether that is domestic violence, armed robbery, or assault. As Basra and Neumann point out in their research, "with criminal and terrorism milieus merging, the fight against

crime has become – to a significant extent – a national security issue" (Basra and Neumann, 2016: 36).

If modern terrorists are criminals first, criminal and security matters should be taken hand in hand. There should be far more cooperation between government agencies that deal with criminal issues, such as domestic violence, and those that work in counterterrorism. Information sharing and collaboration between those focused on ordinary crime and those focused on terrorism would be beneficial for the security. Also an improvement in communication and collaboration between local authorities and national counterterrorism law enforcement agencies would be helpful. Domestic violence is a problem that occurs in the home and often times is dealt with by local authorities. A mechanism of collaboration between those feared violent or with the potential to pose a greater threat to the community would be helpful.

Moreover, Basra and Neumann argue that terrorists are drawing from the existence of ghettos and a "Muslim underclass" in large European cities (Basra and Neumann, 2016: 36). Based on this, addressing social issues underlying ghettos or underprivileged areas with high concentrations of specific religions or nationalities would be worth looking into further. Additionally many criminals, whether they are convicted of a violent or non-violent crime, become radicalized in prisons, entering as criminals and exiting as extremists or terrorists. A focus on prison policy as a means of preventing those with a violent criminal history from being influenced by radical thoughts is an important step for national security. These are social responses to security issues - a rarity in policy but an important step for counterterrorism.

In summation, this paper has examined the relationship between domestic violence and terrorism in the cases of the UK and the U.S. from 2011 to 2016. In the case of the U.S., an incredibly high proportion – eleven out of 24 (46 percent) – of perpetrators had a definitive history of domestic violence. This means that of all the terrorist attacks in the U.S from 2011 to 2016, 46 percent of the perpetrators were engaged in domestic violence. Additionally 62 percent of the cases involved perpetrators with a violent criminal history. For the purposes of policy and improvement in counterterrorism measures, this shows that a violent criminal history is a commonality in a majority of terrorist attacks in the U.S. in recent times. The UK case study did not show the same results, but also had a much smaller sample size. The results of this research may be less vital to UK counterterrorism efforts, or may just show overall superiority in addressing domestic violence incidents that do not get turned into terrorist incidents.

The aim of this paper was to show a connection between toxic masculinity, violent criminal histories, perpetrators of domestic violence, and terrorism. The significant proportion of terrorists with a history of domestic violence, specifically in the U.S., is notable. It cannot be overlooked that many cases of domestic violence go unreported. This may be true with some of the cases examined in this paper or it may not. Nonetheless, it can be concluded that treating violence against women as a national security issue is a valid course of action, both for the good of women and for counterterrorism efforts. More research should be done which may include different definitions and parameters of attacks or a longer time period.

It is notable that the focus of this research examined terrorist attacks from 2011 - 2016 and further research which analyzes longer periods of time, terrorism inspired by

other ideologies, or terrorism in a different country may add to the understanding of the relationship between domestic violence and terrorism. Extending the definition of which terror attacks were examined, or, for example, even looking at perpetrators of attacks that were prevented, may show different results or more concrete results.

Importantly, the UK has seen, since 2016, an increase in ISIS or Islamist inspired attacks. Using the same criteria as the 2011-2016 research, there were five terrorist attacks in the UK: the murder of Jo Cox MP in June 2016, the attack on Westminster bridge and Parliament in March 2017, the Manchester bombing in May 2017, the London Bridge attack in June 2017, and the Finsbury Park Mosque attack in June 2017 (BBC News, 2017).

Notably, of the five attacks since 2016, one of the seven perpetrators has a definitive history of domestic violence. Two of the seven have unverifiable histories of domestic violence. These attacks took place on a much larger scale, involved far more loss of life, and were inspired by Islamic extremism (three) and right wing extremism (two).

APPENDIX 1: DATA ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM

Date	Perpetrator	Perpetrator Type	History of Domestic Violence
11/28/16	Abdul Razak Ali Artan	ISIL-inspired	No
9/17/16	Ahmad Khan Rahami	ISIL-inspired / Islamist	YES
7/17/16	Gavin Long	racial-inspired (not racist)	Likely no
7/7/16	Lakeem Keon Scott	racial-inspired (not racist)	No
7/7/16	Micah Xavier Johnson	racial-inspired (not racist)	YES
6/12/16	Omar Mateen	ISIL-inspired	YES
1/7/16	Edward Archer	ISIL-inspired	No DV but history of violent crime
12/2/15	Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik	ISIL-inspired	YES
11/27/15	Robert Lewis Dear	far right / anti-abortionist	YES
11/23/15	unknown	white supremacists	N/A
7/23/15	John Russell Houser	anti-government extremist	YES
7/16/15	Mohammad Youssuf Abdulazeez	Islamist	YES
6/17/15	Dylann Roof	white supremacist	YES
5/3/15	Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi	Islamist	Likely no
12/20/14	Ismaaiyl Brinsley	racial-inspired (not racist)	YES
12/18/14	Justin Nojan Sullivan	ISIL-inspired	No
11/28/14	Larry McQuilliams	anti-government extremist	No DV but history of violent crime
9/12/14	Eric Frein	anti-government extremist	Likely no
6/25/14	Ali Muhammad Brown	Islamist	Cannot find
6/8/14	Jerad and Amanda Miller	anti-government extremist	yes for Jerad white supremacy, extreme right
6/1/14	Ali Muhammad Brown	Islamist	No DV but history of violent crime
4/27/14	Ali Muhammad Brown	Islamist	No DV but history of violent crime
4/13/14	unknown	radical right / anti-semitic	N/A
4/13/14	unknown	radical right / anti-semitic	N/A
11/1/13	Paul Ciancia	anti-government extremist	No
4/19/13	Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and Tamerlan Tsarnaev	Islamist	Dzhokhar No
4/18/13	Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and Tamerlan Tsarnaev	Islamist	Tamerlin YES
4/15/13	Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and Tamerlan Tsarnaev	Islamist	YES
4/15/13	Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and Tamerlan Tsarnaev	Islamist	YES
8/15/12	Floyd Corkins	anti-anti- gay rights	no significant criminal record. however, he had a dif
8/5/12	Wade Michael Page	white supremacists	No DV but has criminal record
6/18/12	Anson Chi	anti-government extremist	Likely no
JNITED KING	DOM:		
Date	Perpetrator	Perpetrator Type	History of Domestic Violence
6/16/16	Tommy Mair	neo-nazi	No
	Pavlo Lapshyn	white supremacists	Cannot find
7/12/13	Pavlo Lapshyn	white supremacists	Cannot find
	Pavlo Lapshyn	white supremacists	Cannot find
5/22/13	Michael Olumide Adebolajo and Michael Oluwatobi Abedowale	Islamist	UNITED STATES:

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 $^{^{\}rm 2}$ Sources of Data from Appendix 1 are included in Bibliography

APPENDIX 2: PERPETRATORS OF ATTACKS IN THE UK IN 2017

Perpetrators of Attacks in the UK in 2017

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Year	Perpetrator	History of	
		Domestic Violence	
2017	Thomas Mair	No	
2017	Khalid Masood	Possibly	
2017	Salman Ramadan	Possibly ³	
	Abedi		
2017	Khurum Butt	No	
2017	Rachid Redouane	Yes	
2017	Youseff Zagbha	No	
2017	Darren Osbourne	Possibly ⁴	

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³ "One friend said Abedi started fights in the street for no reason, while another told of an incident in which he punched a female classmate in the head, saying "he could have killed her", because he didn't approve of what she was wearing" (Addley et al., 2017).

⁴ However, others said they believed he and his partner had separated in recent months and that he was often seen shouting at her in the street. Pharmacist Rebecca Carpenter, 26, said: "He's quite a shouty person, always shouting at his wife and kids" (Ward, Evans and Furness, 2017).

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